



# West Virginia AGED NEWS and VIEWS

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Harry N. Boone, Jr., Ph.D., Editor

## *Breaking the Stereotype: An Observation* by Jeremy Greene

One of the most challenging aspects of our profession is opening the eyes of students, board of education members, school faculty and staff, and the community to the reality that agriculture is not simply an infrastructure of farm production, but rather an intricate web of processing, marketing, research, etc., industries that make up the largest part of our American economy. If you were to ask a group of students not enrolled in agriculture education in West Virginia to define agriculture, although the responses would vary as to location, a vast majority of them would give answers dealing with the production side of the industry; that is if they could answer the question at all.

As a member of the 10 X 15 Committee and working with agriculture education professionals across the country, I have noticed that agriculture stereotypes are a concern for the 10 X 15 initiative. A great deal of time in the group meetings of 10 X 15's Initiative #3 (Developing New Program Models) involved how we could break the typecast that communities and administrators have about agriculture education and FFA in order to be able to install any program model of agriculture education into a school system which in the past has been hesitant, due to these misconceptions. This ever present goal of 10,000 programs by 2015 is hopeless if we are unable to broaden the idea that FFA and agriculture education is what so many people believe; an exercise in raising animals and crops.

Some of this talk in our initiative meetings included changing the name of agriculture education (which has been done in West Virginia on a couple of occasions, but to no avail), changing the name of the FFA, changing the FFA jacket (both of which should be member discussions, not advisor/educator discussions), and offering agriculture education without FFA all in the

name of the recruitment and retention of students that are afraid and/or discouraged by the stereotypes of agriculture education. But what price would these changes cause to our livelihoods and the best interest of our current constituency.

During the opening session of the 80<sup>th</sup> National FFA Convention, Dr. Case invigorated the crowd of FFA members by asking the group if they were "NASCAR fans" and "country music fans." I spent three days walking through an FFA Mall that was composed of businesses selling cowboy boots, cowboy hats, and belt buckles, from retailers like "Tractor Supply", "John Deere" and "Cow Pokes." The National Agricultural Career Show was littered with huge harvesting equipment and monstrous pick-up trucks and race cars. And the convention was broadcast on RFDTV, a network dedicated to rural America.

I am in no way disappointed in the National FFA Organization for the opportunities and entertainment that they offer students at any given time. It does however beg the question, "Why do these businesses, characteristics, and ideas dominate our organization?" It is but for the simple reason that this is who we are. We don't have to put up with the derogatory names or reinforce the judgmental stereotypes; however the National FFA Organization has been about all of the great aspects of American agri "culture" for 79 years.

In order to achieve the BHAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goal), or even come close to achieving 10,000 quality programs by 2015, obviously we must diversify our culture base. We must make FFA and agriculture education appealing by making conscious efforts to stand with the less traditional agriculture student. But in doing so we must be very careful. The FFA is the largest youth organization in the world and



serves over half a million students across the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands; and I will wager to say that the majority of these students are the pick-up truck driving, cowboy hat wearing, church going, camouflage clad students that we see in our classrooms every day. Let us not overstep our bounds by advising the current agriculture and FFA student out the door. If we abandon these individuals that depend upon us to meet their educational needs by changing their education and their organization beyond what they can relate to and find value, we are going to watch agriculture education and FFA head directly for the septic. One of the biggest mistakes of business is in an effort to obtain new customers; they abandon the ones they have been serving and end up deserting both.

In this effort to obtain 10 X 15 please let us remember that change is good; but any change without perspective on what we already have is going to be detrimental to our present success and the potential for a successful future.

*Jeremy Greene is the 2007 WVAEE President and an agricultural education teacher at Jefferson County School.*

# Problems Faced by Beginning Agricultural Education Teachers

by Harry N. Boone, Jr. & Deborah A. Boone

In 2002-2003 we sent each of you a series of questionnaires asking about the problems you faced as a beginning teacher, problems you currently face, motivational factors that influenced you as a beginning teacher, and motivational factors that currently keep you in the profession. The responses to the open-ended questions were analyzed and placed in 24 categories. In the next few paragraphs, I will share a few of the results on problems encountered as a beginning teacher.

Administrative support was the most frequently mentioned problem for beginning teachers. Examples of the responses included "my administration was not interested in my program," "I did not receive support from my administration," "my administration did not understand my program," "school policies made hands-on learning more difficult," and "I experience a lack of communication with my administrators." When asked to rate the severity of administrative support as a problem, respondents expressed slight to moderate disagreement that administrative support was a problem.

Classroom discipline was the second most frequently mentioned problem for beginning teachers. Responses in this category included: "overall lack of discipline in their school," "difficulty finding effective ways to handle discipline problems," "flagrant actions by students were a problem," "I was not prepared to handle major discipline problems," and "senior students become lazy." When asked to rate the severity of classroom discipline as a problem for beginning teachers, respondents expressed a slight to moderate agreement that classroom discipline was a problem.

Although financial rewards for teaching was not mentioned frequently as a problem for beginning teachers in phase one of the study, respondents in phase two of the research expressed moderate to strong agreement that it was a problem for beginning teachers. Of the twenty-four problem categories for beginning teachers, financial rewards received the strongest agreement by respondents that it was a problem.

Time management created a problem for many beginning teachers. Respondent statements included: "I had difficulty finding the

time to get everything done," "I was involved in too many FFA activities," "there was not enough time to teach all of the CSOs (Content Standards and Objectives)," "too often I failed to set priorities for tasks associated with my program," "I never have enough time to do everything I want," and "I had trouble knowing when to go home." When the severity of the problems was examined, time management was given the second highest rating. There was slight to moderate agreement by the respondents that time management was a problem.

The list of problems for beginning teachers also included problems with paperwork. The problems included; "the increased level of paperwork was a problem," "the level of paperwork was overwhelming," "I spent too much time doing paperwork," and "extended employment justification required too much paperwork." In phase two data analysis, there was slight to moderate agreement that paperwork was a problem.

Budgets/program financing was a problem for a number of the respondents during the beginning stages of their professional career. Respondents indicated the following problems: "there was inequity in the way funds were distributed in my school district," "budget cuts were a problem for my program," "the administration did not provide adequate financial support for my program," "there was little funding for equipment replacement," "financing FFA activities was a problem," and "fundraising for the FFA chapter was a problem."

In summary, administrative support was a frequently mentioned problem for agricultural education teachers. Nearly 50% of the respondents indicated administrative support was a problem for them as a beginning teacher. Two areas closely associated with administrative support, facilities/equipment and budgets/funding, were also identified as problems for beginning teachers. Begin-

Severity of Problems Faced by Beginning Teachers<sup>1</sup>

	Beginning	
	M	SD
<b>Moderate to Strong Agreement</b>		
Financial Rewards	4.73	1.27
<b>Slight to Moderate Agreement</b>		
Time Management	4.04	1.12
Paperwork	3.85	1.26
Balancing School & Home	3.73	1.39
Facilities-Equipment	3.70	1.19
Student Motivation	3.57	1.14
Discipline	3.51	1.21
<b>Slight to Moderate Disagreement</b>		
Guidance Counselor	3.49	1.24
Special Needs Students	3.40	1.25
Undergraduate Preparation	3.28	1.10
Changes in FFA/Agriculture	3.25	1.02
Image of Agricultural Education	3.21	1.65
Budgets-Funding	3.02	1.18
Faculty/Peer Relationships	2.99	1.31
University Faculty Relations	2.91	1.31
Developing a COI	2.89	1.09
Issues from Previous Teacher	2.82	1.55
Administrative Support	2.73	1.17

<sup>1</sup>Scale of 1 - 6 with 1 = "strongly disagree" & 6 = "strongly agree"

ning teachers were likely to have problems in the area of student discipline. One-third of the respondents reported problems with student discipline. Beginning teachers also struggled with time management and paperwork. Nearly one fourth of the beginning teachers listed both topics as problems. Financial rewards for teaching were perceived as a moderate to strong problem for teachers as they entered the profession.

The research has wide spread implications for agricultural education teacher preparation programs. In 2005, The National Council for Agricultural Education announced a long-range strategic goal of having 10,000 agricultural science programs in place by the year 2015. To meet this goal, the agricultural education profession will have to generate over 2,500 additional certified agricultural education teachers in the next ten years, a 33 percent increase above the average of 760 qualified teachers generated each year. Agricultural education departments across the United States should reevaluate the content of their teacher education programs, the inservice opportunities provided for current teachers, and induction and/or first-year teacher programs to determine ways to adequately prepare teachers, at the preservice and entry levels, to handle the potential problems of agricultural education teachers. By doing so the profession can increase job satisfaction and reduce teacher attrition.

# *Field Experience Summary*

*Stacy Hartman, Student Teacher, Jefferson County High School, Fall 2007*

As the days grew closer to the start of my student teaching I began to get nervous, more than normal. As the first day of my student teaching came I was overwhelmed, excited and nervous. After the first two days of observation I came home crying and ready to call the university and withdrawal from college. I didn't want to student teach or become a teacher. I was feeling so overwhelmed with lesson plans, teaching, and changing my life from a student to a teacher. As the week went on I picked up my first class, Agriculture and Natural Resources I. Little did I know what this class would have in store for me. I started out by teaching a unit on the FFA; a topic with which I felt comfortable. By the end of the first few weeks I loved my student teaching experience. My cooperating teachers and students made me feel so welcomed into their classroom and chapter. Within the first week I was able to help prepare teams for the CDEs. As time went on I picked up more classes. With each class it was a whole new experience. As the experience went on I soon learned what it was like to be an agricultural teacher.

My 5<sup>th</sup> period class, Agriculture and Natural Resources I, would soon test me in anyway they could. Within the first two weeks I was told that I was just like a substitute for Mr. Fincham and that I couldn't give tests or write referrals. They would soon learn this was not so. It took a little time for the students to understand that I was their teacher not just a substitute. Before I go further let me describe my 5<sup>th</sup> period class. This is a class of 20 very different students. Some wanted to be there and put forth the effort to learn while other had the "I don't care attitude." A few of the students I could see right off the bat were going to test me as far as they could. This class was right before lunch which made it 15 minutes longer than any other period. Imagine being in a classroom of 20 students who are hungry and wanting to go to lunch before the line gets to long and don't want to be in class to begin with. Any and everything possible that could happen probably did. Some days after this class I wanted to pull my hair out and on other days I walked away thinking this is why I wanted to be a teacher. At times discipline was a problem in this classroom but as time went by I learned that the disci-

pline had to vary depending on the student. At times I was known as Miss Parole, because I ended up having to write so many referrals for discipline problems. My last day teaching this class I had students write a paper about their view of this experience, it was so rewarding to read the comments they had made about me as a teacher, wishing me good luck in future and even apologizing for giving me a hard time in class. This 5<sup>th</sup> period class definitely gave me the experiences I feel I needed to prepare myself for teaching on my own.

My experience with other classes was just as memorable as my 5<sup>th</sup> period class. Within each class you had those students who wanted to be there while others didn't. As I taught each class I got to know the students not only as their teacher but some on a personal level. Of course in every class I had the moans and groans when they had to take notes or take a test.

My favorite part of student teaching was participating in all the extra activities, such as Career Development Events, National Convention, officer meetings and regional meetings. This allowed me to see the student outside of the classroom environment and get to know them on a personal level. It was really rewarding when the students would come to me for advice or help with something. The greatest feeling came when my last days were drawing near and the students began to say how they didn't want me to leave and were already asking when I would be back to see them. Not only did Mr. Fincham and Mr. Greene make me feel welcome but the students did as well.

While at Jefferson I had the opportunity to get to know not only the students but their parents and alumni members. In my opinion they are a very lucky chapter to have such wonderful parent and alumni support. I was so surprised when they held an alumni dinner and bake auction that raised over \$4,000 and all the support that showed up to help make apple butter.

As I completed my Supervised Agricultural Experience visits to the students I could see why these students are so active in the FFA. It also gave me background information on the students and why they are who they are. They have various SAE's in

their chapter anything from sheep and cows to rabbits, goats, horses and even llamas. It didn't take the student long to figure out the way to win me over while on an SAE visit was to show me the baby animals, especially the calves.

My last day of teaching we ended up having a snow day; which I'd been hoping for all semester. Once it happened I was a little disappointed. I began to realize that it was over, I was done; my 12 weeks of teaching were over. Despite all the times I was ready to give up I was going to miss everyone even those students who liked to push my buttons. I never thought the day would come when I would be finished with student teaching nor the day when I would miss student teaching. Was I ever fooled.

I could go on about my experience but to summarize it was one of the greatest if not the greatest experience of my college career. I am so grateful for everyone who encouraged me to do my student teaching. If not I would have missed out on a wonderful experience.

Becky (Ridgeway), I am so glad we got to know each other and have our student teaching experience together. You were a huge help with all your ideas and for providing a listening ear when needed; thank you. I will never forget all of our wonderful times of laughter. Mr. Fincham and Mr. Greene thanks so much for all your encouragement and support. My only hope is that when I get a job of my own my desk doesn't end up looking like yours. You were amazing cooperating teachers, your students are very lucky to have you as advisors. Mrs. Marstiller and Mrs. Planck, it was a wonderful pleasure getting to know you and thank you for allowing me to come into your classroom. As females in the agricultural education profession you give me inspiration. My hope is that I can become a successful agricultural teacher just as you both have. For everyone who was a part of my student teaching experience, you have made a mark in my life you and all the wonderful memories will never be forgotten. Thank You! Don't worry I will be back, you can't stay away from a place that means so much to you.

## ***Field Experience Summary***

### ***Becky Ridgeway, Student Teacher, Jefferson County High School, Fall 2007***

Nervous, scared, overwhelmed and excited were the feelings I felt on my first day of student teaching. However, when I entered Jefferson High School, most of those feelings disappeared. I was welcomed with open arms and most of the students were excited to have a new face in the school. This made me feel comfortable knowing that this is a place that I would be able to fit into.

I knew that teaching wouldn't be an easy task and that I would put a ton of hours into being the best teacher that I can be. I knew going into teaching that the first task that I was going to have to face would be discipline, since I tend to be on the quieter side. But I didn't know that I would face my first test of discipline on my very first day of teaching that would end up with me writing a referral. Having this experience right away helped me to realize that I was taking that step from being the student to being the "teacher." By the end of my student teaching experience, I now know how I want to handle my discipline when I have my own classroom in the future.

Besides being in the classroom and labs, I was able to spend a lot of time working

with the FFA members outside of school, including SAE visits. I had never had an SAE while in high school and didn't even know what they were or even know that teachers actually went out to visit their student's projects until my college experience. After my first SAE visit I realized how important it is to visit your students at their homes. I was able to tell so much by visiting the student. By learning what kind of background they have and where they live, I was able to connect with students on an individual level with subjects that the student was interested in.

I was lucky enough to be able to attend state CDEs in Morgantown and at this time I was still working on making connections with the students. By the time that National FFA Convention came around I was able to enjoy the students. They had come to realize that I was their teacher and I had gained their respect. This made the entire trip not only fun but another learning experience that I will never forget.

I've learned a great deal in my student teaching experience and I have a couple pieces of advice for future student teach-

ers. First, don't let the students take advantage of you, because believe me they will try. Secondly, take every advantage that comes your way during your teaching experience. Go to every meeting within the school and on the state level. Make sure you take advantage of all of materials that you have available to you. Remember that you're working with a cooperative teacher and they have resources right there at the school that you can use and change to fit your teaching style. And lastly become involved with the students through their FFA activities. Make sure you show the students that you are interested in them and not just earning a degree.

I want to take the time to say thanks to my cooperating teachers. I feel that I was working with several teachers; Mr. Fincham, Mr. Greene, Mrs. Marsteller and Mrs. Planck; who were there for me every step of the way. Even though I spent more time working with Fincham and Greene, all of these teachers taught me great lessons. I just hope that one day I will be able to show my students the same dedication, enthusiasm, and loyalty that all four of these teachers show their students everyday.

## ***Field Experience Summary***

### ***Amie Crayne, Student Teacher, Cameron High School, Fall 2007***

What happens when a student teacher is involved in an amazing program, a remarkable school with incredible students, two great teachers, and a principal? Well you get an experience of a life time. Amazing can not begin to describe the school and community of Cameron, WV. Growing up just 40 minutes east of this quiet country town I was not familiar with this area. I looked at it as a great adventure that was before me. As I walked through the doors my first day at Cameron High School I was greeted with warm smiles and hellos as I made my way to the front office. My heart was racing and I was full of excitement and nervousness wondering what the next twelve weeks had in store for me. Reflecting on those twelve weeks, they were full of great learning experiences, a great deal of wisdom, lots of knowledge, surprises, laughs, and many memories that will stay with me for many years to come.

My favorite course to teach was animal science to the career exploratory class, I soon found that the energy that they had was not such a bad thing if used in a good way. Along with the energy they carried came much curiosity and this is what I enjoyed the most. They were constantly asking questions and wanting to know more, which made me even more excited about teaching everyday. From the many hours spent in shop helping students with their individual projects to the hundreds of ferns that we planted into hanging baskets, each moment was a learning experience that I could not have learned in the classroom. Outside of class came even more new and exciting things to experience. Making SAE visits became something that I really enjoyed doing and I wish that more students would have had market steer projects for me to see. Not only did I look at steers but

also students' goats, chickens, and hams and bacons that were set to cure. When my time wasn't filled with preparing lessons and making SAE visits there were FFA activities. The opportunity to go the National FFA convention was unbelievable and a trip I will never forget. My fondest memory is the hundreds of FFA members in blue jackets walking down FFA Way. It certainly gave you a sense of pride. Other activities I helped take part in were the FFA open house, the chicken roast, and a trip to the regional meeting at St. Mary's High School. Cameron FFA is an amazing program, with incredible students, two great teachers, and a principal to pull everything together. It was a great honor and privilege to have the opportunity to student teach there.

## *Field Experience Summary*

*Justin Whitacre, Student Teacher, Mineral County Technical Center, Fall 2007*

I did my student teaching assignment at the Mineral County Technical Center (MCTC) under the direction of Mrs. Carol Webb and Mr. Dana Young. I really enjoyed my time at MCTC. The students there are well behaved and respectful to everyone and the faculty far surpasses anyone I have ever worked with. They will do anything within their power to help you.

I taught small engines and power tools, Agricultural and Natural Resources I, and basics and fundamentals of agricultural mechanics. The students that I had in these classes were full of energy and ready to learn. They were very respectful and rarely gave me any grief. The students are there because they want to learn about these subjects not because they have too.

I aided in running the Mineral County FFA Chapter while student teaching. In my opinion this chapter is probably the best in the state. This is based on the attitude of everyone involved not just the activities that take place. All the FFA members are active

not just a certain few. While I was there I participated in many events. Every member attended at least one event but normally many more than that. I think that the biggest motivator for the students is the rewards they get for being active. The chapter offers many rewards such as taking students to the Pennsylvania Farm Show and going to many agri-tourism spots throughout the year.

Mr. Young and Mrs. Webb are very knowledgeable about the subjects they teach and are very involved in the development of the chapter and their students. They were very helpful to me in providing advice and information that helped me develop as a teacher and a person. They both gave me very useful advice on how to maintain classroom control, deliver subject material, and evaluate student development.

While at MCTC I had the chance to go to the National FFA Convention to help with students while Mr. Young and Mrs. Webb were in a contest. This was a very chal-

lenging experience since almost everyone at the convention had on blue and gold. It made it difficult to keep the students together and with me at all times. Once in a while I would turn around and one would be missing because they stopped to check out a booth or something but they were normally good at getting my attention so the rest of us would stop and wait on them. I enjoyed the convention more as a teacher than I did when I went as a student.

All in all I really enjoyed student teaching; actually I loved it. I think that it was more the people that made my experience so great than anything else. I really think that if I had gone anywhere else I would not have had as good of an experience. Unfortunately I am not going to teach but if I were, I would only teach at the Mineral County Technical Center. The attitude there is far better than any school I have ever been in. This is based on the great faculty and students that are there.

## *Field Experience Summary*

*Amy Kneer, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service*

My internship with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection service (APHIS), Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) for the past two summers was great. Never in my life would I think that one single experience would change my direction in life. Interacting with so many people that came from different agricultural backgrounds gave me a larger perspective on the agriculture industry.

My main goal from this internship was to gain professional experience in a professional setting. I learned valuable skills that I will take with me on a day to day basis. I learned how to communicate with a wide variety people. I also learned writing skills that pertained to PPQ. This internship completely changed my direction in life. Instead of wanting to teach high school students, I want to travel and train supervisors and executives to be leaders in the USDA organization. I feel that having a job with the Leadership Development and Organization Sup-

port (LD&OS) unit of the USDA would utilize the skills I have gained through experiences in 4-H and FFA, and the skills I have acquired through college courses. I have changed my Agriculture and Extension Education focus from teacher education to communication and extension education. Changing my focus allowed me to broaden my career field. With the Extension option I am able to find more career opportunities within the USDA.

I believe that I did make an impact. I like to think that I really proved to everyone that a person right from college can do the same tasks that a person in a higher position can do. While I was there I also improved some of the evaluation processes they had for workshops. I like to think that I set a high standard for future interns.

If I do get the chance to have a career in this field I know that I would have job security and I wouldn't have to worry about living pay check to pay check. USDA em-

ployees get full benefits, so that's another item that I will not have to be concerned about. A career in this field would keep me busy and require my full attention. I would get to travel to other states and broaden my network of contacts. There is also plenty of room to advance and move around. Eventually I would like to end up in the extension branch and work with the extension administrators. I feel that the skills that I have in organization and leadership would be a great asset to the organization.

I have an application in with the USDA-APHIS-PPQ. It has been referred for further consideration. I applied to be a Training Technician and assist the Training Specialists in organizing educational materials for the classes and workshops. I hope to have the opportunity to interview here in the near future. I am so glad that I had the chance to intern with the USDA-APHIS-PPQ-LDOS. It completely changed my goals for the future and my college career.

## ***2 Hardy County Educators Honored by WVU Extension Service for ‘Excellence’***

Dave Workman and Vicki Jones-Fertig, educators in Hardy County’s office of the West Virginia University Extension Service, received Extension Excellence Awards in honor of their successful programs for agricultural producers and limited-resource families, respectively.

The two were among faculty and staff honored recently during the WVU Extension Service’s annual recognition program at WVU Jackson’s Mill State 4-H Camp, Weston.

Workman, a WVU Extension agent and associate professor, received the Team Program Excellence Award as a member of the multi-county Grassland Team. The award is given in appreciation of “efforts that provide significant contributions to the well-being of West Virginia’s people.”

The 30-member Grassland Team was honored because the educators continue to help cow-calf producers learn how to manage pastures, extend the grazing season, deal with droughts and control costs.

Workman and other team members initiated their project by conducting on-farm research. They then began creating fact sheets, organizing pasture walks, and conducting educational meetings to show agricultural producers the effectiveness of im-

proved pastures and the benefits of an extended grazing season.

On farms in Hardy County and throughout West Virginia, better grassland management is creating better production figures. WVU researchers report that summer forage has increased by 406 pounds per acre. Producers have reduced production costs by \$21.92 per animal, while cattle performance has increased by 31 pounds per animal.

Jones-Fertig, the nutrition outreach instructor in Hardy and Grant counties, received the New Employee Excellence Award. In less than two years with the WVU Extension Family Nutrition Program, she has raised more than \$2,000 in cash and in-kind donations to assist her work. The funds equipped a kitchen in the new Hardy County Food Bank building, where she now can teach nutrition classes to low-income families.

Across the mountain in Hardy County, she connected with civic groups that allow her to conduct classes in their facilities. In Grant County, she developed a relationship with the Ministerial Association to conduct classes in facilities in those communities.

Jones-Fertig also teaches nutrition to Head Start parents and works weekly with

Women, Infants and Children program participants.

Through her efforts, a new Community Educational Outreach Service club was formed in a limited-resource community, which now will have easier access to additional family, health and leadership education opportunities.

A Master Gardener, Jones-Fertig created and continues to organize the annual Community Garden. She supplements her nutrition class budget with produce grown in the garden and also encourages her class participants to use the garden to reduce their food bills.

Other agriculture, human nutrition and 4-H Youth Development programs are available through the Hardy County WVU Extension Service Office at 204 Washington St., Moorefield. For more information, call 530-0273 or visit the WVU Extension Service Web site ([www.ext.wvu.edu](http://www.ext.wvu.edu)).

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***The Agricultural and  
Extension Education faculty  
and staff wish you and your  
family a healthy, happy and  
prosperous new year.***

## *4 Grant County Educators Honored by WVU Extension Service for 'Excellence'*

Faculty and staff in the Grant County office of the West Virginia University Extension Service have received statewide recognition for their outstanding work in agriculture, 4-H Youth Development and nutrition education.

Brad Smith, Martha Garton, Cassie Mitters Vandevander and Vicki Jones-Fertig were among faculty and staff honored recently during the WVU Extension Service's annual recognition program at WVU Jackson's Mill State 4-H Camp, Weston.

Smith, a WVU Extension agent and assistant professor, received the Team Program Excellence Award as a member of the multi-county Grassland Team. The award is given in appreciation of "efforts that provide significant contributions to the well-being of West Virginia's people."

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Martha Garton, an Extension agent and associate professor, received the WVU-ES

Advanced Researcher Award for her achievements as a member of the National Camping Research Consortium. The 10-member group field-tested evaluation instruments and procedures. They then developed the National 4-H Camp Evaluation Tool Kit for Extension faculty, camp directors and staff to use in implementing and evaluating 4-H camping programs. Garton was instrumental in developing the tool kit's life skills questionnaire.

Garton shared a second award with Vandevander, who is a youth nutrition outreach instructor with the WVU-ES Family Nutrition Program in Grant County. The two received the Diversity Program Excellence Award for developing "projects that provide educational opportunities to diverse or nontraditional audiences."

Because 4-H camp is a "life-changing experience" for youths, Garton and Vandevander pursued many channels to make the youth development activities available to more limited-resource youths, especially those who live in northern Grant County.

Concentrated recruiting, additional scholarships and clothing gifts increased the number of campers in 2007. The number of limited-resource campers rose from 18 in 2006 to 51 in 2007. The number of northern county participants increased from two to 35.

Garton and Vandevander's successful push for more campers created additional challenges. They needed more staff. So, they recruited more camp counselors and added more classes.

Jones-Fertig, the family nutrition outreach instructor in Hardy and Grant counties, received the New Employee Excellence Award. In less than two years with the WVU Extension Family Nutrition Program,

she has raised more than \$2,000 in cash and in-kind donations to assist her work. The funds equipped a kitchen in the new Hardy County Food Bank building, where she now can teach nutrition classes to low-income families.

Across the mountain in Hardy County, she connected with civic groups that allow her to conduct classes in their facilities. In Grant County, she developed a relationship with the Ministerial Association to conduct classes in facilities in those communities.

In both counties, Jones-Fertig also teaches nutrition to Head Start parents and works weekly with Women, Infants and Children program participants.

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The educators offer other agriculture, 4-H Youth Development and human nutrition programs through the Grant County WVU Extension Service Office at 115-1/2 Virginia Ave., Petersburg. For more information, call 257-4688, or visit the WVU Extension Service Web site ([www.ext.wvu.edu](http://www.ext.wvu.edu)).

### **Contacts:**

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*A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don't necessarily want to go but ought to be. Rosalynn Carter*

### Important Dates

Jan 25-27	State Winter Leadership Conference	Cedar Lakes
Feb 16-23	National FFA Week	
Mar 9	State Ham, Bacon, and Egg Show	Charleston
Mar 10	State Ham, Bacon, and Egg Sale	Charleston
Apr 4	State FFA Governing Body Meeting	Cedar Lakes
Apr 26	State FFA & 4-H Equine CDE	Potomac State College
Jun 14-26	Agriculture Teacher's Conference	TBA: Eastern Pandandle
Jul 9-12	State FFA Convention	Cedar Lakes

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