

# CREAM OF THE CROP

## A Harvest of Ideas for Educators

### Fantastic Fact:

There are over 80 varieties of table grapes grown in California!



## SEED SURVIVOR MOBILE CLASSROOM

We're going on tour!

Nutrien's Seed Survivor Mobile Classroom is partnering with California Agriculture in the Classroom to bring a unique opportunity to schools within California.

Through this interactive mobile classroom experience, students learn that plants need water, light, healthy soil, and nutrients to thrive.

All participants plant a sunflower seed to then take home and watch grow.

**Exciting news!** There are still opportunities to join the Seed Survivor team. Interested in being a paid presenter? Email us:

[Seedsurvivor@learnaboutag.org](mailto:Seedsurvivor@learnaboutag.org)

REGISTER YOUR SCHOOL



# Congratulations

**Kevin Jordan**

Leo A. Palmiter Junior/Senior High School  
Sacramento County

**2023 Outstanding Educator  
of the Year**



"I would argue that learning about agriculture is essential."

Wise words from Kevin Jordan, this year's Outstanding Educator for Agriculture in the Classroom.

As he puts it, for the past 14 years, he's had the honor of teaching horticulture to students with special needs.

"I knew I was onto something special when students who were struggling academically, emotionally, or behaviorally were soon discovering a bounty of success when performing hands-on work in the garden and classroom."

Congratulations to the additional twenty-five Literacy for Life Grant recipients. Read about all the 2023-2024 projects [HERE](#).



Support Agriculture Education

**Give on**  
**GIVING**  
**TUESDAY**





# NOVEMBER 28, 2023

Without farms, there'd be nothing on our plates. Join the Giving Tuesday movement and help students discover the wonders of agriculture.

Last year we reached more than 900,000 students with FREE resources related to California agriculture. This is only possible with the generosity of sponsors and donors like you. Help us keep agriculture in education!

DONATE FOR GIVING TUESDAY



## Teacher Feature



### AMANDA BAILEY

**Grade Taught:**

7th and 8th

**School:**

Blaker Kinser Junior High School,  
Ceres, CA

**County:**

Stanislaus County

**Let's start with the basics: What is your favorite California commodity?**

In regards to production, I like pork and almonds. Not only are they both delicious, but my family produces pork and almonds here in California. Plus, they have so many nutritional benefits, what's not to like?

In regards to taste, I have to say peaches are my favorite California commodity. I LOVE peaches. There is something about eating a fresh peach in the middle of summer that is just a dream.

**How and when did you first learn about Ag in the Classroom?**

I first learned about Ag in the Classroom about six years ago when I started teaching at the middle school level. I was looking for resources to implement in my new classes

and I was referred to the Ag in the Classroom website as a starting point.

**How long have you been teaching students about agriculture?**

I started teaching agriculture in 2012. First, I taught high school agriculture. I moved to middle school six years ago and have been developing a comprehensive agriculture program here.

**What is your favorite AITC program, resource, or event, and why?**

My favorite Ag in the Classroom program is the *Imagine this...* Story Writing Contest. I really enjoy the contest because I get to see my students' writing grow and creativity blossom.

I also really enjoy the Taste to Teach resources. Almost all of my students come from non-agricultural backgrounds and often have a lack of awareness of where their food comes from. I love incorporating a nutrition component into these lessons.

Finally, I attended my first Ag in the Classroom conference, and it was a wonderful experience. Even though I have been teaching agriculture for a while, I took home a lot of new lesson ideas, fresh perspectives, and exciting enrichment opportunities for my students.

**Describe an agriculture-based project you have been involved with lately.**

I do agriculture-based projects weekly in my classes. Recently, the students in my Advanced Agriculture course finished a public speaking competition on forestry and natural resources, including wildfires. Students had to prepare 1-minute responses on a variety of topics. On contest day, students drew two topics out of a hat and had to pick one to respond to on the fly. It was an awesome experience!

My agriculture classes have finished their California agriculture regions and commodity maps. This is a really neat project that not only adheres to agriculture standards but also has students practice effective teamwork and communication strategies. For this project, I break the students up into groups. These groups are each assigned to one of the major agricultural regions in California. They trace out their region for a map I have projected on the screen, and they create a visual presentation of their region with the region's characteristics and a collage of the commodities from that area. After all groups finished, they put it together to create one large map, and each class contributed to a visual display of the diversity in agriculture production across the state.

Finally, students in my floriculture class, a new course added to my program this year, just completed their second floral design of the semester.

## Do you have any advice for other teachers on how to implement agriculture into their classrooms?

The most beautiful thing about teaching agriculture is that it is relevant to *every student, every day*. I always start off by teaching the relevance that we all have to agriculture and these students are excited to “hit the ground running” and learn about all areas of agriculture. I also consistently tie our new learning in EVERY unit back to how it affects our daily lives. In addition, any opportunity you have to have the students learn with a hands-on, “learn by doing” approach will make the biggest impact.

BE OR NOMINATE A TEACHER FEATURE: EMAIL US HERE!



### Featured Resource



## APPLE OF OUR EYE!

This month, apples take the cake. Or perhaps the pie.

Explore our array of apple resources and activities to make this commodity come alive in your classroom.

From [Apple Fact Sheets](#) and a [Meet the Grower video](#) to [Ag-Bite activities](#) and [other resources](#), use the fruit to teach about agriculture now, and perhaps all year long.



### Grant Feature



## Every Kid Outdoors Small Grants Program

In partnership with the USDA Forest Service, the National Park Trust opened the 2024 cycle of the Every Kid Outdoors Small Grants Program.

Grants up to \$5,000 will be awarded that support the needs of non-profits and schools connecting elementary school-aged youth to public parks, lands, and waters. Applications are being accepted from U.S.-based 501c3 nonprofit organizations and schools that serve elementary school-aged students.

**The deadline to apply is November 30**

[LEARN MORE](#)



## Community Events

### [NASA STEM Better Together Conference](#)

**November 15-17, 2023**

NASA invites you to explore and share STEM experiences across projects to improve and increase access for all students through the Better Together 2023 Conference, at the San Jose McEnery Convention Center. More information [HERE](#).

### [Green School Yards America](#)

**Various Dates, Virtual**

An interdisciplinary lecture series that provides technical, design-focused guidance for creating and stewarding high-quality schoolyard forests. Sessions will feature presentations by subject-area experts, including Green Schoolyards America staff, along with time for audience Q&A. All webinars will be recorded. More information [HERE](#).

### [Headwaters Science Institute's Winter Research Experience](#)

**Deadline to apply for scholarship:**

**December 1, 2023**

**January 15-April 19, 2024**

Headwaters Science Institute, is currently accepting applications for its 2023 Spring Research Experience.

This program is held every semester and

aids students in developing research questions, experiment execution, and ultimate publication in their Headwaters Student Journal. With all completed assignments and attended classes, students are guaranteed publication, bolstering their college applications, future research positions, and professional experience.

The program runs for 12 weeks, and offers professional one-on-one scientific mentorship to all students. Scholarships are available to any and all who want to participate. The deadline to apply for a scholarship is December 1.

For more information and to register, email Courtney Kudera at [courtney@headwatersscienceinstitute.org](mailto:courtney@headwatersscienceinstitute.org)

**[Purple Plow Challenge](#)**  
**Online**  
**Fall 2023**

The Purple Plow STEM Learning Challenge engages students in creating solutions for real-world, complex issues related to agriculture. The Fall 2023 Challenge includes activities related to pollinators, energy consumption, and cattle ranching. Find information [HERE](#).

**[Submit Your Fall Class Artwork!](#)**  
**The California Kindergarten Association**  
**Deadline: December 8, 2023**

The California Kindergarten Association's Visual Arts Committee wants to showcase your students' art at the 35th CKA Annual Young Children's Art Exhibit. This event will be held Saturday and Sunday, January 13 and 14, 2024, during the California Kindergarten Conference at the Hyatt Regency Santa Clara, where Ag in the Classroom will be offering a workshop!

You are invited to submit paintings, collages, drawings, prints, class quilts, murals, sculptures, puppets, and more by PreK, TK, K, and Grade 1 students. More information [HERE](#).

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