THREE TEACHERS RECOGNIZED AS NEW YORK AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM’S 2019 TEACHERS OF THE YEAR

Outstanding New York State teachers who use agricultural literacy in the classroom merit statewide recognition.

Ithaca, NY—Each year, New York Agriculture in the Classroom recognizes exceptional teachers who incorporate learning through a lens of agriculture into their curriculum. We are pleased to announce three model educators as our 2019 teachers of the year: Stephanie Locke in the Elementary Division, Jeanne Marie Quarto in the High School Division, and Cheryl Starace in the English for Speakers of Other Languages Division.

Each of these educators have recognized the need for incorporating agriculture into their classroom curriculum in order to advance student learning through relevant and engaging experiential learning experiences. For their excellence in teaching through agriculture Stephanie, Jeanne, and Cheryl will receive an expense-paid professional development experience at the National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference in Little Rock, Arkansas and receive an at-school recognition of the teachers and their accomplishments.

Stephanie Locke is a fifth-grade teacher at DeRuyter Central School in DeRuyter, New York. Stephanie focuses on teaching the things that her students love by actively engaging them in hands-on, cross-curricular lessons. Most notably, Stephanie has cultivated a relationship with local farmers. Stephanie’s students have been able to participate in on-the-farm field trips and learn about nutrition by cooking with local products.

In Jeanne Marie Quarto’s high school Special Education classroom at James Madison High School in Brooklyn, New York she has focused on helping her students learn core content through her school garden. Jeanne has been able to incorporate Science, Math, ELA, and Social Studies concepts into her year-long gardening curriculum while also teaching her students valuable life skills and allowing them to take ownership of the project.
Cheryl Starace has been able to impact more than just her kindergarten through fifth grade English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classrooms with her Bit of Heaven Farm Horsemanship Project. The program has expanded her cross-curricular from a unique group experience for her students to interact with horses to a lesson for all of Pound Ridge Elementary School in Pound Ridge, New York. Cheryl organized a trip for the entire third grade to experience a horse farm and a dairy where students apply their Math, Science, and ELA lessons in real-world scenarios of assessing animal health, equine training, and animal husbandry.

For more information about the New York Agriculture in the Classroom Teacher of the Year program, visit the website at www.agclassroom.org/ny. New York Agriculture in the Classroom is an outreach program of Cornell University. Working with classroom teachers, volunteers, and agriculture’s stakeholders throughout the state, New York Agriculture in the Classroom fosters an awareness, understanding, and appreciation of our food and fiber system.

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