



**NASAE**

# the connection

ISSUE TWO | MAY 2023

## A Moment of Happiness, Peace, and Reflection

By: Josh Bledsoe, President, NASAE

Happy Spring everyone! It's that time of the year when we have so many things happening that it can be challenging to keep up - much less check off - items on our task lists. For some of us, we've finished our state convention and we have a new state officer team full of life and ready to learn. For others, we're in the midst of regional and district events with career and leadership development events gearing up for state convention. Still others are feverishly finishing up curriculum projects so we can share them with our teachers at summer conferences. Summer teacher professional development is being planned and camps are being prepared for a summer of life-changing experiences. And that's just a sampling of all that we as state staff are doing this time of year.

Do you get the picture? I hope you can see in your mind what I'm seeing right now. It is absolutely beautiful. I hope this picture brings a moment of happiness. I hope it brings a moment of peace. I hope it brings a moment of reflection.

On this late Friday afternoon, I find myself at our FFA camp sitting in a wooden chair on the short middle pier looking out over a beautiful scene at White Lake. The bald cypress trees draped with Spanish moss now have green needles emerging. Two mallards just flew by and a family of geese with three little ones just waddled into the lake and swam away. If I've seen one turtle, I've seen several dozen stretch their little heads up for a breath of air and then duck back under for a swim. The birds are singing a medley of beautiful songs and the only other sound I hear is the water gently lapping up on shore. The wind is calm and the lake, almost like glass, is reflecting a beautiful sky with a few high clouds as the sun sets behind me.



### UPCOMING THE STATE STAFF CONNECTION SERIES SESSIONS

May 19

Fill Up Your Bucket: Beat  
Burnout & Boost Retention  
(registration required)

1 pm EDT

Jun 13

FFA Leadership Programs &  
Creation of Programs at  
Non-Traditional Schools

Jul 11

Annual FFA Report &  
On-boarding New  
Teachers  
3 pm EDT

**NASAE.FFA.ORG**

# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

## RONNIE SIMMONS - FLORIDA

Ronnie was selected as the **2022 Outstanding Executive Secretary**. Simmons' responsibilities include: complete management of FFA programming for nearly 27,000 members, overseeing and managing the state association's budget and finances, coordination and supervision of the state FFA officers, planning and developing rigorous career and leadership development events, planning and organizing the annual state convention, and the management and supervision of association staff. Since Simmons' tenure began, he has grown the Associations budget from roughly \$200,000 to an over \$1.4 million dollar budget. Simmons has grown and changed as the organization has needed, taking Florida FFA to new heights.



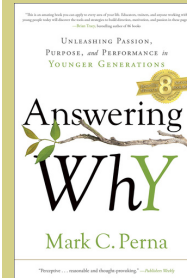
**WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 2023 AWARDS PROGRAM?**  
VISIT [HTTPS://NASAE.FFA.ORG/AWARDS](https://NASAE.FFA.ORG/AWARDS) FOR MORE INFORMATION.  
APPLICATIONS ARE DUE OCTOBER 1.

# GOOD READS

## "ANSWERING WHY"

BY MARK PERNA

**UNLEASHING PASSION, PURPOSE,  
AND PERFORMANCE IN YOUNGER  
GENERATIONS**



*From the urgent skills gap crisis to the proven strategies to inspire our youngest generations, Answering Why addresses the burning questions faced by educators, employers, and parents everywhere.*

# STATE STAFF TOOLBOX

## Ag Education and FFA Staff Discussion Board

Are you connected to the State Staff Facebook Group? Consider joining the group and engage in the conversation and contribute to the shared content. This is the perfect place to build connections in between formal events. The Ag Education and FFA Staff Discussion Board is a place we can network about topics that matter to us!

# REFLECTION

Understanding your personal values is the first step to self-awareness and is an important area of self-reflection in leadership. Reflect on the following:

- A leader you admire – Think of the person you most admire. Which three words or phrases describe the qualities you admire in them?
- Your legacy – What do you want to be remembered for?
- Core values – What are your values? Which things, people and qualities are most important to you?

# KNOWLEDGE & WISDOM



## SELF-CARE

The work we do in agricultural education/FFA is an intensive job. We can greatly benefit from self-care. We cannot care for others if we do not take care of ourselves.

Try on these self-care strategies:

1. Start the day on a positive note: Begin the day doing something uplifting and makes you feel good.
2. Exercise: Commit to 30 minutes of physical activity every day.
3. Connect with Others: Schedule regular check-ins with people you trust and who care about your well-being.