



BUILDING RURAL AMERICA

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CREDIT SPECIALISTS

OF THE

USDA - FARM SERVICE AGENCY



2017-2018 NACS Board - Back Row: Casey Toyne, Ryan Lukassen, Joseph Grier, John Gehrke, Cheryl Brooks; Front Row: Jamelda Fulton, Kim Eilerman, Theresa Windham, Charlean Smith

MEET YOUR 2017-2018 NACS BOARD

I am Theresa Windham and it is my honor to serve as your 2017-2018 NACS President.

A few weeks ago, while talking to my former FLM at a retirement celebration, I realized that in just 2 years I will have 20 years of service with FSA. That was a shock! I started my career with FSA nearly 18 years ago and joined NACS a few years later when I became an FLOT. I remember the call from the state president telling me about NACS—I must have said “yes” too quickly, as it was shortly after that phone call that I found myself signing on to be the state President (not realizing it would be a life-long term!).

I’ve had the great opportunity to serve in many positions within NACS, which have afforded me the opportunity to see first-hand the impact that NACS-FSA has had on improving Farm Loan Programs and FSA. I believe that the Agriculture multiplier effect on the economy is x12; the return in my investment in NACS has to be greater.

This year it will be my great honor to continue representing you in the capacity of 2017-2018 NACS President (hopefully not a life-long term), and I invite all of you to join NACS-FSA in “LEADING THE WAY.”



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Recipient

Convention news has been
provided in a second
newsletter.



Theresa Windham
NACS President



Charlean Smith
NACS Vice President

I am looking forward to serving NACS members as your Vice-President. I began working for USDA, Farmers Home Administration in 1983, as a temporary emergency loan clerk. In December of 1984 I was hired into a permanent position with FmHA. I attended Arkansas State University, where I took several agricultural courses to further my education in order to better serve the producers. I became an Agriculture Specialist, Farm Loan Officer in 2003. I have been actively involved with the Arkansas Association of Credit Specialists, serving as Secretary/Treasurer and presently serving as Vice President. In January, 2017 I was promoted to the Farm Loan Manager position in my hometown of Harrisburg, AR.

I attended my first NACS convention in Detroit, MI, in 2012. Since then, I have represented Arkansas as a state delegate at 4 national conventions. I have served on NACS committees each year, with my most recent service as Chairperson of the Farm Program Committee. I have also had the privilege of representing Zone D on the Convention Committee.

I am much honored to be able to meet with other states' employees and the National Office, come together and discuss issues, and have a voice to move forward with our mission to help make a better way for our producers.

I am Cheryl Brooks, your 2017-18 Secretary

I have been with the Agency for 18 years. I began my career with FSA as a GS-3 County Office temporary with FLP duties. I was a temp for nine months before being hired as a permanent CO Program Technician with shared management duties. I later converted to the GS pay scale, working as FLPT, FLOT and, currently, Farm Loan Officer. I serve 3 Counties in the heart of the Arkansas Delta. I have attended six National Conventions, with my first being in Detroit, MI, and four Zone Meetings. Since my first Convention I have served two years on the Management/Personnel Committee, 2 years as Zone D Rep and 1 year on the FLP Committee. I was Sec/Treasurer of the Arkansas Association for 3 years & President from 2013-2017.

I am honored to serve as NACS Secretary for the next year. My continued hope is that each NACS member takes a moment to discuss the fundamental value of NACS with an eligible employee you are in contact with. NACS is invaluable to our Agency; the Resolution Process has been the catalyst to many changes which have improved the quality of our work-life. There is strength in numbers, and our goal should be to increase our strength.



Cheryl Brooks
NACS Secretary

It is my honor to once again serve as NACS Treasurer.

My name is Ryan Lukassen and I am currently serving as the 2017-2018 NACS Treasurer. I have worked for FSA since August of 2010, beginning my career as a SCEP in David City and York, Nebraska. In May of 2011 I transitioned into the FLOT program and progressed through training while working in David City. In January, 2012, I moved to Ogallala, NE, to become the FLO. After working as FLO in Ogallala I eventually became the Farm Loan Manager. In November of 2015, I moved to Albuquerque, NM to work as the Farm Loan Specialist in the New Mexico State office. After a year of serving as FLS, I accepted my current position as District Director in Southeastern Colorado, and I currently reside in Colorado Springs, Co.

Since starting with the Agency, I have been an active member of NACS. In 2012 I attended both my first Zone meeting, in Grapevine, Texas, and my first National Convention, in Detroit, Michigan. I have not missed a Zone meeting or National Convention since attending my first meetings. While a member of NACS, I have served as the State Secretary, Vice President and President. I have also served as Zone Rep and Alternate. I have been the NACS Treasurer since January of 2016, and I look forward to continuing to serve in this role through 2018.



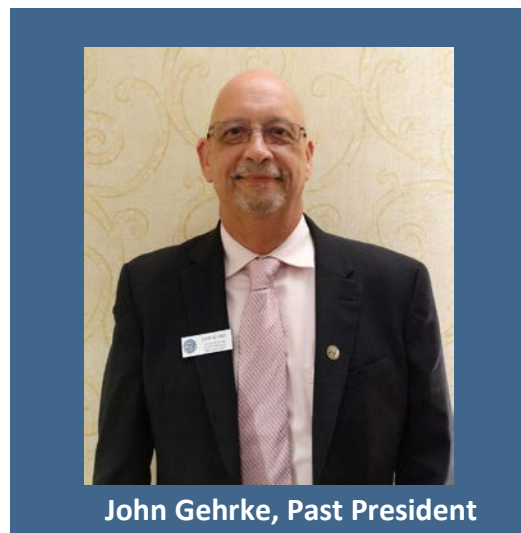
Ryan Lukassen
NACS Treasurer

Message from John Gehrke, NACS Past President

I am looking forward to serving NACS members as your Past President in 2017/2018. I was raised on a Central Illinois grain farm. My USDA career began as a Student Trainee in 1983, while I finished my senior year at Illinois State University. I received my agriculture business degree and became an Assistant County Supervisor in South Central IL and worked in 2 different offices. I became a County Supervisor in 1987 and served in that capacity for 5 interesting years. I accepted a position as Farm Loan Specialist located in the field in 1992 and still serve in that capacity. My past “other duties as assigned” have included problem loan specialist and FLOT coordinator, and I continue to serve as the State Environmental Coordinator.

My NACS membership began as soon as I became eligible in 1987. I have attended many State and Zone meetings and National conventions. I have served terms as the Illinois State President and one year as Zone C Representative. My focus the last 10 years was the Legislative Committee. This gave me a view of the big picture of FSA outside the borders of Illinois, both the work that we do and the hurdles we encounter. My hope is that this experience, along with serving as NACS VP and President, has left me better prepared to represent the members of NACS. As you have heard me say many times, we have a great story to tell and I am grateful for the chance to continue telling it.

Thank you for your support of NACS!



I am Casey Toyne; the new NACS Zone A Representative.

I started my career with the Farm Service Agency in 2011 as a County Operations Trainee in New Mexico. In 2012 I moved to eastern Colorado to be the CED for Lincoln County. At the end of 2014 I became the Farm Loan Specialist for Colorado and joined NACS shortly thereafter. I’m married, with no kids, but my wife Heather and I have two dogs and a cat, which is good enough for me! I enjoy long walks on the beach, but not writing bios about myself.

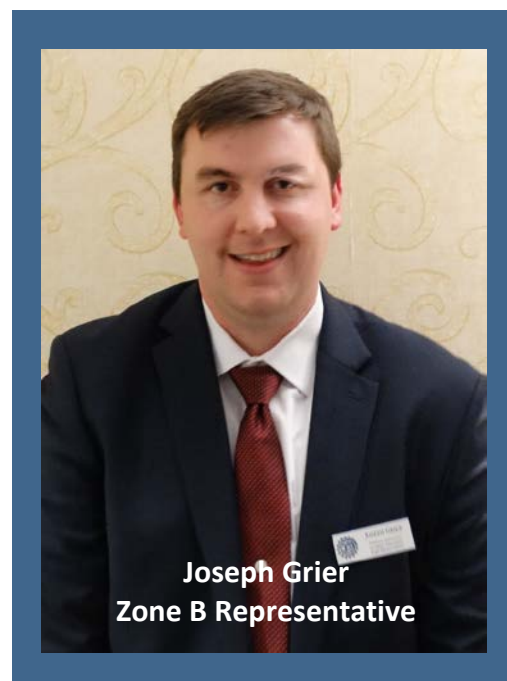
In 2016 I had the honor of being elected to be the Zone A Representative for the first time, and am grateful to have the opportunity to serve a second term.

I am Joseph Grier, your 2017-2018 Zone B Representative.

I was honored to be selected at the 2017 NACS Convention in Kansas City to serve a third term as Zone B Representative for the National Association of Credit Specialists. I have served in this position since 2015, and have also served the Texas Association of Credit Specialists as Secretary and Vice President.

I have worked with the Farm Service Agency since 2010, beginning my career in the Texas FSA Farm Loan Officer Trainee Program and progressing into other positions, including; Farm Loan Officer in Wharton, Texas and then Farm Loan Manager in Tyler, Texas, where I provide farm loan program coverage for eight counties.

I grew up in Grand Saline, TX in Van Zandt County where I continue to be involved in the family farm and cattle operation. I earned a bachelor's degree in agricultural from Texas A&M University. My wife Katelyn and I reside in Tyler, Texas, where we are involved with our church and community.





Kimberly Eilerman
Zone C Representative

Hello! I am Kim Eilerman, your 2017-2018 Zone C Representative.

After 4 years in commercial lending, I began my FSA career in March 2010 as a FLOT in Quincy, IL. After completing my training, in April 2011, I was transferred to my first county office. I was promoted to Farm Loan Manager in February 2016 and currently cover 5 of the busiest counties in West Central Illinois.

Since my first National Convention in Rosemont, IL (2014), I have attended 4 consecutive National Conventions and 2 Zone Meetings. In my 7+ year NACS tenure, I have served for 2 years on the FLP Committee (2017 as chair), 1 year on the IT Committee and 1 year as the Zone C Alternate Rep. NACS nominated me to serve on the IT Steering Committee in 2016 and I have traveled to both Washington, D.C. & Kansas City over the past 2 years to serve in that capacity. Additionally, I have served as the State President in IL for the past 3 years and am currently a Trainer for the National Leadership Training Program administered by the Agency.

My husband, Adam and I have been married for 10+ years and currently reside in Calhoun County, IL on his family farm. When I'm not working for FSA and participating in the various NACS activities, I am typically busy with my two children, Anabel (8) and Henry (5).

I am honored to serve as your Zone C Representative for the upcoming year. I want to challenge each and every one of you to get involved in NACS in some capacity. It truly opens a lot of doors and the friendships you make will last a lifetime.

I am Jamelda Fulton, Zone D Representative.

I am a native of Greenville, Mississippi. I am the only biological child of my mother, and I have a daughter, Princess Jaria Prena' Fulton. I am a Farm Loan Officer in Greenwood, MS, servicing 13 counties. I have been with the Agency 17+ years, and have been an active MACS and NACS member for many of those years. I have a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and a Master of Science in Agriculture Economics from Alcorn State University.

I define my major life accomplishments by my involvement within my local community, state and career. I currently serve on the school board of Western Line School District, and have been appointed to the Mississippi School Board Association Board of Directors, on which I am Sec/Treas. I am an active member and on the parish council of Sacred Heart Catholic Church of Greenville. I am affiliated with Alcorn State University's National Alumni Association and American Federation of Government Employees (Local 1031 Chief Stewart & Women's/Fair Practice Coordinator). One of the major highlights of my life was being recognized by President Barack Obama with the Bronze Presidential Service award for putting in service hours representing the state of Mississippi as a member of the IRS Tax Payer's Advocacy Council.

I served as NACS Zone D Representative during the 2016-2017 operating season, and am proud to be able to represent my Dynamic Zone D once again in 2017-2018! My involvement with NACS brings the satisfaction of knowing that I have a hand in improving work conditions for FLP in FSA and helping provide food for the American People.



Jamelda Fulton
Zone D Representative



LeAnn Gibbs; Blood, Sweat, and Tears Award Recipient



It was my privilege and honor to present this year’s Blood, Sweat, and Tears Award to LeAnn Gibbs of New Mexico. This award is named in honor of our founder and then longest-serving President, Ray Turknett from Texas. It is considered the most prestigious award presented by NACS.

LeAnn is passionate about NACS and FSA, to say the least. Characteristics used to describe her character include devoted, hard-working, persistent and dedicated. She began her career in the private banking sector before being recruited to work for FSA in 2001. She began her career with FSA in a full-time temporary CO-4 position as a program technician with farm loan program duties and advanced her way through the ranks to Farm Loan Chief.

LeAnn has worked hard for NACS by being involved in numerous task forces and steering committees; the IT Committee, as member and Chair; Zone A Representative and Secretary. LeAnn is passionate about the IT Committee resolutions and works hard to continue our strong relationship with the National Office to get things done!

Please help me congratulate our 2017 Blood, Sweat, and Tears Award winner, LeAnn Gibbs!

~ Lisa A. Liska, NE; 2016-2017 Past President



The NACS board hopes to see YOU
In San Antonio, Texas
For the 46th Annual Convention
June 24th-28th, 2018