

Spartan



Spotlight

Union High School: "Promoting an Atmosphere of Academic Excellence Through Continuous Improvement While Providing a Safe & Orderly Environment"

Welcoming Two CTE Educators to the Spartan Staff by Jessica Register, Media Specialist



Union High School is pleased to welcome Mr. Dan Chabot to the Agriculture Education department. Currently, he teaches Agriculture Mechanics I & II and Agriscience Applications. A graduate of NCSU, Mr. Chabot holds a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture Education and has his Cabinet Builder Certification earned from Fayetteville Technical Community College. Before UHS, he worked in agriculture education at Cape Fear High School and North Lenoir High School. During his time at Cape Fear, he built the largest FFA program in NC. In fact, the FFA organization is one of the things that drew him to the education profession. "I was originally accepted into college to study architecture," says Chabot. However, after participating in agriculture and the FFA, he decided he wanted to teach agriculture and be an FFA advisor (Fun fact: he has a twin brother that is an agriculture teacher as well). Dan Chabot's work with the National FFA Organization is quite impressive. He has facilitated student work based education in agriculture education across the United States, and has been in charge of the American FFA Degree, SAE, Stars Over America, and SAE grants. He hopes he can do for the Union FFA Chapter what he did for Cape Fear High School. "I want our students to be competitive in the industry, strong in leadership, and grow personally in their success," he says. Mr. Chabot wants students at UHS to be competitive in both the state and national levels of FFA. His teaching philosophy is quite simple: to be honest and fair in the game of life. He enjoys motivating students to be humble, honest, and good to those around them. He wants to instill in his students a strong sense of working hard for what they have and being proud of it. "You may have more money, may be able to do it faster than me, and you may be smarter than me, but no one will work harder than me," adds Chabot.

When asked about what he likes most about UHS, Mr. Chabot said he really enjoys the small feel. "The facilities are absolutely beautiful and the agriculture-based economy and community surrounding the school are great," he adds. When not at UHS, Mr. Chabot enjoys carpentry and renovating old antiques and furniture. He also enjoys music, admitting that he plays multiple instruments, guitar being his favorite. Mr. Chabot enjoys movies, camping, fishing, hunting, and cooking when he has the time.

Principal Julie Hunter is excited about the great knowledge and leadership that Dan Chabot brings to UHS, adding that his experiences at the national FFA level will only benefit our students and community. "His passion for carpentry is most impressive and, as a school, we will reap the benefits of his skills in all the projects that he has in mind for his Ag Mechanics students," says Hunter. Like Ms. Hunter, the students and staff are honored to have Mr. Chabot join the Spartan team.



Another new staff member to join the UHS family is Mrs. Danielle Sills, who has quickly become an asset to the Family and Consumer Science department where she teaches Foods I, Principles of Family and Human Services, and Fashion Merchandising. "I love the family atmosphere and level of positivity at UHS," says Sills. The genuine amount of support for her as a new teacher and seeing how caring staff are towards their students are among what she likes best. "I have really enjoyed getting to know and connecting with my students," she adds.

A graduate of UNCG with a Bachelor of Science in Home Economics, Mrs. Sills began her teaching experience in Sampson County as a teacher assistant for Sampson County Schools and Clinton City Schools, and has also been a preschool teacher and director. "Working as a preschool director and teacher, as well as an elementary assistant, provided me with a strong foundation in teaching. It also helped me realize my love for teaching and working with children of all ages," says Sills.

Before entering the education profession, she was a retail buyer who traveled overseas to countries in Asia, buying and importing merchandise for retail stores. As a Family and Consumer Science teacher, she is able to combine her education and experience in the business industry with teaching her students. Subjects she teaches help prepare students for life, the workforce, as well as higher education. "My hope is that my students discover an interest in an area where they would like to further their education to increase their employability in the workforce," she says.

As many teachers do, Mrs. Sills has a solid teaching philosophy. She explains, "I tell my students that the meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away." She feels that, by using our gifts to enrich the world and the lives of others, we are also fulfilled. One of her greatest goals as an educator is to instill a sense of confidence and pride in her students that will encourage them to pursue their goals and be the best they can possibly be.

Outside of teaching, she spends a lot of time with her family, participating in various activities and sports with her children. She also enjoys cooking, decorating, sewing, and being involved in church activities.

"Mrs. Sills is eager to be the best teacher she can be, and utilizes every resource available to help make her classes rigorous and engaging," says her principal, Julie Hunter. One day, for example, her classes participated in a teamwork activity where they built towers with marshmallows and spaghetti noodles. Different team members had specific roles using teamwork vocabulary words. Students were learning and having fun, which is often a challenging task to accomplish in education. Her Spartan family is glad she has chosen UHS to call home and we look forward to seeing all of the wonderful things in store for her students this school year.

CTE Corner

by Jaclyn Garey, UHS CDC/SPC



The FFA is the largest youth organization in public education in the United States. It offers students opportunities that change lives and prepares them for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success. These opportunities would not be possible without the support of the surrounding community, parents, and businesses.

On Tuesday, September 20, Union High School held an interest meeting in an effort to reactivate Union's Alumni affiliate in the North Carolina FFA Alumni Association. The UHS Agriculture Department is calling on former FFA members, parents, interested adults, and an assortment of community leaders and businesses for support. You do not need to be an alumni of Union High School to join the Alumni affiliate. Membership fees are tax deductible and will be used to promote the FFA organization, FFA activities, and Union's Agriculture Department. If you are interested in supporting our FFA program and would like to become a member of the Alumni affiliate, please contact Mr. Dan Chabot, Mr. Arno Peterson or Mrs. Jaclyn Garey at 910-532-6300. Please help us in our efforts to promote the FFA organization and provide opportunities for our students to gain skills needed that will help them be successful in their future endeavors.



Teacher Visits Berlin for EF Tours' Group Leader Training by Jessica Register, Media Specialist



Union High School History teacher Meagan Thornton is excited to announce that she will be the group leader for her school's upcoming summer trip abroad with EF Tours. Although she has chaperoned educational trips abroad in the past, this will be her first time leading a group of students.

Along with other first-time group leaders, all teachers from NC and VA, Thornton attended a five day training in Germany to prepare for the upcoming trip. Her group left for Berlin on Thursday morning, October 6, and they returned on Monday night, October 10. Although they were gone for a total of five days, their group was actually in Berlin for three full days and traveled for two days.

Her hotel was on the former East Berlin side, which she found very interesting. They stayed in Berlin, for the most part, but did venture to Potsdam for a day tour. The group also went to the palace where

they held the Potsdam Conference at the end of World War II. In addition, while in Berlin, they visited places such as The Reichstag (German Parliament building), Checkpoint Charlie, the Berlin Wall, the Topography of Terrors (a museum detailing the Holocaust), Bradenburg Gate, and more.

As a history teacher, Thornton loved her experience and feels it will help so much with their upcoming trip. "Berlin has left a lasting impact on me. In terms of the training, I learned a lot about what to expect as the group leader for our trip. I learned different tips and strategies to not only ensure safety and organization, but also how to engage students while we are abroad," says Thornton.

Ms. Thornton has been so excited to share her experience with her students. "Europe has such a deep and interesting past, and I really want students to reflect on that. In terms of Berlin itself, the history there was incredible. I plan on showing pictures I took while I was there to all of my students," she adds. "I will talk to them about the history of the city and country. Berlin has so much to offer, and I want my stu-

dents to understand how rich and beautiful the history is here. I plan on connecting American history and government with that of Germany. For example, how does their government operation compare to ours? Freedom of speech is very important in Germany...how does that compare to our freedom of speech in America? Even music is important...polka music is very popular in Germany. What does that show about German culture? I really want students to understand and analyze the similarities and differences of these two seemingly different cultures," says Thornton.

She also mentions that parts of the Berlin Wall still stand throughout the city, and it's interesting to see the divide that still exists. "The wall fell 27 years ago, but you can still easily see what was known as West Berlin and East Berlin. Those who are old enough, still refer to themselves as West or East Berliners. I found it fascinating that a wall that only existed for 28 years left such a lasting impact on the city," she explains. In addition, she mentions that, while she loved the history and culture of Germany, she really loved the food. "You have not fully lived until you have had German chocolate!"



School Event Sparks Important Dialogue

by Jessica Register

On Tuesday, September 27, Union High School hosted its first Parent/ Teacher/ Administrator Bash on campus. The event, planned by the UHS School Improvement Team, was designed to start important conversations with parents, community leaders, teachers, and administrators regarding how to create the most supportive community environment possible with the school being the hub. According to Principal Julie Hunter, "Parents and community members want the opportunity to be heard, and it's our job to provide that forum for them. We want to be the center of our community, and these discussion opportunities will help us build that bridge."

For a first time event like this, Hunter and her staff felt like it was very successful. It revealed that there is a need for other events like this one. "Our hope is to hold at

least two more events like this, and hopefully more parents will join us," adds Hunter. For other schools who are looking to build their parental and community support systems, the staff at UHS highly recommend organizing a similar event at your school.

Mum closeout sale! \$2 each!
Please contact Arno Peterson at (910) 532-6300

Upcoming Union High School Events

Oct. 27	PTO/Progress Report Pick Up	Nov. 15	CTE/ Beta Club Inductions
Nov. 3	12:30 Student Release/ Staff Development	Nov. 21	End of 6 Weeks
Nov. 4	Senior & Underclassmen Picture Retakes	Nov. 23	12:30 School Dismissal
Nov. 11	Veterans Day Holiday	Nov. 24	Thanksgiving Break Begins
Nov. 12	Miss UHS Pageant	Nov. 28	Report Cards
Nov. 15	ASVAB Testing	Dec. 7	WorkKeys Testing

2016-2017 all color Union High School Yearbooks are on sale! You can visit Jostens.com to order online, or contact Mrs. Jessica Register or Mrs. Debora West at (910) 532-6300. Senior Dedication pages are also available for purchase while spots last!