MACA
MID AMERICA CROPLIFE ASSOCIATION
UPDATE
JUNE 2025

WHAT'S COOKING IN AGRICULTURE?

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As we quickly move into the summer of 2025 the weather across the MACA geography will begin heating up in a hurry. This reminds me of a friend of mine often asking me "What's Cooking?" With that in mind, if you want to learn more about "What's Cooking in Agriculture?", join us at the MACA Annual Meeting, September 2-4, at the Kansas City Marriott Country Club Plaza, Kansas City, Missouri.

The seven speakers are experts in their field and will be on hand to share their insight with you, the MACA member! Kicking off the meeting on Tuesday, September 2 will be Elizabeth Fastiggi, Idealyst Innovation. She will share her insight on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and it's impact and path forward in US Agriculture. A panel will follow, addressing Critical Collaborations in our industry. It will feature Kevin Cox, an Indiana Farmer; Jami Loecker an Agronomy Service Manager with Syngenta in the Manhattan, Kansas area; and Ryan Morris who is the MFA, Inc. Location & Sales Manager, River Valley, Missouri.

The 2025 Developing Professionals Class, which features 11 participants from 8 member companies, will be introduced as well as the new 2026 incoming class. The 2025 Young Leader Scholarship Program class will be on hand to share their thoughts on their summer internship and college experiences.

Wednesday will continue as the day set aside for private business meetings. Be sure to make plans to schedule a meeting by reserving a private meeting room. Allied members can also set up a display to highlight their business. Questions? Contact rodney@maca.org

Be sure to lock in Wednesday afternoon for a new event at the meeting – **"The KC Barbeque Experience."**

When most people come to Kansas City, what do they think about? Barbeque! As we take a break in 2025 with the MACA Golf Tournament, we have a very unique team-building event lined up for Wednesday afternoon during the Annual Meeting. It's called "The KC Barbeque Experience". The afternoon starts with a visit to the world's first Museum of BBQ. This will immerse you in the A-Z's of BBQ in a feast for the senses. You will learn how pitmasters combine meat, spices/rubs, wood, fire, smoke and sauce to turn tough cuts of meat into delicious BBQ. You will explore the four main U.S. regions of barbeque --- Carolinas, Memphis, Texas, and Kansas City and what makes each unique. Then we will enjoy a full-course, mouthwatering BBQ meal at Jack Stack Barbeque - Freight House, one of the top BBQ restaurants in Kansas City. We will get some insights from their Pitmaster regarding how they make BBQ meat so memorable. Join us for a one-of-a-kind memorable afternoon with "The KC Barbeque Experience."

On Thursday, September 4, the day begins with a breakfast buffet and the annual meeting of the members. The program will focus on Critical Issues Facing Members and will feature Val Dolcini – Head of Public Affairs, North America, Syngenta; Harrison Pittman – Director, National Ag Law Center; and Ron Seeber – President and CEO, Kansas Agribusiness Retailers Association. They will share their perspectives on the Trump Administration, State Policies, and the impact on our industry.

The President's Reception is scheduled for Tuesday evening to encourage members to connect with their colleagues from around the country. The Wednesday evening reception will feature our MACA Committees. Join us for both of these events for fellowship and networking to learn more about the association, our committees, and opportunities for you with MACA!

For additional details on the meeting click here: www.maca.org

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

MACA members,

It's been a busy few months at MACA with several programs, the transition from Bonnie to Rodney, plus the planning of the 2025 MACA Annual Meeting. This year's meeting will be held in Kansas City, Missouri and looks to be filled with current topics and experts to address industry issues. In addition, there will be time for the customer/supplier meetings, and a new team building event we're calling "The KC Barbeque Experience".

For me, it's a terrific opportunity to combine business and reconnect with industry friends and associates.

I'm excited to share with you an update on the MACA programs. First, the Developing Professional (DP) program entered it's second year at the '24 MACA Annual Meeting. The virtual training sessions continue to focus on developing the soft skills of the DPs to help them better understand the industry, as well as be more effective and efficient. Eleven participants from eight member companies are participating in the program. They have training sessions focused on self-evaluation and work/life balance; strategic thinking; leadership skills and the final session will be at the Annual Meeting with 'Ask the Leader' featuring a panel of industry leaders sharing a few thoughts, followed by Q&A. We're recruiting participants for the '26 Class. Please see Developing Professionals article on page 10.

The second program is the 2025 MACA Lunch & Learn (L&L) series. Five topics were identified with experts in our industry. Topics and presenters included:

- **Protecting Crop Yields with Integrated Weed Management Update:** **Dr. Christy Sprague**, *Michigan State University*
- **CropLife America Federal Update:** **Stephanie Pizzoferrato**, *Director of State Government Relations;* **Brian Glenn**, *Senior Manager Government Relations team;* and **Josie Montoney-Crawford**, *Federal Government Relations team*
- **State Association Update:** **Steve Taylor**, *Executive Director, MO-AG;* **Grace Howe**, *Executive Director, Wisconsin Agri-Business Association;* **Bruce Kettler**, *President & CEO, Indiana Agribusiness Council;* and **Julie Kenney**, *CEO, Agribusiness Association of Iowa.* Hosted by **Randy Stookey**, *JD, IOM, Sr. Vice President Government Affairs & General Counsel, Kansas AgriBusiness Retailers Association.*
- **Safety: Building Awareness and Prevention** – **Kerry Stevenson, Brian Ahrens** and **Johnny Jay** with *Nufarm*
- **Making Work Optional: Brad Alliger** with *Alliger Financial.*

The eleven recipients of the Young Leader Scholarship Program Class of '25 have been announced. Please join me in congratulating them and welcoming them to the MACA Annual Meeting.

For me, MACA is about the members – people like you who are reading this. It's a great opportunity to work on industry issues together as well as assist with the educational programs which MACA offers. We can be proud of the programs we have and welcome your thoughts and suggestions. I hope you'll join us at the 2025 MACA Annual Meeting in Kansas City!

Mike

Mike Lehman
2024-2025 President
MichaelL@AMVAC.com; Cell: 317-403-7355

MACA 2025 ANNUAL MEETING

PROGRAM

Tuesday, September 2, 2025

2-6:00 PM	**Registration Desk Open**
3:00 PM	**Welcome: *President*, Michael Lehman**
3:10 PM	**Awards Presentation**: Educator of the Year
3:20 PM	**Keynote Presentation: AI Technology and Shaping Agriculture** **Elizabeth Fastiggi** *Chief Product Officer, Idealyst Innovation*
3:50 PM	**BREAK**
4:00 PM	**Dean Roy Award Presentation**
4:10 PM	**Industry Panel "Critical Collaboration in Agriculture"** **Ryan Morris,** *River Valley Agronomy Center Manager – MFA, Higgansville, MO* **Jami Loecker,** *Agronomy Service Manager West Heartland Customer Unit, Syngenta, Manhattan KS area.* **Kevin Cox,** *Grower, Brazil, IN*
5:10 PM	**Developing Professionals:** Class of 2025 Introduction
5:30 PM	**Young Leader Scholarship Program (YLSP)** Class of 2025 Q&A
6-7:00 PM	**President's Reception**

Wednesday, September 3, 2025

Day reserved for confidential business meetings. For those not involved, see the options below.

Developing Professional Meeting

Young Leader Scholarship Program Speed Networking

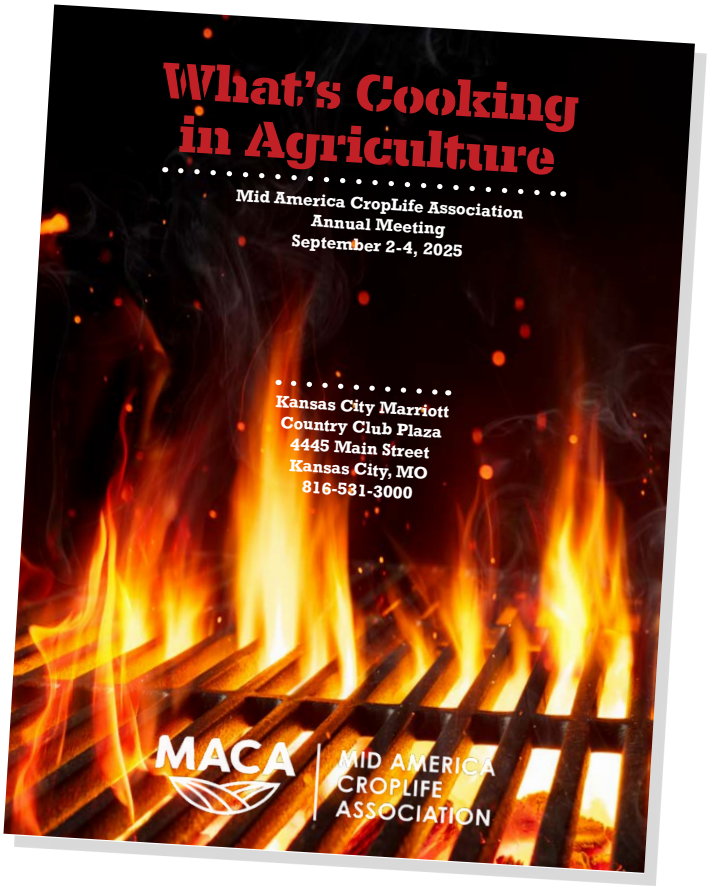
TOUR The KC Barbeque Experience

Team Building Event:*$150 per person*

12:30 PM	**Transportation Departs for Museum of BBQ**
1:00-2:15 PM	**Museum of BBQ** *2450 Grand Blvd, Suite 231, Kansas City, MO. 64108*
2:30 PM	**Walk or Trolley Ride to Jack Stack BBQ**
3-6:00 PM	**Jack Stack BBQ: Dine and Discussion with Pit Master** *101 West 22nd Street, #300, Kansas City, MO 6410*
6:00 PM	**Transportation Back to Hotel**
7-8:30 PM	**MACA Reception - Hosted by the MACA Committees** *This is a new and fun event hosted by our MACA Committee Members. Join us for fellowship and networking to learn more about our committees and opportunities for you with MACA! All are invited to attend!*

Thursday, September 4, 2025

7 - 7:45 AM	**Breakfast Buffet**
7:30 - 8 AM	**MACA Annual Meeting of Members**
8:00 AM	**Opening Comments: Vice President, Aaron Deardorff,** *Commercial Unit Head, East Heartland at Syngenta*
8:10 AM	**Industry Vision Award**
8:20 AM	**Members' Report: Rodney Schmidt,** *MACA Executive Director*
8:30 AM	**Break**
8:45-10:15 AM	**Critical Issues Facing Members – 2024 Election and New Trump Administration** *The panelists will share their unique perspectives on the Trump Administration, State Policies, and the impact on our industry.* **Industry Panel** **Val Dolcini**, *Head, Public Affairs North America, Sygenta* **Harrison Pittman**, *Director, National Agriculture Law Center* **Ron Seeber,** *President and CEO Kansas Agribusiness Retailers Association*
10:15 AM	**Closing Comments** Aaron Deardorff, MC
10:30 AM	**Adjourn**



Ryan Morris

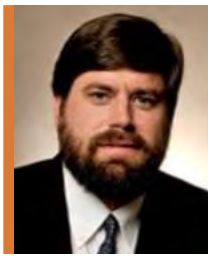
Jami Loecker

Kevin Cox

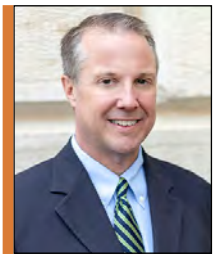
MUSEUM OF BBQ

FIORELLA'S JACK STACK BARBECUE

Val Dolcini



Harrison Pittman



Ron Seeber

Register Here: **https://maca.org** Then Click on Register Now

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

MACA is looking for nominations for awards, which will be presented at the Annual Meeting and the Board of Directors.

Submit your nominees for the annual **Educator of the Year Award** and the **Industry Vision Award**. Recognize someone you have worked with to educate the industry on the benefits of crop protection products. In 2024, the **Educator of the Year** was **Dr. Christy Sprague**, *Michigan State University*, while in 2023, it was **Eric Snodgrass**, *Nutrien Ag Solutions*.

Industry Vision Award, is presented to a person who has had a distinguished career devoted to promoting and protecting the interests of the entire crop protection industry, and supported American and Midwestern agriculture. The 2024 recipient was **Ben Kaehler**, *Corteva Agriscience*, and in 2023, **Steve Petersen**, *Gowan USA* received the award. Submit your nominee by June 30, 2025. Questions: **rodney@maca.org**.

To nominate someone to serve on the board of directors or as an officer for the board, please contact the Nominating Committee Chair Jaime Yanes by June 30 at **info@maca.org**.

ENJOY A MEMBER BENEFIT

MACA Website Member Information:
free to MACA member companies.

Survey Form for Warehousing of:
Crop Protection Products and Seed
Purposes of this document are to (i) provide assistance in evaluating warehouses' qualifications to receive, store, and ship crop protection products and/or seeds and (ii) identify any areas for improving safety at any such warehouses.

Pesticide Fees Matrix – updated to reflect the current fees charged by the respective 13 Midwestern States for various things. Check it out on the MACA website. It's in the members only area under literature.

Reminder! Be sure to add **rodney@maca.org**, **info@maca.org** and **michelle@maca.org** to your list of contacts! If you change jobs, please let us know so the database can be updated!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

A special welcome to **Kincannon & Reed**, an allied member. Aaron Locker is the contact.

Also special thanks to new allied member **NPW LLC, Inc.** Norm Wagoner is the contact.

Tessenderlo Kerley is a new standard member, with the contact being Ryan Meredith. *Welcome!*

Kincannon & Reed

NPW, LLC

TESSENDERLO Kerley

MACA's Agriculture Academy Grant Program Supports Agricultural Education for K-12 Students

The Mid America CropLife Association (MACA) is committed to educating the next generation about the vital role agriculture plays in our daily lives. Through its Agriculture Academy, MACA aims to support K-12 students by funding educational programs that promote awareness and understanding of agricultural topics. By providing up to $1,000 in grant funding, MACA seeks to empower teachers, schools, and organizations eager to incorporate agriculture into their curriculums but in need of financial support.

The application period for the 2025 school year has now closed, and the grant review committee is currently evaluating the submitted applications. The exciting list of grant recipients will be announced in August 2025, and MACA is looking forward to seeing these innovative projects come to life in classrooms across the region.

For more information about the Agriculture Academy Grant Program or to learn how to apply for future funding, visit **https://ambassador.maca.org/grant-program/** or contact Program Director Michelle Kilper at **Michelle@maca.org**.

Michelle Kilper,
Agriculture Academy, Program Manager
- 314-849-9446
- michelle@maca.org
- https://ambassador.maca.org
- Facebook, search: Agriculture Academy

Our Mission...

To provide scientific based accurate information to the public regarding the safety and value of American agricultural food production by placing agricultural professionals in the classroom of K-12 students in 13 Midwest states.

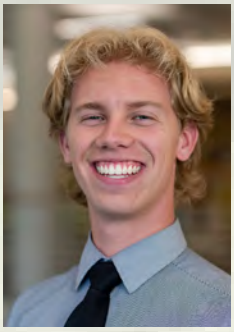
MACA Young Leaders 2025:

Eleven recipients selected for the 2025 YLSP

MACA YOUNG LEADER SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

MACA is proud to announce the 2025 class of recipients for the Young Leader Scholarship Program (YLSP). This year's cohort consists of 11 exceptional students who are pursuing degrees in agriculture-related fields at universities across the region.

The 2025 YLSP recipients, along with their respective universities and fields of study, are:



ILLINOIS

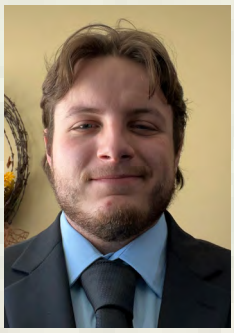
Adam Loker, ***Southern Illinois University - Carbondale***, majoring in Agribusiness Economics with a minor in Agricultural Communications.

KANSAS

Coy Stamm, ***Kansas State University***, majoring in Agronomy-Consulting and Production with a minor in Animal Science and Industry and Agricultural Sales.

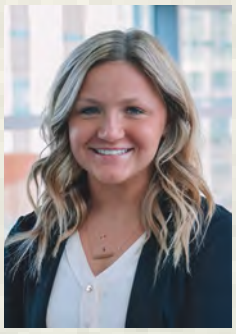
INDIANA

Regan Koester, ***Purdue University***, majoring in Agribusiness with a minor in Agribusiness Management.



MICHIGAN

Blaine Cords, ***Michigan State University***, majoring in Crop and Soil Science with a minor in Agronomy.



IOWA

Kylie Anderson, ***Iowa State University***, majoring in Agricultural Communication and International Agriculture with a minor in Spanish.

MISSOURI

Noah Riley, ***University of Missouri - Columbia***, majoring in Agribusiness.

NEBRASKA

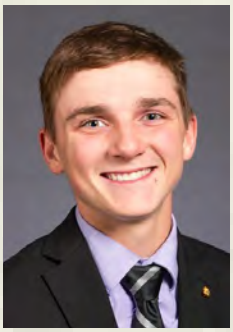
Alexis Bodlak, ***University of Nebraska***, majoring in Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Communications with minors in Public Policy Analysis and Clifton Builders.

NORTH DAKOTA

Haley McClue, ***North Dakota State University***, majoring in Agriculture Communication with a minor in Crop and Weed Science.

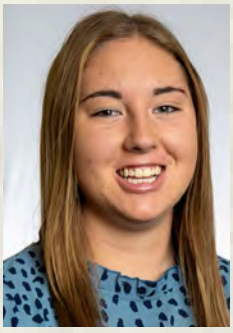
OHIO

Sarah Hoak, ***The Ohio State University***, majoring in Sustainable Agriculture with a minor in Agribusiness.



SOUTH DAKOTA

Kyle Hagen, ***South Dakota State University***, majoring in Agriculture Systems Technology with minors in Ag Business and Precision Ag.



WISCONSIN

Natalie Clemenson, ***University of Wisconsin***, majoring in Dairy Science with minors in Ag Business and Spanish.

As part of their recognition, these students will receive a $2,000 scholarship to assist with college expenses, along with professional development training from MACA members, and networking opportunities with MACA mentors. Additionally, the recipients will attend the MACA Annual Meeting in Kansas City, MO, to further their connection to industry leaders and peers.

The MACA Young Leader Scholarship Program (YLSP) is designed to introduce aspiring agricultural professionals to the crop protection industry and open doors to future career opportunities. Scholarship recipients gain valuable exposure to the industry through networking with MACA members, which can lead to potential job prospects, as well as financial support for their education. In turn, MACA members benefit by cultivating a pool of emerging talent while increasing awareness of MACA's mission and initiatives within participating universities.

For more information about the Young Leader Scholarship Program, visit **https://maca.org/young-leader-scholarship-program/** or contact Program Director, Michelle Kilper at **Michelle@maca.org**.

THANKS TO THE 2025 SPONSORS INCLUDING:

Albaugh, LLC
AMVAC
BASF
Bayer Crop Science
Certis Biologicals
FMC
Foster Logistics LLC
Gowan USA, LLC
Green Leaf, Inc.
GROWMARK, INC.
Helm Ago
IEDS Logistics
KALO, Inc.
MFA, Inc.
Morris Bixby Group
Nutrien Ag Solutions
Rosen's Inc.
Syngenta Crop Protection, Inc.
Valent USA Corporation

MACA NOVEMBER QUARTERLY MEETING

A

B

C

D

A. Officers and MACA Members at the meeting.

B. Immediate Past President Jaime Yanes and Board Member Steve Sloan.

C. Jay Morris, Morris Bixby Group, Norm Wagoner, NPW LLC, Inc. and Kent Thompson, Helm Agro.

D. President Lehman, back row, second from left, and Michelle Kilper, front row right, and participating members from the Education Committee Meeting.

E. Jay Morris, Morris Bixby Group and Kent Thompson, Helm Agro.

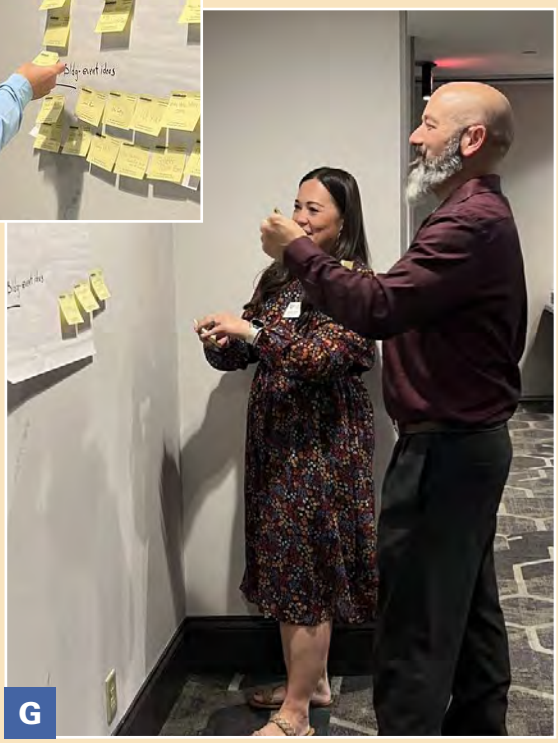
F. Board Member, Drew Ratterman during a planning session at the meeting.

G. Vice President Deardorff and Michelle Kilper, MACA Staff during a planning session.

H. Vice President Aaron Deardorff and Dillon Gabbert, CLA Director of State Regulatory Affairs.

I. President Lehman, Annual Meeting Committee Chair Scott Stout, Immediate Past President Jaime Yanes, and Membership & Meetings Committee Chair Matt Wagner.

J. President Lehman and Dillon Gabbert, CLA Director of State Regulatory Affairs.



DEVELOPING PROFESSIONALS MEMBER INFO

MACA's Developing Professionals Program Empowers the Next Generation of Agricultural Leaders

MACA is proud to highlight the continued success of the Developing Professionals Program, a cornerstone initiative designed to nurture and empower the next generation of agricultural professionals. Created for individuals in the early stages of their careers, the program delivers a comprehensive mix of professional development, industry insights, and networking opportunities—equipping participants with the tools needed to thrive in the evolving ag industry.

Building the Skills That Matter
A core element of the program is the development of essential soft skills. Through interactive workshops and one-on-one mentorship, participants strengthen their leadership, communication, and teamwork abilities—key competencies for long-term success in any professional setting.

Deepening Industry Knowledge
Participants also gain valuable insights into the crop protection and agricultural sectors. Expert-led sessions dive into current industry trends, challenges, and innovations, offering attendees—whether new to the field or seeking to expand their expertise—a well-rounded understanding of the ag landscape.

Connecting with Industry Leaders
Networking is another vital component of the program. Participants are invited to engage with MACA's extensive network of professionals at events like the Annual Meeting and Quarterly Meetings. These connections often lead to new opportunities, collaborations, and mentorships that support continued career growth.

Investing in Future Leadership
The Developing Professionals Program goes beyond training—it encourages participants to become active contributors to MACA and the broader ag community. By taking part, individuals are not only building their careers but also positioning themselves as future leaders who will shape the direction of the industry.

For more information on how to participate in or support MACA's Developing Professionals Program, visit **https://maca.org/developing-professionals/** or contact Executive Director, Rodney Schmidt at **rodney@MACA.org**.

Nominate A Developing Professional for the 2026 Program

Nominations are requested for the Developing Professional (DP) program.

The virtual training sessions are designed to develop soft skills of the DP to help them better understand the industry, be more effective and efficient in doing their job.

The target group for identifying a Developing Professional would be to have at least 4 years in the industry but no more than 7 years in the industry. Basic/post patent representative, distribution salespeople and other marketing and sales types are encouraged to participate in the program.

Tentative topics for the class include:

Self-Evaluation

Mentoring

Work/Life Balance

Strategic Thinking

Leadership Skills

Final session will be determined for the 2026 MACA Annual Meeting

Class participants are required to attend the 2025 MACA Annual Meeting to learn more about MACA and participate in a special event on Tuesday evening, and Wednesday morning's leadership panel and orientation. The Developing Professionals will be required to attend the 2026 MACA Annual Meeting for their final session.

Participants will be required to register for the 2025 and the 2026 MACA Annual Meetings, reserve their hotel room at the MACA hotel site, and make their own travel arrangements.

The nomination form is available on the MACA website and by clicking on this link **"MACA Developing Professionals Class of 2026 Nomination Form".**

Please submit names from your company by August 1, 2025, to **rodney@maca.org** to participate.

EXECUTIVE REPORT

Rodney Schmidt
Executive Director

The first five months of 2025 have been filled with in-depth meetings with Bonnie, the Officers and the Board as I began my new role as MACA Executive Director. With that said, I have learned a lot and am totally humbled and honored to be working for MACA and with an outstandingly talented, dedicated and outgoing membership.

When I think of Midwest Agriculture and the Farmers who dedicate their lives to world food production, two phrases immediately come to mind, those being, "Good Soil" and "Good Seed". The Members of MACA play a critical role in collaborating with the Farmers to steward the soil and produce the safest, highest quality and most abundant crops from the good seeds planted and fed each year.

The MACA strategic plan and initiatives further strengthens our members efforts throughout the 13 State coverage area which includes CO, IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, ND, OH, SD, WI.

Below is a short-list I put together highlighting all the services & benefits MACA provides to the members and the US Agricultural Industry.

Centered with Partner Organizations

- Key legislative Issues
- Decision Makers

Development of:

- Young Leader Scholarship Program (YLSP)
- Developing Professionals Program (DP)

Education:

- Agriculture Academy (Grant Based assistance to teachers, schools and organizations which are eager to teach agricultural topics ….. also, in-class presentations by our Ag Ambassadors)

Lunch & Learn Sessions

- Monthly or bi-monthly one-hour virtual sessions with an industry expert open to all employees of member companies.

Personal & Professional Connections:

- Networking
- Annual Meeting
- Quarterly Meetings
- Service on Board, Executive Committee and Officers

Partnership with:

- MO-AG…Missouri Agribusiness Assc. (Andrea Rice of MO-AG is the MACA Water Consultant and sits in on FWQC – Fed Water Quality Coalition meetings to monitor issues….provides monthly Water Update)
- State Associations (Randy Stookey of KARA is the Board Representative for the 13 State Associations within the MACA coverage area. Provides periodic updates from this group)
- CLA – CropLife America - representation at MACA meetings
- TPSA – The Pesticide Stewardship Alliance

Much, much more….

MACA is a team of dedicated professionals collaborating together on these strategic priorities to ensure all of us are ready to tell our story throughout the industry and to others.

All of this is done because of the work of the committee members, chairs & vice chairs, along with the MACA Board of Directors. This is a committed group who get the job done as they understand the value of MACA and the benefits it provides to them.

Plan to join me for the annual MACA gathering... the 2025 MACA Annual Meeting in September in Kansas City, Missouri. Current and future issues will be addressed by robust speakers, along with the new "KC Barbeque Experience" will make for an outstanding program you won't want to miss!

MACA
MID AMERICA CROPLIFE ASSOCIATION

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President Michael Lehman
Vice President Aaron Deardorff
Secretary/Treasurer Matt Lawrence
Immediate Past President Jaime Yanes
Executive Director/Editor Rodney Schmidt

KEY MEETING DATES

November 12-13, 2025
MACA Quarterly Meetings

September 8-10, 2026
MACA Annual Meeting

The crew out for a cutting-edge team building activity.

Past President Matt Ewers – perfect focus!!!

Immediate Past President, Jaime Yanes on target for 2025!!!