

2019 CONFERENCE

WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATORS

LA CROSSE • WISCONSIN

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LA CROSSE, WIS.- The agricultural education program at New Richmond High School has received the Outstanding Agricultural Education Program Award from the Wisconsin Association of Agricultural Educators (WAAE). This award was presented to instructor Rachel Sauvola at the WAAE Professional Development Conference held in LaCrosse, Wis. on June 23-27, 2019. This state-level honor is generously sponsored by Don and Mary Josko.

The Outstanding Secondary/Middle School Program Award is bestowed upon an agricultural education program and its instructor who have excelled in membership, participation in WAAE and other professional associations, classroom instruction, FFA involvement, and community service.

Sauvola says, "Every student achieves success in my program - It simply looks different for each one of them as they embrace their opportunities for premier leadership, personal growth and future career success."

Sauvola teaches 16 different courses, all aligned to state and national standards with five offerings being awarded science elective credits. Her teaching approach puts students in charge of their education through the use of inquiry instruction. In such an environment, Sauvola says she does not feed students information, but rather the students engage with scientifically-oriented questions, gather evidence, formulate explanations, connect scientific knowledge and communicate their findings with plenty of justification.

All of the New Richmond agriculture students participate in experiential learning through an individual Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE). Sauvola credits community partnerships as one key asset for this success, touting that 38 local businesses have taken students during the past academic year.

Regarding FFA leadership development, Sauvola has students attending many of the local, state and national conferences and conventions. She is also proud of how her students hone their skills through project-based leadership. She has many student managers who take care of the school lab spaces and SOAR Center, which is a 20-acre

school farm. Through their efforts, they have netted over 2,000 pounds of fresh beef for school lunch during the past academic year, among other fruitful harvests.

“As agricultural educators we are immersed in both evolving agriculture and learning technology with our students,” says WAAE’s 2018-19 President Becky Wirkus. “Our organization’s members provide nurturing environments for students to grow as leaders as well. Being an agricultural educator like Rachel requires dedication year-round as well as enthusiasm, and a passion for both teaching and learning.”

WAAE is the professional association for agricultural educators in Wisconsin. Members include 410 middle school, high school, technical college and university educators. The focus of the association is to provide professional development, legislative support and educational resources for teachers to enhance their local agriculture education programs.

For more information about your local agriculture education program and to find out how you can support agriculture in your community, please contact your local agriculture education instructor or call WAAE at www.waae.com.

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