



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

25 California Educators received a Literacy for Life Grant! Santa Barbara Educator Receives Statewide Award for Agriculture Literacy Efforts.

SACRAMENTO, CA – California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom (CFAITC) announced Los Olivos school teacher, Suzanne Squires, as the recipient of CFAITC’s 2019 Outstanding Educator Award through its Literacy for Life grant.

Literacy for Life grants, sponsored by the Oreggia Family Foundation, are designed to help initiate new projects or expand existing ones that promote agricultural literacy. Grants of up to \$500 are provided to California K-12 educators to support the integration of agriculture into regular classroom instruction. Each year 25 recipients are selected and one of those recipients is named CFAITC’s Outstanding Educator.

“Agriculture has always been a part of my life. My grandfather farmed citrus and avocados in Orange and San Diego counties and my mom grew up riding horses. As a youngster, I became an equine enthusiast and developed a love for gardening. Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo became a natural fit for me and, as an animal science graduate, I decided to pursue my goal to become a zookeeper. After moving to the Santa Ynez Valley in Santa Barbara County, I took a job as a quarantine biologist. Educational outreach was always my passion and I often took animals and Medflies into the classroom. Realizing that teaching was one of my strengths and passions, I pursued my teaching credential and was hired at Los Olivos Elementary School where I have been able to weave agriculture into my core science classes and electives for 23 years. I incorporate hands-on experiences as much as I can so my students can see how important it is to understand the world around us. Teaching agriculture in the classroom provides many opportunities for that.” – Suzanne Squires.

Suzanne is receiving the Outstanding Educator award because of her passion for teaching agriculture! She was recently presented the Outstanding Educator Award during the Agriculture in the Classroom Luncheon at the California Farm Bureau Federation’s Annual Meeting in December. CFAITC will also be recommending Suzanne as a National Teacher of Excellence at the National Agriculture in the Classroom Conference in June. Photos available upon request.

Individuals receiving CFAITC’s Literacy for Life Teaching Awards are:

Suzanne Squires, Outstanding Educator – “HELP- Help Energize Local Produce”
Los Olivos Elementary School, Santa Barbara County



Cynthia Adams – “Hydroponics and Nutrition”
Foulks Ranch Elementary, Sacramento County

Tonya Andrews – “What is Grown Locally”
El Vista Elementary, Stanislaus County

Amanda Bailey – “Agriculture Exploration Field Trip”
Blaker Kinser Junior High School, Stanislaus County

Sergio Blanco – “School Garden”
Hillcrest Middle School, Sonoma County

Margie Brennan – “Captain Ray’s Corral Refurbishment”
Captain Raymond Collins Elementary School, Los Angeles County

Amanda Bush – “Urban Farm to Table: Ending the Cycle of Hunger”
Norte Vista High School, Riverside County

Jeff Capps – “Fruits of Our Labor”
Dunsmuir High School, Siskiyou County

Wendy Chang– “Bee Presentation”
Helen Carr Castello Elementary, Sacramento County

Jessica Eves – “Free Little Library Grand Opening in the Garden”
Darnall Charter School, San Diego County

Mary Funk – “Worms! Worms! Galore!”
Big Picture Elementary, Fresno County

Luke Gocke – “Tractor Restoration”
John H. Pitman High School, Stanislaus County

Laura Gonzalez – “Garden to Table”
Otay Elementary, San Diego County

Greg Hazelhofer – “Project Farm to Desk”
Chris Jespersion Therapeutic Learning Program, San Luis Obispo County

Shannon Lehman – “Farm Smart Educational Trip”
Pine Elementary School, Imperial County



Gene Lieb – “Chickens Beyond the Nuggets”
Firebaugh High School, Fresno County

Karen McDaniels – “Sustainable with Chickens”
Paso Verde School, Sacramento County

Erin Mix – “Vegetable and Herb Garden”
Thomas Jefferson Middle School, Riverside County

Tiffany Oliveira – “Garden Renaissance”
Paulding Middle School, San Luis Obispo County

Michelle Pulliam – “Students for Seed Starting”
Mark West Elementary, San Diego County

Paloma Salazar – “Agriculture for All”
St. Anthony School, Merced County

Kim Schouten-Williams - “Veterans of Foreign War – Veterans day Memorial Garden”
Washington Elementary, Sacramento County

Hannah Stanley – “McKellar Family Farms Field Trip”
Sequoia Union Elementary, Tulare County

Eron Truran – “Our Voices in the Garden”
East Palo Alto Charter School, San Mateo County

Katie Young – “Awesome Aquaponics”
Cressey Elementary School, Merced County