

UMO's Sandy Maddox Earns NC's Top Ag Award

MOUNT OLIVE – Dr. Sandy Maddox, Dean for the School of Agriculture and Biological Sciences, has received one of the highest awards given to a North Carolina professional in the agriculture industry. On Friday, February 4, Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler presented Maddox with the 2022 Excellence in Agriculture Award during the 17th Annual Tobacco Farm Life Museum Breakfast held on the NC State Fairgrounds.

Commissioner Troxler noted that Maddox has spent 44 years as a public servant supporting agriculture, agricultural research, and education providing invaluable experience that she willingly shares with others daily.

“It’s my honor to recognize someone who is very special to all of us, especially me,” said Troxler. “She is a wonderful person and has a great attitude. Her passion for agriculture and education is evident when you see her working with students and inviting them to attend events, just as she has done today.”

Upon receiving the award, Maddox said, “I am very honored to have been selected to receive the Tobacco Farm Life Museum Excellence in Agriculture Award. To join the list of previous recipients is very humbling. I have been blessed to have had a career in the agriculture industry. I owe my successes to so many of my colleagues and the leaders with whom I have had the pleasure to work. To now have the opportunity to work with students at the University of Mount Olive and have the chance to guide them into careers in the field of agriculture, is more rewarding than I could have ever imagined.”

Maddox’s extensive career in agriculture spans over four decades. As the Founding Dean for the School of Agriculture and Biological Sciences at the University of Mount Olive, Maddox has served as Assistant Professor of Agricultural Education, Director of the Lois G. Britt Agribusiness Center, Chair for the Division of Agriculture, and currently as Dean for the School of Agriculture and Biological Sciences. Prior to arriving at UMO, Maddox was employed by both NC State University and the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. She worked in the Soil Science Department at NC State in research; was a Horticultural Agent and County Extension Director for Cooperative Extension in Pender County; served as the Superintendent of the Horticultural Crops Research Station in Sampson County; and lastly served as the Director of the Division of Research Stations with NCDA; retiring from state service in 2007.

Maddox has been a member of the Wayne County Cooperative Extension Advisory Board, Wayne Extension Community Association Advisory Board, Tobacco Farm Life Museum Board of Directors, participated in the Karl Best Leadership program, Leadership Wayne, and much more.

“Sandy’s work ethic is second to none and her visionary leadership has allowed students to take part in building the agricultural program at UMO into what exists today,” said UMO President Dr. H. Edward Croom, who was in attendance at the award presentation. “She has a passion and

drive to make a positive difference in the lives of so many. I am pleased to see her receive this worthy honor and much deserved recognition.”

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.