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NATIONAL AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM ORGINATION HIRES GUFFEY AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CONWAY, AR – The National Agriculture in the Classroom Organization (NAITCO) has named Andy Guffey, former Arkansas Agriculture in the Classroom State Contact of 15 years, as its new executive director.

Guffey will replace current executive director, Lisa Gaskalla, who announced her retirement in July after leading the organization for the last 5 years. During his time as a state contact, Guffey served on the NAITCO executive committee for 9 years including serving as president of the organization in 2012-2013. During his 20 plus year career in agriculture, Guffey has worked for Tyson Foods, Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation, and private business ventures. He has also previously served on the boards of Economics Arkansas and the Arkansas FFA Foundation.

“On behalf of NAITCO’s Executive Committee, I am thrilled to welcome Mr. Andy Guffey as our new executive director,” said Denise Stewardson, NAITCO president. “Andy’s extensive breadth and depth of experience with National Agriculture in the Classroom, his insightful vision to support state and territory programs, and his executable plan for the growth of our organization certainly will benefit both our organization and the populations whom we serve. Additionally, I want to acknowledge Lisa Gaskalla for her outstanding leadership as our past executive director and thank her for her support during this transition.”

“It is a great privilege to work with a diverse and talented group of agricultural literacy professionals from across the nation and U.S. territories,” Guffey said. “I am excited for the challenge of continuing to move the organization forward and build upon the amazing successes and growth that Lisa brought to the organization during her tenure.”

The mission of NAITCO is to increase agricultural literacy through preK-12 education. An agriculturally literate person is defined as "one who understands and can communicate the source and value of agriculture as it affects our quality of life." Agriculture in the Classroom (AITC) programs seek to improve student achievement by applying authentic, agricultural-based content as the context to teach core curriculum concepts in science, social studies, language arts and nutrition. By encouraging teachers to embed agriculture into their classroom, AITC cultivates an understanding and appreciation of the food and fiber system that we all rely on every day. NAITCO’s vision that "agriculture is valued by all" is unique within the agricultural education community and positions itself as the lead organization to serve the full spectrum of preK-12 formal education.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT ANDY GUFFEY BY CALLING (501) 339-6140 OR EMAILING AT info@naitco.org