

## Rookie/Young/Ag Teacher of the Year Application

- a. Overview – brief description of the agricultural education program and the community in which the program exists.

My agriculture education program (Mayfield High School FFA) serves roughly 280 students every year, between my teaching partner and myself. Our pathways include animal systems and power, structural, technical systems. I teach 3 sections of intro to agriculture mechanics, two sections of welding and a section of metal fabrication 1 & 2. Mayfield High School's population exists somewhere between 1400-1500 hundred students from primarily the northern areas of the Mesilla Valley. While a majority of Las Cruces is an urban area, the northern end of the district is full of incredible farms and ranches. The more popular crops in the valley include onions, chile, pecans, and even lettuce.

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

I think the largest portion of my teaching philosophy comes from my "why" for doing it. My ag teachers made such a huge impact on my life. Such an impact that I felt the only way I could repay them was giving back and teaching ag to the next generation. I try to let this guide me day in and day out. My goal is to provide a place where students feel safe and comfortable. A place where they can be themselves and find belonging. I want my students to know that I love and care about them; and that I would bend over backwards for them. A wise ag teacher once told me that he treats/ talks to his students like the incredible adults he knows they're capable of becoming. The moment I heard it; I knew it would be something that shaped my career. For that reason, I also treat my students with the same if not more respect than they show me. I show them the same grace and humility I would like someone to treat me with. I'd like to teach them about life and if I just happen to teach them something about ag along the way, even better.

- c. Instruction – examples of your effective classroom and laboratory instruction including curricula that is used or has been developed.

I think the easiest way to describe my curriculum might be by comparing it to a jig saw puzzle. To me the big picture (the completed puzzle) is the student's success or mastery of the subject. The pieces of the puzzle are my different resources and how I present them. I would assume much like the rest of you, I don't pull all my information from one source. I look at everything I have available to me and see how and where it fits in my big picture. Resources and curriculum aren't one size fits all, what may be good for one of my classes may not be good for the other. That's a big part of the reason I say my curriculum is "pieced together".

When I began teaching, we were still very much so in a covid world. It was during that time in which I developed my most prized piece of curriculum. Being brand new I was bound and determined to engage my students even if it was through a computer screen. I was teaching an electrical unit and really wanted to find a way to give the kids an experience of wiring residential electrical components. I found a program called Nearpod. It allows its users the ability to build interactive presentations by letting them insert videos, questions, and even screens for students to draw on etc. All the while you can control whether students are following along with you or continuing through it at their own pace. With all the capabilities of Nearpod, I took pictures of electrical components paired together and was able to watch student "wire" them in real time. I was even able to insert videos, hints, and instructions for students which thoroughly explained the component and its operation.

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- d. Experiential Learning – examples of the accomplishments in getting students involved in work-based learning such as supervised agricultural experience programs, cooperative education, and internships.

At Las Cruces public schools our program capstone is a work-based learning program called ACE. Students prepare for ACE through our program, learning both soft skills and skills that may be required of them on the job. Students who are active in FFA list the ace program as one of their SAEs.

I am particularly proud of a recently developing SAE with one of my students. This student lives in the “Truck World” as he calls it. Ultimately meaning he enjoys tinkering, improving, and modifying his truck. Not too long ago he revealed to me a new trend where individuals are putting hexagonal/ octagonal exhaust tips on their trucks. He set out to build one during my class and has managed quite well. Together we realized with the time, effort, and materials put into the project there was room for him to make a profit. We are now working on developing this into an entrepreneurship SAE for the young man.

- e. Leadership Development – examples of the accomplishments in developing leadership skills of the students. Students’ participation and successes in student organization activities, such as FFA, PAS, and NYFEA but not limited to these organizations may also be included.

During my time at Mayfield, I’ve worked incredibly hard at getting students more involved with things that I believe they could be good at but are perhaps out of their comfort zone. My most recent example of this came from two of my students at our district LDE contest.

One of them to my knowledge had no experience with LDEs at all. Being the talkative person he is, I felt strongly that he would excel in extemporaneous public speaking. After some convincing he agreed to give it a try. Unfortunately, we didn’t get to practice too much together considering I share him with the baseball coaches. In fact, he went into our district contest with one practice under his belt. Despite all the odds he beat 13 other individuals in our district to come out in fifth. He was so excited, and absolutely HOOKED. The day after the contest he began talking about next year’s LDE contest and when he could start preparing.

My other student is a bright young woman with an incredibly bubbly personality. I just knew she would be killer at the employability skills contest. She has a major case of senioritis and was trying her best to fly under the radar this year. Once again, after so much convincing the young lady agreed to compete at our district contest. No surprise to me, but she did fantastic! She beat 20 other students to place 2<sup>nd</sup> and move on to the state contest.

The most rewarding moment of it all was when both kiddos came up to me after the contest and thanked me for all but “forcing” them to compete that day.

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f. Professional Growth – examples of how they stay professionally prepared and up-to-date in teaching techniques and technical content including information regarding their participation in professional organizations such as NMAETA, NAAE and programs sponsored by NAAE

- NMAETA- Summer and Winter conference
- NAAE- Virtual conference last year
- NMACTE- Attending virtually this year
- ACTE-Virtual alongside NAAE