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Happy Holidays

# CASNR Chronicle

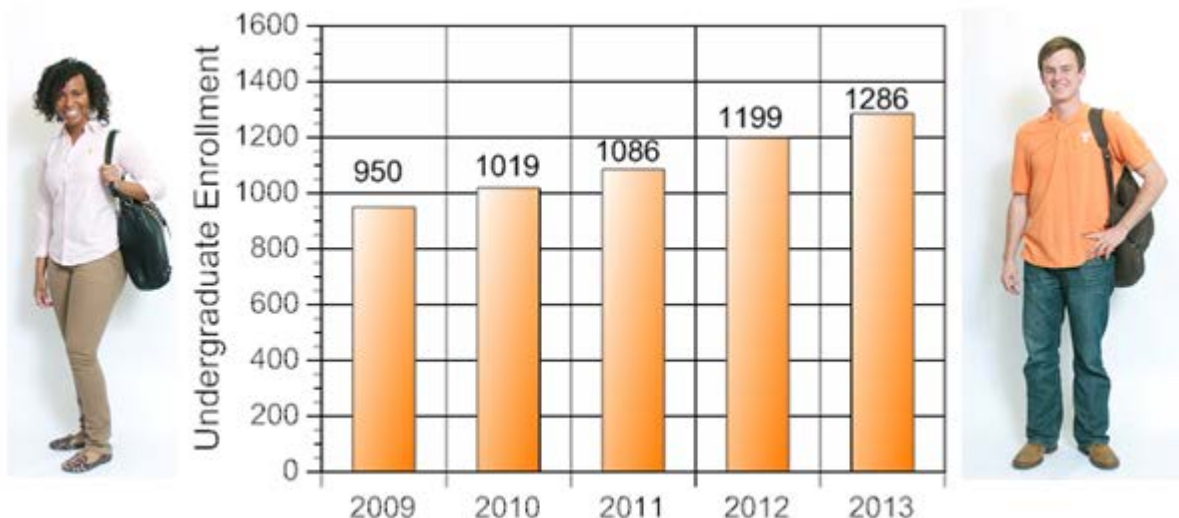
Fall 2013

The fall semester is almost at an end and it seems as if it just started yesterday. It has been a very exciting time with our Career Fair, our first Construction Career Fair, our first International Fair, AgDay festivities, the Halloween mixer, CASNR scholarship banquet, and a host of outstanding student achievements. This semester was also marked by the loss of a valued colleague, John Riley. As we celebrate the holiday season, we are thankful for our talented students, dedicated staff, and exceptional faculty!

*Caula Beyl, Dean*

## CASNR Enrollment Continues to Climb

CASNR continues to be a destination of choice for students, and undergraduate enrollment has increased more than 7% from 1199 to 1286 students. Nationally, enrollment growth at many universities has stalled and even declined; even for community colleges that had experienced quite a bit of growth during the tougher economic times of the last several years.



In a December 2013 article titled "Colleges Cope with Shrinking Pool of Students," the St. Louis Post attributes the declines to a "demographic shift that's churning out smaller high school graduating classes." Universities and community colleges are recruiting more aggressively and creatively as a result and are looking at surrounding states as a potential source for incoming students.

The article also indicates that "People want a return on their investment." We have noted that students and their families are paying attention to availability of jobs and job security, availability of scholarships, and whether the advising is effective in keeping the student in school and on time to graduate. On the question of whether or not an agricultural degree will be needed in the future, one student in CASNR was overheard to say, "Everyone eats, don't they? If that's not job security, what is?"

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## Dean's Scholars – Class of 2017

Just prior to the start of the fall semester, 16 specially selected CASNR Dean's Scholars attended a retreat at Camp Wesley Woods where they bonded, engaged in confidence building exercises (such as the trust-fall), worked on team building, discussed the "Life of the Mind" book, and designed a custom logo to represent their group. This year's class, our third since starting the program, developed the slogan,

"Find Your Direction," and used a compass to represent themselves.



CASNR Dean's Scholars are expected to engage in undergraduate research, take honors classes, and have been very active in service and international activities. Dean's Scholars have been on study or research trips to Jamaica, Switzerland, and Belize, and others have had semester long experiences in Costa Rica, New Zealand, China, and Sweden.

## Second Group of Farm Credit Scholars Chosen

Last year, Farm Credit Mid-America launched a specialized program with the UT Institute of Agriculture that would provide scholarships, mentoring, internships, and travel opportunity to a select group of students who are interviewed and chosen only after a very competitive process. Five students were selected last year and this year, another five have successfully joined the ranks of Farm Credit Scholars. They are (from left to right) Landon Cameron, Maegan Cantrell, Tanner Pritchett, Tracy Taylor, and Tori Bryant. Pictured with the scholars is John Riley, who served as the program administrator. With the loss of Riley this September, Delton Gerloff, head of the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, is now serving as the program administrator.



## CASNR Ag Ambassador Retreat

The CASNR Student Ambassadors are a group of select CASNR students who serve the college, its student body and their community by recruiting prospective students, representing and supporting the college, and promoting public awareness of agricultural opportunities.

On August 19, the Ambassadors traveled to the Clyde Austin 4-H Center in Greeneville, Tenn., for a two-day retreat to prepare them for the upcoming academic year with team-building activities and training sessions on how to represent CASNR in the most positive light and recruit students all across the state of Tennessee. Second- and third-year ambassadors put together presentations and materials as teaching aids for the new ambassadors. All Ambassadors learn about majors and minors offered in the college, clubs and organizations students can get involved in, how to give a campus tour to a prospective student, how to participate in a college fair, and how to be an asset for the current CASNR student body as a wealth of information.

Another key aspect of the retreat was the team-building activity time. Ambassadors participated in ice breakers and team-building exercises in order to bond with the group.

### CASNR Ambassadors (2013-14)

Ashlee Ailshie  
Kemia Amin  
Michael Barnes  
Evan Betterton  
Ariel Buehler  
Adam Boucher  
Alyssa Clements  
Forrest Duncan  
Kendra Flynn  
Will Freeman  
Sarah Hargrove  
Paige Jared  
Sarah Macarro  
Billy Rochelle  
Belina Sengmanyvong  
Shelby Summarell  
R.A. Warden  
Dalton Wayman  
Brittney Woods



One of the favorite team-building activities was canoeing together at the 4-H campgrounds. It gave the Ambassadors a chance to get to know each other in a relaxed setting and practice their response to unexpected challenges, such as an overturned canoe!



After the retreat, Ambassadors are ready to tackle anything — college fairs, campus tours and events!



## CASNR Career Fair Was a Success!

On a beautiful fall day (Oct. 2), at the 29<sup>th</sup> annual CASNR Career Fair, nearly 400 students took advantage of the opportunity to visit with representatives of organizations offering internships and job opportunities, including AgriGold Hybrids, ConAgra Foods, Farm Credit Mid-America, Novozymes, Pictsweet, Pilgrim's Corporation, Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service, Syngenta, Tennessee Farmer's Cooperative, Tosh Farms, and Tyson Foods. Several nonprofit organizations, such as Appalachia Cares, Peace Corps, and Shangri-La Therapeutic Academy of Riding (STAR), participated as well. Of the students attending, 95% were from CASNR at all levels (19% freshmen, 18% sophomores, 18% juniors, 34% seniors, 8% master's, and 3% doctoral students). Two student groups, Sigma Alpha Professional Agricultural Sorority and the Poultry Club, cooked and served meals for the company representatives at the fair as well other faculty, staff, and students as a fundraiser for their groups. Many compliments were received from company representatives regarding the quality and preparedness of our students.



## First CASNR Construction Career Fair

The first CASNR Construction Career Fair and Information session was held Oct. 10, 2013, in Hollingsworth Auditorium. This fair was designed to connect regional construction industry representatives with University of Tennessee students for summer job, internship, and career opportunities in construction.

Thirteen organizations registered for the fair, including Ball Homes, Blaine Construction Corporation, Construction Specifications Institute, EMJ Construction Chattanooga, Johnson & Galyon Construction, Merit Construction, Messer Construction Company, Noland Plumbing Company, Professional Engineers Inc., Rentenbach Constructors Inc., Star Construction LLC, Steve Ward & Associates, and The InSite Group.

At least six students report accepting offers of part-time work, multiple cycle co-op assignments, and at least one full-time job offer resulted.



## Curtis Bivens from AgriGold Hybrids Visits Classrooms

While attending the CASNR Career Fair, Curtis Bivens, Regional Sales Manager for AgriGold Hybrids, had some positive comments about the students he saw at the fair. He also had some advice for some of the students on improving professionalism.



Bivens made arrangements through

UT Career Services to return to campus in November to conduct interviews with interns. Students were able to submit resumes and sign up for interviews via the Hire-A-Vol system. Due to his interest in our students and his desire to see CASNR students make the best impressions, he was invited to speak to three student groups while on campus. His presentations to Sigma Alpha Professional Agricultural Sorority, NAMA/Agribusiness Club, and the Block and Bridle Club included information on the history of AgriGold Hybrids and opportunities in the company as well as expert tips for enhancing the professional impact of their resumes, developing memorable interview skills, and understanding what is meant by professional conduct at career fairs or other similar events.

For resumes, his suggestions included focusing on what you have done, quantifying results, and including leadership experiences. With interviews, he stressed that the first impression is absolutely critical. He stated that students should have examples of leadership, teamwork, and work ethic; know their strengths and weaknesses; and ask good questions. He also recommended that students prepare for career fairs by researching companies, taking copies of well-edited resumes, and dressing professionally.

As part of CASNR's 2020 Strategic Plan, alumni and employers are often invited back to campus to share with students their perspectives and expertise about the professional workplace. We value their input on our curriculum and their impressions of our graduates.

### *Additional Advice from Ken Bivens*

*Don't let a textbook get in the way of a true college education! Gain experience.*

*It is not what you know, but who you know! Build a network.*

*Protect your driving record and your reputation. They will follow you the rest of your life!*

*Most dreams don't work because people don't.*

*Find your passion ... and follow it. If you do, you'll never "work" a day in your life!*

## CASNR Has First International Fair

CASNR held its first Study Abroad Fair on Oct. 23 to offer information on our four short-term programs running in mini-term or summer, as well as semester abroad opportunities with seven international universities that are good matches for CASNR students. International Mentors (students with study abroad experience) and faculty were available to answer student questions as well as a representative from the Programs Abroad Office in the Center for International Education. Approximately 50 students took advantage of this chance to better understand a wide array of study abroad opportunities available to CASNR students.



Dave Ostermeier points out a location in Australia to Justice Owens, an Animal Science student.

## CASNR Students Complete Summer Research in China

This summer, UT undergraduates and Haslam Scholars Kenna Rewcastle and Imani Chatman spent six weeks in Shenyang, China, completing a soil science research project funded by the National Science Foundation (PI Jie Zhuang) at the Institute of Applied Ecology within the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Looking back, the students are quick to conclude that they brought back much more than just a better understanding of soil respiration and conservation tillage practices, both important for adaptation to climate change and agricultural sustainability.

Shortly after landing at the Shenyang Airport, Rewcastle and Chatman attended a China-US joint workshop on the Biogeochemistry of Carbon and Nitrogen, at which CASNR professors Mark Radosevich and Sean Schaffer shared the conference's program with American scientists from UT and ORNL, as well as many Chinese scientists from the Chinese Academy of Sciences and Shenyang Agricultural University. The workshop was organized by the China-US EcoPartnership for Environmental Sustainability and the China-US Joint Research Center for Ecosystems and Environmental Change, with sponsorship by the National Natural Science Foundation of China and the United States National Science Foundation.



While spending late nights in the institute's laboratory monitoring soil respiration curves with several graduate student collaborators, the UT students were struck by how overwhelmingly similar their lives, values, and aspirations were. Qin Qin and Qiufeng Xu, both graduate students at the Institute of Applied Ecology, taught Rewcastle and Chatman various techniques used in soil science research and shared the Chinese perspective and education. "The Chinese graduate students welcomed us into their labs, their culture, and their lives. The patience and generosity that I was shown will forever stand as a model for me as I pursue opportunities for intercultural collaboration in the future," said Rewcastle. Their six weeks in China culminated with a formal presentation of the research that they had completed and a short lecture on their lives as undergraduates in the US.

## West Tennessee FFA Students Visit CASNR

On Saturday, Nov. 23, roughly 120 prospective students, parents, and agricultural educators from West Tennessee visited the University of Tennessee to learn about opportunities in undergraduate education with CASNR. The visit was organized by CASNR's own Peyton Graham working with West Tennessee agricultural educators who desire to help send more students from the region to us to pursue their education. Many students who live in West Tennessee are not exposed to UT-Knoxville, and think that becoming a Volunteer is an impossible dream.



The students toured the Ag Campus and the College of Veterinary Medicine in addition to attending the UT vs. Vanderbilt football game and enjoying a meal provided by the college. The students were divided by their major interest and heard from departmental faculty in these smaller groups while on the Ag Campus.

## CASNR Halloween Mixer

On Wednesday Oct. 23, CASNR held its annual Halloween Mixer sponsored by the CASNR Dean's Office and the college's Ambassadors. The event was held for the first time in the impressive renovated Brehm Animal Science Arena.

One of the events during the mixer, which featured food, fun, and a cake walk, was the costume contest. Ty Roper, 4 year-old son of David and Jennifer Roper, demonstrates his winning moves (right) as a very realistic scarecrow during the costume contest.



## Mitch Baker Elected National FFA Secretary



Mitch Baker, an agricultural leadership, education and communications student in the UT College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, has been elected secretary of the national FFA organization. Students from Virginia, Tennessee, Alabama, Iowa, West Virginia and Oregon have been elected by delegates to the organization's national convention to serve on the 2013-14 national FFA officer team.

National officers commit to a year of service to the National FFA

Organization. Each travels more than 100,000 national and international miles to interact with business and industry leaders, thousands of FFA members and teachers, corporate sponsors, government and education officials, state FFA leaders, the general public, and more. The team will lead personal growth and leadership training seminars for FFA members throughout the country and help set policies that will guide the future of FFA and promote agricultural literacy.

## Ariel Buehler Receives Prestigious Research Fellowship

The American Society for Microbiology (ASM) selected Ariel Buehler, a food science and technology senior in CASNR and a 2010 Haslam scholar, to receive a 2013 ASM Undergraduate Research Fellowship.

Of this year's 138 applicants, 37 students received awards. Each fellow will receive up to a \$4,000 stipend, a two-year ASM student membership and funding for travel expenses to the ASM Capstone Institute and 114<sup>th</sup> ASM General Meeting. If their abstract is accepted, award recipients also may present their research results at the 114<sup>th</sup> ASM General Meeting, which will be held in 2014 in Boston, Mass.



Drs. David Golden and Faith Critzer from the Department of Food Science and Technology are Buehler's mentors. The title of Buehler's research project is Microgreens: Use of Green Fluorescent Proteins to Evaluate Survival of Shiga Toxigenic *Escherichia coli* (STEC). Microgreens are a new specialty salad green and garnish that are being utilized in the high-end dining community. Due to their novelty, little is known about the survival of foodborne pathogens, such as *Escherichia coli* O157:H7, in the plant. Buehler's research aims to determine where the risk for *E. coli* contamination is highest in the microgreen plant by evaluating the survival of *E. coli* O157:H7 in microgreens as well as utilizing fluorescent microscopy to visualize colonization of *E. coli* O157:H7 in the plant.

Buehler is the daughter of UT professor of wildlife science David Buehler and Beth Buehler of Knoxville. She attended Farragut High School. In 2012 she was also named as a Barry M. Goldwater Scholar, a national award.

## CASNR Student Attends Youth Ag Summit in Canada

In August, James Swart attended the Global Youth Ag Summit held in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, sponsored by Bayer Crop Science and 4-H Canada. Swart was one of 20 youth from the United States selected to attend and one of 120 total attendees.

The focus of the summit revolved around the issue of feeding the world's growing population, which is expected to reach 9 billion by the year 2050. Participants were divided into groups to create an action plan that would help solve this problem. On the final day of the conferences, each group presented their work and the delegation selected one central theme to carry out in their community. Swart was selected to be one of only nine presenters and communicated about the science of aquaponics as a solution to the growing issue of food security.

In addition to working in their groups, the attendees also had the opportunity to tour different agriculturally based facilities in the Calgary area, including John Deere, C&L Ranch, and Altagenetics. Each day, the delegates were joined by speakers from across Canada who spoke about their companies and what they were doing in the areas of sustainability, innovation, and leadership in the agricultural world.



## Turf Students Sod the Rock

Turf students took the opportunity to show their pride by sodding the rock during homecoming weekend. Standing in front of the rock are Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Alumni Officer Lee Patouillet, Chancellor Jimmy Cheek, and Provost Susan Martin.

Martin praised the turf program for its “enviable record of 100% placement in the last decade.” The employment record is perhaps aided by the program’s aggressive placement of students in summer internships nationally and globally. Its students have been successful in garnering prestigious scholarships, such as the one awarded recently to Mark Follis, who earned the Ernest Hardison Memorial Scholarship offered through the Tennessee Turfgrass Association. A slogan of the program is “Careers That Never Stop Growing!”



## UT's Wildlife Society Quiz Bowl Team Takes Third Place

Competing against 16 colleges from around the country, UT's Quiz Bowl Team earned third place against stiff competition on Oct. 8<sup>th</sup> at The Wildlife Society's 20<sup>th</sup> Annual National Conference in Milwaukee, Wis.

Founded in 1937, The Wildlife Society (TWS) is a nonprofit association dedicated to excellence in wildlife stewardship. Its Quiz Bowl is the much-anticipated main event where students come to show off their knowledge of wildlife, conservation, disease, human dimensions and much more. Teams, including UT Knoxville, take the Quiz Bowl very seriously and spend many months practicing, hoping to be the best wildlife Quiz Bowl team in the nation.

"We worked hard to prepare for this event, and it paid off. Go Vols!" cheered Andrew, team captain.

Upon returning to Knoxville, Tenn., from the TWS Conference, the Quiz Bowl Team took only a small study break then picked up their books and notes to continue studying for the Southeastern Wildlife Conclave, where they will once again compete in a Quiz Bowl tournament.

The Quiz Bowl Team is an important function of the student chapter of The Wildlife and Fisheries Society and is coached by Max Cox. College Advisors include David Buehler, Emma Willcox, and Chris Graves.

With a little more preparation and continued hard work, this team could very well be the best in the Southeast, and they will have a shot at the national title again in Pittsburg, Penn., in 2014.



UT Quiz Bowl team standing proudly in front of the Wildlife Society logo after a third place win. From left: Ravin Thomasson, Ariel Elliot, Nathan Wilhite, Jared Chrisp, Andrew Isenhower and Alex Jackson.

## CASNR Living Learning Community Paints the Rock

On Oct. 1, 35 intrepid members of CASNR's Living Learning Community rose very early to show their dedication and support for agriculture.

These creative students painted the rock, rendering a very credible image of a dairy cow with a slogan, "No Udder Like It."



## Grand Champion Science Fair Winner Works on Flies

On Oct. 7, Mary Marlino, a fifth grader at North Middle School in Lenoir City, Tenn., and daughter of Kimberly Campbell, won first place in her school competition and then was awarded grand champion in the third to fifth grade experiments category in the Loudon county science fair with a project titled "The Fly Trap." For Mary, being able to talk with the judges passionately about her project was a particular victory. When she was only four, she suffered a life trauma that resulted in her not being able to talk. Where traditional therapy proved ineffective, therapeutic riding lessons at the Shangri La Therapeutic Academy of Riding (STAR) gave Mary an outlet to interact with animals and volunteers in a safe environment. The volunteers at STAR helped her not only to build riding skills, but also develop courage, knowledge of horses, and a sense of accomplishment. Last year, Mary found her voice again. With inspiration and guidance from



Becky Trout-Fryxell and supplies from Kevin Moulton (two faculty members in Entomology and Plant Pathology), Mary set out to discover how long you could safely allow horse manure to sit before the emerging stable fly population exceeded the adult population. Her project involved collecting four samples of horse manure at different exposure stages, trapping, and identifying the flies. Mary's love for science and her compassion for horse health are inspiring her to work someday with large animals and veterinary research.

## Seventh Annual Buggy Buffet

The seventh annual Insect Smorgasbord/Buggy Buffet was held on Nov. 7 on the Ag Campus and nearly 300 people attended. In our culture, insects might not sound appetizing, but they are actually a large part of the diet for many people in other parts of the world and could help feed an expanding global population. The menu featured a number of dishes in which insects were the main course. Past recipes have included Cricket Stir Fry, Grasshopper Cookies and the Buglogna Sandwich, which is fried bologna covered in mealworms. This event is co-sponsored by the students in Dr. Jerome Grant's Freshman Seminar class (A Bug's Life, FYS 129) and the Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology. Grant is actively involved in several outreach programs in addition to the Insect Smorgasbord, such as the Insect Zoo, Cricket Spittin' Event on AgDay and the Butterfly House, all of which provide entomological appreciation, fun and education. Grant says, "This is a great way to showcase the importance of insects as food throughout the world. BUGS RULE!"



## Sigma Alpha Wins Awards at National Convention

Ten members of the UT Theta chapter of Sigma Alpha Agricultural Sorority participated in the National Convention, Oct. 17-19, in San Diego, Calif. The convention included dynamic speakers from very diverse backgrounds and professional development breakout sessions covering topics such as learning how to communicate your passion for agriculture, balancing work and life, and money management.



The UT chapter received multiple awards at the convention including first place for Outstanding Leadership (Alyssa Clements), Website, Scrapbook, and Attendance. Sarah Howard, Theta President, received the second place award for Outstanding Senior. Third place awards went to Emily Gray for Outstanding Advisor and to the chapter for Outstanding Sisterhood.

Sarah Howard reported that “we learned a lot and had a great time bonding with each other.” Maggy Greenway was gratified to find out “just how many Sigma Alpha alumni are

successful in the industry.” Macy McGuire stated, “My favorite part about convention was getting to communicate with others from across the nation,” and Sharena Domingo said “I left California even more proud to be an active sister of Sigma Alpha.”

“I learned a few ways to strengthen the bond between the sisters in our chapter and actually hope to implement them very soon!” declared Valencia M. Guein, who returned from the convention inspired with ideas.

The Theta chapter continues to grow and develop at UT. Ideas from the convention are being shared with the group and utilized to strengthen the sorority.

## Brad Collett – Quest Scholar of the Week



Brad Collett, an assistant professor of plant sciences and landscape architecture, was selected Quest Scholar of the Week for Oct. 11, 2013. Collett is a scholar of landscape performance and sustainable planning and design. He recently published “Low-Impact Development: Opportunities for the PlanET Region,” which addresses the Knoxville area's water resources as economic, social, and environmental assets, and details their threatened and impaired status.



## Loss of John Riley

In mid-September, we lost a valued professor and colleague in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, John Riley. He had been a member of the UT faculty since 1995. After serving almost four years as dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, he returned to the classroom, where he taught courses about marketing and sales communications in addition to agricultural economics.

Riley was best known for his advising, with more than 40 undergraduate students under his wing. He was also noted for coaching UT's National AgriMarketing Association (NAMA) student team. He was the longest-serving coach for this competition, and NAMA not only had recognized Riley with an outstanding adviser award, but renamed the award in his honor. Students held a torchlight ceremony to honor his impact on their lives.



## Craig Pickett Joins the Dean's Staff

Craig S. Pickett Jr. joins the dean's staff as its new Coordinator for Student Life and Diversity. In his new role, he will coordinate the CASNR Living Learning Community and serve as the instructor for its course, AGNR 103, as well as teach AGNR 100: Orientation to Studies in Agriculture and Natural Resources. The



Living Learning Community is an academic and student life program that brings together agricultural and natural resources students for shared residential housing and student life experiences with academic study and hands-on learning opportunities. Pickett will also provide leadership of multicultural awareness, inclusivity and student success by coordinating efforts aimed at increasing the recruitment, retention and academic performance of minority students at CASNR.

Pickett comes to CASNR from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, where he served as the career counselor for career development. While at UNCG, he volunteered as a staff adviser and mentor through its Office of Multicultural Affairs Rites of Passage Program and was a service-learning leader through the UNCG Office of Leadership and Service Learning. His background also includes experience in diversity initiatives at Carnegie Mellon University and multicultural affairs at Dennison University.

## Creation of Wetlands on the UTIA Cherokee Woodlot

Wetlands are critical ecosystems for flood control, water filtration, and groundwater recharge and provide habitat for diverse wildlife communities. Recognizing the importance of wetlands, UTIA partnered with UT Knoxville, U.S. Forest Service Center for Wetlands and Stream Restoration, the Clinch River Environmental Studies Organization, and ARCADIS Inc. to construct three wetlands in UTIA's Cherokee Woodlot associated with the UT Knoxville campus.

The goal of the project was not only to increase wetland and engineering research, but also enhance teaching and outreach opportunities for UT students, faculty and staff. The project was orchestrated by Matthew Gray (Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries; FWF), Bobby Simpson (UTIA East Tennessee Research and Education Center), Andrea Ludwig (Biosystems Engineering and Soil Science), and Jenny Retherford (Civil and Environmental Engineering). Students learn best by doing, and the project involved student participation during every step of planning and implementation. First, students performed a topographic survey and soil sampling to identify ideal locations for the wetlands. The wetlands were constructed over three days in November 2013 as part of the UT FWF Fall Camp. Wetland and engineering experts outside of UT (Tom Biebighauser, John Byrd, and Steve Forbes) led construction activities, which provided real-world learning experiences for participating students. After construction, students added woody debris, leaf litter, and a wetland plant seed mix to the depressions to facilitate development of wetland trophic levels once flooded.

The learning isn't ending! Students will have the opportunity to monitor water quality, hydrology, and plant and animal responses to wetland construction. "We hope that these wetlands provide student learning opportunities for many generations," says Gray. The Cherokee Woodlot Wetlands Project can be followed at: <https://ag.tennessee.edu/watersheds/Pages/CherokeeWetlands.aspx>.





From Caula Beyl, John Stier, Angela Berry, Bessie the CASNR Cow, Brent Lamons, Anna Adams, Ashley Carter, Emily Gray, Leann McElhaney, Craig Pickett, and Tammy Pass (clockwise from the bottom), we wish you the very best holiday season and an outstanding upcoming year!

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