



NREA

National Rural Education Association

The Voice of Rural Schools and Communities

Arizona Teacher Named 2016-2017 Monsanto Fund Rural Teacher of the Year

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West Lafayette, IN--- John Hill, Executive Director of the National Rural Education Association, announced the selection of **Virginia Sautner** as the Monsanto Fund National Rural Teacher of the Year.

Sautner teaches at Lake Havasu High School where she has taught 9th grade English Language Arts and Student Government for the last 13 years. She achieved National Board Certification and is an Arizona Master teacher.

Sautner shares, “While student impact is at the heart of good teaching, my experience has taught me that being an effective teacher means lifelong learning and leading. Strong schools and strong communities go hand in hand – I recognize how collaboration with parents and the community at large is integral for our students and our education system as a whole.”

Lake Havasu principal, Scott Becker, describes Saunter as placing “sincerity and compassion into all of her extra responsibilities as well as her teaching assignment.” Katie Henderson, Lake Havasu parent says, “Mrs. Saunter is the reason my children are as successful as they are in their peer and community leadership efforts.”

Sautner’s peers hold her in high esteem. Kelsey Balint, fellow staff member, emphasized: “Sautner is one of a kind. She is a well-rounded educator who inspires those around her to have love for education.”

“She is the biggest role model to me and continues to surprise me with leadership, knowledge, and genuine care that she shows her students,” says Lake Havasu student, Savannah Causey.

In her letter of support, Jaime Festa-Daigle, Lake Havasu High School assistant principal, stated, “ She never lets the fact that we live in an isolated community, where education is not always the focus, stop her. She continues pushing our school forward.”

Sautner will receive the award at the 108th National Rural Education Convention and Research Seminar and National Rural Education Forum on October 14th in Columbus, Ohio. She will receive a \$2000 award and Lake Havasu High School will receive \$1000. All finalists for the award will be recognized at the banquet.

Finalists for the 2016-17 Monsanto Fund Rural Teacher of the Year were:

Tiffany Adair – Mexia, TX

Brenda Bowman – Galveston, IN

Scott Lambley – Benkleman, NE

Kristen Richerson – Oakfield TN

Leah Shannon – Livingston, MT

Ronald Von Glahn – De Soto, WI

The Rural Teacher of the Year program is sponsored by the Monsanto Fund, who works to substantially and meaningfully improve the lives of people around the world. We're focused on one goal – strengthening both farming communities and the communities where we live and work.

