

July 13, 2009

White Reinhart Scholarship Committee,

Attending the 2009 National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference in St. Louis, Missouri was an amazing experience. I am so excited about what I was able to learn and take in at that time. It was unbelievable to realize the national support that students receive from teachers toward their educations about agriculture. I was inspired by the ways in which teachers and educators work to include agriculture in everyday lessons.

The traveling workshops were incredible. Being able to travel up the Mississippi river through the locks and dams and learn about the nonprofit organization, Living Lands and Water, and their dedication to cleaning the local rivers was inspiring. To see how one individual can make a difference is something that I will share with my students in my Natural Resources class when they create an environmental awareness project over a two month period. This is also a great lesson to share with students who are selecting projects for their Supervised Agriculture Education Plans. Baisch and Skinner, an international floral wholesaler was an interesting place to visit. We have wholesalers here in Connecticut however they are much smaller and do not span city blocks like the one that we visited. We were able to tour the facility and meet with the owner and his son. They explained the industry in great detail and discussed their travels to Equator, Holland, Columbia and other countries where they select product for consumers here in the United States. This information will be an integral part of my Floral Arts and design classes and advanced floral design classes as I teach students about the chain of life and the scope and sequence of the cut flower industry. Our last stop was to the Lange-Segmann fertilizer facility where it was very interesting to see the production practices and procedures required in the fertilizer industry this knowledge will be helpful in greenhouse management, landscape design, horticulture and Agri-science survey courses. I took photographs of the entire day which I also provided to the National Agriculture in the Classroom staff.

The workshops on Friday and Saturday provided many new ideas and methods. One of the most helpful workshops was, "What's the buzz on Bees?" I have the intentions of starting a program along with a fellow Agri-Science teacher, with my high school students in which we visit elementary schools each month and present a lesson involving bees. This workshop was great because it gave me ideas and ways in which to involve high school students in the teaching of younger students. I also feel that it is

important for students to have an understanding of our pollinators and with the help of the grant my coworker, Jen Elman received for a beehive, also from White-Reinhart, we are now able to have that at our school .This program has the potential to reach students of all ages approximately 200 high school students in 2009-10 and up to 500 elementary students as part of our animal fair and special programs.

I plan to use the knowledge I have gained from my classroom as I work to inspire students to see the big picture in agriculture. I plan to share knowledge with other educators in the state in many various ways. At the annual Connecticut Association of Agriculture Educators meeting in August I will be giving a fifteen minute presentation about my experience. I also want to encourage other teachers to apply for grants to attend the next conference and become more involved in this great program. I would also like to share with other teachers the grant opportunities that I learned about.

I plan to attend the National Agriculture in the Classroom conference in Baltimore next year and bring more teachers. I will be helping with their planning committee if I am needed, I want to present a workshop next year as well as have a state breakfast table.

I feel so fortunate that I was able to have this opportunity to continue my learning in ways which will affect my school community and I am excited to be able to provide learning opportunities for students.

Thank you again for your support,

Dollie Harvey