

## **Ag Foundation names Kansas high school teacher, teacher of the year**

**Manhattan, Kan. – Sept. 30, 2016** – Denise Scribner, biology, ecology and forensic crime science teacher at Eisenhower High School in Goddard, Kan., was recently named the 2017 Janet Sims Memorial Teacher of the Year by the Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom (KFAC).

The KFAC Janet Sims Memorial Teacher of the Year award recognizes Kansas teachers who instill a passion for learning about agriculture within their students. The Foundation honors one teacher annually who has successfully integrated agricultural education into his or her pre-existing curriculum. Scribner will be honored with the award at the Bookmark Art and Teacher of the Year celebration during Kansas Ag Month in March 2017 in Topeka, Kan.

Scribner has been involved in youth education for a total of 40 years.

She spent 31 years as a staff member with the Girl Scouts of the USA, where she emphasized support for STEM (science, engineering, technology and mathematics). For the last nine years Scribner has been employed at Eisenhower High School, teaching ecology, biology and forensic crime science to students in grades nine through 12.

After school Scribner is the sponsor of the Science Club, as well as coach for the Eco-Meet team and Science Olympiad team.

She recently received the Presidential Award of Excellence for Math and Science Teachers and the International Congress of Entomology President's Prize for Outstanding Teaching at the Secondary Level.

Scribner noted the importance of taking the time to fill out applications and paperwork in order to help showcase the good work of her school, school district and students.

"I don't need another certificate on the wall, but I want to showcase the school district and students," Scribner said.

Scribner said the image most kids have of agriculture includes a farmer in a pair of overalls with a piece of wheat sticking out of his mouth. However, Scribner wants to change that stereotype in the eyes of her students.

"Agriculture is the number one conservation tool, which is not only responsible for feeding the world, but also for conservation of our ecosystems," Scribner said.

Scribner is proud that her curriculum and implementation of agricultural concepts reach every student in her school. She takes agriculture education beyond the agriculture based elective classes and uses cross curricular adaptation so each student receives a dose.

"Before taking my classes, where I apply real world concepts of agriculture into my lessons, my students saw agriculture only in terms of narrow stereotypes; a farmer, a cow, a tractor, with the

stereotypical farmer only visualized as an old man wearing bib overalls and chewing on a piece of straw,” Scribner said. “My students represent the future leaders of society, the people we will depend on to support, regulate, and advocate for agriculture.”

Scribner focuses on exposing trending issues like sustainable farming and natural resources and energy to help her students start focusing on ways to advocate agriculture in their chosen career fields, for a better life through agriculture.

She believes the cultivating of agricultural interest among youth can lead to a more agriculturally aware society, as well as, a more knowledgeable workforce to help support future agricultural practices.

“I am thrilled to share how I have ramped up ag in the classroom’s elementary materials for the high school curriculum,” Scribner said.

By taking agricultural ideas into the high school curriculum, Scribner notes that it helps showcase agriculture careers.

“We need those ag chemists, people focusing on GMOs and people looking into alternative fuels and ways to feed the populations,” Scribner said.

Scribner said she believes in educating her students on agriculture in the environment because it translates to more applications and helps her students understand different concepts introduced in class.

As KFAC’s Teacher of the Year, Scribner will have the opportunity to attend the National Agriculture in the Classroom (NAITC) conference, which will be held in Kansas City, Mo., June 2017.

The Janet Sims Memorial Teacher of the Year award is named in honor of Janet Sims, who passed away in June 2007 from Lou Gehrig’s disease. Sims, an educator herself, had served on the KFAC board from November 2005 until her death.

### **About Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom**

The Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom (KFAC) is a 501c3 nonprofit organization. KFAC was founded in 1982 as part of a nationwide initiative to help students gain a greater awareness of the role of agriculture in the economy and society, so that they may become citizens who support wise agricultural policies. For more information, visit [www.ksagclassroom.org](http://www.ksagclassroom.org) or phone (785) 320- 4350.