



The National Association of Agricultural Educators, Inc.

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NEWS RELEASE:

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Buena Park High School Selected for Outstanding Program Award

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Buena Park High School Agriculture Department in Buena Park, Calif., is one of only six programs nationwide that received the National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE) Outstanding Middle/Secondary Program (OMSP) Award on November 18th at the NAAE annual convention in Nashville, Tenn.

Jessica Weisbart, who began teaching at Buena Park in 2006, has transformed the program into one of the premier agricultural education programs in the state of California. Three years ago, the program had three and a half acres of deserted farm land, a poultry and rabbit barn that was used to keep trash, no facilities to work with animals, and no landscaping. Today the four and a half acre facility includes a new barn with space for 100 market animals, three show and exercise arenas for steers, sheep, goats and pigs, a refurbished poultry and rabbit facility that currently houses 65 laying hens. The garden plot boasts a brand-new sprinkler irrigation system and the 350 fruit trees have micro-sprinkler irrigation installed. Community members helped students landscape the front lawn areas and install a six foot waterfall and sign to recognize the agriculture program.

“Today our farm is a beautiful, thriving hub of activity for many students. Our facilities look amazing, including beautiful new groves of trees and the school’s “footprint” in the middle of our somewhat poor, urban community has become a source of pride for the residents of our city,” said Benjamin Wolf, principal at Buena Park High School.

These facilities allow for students to gain hands-on experience within the rigorous classes included in the animal science and horticulture pathways. The ag earth, ag biology and vet science courses now meet high school graduation requirements for science credit and are recognized by the University of California and California State University. Under Weisbart’s leadership the Buena Park agriculture program formed articulation agreements with Mount San Antonia Junior College and Cal Poly Pomona University for students to receive college credit for the animal science and ornamental horticulture classes.

Each of the six regional OMSP winners received an expense paid trip to attend the annual convention, a dinner in their honor, and a plaque. The National FFA Alumni Foundation sponsors the OMSP award as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

NAAE is the professional association for agricultural educators. Its mission is “professionals providing agricultural education for the global community through visionary leadership, advocacy and service.” The NAAE office is located in Lexington, Ky.

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