

# Faith Jurek: Making an Impact



Standing patiently outside of the conference room at the National Agricultural Media Summit (AMS), Faith Jurek nervously awaited the results.

As she walked through the conference room doors and saw her name on the screen as the 2013-2014 National Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow (ACT) president, Jurek smiled and immediately began putting her goals for the year into a strategic plan.

“I knew then, that it was going to be a great year,” Jurek said.

Each year, ACT hosts its national meeting in conjunction with the AMS. There, ACT members receive awards for various critique contests, interact with professionals, learn more about their future profession and elect national officers for the upcoming year.

Jurek, a graduate student in agricultural communications at Texas Tech University, joined ACT her freshman year in college. After graduating from a high school class of 11 students, she said she was eager to remove herself from her comfort zone.

“I was really excited to be a part of something bigger than myself,” Jurek said.

That excitement fueled Jurek to participate in ACT events and eventually run for officer positions at Texas Tech and on the national level. She served one term as the National ACT secretary/treasurer before being elected president. Jurek credits much of her personal and educational success to the experiences she had as an ACT member.

“ACT is really always going to have a special place in my heart,” Jurek said, “because of all the things it has helped me accomplish as a student, as an individual, and hopefully as a professional.”

Erica Irlbeck, Ed. D., Jurek’s academic assistant professor of agricultural communications at Texas Tech, said ACT has similar objectives.

“Our focus is on going beyond the classroom and helping students with professional development,” Irlbeck said.

Local and national ACT events such as the AMS held in the summer and the ACT Professional Developmental Conference in winter give students an opportunity to enhance their leadership abilities. It also helps prepare members for their careers by providing them a chance to meet and mingle with established professionals in the agricultural industry.

“ACT is a great organization to get involved with, not only because it allows you to meet new people, but you can jump in and get involved early,” Jurek said. “Having the opportunity to meet so many different people in the industry just opens your eyes to what’s available to you.”

As National ACT President, Jurek said she is looking forward to giving back to the organization that has given her so many valuable opportunities. She said one of her main duties as president will be to implement new goals for the organization while maintaining the values that have already been established.

Specifically, Jurek has two main goals: enhance alumni and student relations and create a mentoring program.

“Ultimately, my goal would be to connect students with professionals in the industry to an area they’re interested in,” Jurek said. 

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