



# Loudoun County Public Schools Media Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 6, 2024

**ASHBURN, Va.** - Amy Goodyear, a biology teacher at Heritage High School, has been named the Virginia Agriculture in the Classroom (AITC) 2024 Teacher of the Year. The award recognizes a Virginia educator for incorporating agriculture into their core curriculum.

Goodyear uses hands-on activities and real-life applications in her classroom to engage students in agricultural concepts. She encourages her students to develop a deeper understanding of agricultural sciences through activities like NASA's Plant the Moon Challenge, a project that explores growing food on the lunar surface while learning about the importance of soils and nutrients for plant growth.

"I am very honored and appreciative to receive this award," Goodyear stated. "I am excited to use this award to continue helping my Heritage High School students learn about 'Out of This World Agriculture' and biology."

In addition to agricultural themes, the challenge allows students to hone their critical thinking and problem-solving skills as they dive into scientific concepts, mathematical applications and environmental studies. Goodyear also employs agriculture as the medium to explore other required standards, such as conducting a chicken embryology lab to study life cycles, experimenting with strawberry DNA and using wheat products and breadmaking to study cellular respiration.

"Amy sees science and agriculture as living and breathing all around students, and she wants to facilitate opportunities for students to experience its wonder and impact on their daily lives," said Tammy Maxey, Virginia AITC executive director. "As a result, students find a greater appreciation for agriculture and its potential career opportunities. Students who might not have considered it before can find themselves drawn to the world of agriculture."

As Virginia AITC Teacher of the Year, Goodyear will receive a scholarship to the 2024 National AITC Conference in June in Salt Lake City, Utah, and a \$500 cash award.

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