

## **Jake Devine - Rookie/Young/Ag Teacher of the Year Application**

*a. Overview – brief description of the agricultural education program and the community.*

Capitan, is a very family orientated community in which we serve around 100 students in Agriculture class with 74 registered FFA members. Capitan is a very active chapter in all of three rings of Agriculture Education. I'm sure that every other school has seen the excitement level jump now that we are "back to normal" but here in Capitan we are hauling a record number of students participating in the FFA this year. We hauled 28 teams and 56 kids to the first career development event this year, while it seemed overwhelming it was great to see my kids having fun and competing. However we know that competitions aren't everything in FFA or Ag class for that matter. Here I teach agricultural mechanics and dual credit welding classes, small and large animal science, leadership and communications, and junior high agricultural classes. I utilize a meat processing facility and a greenhouse.

*b. Teaching Philosophy – a brief reflective statement of the personal teaching philosophy.*

"I am an agricultural educator by choice and not by chance. I believe in American agriculture; I dedicate my life to its development and the advancement of its people." – Ag Teacher's Creed. My teaching philosophy is derived directly from that, helping students to reach their unforeseen potential. I was blessed to have an Ag teacher for a father, and to do my student teaching with a legendary Ag teacher and they both taught me that every student that walks through the door is treated just like they are one of your own children. I have seen that happen for me as the year progresses; I love my students like they are my own and will do anything to keep them on the right track to become successful citizens. I once heard an experienced vo ag teacher say "I teach

my students about life and if there is time I teach them some agriculture” I strive to accomplish that statement.

*c. Instruction – examples of your effective classroom and laboratory instruction.*

My teaching instruction directly follows the FFA Motto, “Learning to Do, Doing to Learn, Earning to Live, Living to Serve.” I try to keep every lesson structured to hit all 3 learning styles, auditory, visual, and hands-on. For me it only makes sense that the only way to learn how to do something is by actually doing it. Whether we are candling eggs, planting seed stock plants, or welding we are going to learn the safe way to do it, then we will do it. Hands on activities are important and I strive to build that into every unit I teach.

*d. Experiential Learning – examples of the accomplishments in getting students involved in work-based learning such as supervised agricultural experience programs.*

For me the coolest example I can think of this year goes back to a weekend vacation for one of my students. While she was on the mountain snowboarding she met a person who owns True Blue landscaping company in Durango, Colorado; it also just so happens that my student participates in landscape design and is very good at it. While she was on the mountain with the owner of the she mentioned that she enjoyed her contest and would like to do it as a career. On the spot the owner offered her a job as soon as she graduates high school to come and work for the company as a designer. It just goes to show that these Career Development Events actually do develop students for a career, was a great story to hear for me.

In the area of supervised agriculture experiences a large majority of my students rear and show market animals; I had 21 members with livestock on feed this last summer. A few students work for local ranches, or work hunting for deer and elk sheds to sale, work for guide and outfitters

and local fabrication shops. I look forward to the opportunity to expand some of the SAEs in some “non-traditional” avenues.

*e. Leadership Development –examples of the accomplishments in developing leadership skills of the students.*

This is probably my favorite part of the FFA organization; I believe that leaders are made not born. I will admit that certain people are born leaders and ready to go, however I do feel like loads of good leadership qualities can be taught. In Capitan we are a small school meaning that all of my FFA kids do other things like play sports, leader in youth groups at local churches or 4H, band and choir too. I love to win but also realize that it is not the most important thing, what I want my kids to get out of having me in class is being active in something that is you're passionate about; being able to stand up for something you believe in and participate - that is the main goal for me.

I hate to brag but I will do it a little on my state officer, Zach Rich who shows animals, judges, played basketball, and hunts avidly, etc. etc. etc. I have known him for 10+ years while showing against each other in the same county, however when I was senior Zach was a quiet, shy, timid individual. This year I have seen Zach blossom into one of the best leaders I have ever seen. He works diligently on all his contests, school work, state officer duties, show animal projects, LDE contests, all the while motivating other students in the chapter. At the beginning of the year he helped me coaching on the Opening Ceremonies team that won our district contest. When judging season hit he decided to judge wool and poultry. However Zach is a reserve champion national horse judge at the Denver National show, after a few conversations he was persuaded to continue judging Horse. He has helped me coaching that team and developing the skills for the younger kids behind him.

I'll switch gears and talk about one of my 7<sup>th</sup> grade students now. She transferred here in January leaving a broken home. When she got here she was quiet and scared as anyone would be if they transferred to a brand new school and area. However after she decided to join FFA and join a couple judging teams I have seen her completely break out of her shell. She is a bright shining student now that loves everything about FFA and Ag, and to me that is the most rewarding part of the job.

*f. Professional Growth – examples of how they stay professionally prepared and up-to-date in teaching techniques and technical content.*

I attended the NMAETA- Summer and Winter conference and will attend NMACTE conference virtually this year. Of course I am a member of NAAE and ACTE. Along with these conferences I spend hours on the phone with experienced Ag Teachers learning how to do it right. A great Ag teacher named Brian Mitchell once told me that Ag teachers don't know anything until they have taught for 10+ years. I thoroughly believe and can see that because there is so much to it, however what has helped me the most is actually reaching out and asking for help. It also helps our relationships have been going on since I was 2 years old being hauled around to all the contests, conventions and fairs but now I think it makes those conversations easier for me to ask for help. We have such a great group of Ag Teachers in the state that is a HUGE resource for all of us young teachers coming up.

Lastly, I would just like to say that I am honored to have been selected by my district and just want everyone to know that...I AM HAVING A BALL IN THIS PROFESSION!