

Idaho Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association
NEWSLETTER



2016 Wrap up Edition

TEACHERS SPEND TIME IMPROVING THEIR PRACTICE

The IVATA would like to thank Madison High School teachers and administration, as well Kimberly High School teachers and administration, and Mackey School District for hosting our three teacher inservices this summer and fall.

SUMMER INSERVICE

114 teachers attended the IVATA Summer Inservice held at Madison High School last June. There were fifteen workshops taught by fellow teachers and local business representatives where teachers could build their skills, get answers to many questions, and make connections with fellow teachers. Industry tours gave teachers the opportunity to learn about Wildlife Management at Bear World, Natural Resources at Yellowstone National Park, and livestock and horticulture facilities at the BYU-I Livestock and Horticulture departments. Evening activities included a traveling program tour and dinner, a golf scramble, and the annual awards banquet. Val Johnson from Madison was recognized as the Norco Inspirational Teacher award and had the opportunity to receive the award with his local district administration in attendance. Congratulation to Val and thank you for your and your team's hard work to put together the conference!

FALL INSERVICES

Kimberly

In October, Kimberly High School hosted the final meeting of the CDE Committee to craft the upcoming rules and regulations for the FFA Career Development Events. All teachers had the opportunity to give their input through a survey or directly at the meeting. The 31 teachers that attended also participated in a tour of the Clif Bar plant in Twin Falls, where they learned about innovative practices in food science and product development. Curriculum in Floral Design was discussed, and teachers were brought up to date on upcoming changes in Proficiency awards and National Chapter applications. They were also given advice on how to make applying for the Idaho Quality Program Support grant easier, and how to make our AET record book work for us with the IQPS reports. Thanks again to Cody, Heather and Joe for hosting the event!

Mackay



Trent Van Leuven hosted an aquaculture in-service in Mackay that focused on Aquaculture. Trent gave an informative tour of the Mackay aquaculture lab and went through presented a tutorial on how to build your own DIY aquaculture system. After lunch, the teachers had the opportunity to tour two large commercial aquaculture facilities where they even got to fish for escaped tilapia! The in-service wouldn't have been complete without a visit to the famous Idaho Surplus yard!

PROPOSED NAME CHANGE FOR THE IVATA

During the Summer Inservice, there was a recommendation from Sam Condie to drop the word vocational from our organization's name. A straw poll showed the delegation was generally in favor of the idea. Since this was a bylaw change, it must be formally brought before the executive committee at least 60 days prior to the next meeting and to the general membership 30 days before the next meeting. So Joe Blackstock sent formal notification of a motion stating that **“the IVATA will change its name to Idaho Ag Teachers Association (IATA).”**

Other constitutional changes that came from Inservice include adding a positions for Media Director to manage the IVATA website and a Membership Development Officer whose duties would include organizing the professional development at Summer Inservice and October Inservice, overseeing the mentoring program, and organizing credits for all professional development opportunities.

All of these constitutional amendments will be brought before the membership at the next IVATA meeting at State Leadership Conference.

University of Idaho Update

The University of Idaho is working hard to ensure Idaho Ag Ed stays strong through a focus on two big initiatives: the Idaho Agricultural Education Curriculum Project and work on the creation of an Agricultural Science pathway.

The curriculum project will allow Idaho-specific curriculum to be updated by ag teachers for ag teachers. More than 100 ag teachers provided input to prioritize the courses, and nearly 40 teachers have volunteered to assist in the development efforts. This spring, selected teachers will develop complete curriculum resources for two classes. Curriculum will be presented and distributed at Summer Inservice. If you would like to be involved, please contact Kasee Smith (klsmith@uidaho.edu).

During ACTE/NAAE Convention in Las Vegas, faculty members met with members of the State CTE division to discuss the process for creating a new Agricultural Science pathway. This pathway would articulate into the Agricultural Science, Communication, and Leadership BS at the University of Idaho and provide a way for students to gain skills which directly translate into agricultural careers.

In addition to these initiatives, U of I has also completed the work on an online Master's of Science in Agricultural Education. This program will allow practicing teachers to obtain their degree at a distance, while taking courses designed to improve teaching and agricultural education programs. New course offerings began this fall. The spring departmental graduate course offered online is AGED 564- Curriculum Development in Agricultural Education. Enrollment is open through the beginning of spring semester. For more information on how to enroll and start taking graduate classes, contact the department.

MACKAY TEACHER IS NAAE AGRISCIENCE TEACHER OF THE YEAR



Trent VanLueven from MacKay was named the Region I Agriscience Teacher of the Year and was recognized at the NAAE Convention in Las Vegas. The National Agriscience Teacher of the Year award recognizes teachers who have inspired and enlightened their students through engaging and

interactive lessons in the science of agriculture.

“[Van Leuven] takes student learning to a new level. He has developed relevant and rigorous lesson plans that almost always have an engaging lab activity to go with them. In the five years we worked together I witnessed his students getting motivated to learn some of the most mundane subjects or topics through his inquisitive approach to make it important to each kid that day. Dissections, models, guest speakers, field trips, or whatever it would take to open the student’s eyes and minds were never an obstacle for [Van Leuven]. His teaching style is a testament to the fact that students learn by doing,” said Shane Stevenson, former colleague and currently a teacher at Rocky Mountain High School.

IQPS UPDATE

2015-16 was the first school year that the effects of the IQPS grant were felt among the schools and teachers who were recognized by the program. It has made an impact in each and every program. For example, Homedale High School was able to purchase a class set of chromebooks. Now every student has access to them daily. Mrs. Poland has every student update their SAE every Monday morning, as well as using them to access modern updated curriculum. Her Food Science students all completed an agriscience project, using the Chromebooks to record their data and create their reports. At Kimberly, a new netbook cart allows members to update their SAE programs regularly, partially offset the purchase of a CNC plasma cam. At Kuna, they could add more students in in the ag mechanics classes as additional tools and supplies were purchased. Other schools reported making needed safety updates and adding agriscience equipment to develop both hands on and critical thinking skills in their students. Congratulations to the thirty schools who received funding from the IQPS grant for the 2016 school year. We can’t wait to see the positive effects of the program for our students this year!

There were 31 teachers who were awarded the IQPS funding for the 2016-17 school year. Stay tuned to hear how the funding continues to improve Idaho Ag Education programs.

Proposed Changes: The IVATA and the State Department are trying to change the language that will allow the IQPS to be a non-competitive application. **What does that mean?** It means that every program that reaches the qualified level will receive funding – equally divided among teachers who meet the threshold, adjusted for their approved course FTE. **What can you do to ensure future funding? We need more teachers to apply for the FY 18 (this year) grant cycle!** The grant will open in January, and the IVATA will post documents to use as models to help new applicants. Look for emails soon!

TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Idaho Agriculture Education is still facing a tremendous shortage of qualified agriculture teachers. This year, there were 28 open positions in Idaho, the majority of which were teacher changes. Two programs were started this year: Mountain Home and Ridgevue. Five programs added an additional teacher, leaving one program with a short-term sub.

The University of Idaho department of Agriculture Education has maintained records of teacher candidate placements since 2010. Forty-eight students have received their teaching certificate through the teacher preparation program at UI since 2010; of those, 7 never entered the teaching profession, the remainder are STILL in the classroom.

To help retain our new teachers, IVATA member Jaysa Fillmore partnered with the University of Idaho to create a formal mentoring program. A short survey was sent to all Idaho agriculture teachers where they could sign up to be a mentor or be assigned a mentor. 50 teachers volunteered to serve as a mentor this year and 20 were selected based on new teacher preferences and geographic location. Thanks to Brandee Lewis, Kevin Wells, Trish Stokes, Jason Bair, Tom Jacobsen, Larin Crossley, Dawn Holmes, Cody Park, Jaysa Fillmore, Danielle Reynolds, JR Morrow, Kyle Stapleton, Sam Condie, Brian Wolf, Cami Schumann, Janna Volkens, Heather Hopkins, Josette Nebeker, Stuart Nesbit, Whitney Tuckett, and Nicole Lebsack for serving as mentors this year. The mentors were asked to contact their mentee at least twice in the first month and once a month thereafter in addition to visiting their mentee teacher in his/her classroom and hosting their mentee teacher in their own classroom. University of Idaho will provide professional development credits to all mentees and mentors that complete the program requirements.

This year, The University of Idaho has four student teachers, two of which are products of Idaho agriculture education programs. Daniel Heikkila graduated from Meridian High School and will be student teaching at American Falls with cooperating teacher Marc Beitia and Max Blitman, from Kuna, will be student teaching at Meridian with cooperating teacher Jack Blattner.

I predict there will be more openings than student teachers with expansions, retirements, and the exodus from our profession that seems to be the new norm. What are you doing to help solve this problem? Are you being a Teach Ag Advocate? Take a moment and talk to that student you think will be able to fill your shoes, and give them the tools necessary to explore our profession.

NAAE National Conference update



Idaho had an outstanding delegation that attended the NAAE conference in Las Vegas in December. IVATA officers Robert Hale, Sue Poland and Travis Edwards served as official delegates, and Janna Volkers served as a Region I committee chair. Tyler Johnson from Murtaugh was selected as a Teacher Turn the Key participant. Jaysa Fillmore and Janna also were recognized as past DuPont Agriscience Ambassadors. Other teachers that attended to take advantage of the professional development opportunities were Katie Cooper, Alan Willmore, Tom Clifton, Joe Blackstock, Nicole Lebsack, Josette Nebeker, Stephanie Whipple, Pat Dixon, Nate Low, Lindsey Stephens as well as University of Idaho representatives Kat Wolf, Jeremy Falk and Kasee Smith. A repository of workshop summaries and resources can be found on the IVATA website: www.theivata.com.



Janna and Trent at the Dupont Agriscience activities held during the NAAE Convention



UPCOMING IVATA/NAAE DATES

January 5-6, 2017 - IVATA Mid-Winter Board Meeting, Boise

FFA Board of Directors Meeting, Boise

January 30-31 - Pete Cenarussa Legislative Luncheon and 212/360 Boise

February 6-7- 212/360 Pocatello

April 7 - IVATA Meeting at State Leadership Conference

April 25-28 - Region I Conference, Sheridan WY