

At the recently completed Iowa Agricultural Education Summer Conference, held June 28-June 30 in Ankeny IA, Tara Fastert, agriculture instructor and FFA advisor from Emmetsburg High School was selected as the 2011 Outstanding Young Agricultural Education Teacher. Young members of any organization are the seeds from which the organization grows. Without recruitment and new members, an organization would soon be phased out. One way that the IAAE recognizes new young members is to award them on their successes in the classroom. Outstanding young agricultural educators are innovators and catalysts for student success in agricultural education.

Enthusiastic, motivated, inspiring... these are just a few words that describe an Outstanding Young Teacher. The IAAE Outstanding Young Teacher Awards go to agriculture teachers that have kept a tradition of excellence in their program along with the inborn love for agriculture. This award is for teachers who have completed at least three but not more than five years of teaching. The IAAE's vision is to be the premier professional organization for advancing agricultural education. Tara embodies the ideals of the agricultural teaching profession through his instruction methods.

Fastert has just finished her 3rd year teaching at Emmetsburg. As a young teacher, she has been directly involved in the IAAE organization and her local school district. She has served on the conference planning committee and has been responsible for training new teachers with IAAE. She has received the Teacher Turn the Key and Ideas Unlimited Awards through this organization. At her local school district, she had developed partnerships and actively engages her students in her classroom. "At the end of the day, I hope that I have shown a little light for the future to each of my students in agriculture," states Fastert.

For her outstanding efforts throughout this past year as well as in her teaching career, Tara Fastert was presented a plaque by fellow agricultural education instructor, Melanie Bloom. Her application has been forwarded on to be evaluated in the National Association of Agricultural Educators regional competition. Fastert will also have the opportunity to represent the state of Iowa at the NAAE Convention to be held November 15-19, 2011 in St. Louis, Missouri.