



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Wendland Named 2020 VATFACS Outstanding Teacher of the Year

**Bedford, VA – August 13, 2020** – The Virginia Association for Teachers of Family & Consumer Sciences (VATFACS) honored its award and scholarship recipients during a virtual ceremony on June 29, 2020. Elizabeth Wendland, an instructor at the Susie G. Gibson Science and Technology Center with Bedford County Public Schools, received the 2020 VATFACS Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award. The purpose of the Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award is to recognize teachers who are providing outstanding educational programs for youth and/or adults in Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS) and communities. The award winner must currently be employed as a full-time classroom teacher, be a member of VATFACS, and should demonstrate active involvement with Career and Technical Student Organizations.



Wendland’s passion is teaching technical life skills to her students so they will be lifelong learnings. Her Early Childhood Careers and Teachers for Tomorrow students excel and earn credentials in Praxis and ParaProfessional Certifications. Many of her students are now teachers in Bedford County and other parts of the United States. Wendland has taken her students across the country multiple times for Educators Rising events and been very successful in having students place in the top two in the state and the top ten at the national level. Her internship-based classroom is spread throughout the community to help assist families looking for quality preschool and afterschool programs. Wendland serves on the Child are Desert Committee to help the community find a solution to this issue. The opportunity for leadership is great in Mrs. Wendland’s classroom as the community is in need of child-care workers and teachers to rise on the occasion and help fill the gap of the problematic child care desert along with teacher shortages.

Teeghan Guess, a former student, had this to say about Mrs. Wendland, “One of my favorite memories of her is when she told me good morning every morning I walked into class and she would always ask me how my day was going or how the previous day was. With everything that has been happening, regardless of us not having school anymore, she still checks on me periodically to make sure that I am okay and I’m still looked after and if that doesn’t make her a good teacher, I don’t know what would. For me she is more than an educator, she is a friend, mentor, someone I look up to and aspire to be like one day and I will never forget the impact she has had not only on my education, but my life as well.”

**About the Virginia Association for Teachers of Family & Consumer Sciences (VATFACS):**

VATFACS is an organization dedicated to promoting Family and Consumer Sciences in Virginia public schools to improve the lives of our students, their families, and our communities. VATFACS' mission is to promote professional development opportunities for family and consumer sciences teachers in Virginia, provide opportunity for collaboration with family and consumer sciences professionals, and support the purposes of the Virginia Association of Career and Technical (VA ACTE). VATFACS awards scholarships and graduate fellowships to individuals who have exhibited the potential to make contributions to the family and consumer sciences education (FCS) field.

**About the field of Family & Consumer Sciences:**

Family & Consumer Sciences (FCS) is the comprehensive field of study focused on the art and science of living and working well in our complex world. Our primary areas of focus include culinary arts, hospitality, and tourism; education and training; food science and nutrition; health management and wellness; housing and interior design; human/child development and family relations; personal and family finance; and textiles, apparel, and retailing. Sustainable practices, consumerism, and leadership principles are woven throughout the content areas. Through research, experiential education, and technology, our professionals help people develop the essential knowledge and skills to lead better lives, be work and career ready, build strong families, and make meaningful contributions to our communities. FCS professionals are found in settings such as academic education at the early childhood, elementary, secondary, and higher education levels, community education for adults and youth, including Cooperative Extension programs, business and industry, government, and health and human services.

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