

South Coast Region Gets AMP'D

By Erin Gorter, Program Director, CCPT, South Coast Region Agricultural Education Consortium

The South Coast Region Agricultural Education Consortium has been busy spending its California Career Pathways Trust (CCPT) monies during its first year of funding. While the 29 programs that comprise the consortium have been working to identify their own needs and spend money according to individual needs, comprehensive grant funded programs have been implemented to enhance opportunities for students in career preparation. One of these took place for the first time this past June and was designed specifically to address the shortage of agricultural mechanics teachers in California.

Enticing Future Teachers

The Agricultural Mechanics Power & Design Experience, or The AMP'D Experience, was developed to entice agricultural mechanics pathway students, with a propensity for teaching, into the profession.

Potential attendees were to be going into their junior or senior of high school, having completed at least two years of agricultural mechanics courses. Each submitted an application that included an advisor's statement of recommendation.

Students involved in the 2016 experience spent three full days on the Cal Poly campus, under the supervision of Cal Poly teacher candidates, while participating in skills-based activities with some of California's finest agricultural mechanics teachers. Plumbing, cold metal, welding, carpentry, electricity, and tool sharpening comprised the individual skills sessions, concluding with a comprehensive team activity constructing a garden shed in a timed environment.

College Planning

Additional conference activities included a college planning session. Dr. Bill Kellogg guided attendees through the process of becoming a teacher and the steps which can be taken now to help in the realization of that dream.



Each student established his/her own academic plan for post-secondary success in pursuing a career in agricultural education.

Recreation/Pep Talk

Recreation included a campus photo/video scavenger hunt as well as a homerun derby at Bob Janssen Field followed by a pep talk on making good decisions from local high school football coach Tim Alvord.

During the final session, participants had the opportunity to

listen to James Brabeck, president and CEO of Farm Supply Company, discuss the importance of mentoring and the need for teachers.

Ag Ed Stars

The nine students in attendance got to work with some powerhouses in agricultural education. Dick Piersma, Tim Reid, Richard Darrach, Mike Fontes, Rob Thoreson, Ben Swan, Garret Rowley, Emmett Schultz, Daniel Fishman, and Darrel Hirschler

are all rock stars and The 2016 AMP'D Experience would have never happened without them.

Event chaperones and future teachers Kenny Goodman, Bailey Riedel, Landon Sudberry and Matt Vierra were models of professionalism and genuine interest in high school students.

Sponsors

Conference sponsorship was provided by Farm Supply Company, Praxair, and Airgas, who were beyond generous, providing each student with a tool box including every piece of personal protective equipment (PPE) and other equipment necessary for the event.

Local Deputy Sector Navigator for Agriculture, Water & Environmental Technology, Margaret Lau, aided in offsetting specific costs not allowable with CCPT funds.

Repeat in 2017

During its introductory year, The AMP'D Experience was small, but mighty. Plans are already moving forward for The 2017 AMP'D Experience with hopes to open statewide.

Although it is too soon to tell if 2016 efforts will create a wave in the pool of teacher candidates, The AMP'D Experience will continue to roll forward in pursuit of making that change. ❖

Aggie Annex Now Online

Look for the Aggie Annex online at
www.calagteachers.org/GoldenSlate.html