



Outstanding
Teacher
Mentor

Wes Anderson

Lac qui Parle Valley

"All my career I have simply helped any ag teacher that needs assistance. I still to this day get calls on things like, 'What is Joel Larson's cell phone number?' I stress to new teachers and teacher candidates that SAE visits are crucial to the development of their program and they had better figure out a way to make it happen in whatever school district they become a part of."

Overview

- Lac qui Parle Valley High School is a part of the Minnesota River Valley Education District. MRVED consists of nine schools that collaborate in multiple ways.
- Has had 4 or 5 students join the Agriculture Education profession.
- Wes was a cooperating teacher for one student teaching candidate.
- Wes' son, Nathan, is a teacher starting a new program in western MN.

Instruction

- Wes has written over \$120,000 in grants for the Lac qui Parle High School Ag. Dept. He regularly uses the equipment from the grants to put on demos for other teachers in the school district and for other agriculture instructors.
- Sharing is important to him. He shares everything from an officer handbook to graphics and cutting files for a Plasma Cam CNC Cutting System.
- Wes encourages new teachers to ask questions to the administration, school board, parents, and community members to see what they want the program to be. He says be visible and make it the community's program.

Experiential Learning

- Wes believes SAE visits are a very important component to building a successful program. It is beneficial to see the students on "their turf" and allows a teacher to send a powerful message to the student's family.
- He believes in AET and encourages new teachers to start using it.

Student Organizations

- His family owns and operates a tour company called WD Tours. He uses the resources from the company to collaborate with other ag teachers. He organizes buses to take students from multiple chapters to the National FFA Convention. He organizes a summer ag trip for students from all over western MN and works with other teachers to provide transportation to a multitude of FFA events. Wes says the bus rides are a good time to mentor younger teachers and share ideas on a range of different topics.
- Wes has served as a mentor to set up other chapter's FFA Alumni Affiliates and have had a few of them come to visit events his Alumni Affiliate hosts.

Professional Growth

- Wes believes in adapting to and using new technology and adjusting your lessons to use it. In order to be able to use new technology, he has written several grants to secure the equipment. With the success he has had in grant writing, he has mentored numerous other teachers in writing successful grants.
- He helped his son write a successful MAELC grant before he even started teaching at his new school. The next year he wrote a successful MAELC grant again and Wes didn't even know he applied. As he says, "that is what it is all about folks!"

"Mr. Anderson has been a leader of the Ag teachers group for many years as a senior member and also as a teacher that seeks out the best practice teaching methods and learning opportunities for his students." – Scott Sawatzky, Lac qui Parle Valley Principal

2017 MAAAE Award Winner

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