

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ACTE Announces Georgia Teacher as National Award Finalist

ALEXANDRIA, VA—The Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) announces Jennifer Reneé Smith, a teacher for the Clarke County Board of Education in Athens, Georgia, as the 2015 ACTE Region II New Teacher of the Year. The ACTE New Teacher of the Year award recognizes CTE teachers with three to five years' experience (at the middle, secondary or postsecondary level) who have made significant contributions toward innovative and unique CTE programs and shown a professional commitment early in their careers.

During her time as a teacher, Smith has been tapped for a number of leadership roles. Formerly, as a welding instructor, she served as a member of the Georgia Career Cluster Board for the Trade and Industrial Division to review curriculum with industry leaders and fellow teachers; more recently, she also worked with the Agriculture Standards Revision Committee on reassessing basic agricultural science standards with emphasis on agriscience and forestry. In 2013, she was selected as Teacher of the Year for CHAPS Academy, and was elected to serve a three-year term as the Agricultural Division vice president for Georgia ACTE. She was appointed chair of the wildlife contest at the Okefenokee Agricultural Fair and worked to increase participation in the fair through creation of a poultry exhibition.

During her first year of teaching, Smith was selected to participate in the Georgia Intern Fellowship for Teacher program, for which she spent a month studying birds and insects in Costa Rica and returned to present on her experiences with international agricultural education at the National Association of Agricultural Educators' conference in 2013.

Smith is dedicated to developing quality Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) projects for her students, and started a rabbit and chicken breeding and showing program through her animal science and biotechnology course for her students who are unable to keep large animals. She has continued her work with SAEs and animals while at Hilsman. In 2014, Smith's program made school history when one of her students was selected as the National FFA Winner in the Agriscience Fair. Staci Smallwood, assistant principal of instruction at Ware County High School, says, "Reneé is an outstanding professional, teacher and colleague, but above all else, she is an excellent leader."

Smith is one of five finalists for the 2016 national title. The national winner will be announced at the ACTE Awards Banquet, a dinner and award presentation recognizing the best CTE educators in the country. The event will take place on Thursday evening, November 19, during ACTE's CareerTech VISION 2015 in New Orleans, Louisiana. The Awards Banquet is sponsored by Express Employment Professionals, Kuder, CareerSafe, Certiport, and Stratasys. For more

information about the ACTE Excellence Awards, visit our webpage (www.acteonline.org/awards).

About ACTE

The Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) is the nation's largest not-for-profit association committed to the advancement of education that prepares youth and adults for successful careers. ACTE represents the community of CTE professionals, including educators, administrators, researchers, guidance counselors and others at all levels of education. ACTE is committed to excellence in providing advocacy, public awareness and access to resources, professional development and leadership opportunities.

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