

High School Students Attend SAE Institute at UMO

MOUNT OLIVE- Thirteen high school students from across the state of North Carolina gathered at the University of Mount Olive (UMO) July 13-15 for the 2021 NC Tobacco Trust Fund Commission Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) Institute. Students from Duplin, Greene, Johnston, Lenoir, Lincoln, Sampson, Wake, and Wayne participated in the three-day event aimed at introducing them to the agriculture industry and showcasing the diversity of NC agriculture. Participants earned up to 25 hours of SAE credit during the event.

In addition to learning about SAE projects, participants gained valuable insight into ag careers and internships, international ag opportunities, and resume writing skills. They toured several farming operations including Chad Herring's Wayne County pig nursery, Michael Renfrow's Cyn-Mar Greenhouses, and Hinnant Family Vineyards in Selma, NC. Mid-way through the week, students participated in a service-learning project by gleaning at Williams Farm in Autryville, NC. Pizza, putt-putt, and plenty of laughs and friendship building were a big part of the week as well.

"I had so much fun at this camp," noted one participant. "It has been a great week to build our knowledge in SAE, and has given us many good ideas to take back to our schools."

The SAE institute is funded by the North Carolina Tobacco Trust Fund Commission through a sponsored program grant.

"This institute is significant for students because they get hands on agriculture-related learning experiences that they might not otherwise receive," said Dr. Sandy Maddox, Dean of the School of Agriculture and Biological Sciences. "The activities provide participants with opportunities to develop leadership and a work ethic that will serve them throughout their college and work careers. We are hosting more than just an institute at UMO, we are hosting a life-changing experience."

The University of Mount Olive is a private institution rooted in the liberal arts tradition with defining Christian values. The University is sponsored by the Convention of Original Free Will Baptists. For more information, visit www.umo.edu.