



Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance (WiRSA) 2015 Rural Teacher of the Year Award Winner

Ron Von Glahn | [DeSoto Area Schools](#)



Ron Von Glahn, Agriculture Teacher, DeSoto Area Schools was honored by the Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance (WiRSA), a non-profit organization that is dedicated to helping address challenges faced by rural school districts, at the annual Rural Schools Conference on Nov. 12, 2015.

Ron's exceptional 29-year career as an agriculture teacher, advisor, coach, student mentor and student advocate is representative of his tremendous dedication and commitment to the holistic development of all students. Ron's remarkable career has extended from state level leadership inclusive of the development and institution of online agricultural curriculum in Wisconsin to his local community leadership contributions including farm-to-school programs and youth sports program. This past year, it is most noteworthy to remark on Ron's responsiveness to the needs of students and administration in the Eastern Allamakee Schools in Lansing, Iowa, who were unable to secure an agriculture teacher for the 2014-15 school year. Ron worked with administration from both school districts in an innovative collaborative effort and realigned his course schedule to allow him to travel to Iowa and provide curriculum instruction to Key High students. He also coordinated labs and classroom blended learning activities utilizing Skype to instruct Key High and DeSoto, Wisconsin students simultaneously. Ron exemplifies the philosophy that *it takes a community of caring individuals to raise a child* and this is an example of the significant contributions Ron makes in the lives of every young person he encounters.

Positive Impact on Students and Student Achievement

Throughout Ron's career he has viewed his mission as an agriculture teacher as being a multifaceted facilitator to student achievement, not only while



students are in school, but also to ensure each student has the support and skills to be successful in their daily lives, relationships, career and as citizens in society. Over the years, his students have acknowledged and attributed their success to the positive learning environment Ron created and the supportive impact he has made in all aspects of their academic, extra-curricular, social and emotional development.

During his career, Ron has served as a school softball assistant coach and for nine years as the varsity baseball coach during which he received the District Coach of the Year award in 1999. Ron has also been a faculty advisor for over five years to the Harvest Challenge Team where De Soto students prepared and presented in a regional meal competition, earning the 2013 Judges Choice and 2014 People's Choice Awards.

Ron also provides an abundance of opportunities for students to connect classroom learning to career and college readiness. Ron prepared and supervised students on more than 20 trips to the National FFA Conference and his students participate annually in the Jag Lake FFA Leadership Camp, Vernon County Fair, 4-H Clubs, World Dairy Expo Judging, FFA Regional and Sectional Leadership Conferences in Green Bay, Tomah and Stevens Point, Regional and State FFA Career Development at UW-Platteville and UW-Madison respectively, and at the State FFA Convention in Madison. Ron also takes FFA seniors on an annual trip to Chicago to gain cultural exposure and experience in a major metropolitan city.

Demonstrate Leadership in the School and the Community

Ron's community work is extensive and his contributions extend for three decades. Ron has served as the Superintendent at both the Vernon and Crawford county fairs working with Junior Fair exhibitors and adults for 29 years. Ron has also served as the treasurer of the Vernon County Fair Meat animal sale for 27 years.

Ron is a volunteer instructor for the Department of Natural Resources providing community member and student certification in Trapper, Boating and ATV safety. All De Soto 8th grade students will have the opportunity to earn these



certificates by the end of this school year. Twenty-three years ago, Ron was a founding member and treasurer of the De Soto Lions Club whose members continue to provide service to the community and De Soto schools today. Ron also spearheaded and founded the youth Legion Baseball and summer softball league for De Soto area youth.

Ron has served as the Farm to School Coordinator, promoting awareness of diabetes, a disease he is personally impacted by, and he promotes healthier alternatives other than preprocessed foods. He has facilitated school food service staff training in processing end of growing season excess produce and as a result hundreds of pounds of fresh wholesome products have been served to De Soto K-12 students through the Farm-to-School program, many of which have been grown by De Soto students on a local farm.

Innovative and Creative Practices that Impact all Students

Ron served as the President of the Wisconsin Agricultural Educators in 2004-05 and introduced the State to the online CAERT curriculum. Ron was one of the first agriculture teachers to move to this curriculum, which he has successfully taught for the past nine years, affectively reducing textbook cost expenditures. Ron introduced the Greenhouse operations, management, marketing and sales program 29 years ago to the De Soto area. His students continue to learn teamwork, cooperation and employability skills that are directly transferable to career and college.

Ron also served Chairman of the Region Three Constitution and Bylaws committee of the National Association of Agricultural Instructors and was Chairman of the Region Three Convention held in La Crosse in 2006. Additionally, Ron continues in his ongoing role as parliamentarian for the De Soto Area Schools Annual Board meeting.

Note: This state award now qualifies Mr. Von Glahn as a semi-finalist for the Monsanto NREA National Teacher of the Year Program.

The Wisconsin Rural Schools Alliance was formed to help rural school districts address the unique issues that affect rural schools as they seek to achieve



the highest quality education for every student. Members include a cross-section of administrators, educators, school board members, post-secondary representatives, rural community members, business leaders, and other concerned individuals who want a strong voice for rural education.