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Subject: NVC 060115 Jim Smith (AR) to Retire

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NAEPDC



News, Views, and Clues

June 1, 2015

Jim Smith (AR) to Retire

Our colleague Jim Smith (AR) is set to retire in July. We will miss his enthusiasm, that booming voice and his willingness to take on challenges large and small. Our best wishes Jim and thanks for the contributions you made to us and to our profession.

FROM THE DESK OF JAMES H. SMITH, JR.:

Good Morning,

I have officially submitted my letter to Dr. Childers requesting permission to retire effective at the end of the day on July 10, 2015.

This concludes my 45-year career in education that started July 1970:

- ✓ 3 years at Oak Grove Junior/Senior High School as an Industrial Arts instructor
- ✓ 10 years as a Vocational Automobile Mechanics Instructor 8 years of which I spent driving a bus, 8 years announcing football games, and 4 years as a janitor at night to clean the gym, math, and english buildings
- ✓ 10 years Department of now Career Education in Trade and Industrial Education Section as Public School Program Advisor and as of my retirement still the longest serving State VICA, now SkillsUSA, Director
- ✓ 6 years as a Public School Program Advisor in Adult Education and 1st Arkansas WAGE Program Coordinator
- ✓ 8 years as Manager of the Federal Surplus Property Program
- ✓ 8 as Adult Education Division Director and Career Education Department Deputy Director

I was the kid who wanted to drop out of school in the 8th grade because that is as far as

my father went to school. He was one of the smartest men I have ever known with few in my life being his equal. Who would have ever thought I would become a teacher, a manager, a coordinator, a president of several state and national organizations, meet and work with US Senators and Representatives, Governors, and State Senators and Representatives, help to craft legislation, and finish my career as Deputy Director of Adult Education? Most important was changing student's lives for the better. This can't be anything short of God's intervention in Carolyn's and my life.

I found this quote when attending the National VICA Director's meeting held in Leesburg, VA, it is framed, sits on my desk, and I review it often:

"The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, who strives valiantly, who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, and spends himself in a worthy cause, who at the best, knows the triumph of a higher achievement, and who, at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat." Theodore Roosevelt.

I want to thank my parents, my wife and children, my students from whom I learned the most as a teacher, the many educators who saw more in me than I did at times, and to the staff with which I have served over these many years for making my life the adventure it has become. Above it all, I thank God, among many things, for His leadership and guidance to provide direction and intervention.

To all I extend a grateful thank you for your support and council. What a great ride.

Sincerely,

James H. "Jim" Smith, Jr.

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Keep up the good work. Let me know when we can help.

NAEPDC

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