

My name is Brian Merce I am the Agriculture Educator at Tri-valley Local Schools. I have 19 years of education experience. I have always seen my job as two-fold; I am always focused on creating valued members of society who will add to their community more than they take. The other focus of mine is to give my students as many opportunities that I can. I'm really big on opportunities. Focusing on these two things means that I am willing to work over my contracted hours by a substantial amount. I annually work around 150 hours extra without complaint.

The 5<sup>th</sup> quarter grant can and has made up for a small portion of that time. Honestly, I would like it increased. The fact of the matter is that we have a wealth of careers opportunities in this country for they type of jobs our programs promote and a dearth of young people equipped and willing to take those jobs. Educators in the career tech need more support and I hope you see the need to help us attain it.