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UT CASNR Chronicle

Summer 2013

Summer is traditionally a little bit quieter with many of our students engaging in international experiences, working on research projects, doing internships in their discipline areas, or applying what they have learned in volunteer activities. As we see summer end and the new fall semester start, we celebrate the continuing strong picture for agriculture placement and careers and welcome our incoming freshmen to the family!

Caula Beyl, Dean

CASNR Is a Family Tradition

Each year, we greet incoming freshmen and are eager to get to know them and see them grow over the time that they are with us. On Saturday, Aug. 17, deans had the privilege of having dinner with the parents of some of our incoming freshmen as they were experiencing "move-in day".

Alyssa Hoffer (on the right) with Dean Beyl and parents (on the left) at 'Dinner with the Deans' during move-in day for students. Alyssa is a freshman majoring in animal science and a Dean's Scholar.

Many of our new incoming students are joining CASNR with names that are very familiar. For many, CASNR has become a family tradition! In this next article, we are featuring just two of our many Legacy Families in this edition of the CASNR Chronicle, but we could fill an entire book with the many fine families who have entrusted sons and daughters to us because they themselves came to us for their degrees. For some in Tennessee, coming to CASNR and earning an agricultural degree has become a cherished tradition.

THE UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE INSTITUTE of AGRICULTURE

CASNR Legacies

(contributed by Anna Adams)

Look who's coming to the family reunion – it's CASNR! The College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources has always encouraged a close sense of community among its students, faculty and staff. "We're one big family," says Dean Caula Beyl. "Family is always willing to go the extra mile for family and our students benefit from that closeness." So, it may not be surprising to hear that some members of our CASNR family actually *are* family.

The Hensley Family

Mention the Hensley name in the Agricultural and Resource Economics department and professors will be sure to share fond memories of teaching at least one, if not all four, of the Hensley brothers. Adam Hensley graduated from CASNR in 2007 with a degree in agricultural economics. He also received an MBA and is currently working at Syngenta as a customer campaign lead. Ryan Hensley graduated from CASNR in 2009 with a degree in agricultural economics and then again in 2011 with a dual MBA and MS degree in agricultural economics. Ryan has continued to serve our Institute of Agriculture as executive director of the Tennessee 4-H Foundation. Kevin and Kyle Hensley, twin brothers, both graduated with food and agricultural business degrees in 2012. Kevin serves community farmers as a Farm Bureau regional field service director. Kyle is currently earning an MBA. Three out of the four brothers served our college as CASNR Ambassadors and all had student jobs in Morgan Hall. The family as had an tremendous impact on the Tennessee 4-H program. In 2008, the Hensley family was honored as the William and Ruther Hale Master 4-H Family.

Amy Powell (4H Office) with Greg Hensley and sons Adam, Ryan, Kevin, and Kyle

When asked how all four siblings ended up in the Agricultural and Resource Economics department, Ryan points to his parents. His father, Greg Hensley, graduated from CASNR with both B.S. (1980) and

M.S. (1987) degrees in agricultural mechanization, a precursor to our biosystems engineering technology program. He, along with his wife Debbie (also a UT alum), encourage their boys to continue their education. Furthermore, they instilled in their sons an appreciation and respect for agriculture. Following his father's and older brother's footsteps turned out to be a wise decision for Ryan. He felt that it was the relationships he formed in CASNR that made all of the difference. The student body allowed him to form friendships and connections with people from across the state with similar interests. These connections have been an important part of his success with the 4-H Foundation. Equally important were the personal relationships he formed with his professors. They helped him feel like he wasn't just a number or another student on the roster. "I even invited them to my wedding," said Ryan. And yet, with all of his wonderful CASNR memories, his favorite experience was his first day as a UT student. After attending a biology course with at least other 500 other students, he came over to the agriculture campus for an introductory agricultural economics course. He walked into a small classroom with only 12 other students. He breathed a sigh of relief and realized this was the place for him.

The Jones Family

Dennis Jones has served the Institute of Agriculture for over 22 years. He often jokes that he's had an office in every building on the agriculture campus. Surprisingly, he was a part of our college even before he was one of our students. While earning his undergraduate degree in business, he worked as a lab assistant in the Agricultural Engineering department. This led him to earn a master's degree in agricultural mechanization in 1983. He met his wife, Karen, while doing food engineering research and a graduate assistantship with the Food Science and Technology department. Karen earned her bachelor's and master's degree in food science and technology in 1984 and 1986, respectively. After graduating with her degrees, Karen became a stay-at-home mom, active 4-H volunteer, and middle school Science Olympiad coach. In 2012, she officially joined UTIA as a Food Science Lecturer.

As their three children, Josh, Matthew, and Lynsey, grew up, 4-H became an important part of the Jones family. Participating in 4-H played a major role in encouraging all three children to attend CASNR, along with excellent scholarships and summer internships opportunities. It gave them a comfort level with the campus and our professors. According to Karen, "If anything, 4-H ruined them from considering anything or

anywhere else." Josh's "Dairy Foods" project led to a bachelor's (2009) and master's (2010) degrees in food science and technology. Josh is earning a Ph.D. in food science at Purdue University. Matthew's "engineering and safety science" 4-H project led him to earn a bachelor's degree in environmental and soil science in 2012. He is working as a research assistant in the UT Plant Sciences department. Lynsey *lived* 4-H, serving on both the State and Regional Councils, and participating in a wide variety of projects, including "nutrition, health and fitness." She is following her mother and older brother's footsteps, entering CASNR this fall as a food science and technology student, minoring in food and agricultural business. She was selected as a member of the CASNR Dean's Scholars program, and we are excited to see where her CASNR experience takes her.

When asked what made the CASNR experience so special, Dennis and Karen said students got to know each other very well through events and social activities. They also had a lot of social interactions with faculty including cookouts and intramural sports. "We were all just friends," said Karen. Being members of the UTIA community for so long has also allowed them to see how our college has changed. They both laughed when describing the certainty in which administrators once vowed, "There is no way there will ever be a bridge to main campus." Thankfully, the quality faculty-student relationships have stayed the same. The personal attention Dennis and Karen received when they were students has extended into lifelong friendships with their professors. CASNR professors were approachable in a way not expected at such a large university. Both they and their kids always knew that the CASNR professors would care about their problems and successes. For CASNR professors, "It's not just a job." In fact, this CASNR experience has taught the Jones family to give that same personal attention they received to others. They regularly recruit students to CASNR through social and academic situations, simply by taking an interest in them. It is this exponential service to students that makes CASNR truly exceptional.

Honoring Our CASNR Legacies

Our CASNR family is filled with Legacy Families that we were not able to highlight in this article. In fact, two such families, the Willis family and the Guy family, are related to the Hensley and Jones families, respectively. Many of our CASNR Legacy Families have gone on to do great things for the agricultural community, such as Lacy Upchurch, president of the Tennessee Farm Bureau, and his family. We hope to profile more CASNR Legacy Families in future issues of the CASNR Chronicle. Each CASNR Legacy Family has a unique story, but one truth remains constant. It takes a lot of trust in the CASNR experience to encourage your siblings or children to follow in your academic footsteps. We thank all of our CASNR alumni for that trust and will continue to earn it with each student that walks through our doors.

New Technology Enhanced/Active Learning (TEAL) Classroom

Keeping undergraduate students actively engaged during a long class period is a challenge, and the current trend in "flipped" classrooms encourages activities other than standard lectures. Joanne Logan, associate professor in the department of Biosystems Engineering and Soil Science, leads the way with a special classroom technology grant that has provided the funding to develop a technology enhanced/active learning classroom. The TEAL classroom was funded and opened in January 2011.

Mobile furniture in the TEAL room allows for easy rearrangement of its eight tables and 32 chairs. A portable media cart carries four fully charged Windows® laptops and 12 Ipads. There are four wall-mounted 48-inch monitor/mini-Mac combinations, in addition to a standard instructor workstation/mini-Mac and overhead projector/large screen. The software used (ClassSpot) allows students to share their work and collaborate on the wall-mounted monitors, helping them to learn more effectively by actively participating in the construction of knowledge.

Students study an online mini-lecture before coming to class and then the group embarks on the active learning assignment. For example, a general topic such as dams might be divided into themes such as history, types, societal impacts and downstream effects of dams. A handout provides background information, learning outcomes and expectations, presentation platform, instructions, guided questions, suggested division of labor and time on task and a grading rubric.

Joanne Logan applauds the fact that feedback from students using the TEAL technology has been very positive and has noted an added plus – the average attendance increased by 17 percent once the new instructional format was changed.

Outdoor Classroom Planned for the UT Gardens

Imagine this environment – gentle breeze blowing, sounds of birds singing and warm sunlight all around you. Does this sound like a classroom? For CASNR students, next year this setting will be a real possibility. UT Gardens plans to begin building this outdoor classroom in late fall with plans to finish it by spring semester 2014.

With its timber frame and wood peg construction, the inside will be just as beautiful as the outside and will fit well with the Garden's aesthetic appeal. All of the electrical conduit will be hidden within the bald cypress timbers! This 30- by 40-foot building will be a delightful setting for learning.

Funding for the outdoor classroom was provided by the Friends of the UT Gardens and by CASNR for a total of more than $85,000 for the project. Plans are for the actual construction to begin around the October time frame and be finished for the start of the 2014 spring semester. The primary and most import use for this facility will be as an actual outdoor classroom and venue for professors to bring students. It can also serve as an outdoor meeting or event space for academic departments, faculty, and students. The outdoor classroom is such a beautiful space in an aesthetically beautiful setting that it may also be rented for weddings and other private and community events. We are excited about students actively learning in an environment surrounded by natural beauty!

Farm Credit Scholars Go to Washington, D.C.

Farm Credit Scholars Forrest Duncan, Billy Rochelle, Peyton Graham, John Riley (UTIA Farm Credit Scholar Program administrator), Erin Brinkley, David Lynn (Farm Credit Services), and Ashlee Ailshie in Washington DC

The first class of Farm Credit Scholars, chosen in fall 2012, spent several days in Washington, D.C. as part of their scholar's experience. The visit was fully packed with meetings and the time spent on the trip had very little downtime.

The Farm Credit Scholars program is supported by Farm Credit Mid-America and provides scholarship support for talented students. The recipients of the scholarship take advantage of a specialized curriculum, internship opportunities with Farm Credit, travel opportunities to broaden their understanding of agricultural finances and policy, and mentorship. Within the Institute of Agriculture, they are guided by John Riley, professor in Agricultural and Resource Economics. David Lynn from Farm Credit Services accompanied the five scholars on the trip.

The first evening and second morning was spent with Farm Credit lobbyists so that the scholars could have an understanding of the scope and impact of what they do. Just before lunch on the second day, the scholars met with agricultural legislative assistants from the Tennessee delegation representing congressmen Roe, Desjarlais, Cooper, Fincher, Congresswoman Black and Sen. Lamar Alexander. That afternoon was eventful with a visit to the U.S. to meet the acting deputy secretary, Michael Scuse.

At the beginning of each fall semester, a new cohort of Farm Credit Scholars is chosen after applications and a personal interview before a selection panel. CASNR students truly benefit from such a model program incorporating not only academic excellence but also real world experience.

CASNR Students Attend IAAS World Congress in Chile

The International Association of Students in Agriculture and Related Sciences (IAAS) is a global network of agricultural students with a mission to promote the exchange of experience, knowledge and ideas, and to improve mutual understanding among students all over the world. It is one of the world's largest student organizations and is now represented by 40 countries worldwide. Each year, IAAS holds a World Congress, a global gathering of delegates where participants meet for general assembly and elections, discuss the state of agriculture in our nations, and tour the host country.

This summer, the UT chapter of IAAS got the opportunity to represent the Unites States at the World Congress in Woco, Chile. Over the course of the congress, they visited Santiago, La Serena, and Valparaiso; experienced new cultures; and learned about agriculture with future colleagues from 17 different countries. The congress featured speakers such as the minister of agriculture and discussions on GMOs, water resources, sustainability and the global food crisis. Students toured farms, vineyards, orchards and water reservoirs to learn firsthand how agriculture works in Chile. In March 2012, CASNR was the host of the National IAAS Conference in Knoxville.

Leanne Fowler, a senior in Animal Science, says "The World Congress was a once in a lifetime opportunity to meet students with a common interest in agriculture, experience different cultures and learn about agriculture, both nationally and worldwide. We left Chile with new friends and knowledge from all over the world and are so thankful that CASNR supports their students and fosters learning on a global level."

Learning in Jamaica

Jamaica offers a wealth of opportunities to study not only agriculture, natural resources, and economics, but also to experience the rich culture of the people of Jamaica. Michael Smith, professor in Animal Science, leads students on this exploration of Jamaican agriculture, which includes coffee, bananas, beef cattle, vegetables, poultry, beekeeping and aquaculture. Students who go on this trip are impacted for a lifetime by the experience. In their own words, the students who went on the trip express what it meant to them:

"Bob Marley once said, "Some people feel the rain. Others just get wet." This expression indicates the difference between having a deep and meaningful experience rather than simply being present for an occasion. Not only did I get wet (both literally and figuratively), but I definitely felt the rain during my two weeks in Jamaica on the Study Abroad Tour. Having never been out of the country, the trip was new, exciting and invaluable to me. Though I have been all over the United States and have experienced many different things, leaving the country was completely different. Learning about and observing the culture in Jamaica as well as the agriculture was not only fascinating, but enlightening as well.

Daniel Love - school project in Jamaica

In the beginning, I was unsure of what I would glean from the trip and how it would affect me. However, studying abroad turned out to be well worth the investment as I learned valuable lessons, gained lifelong friends and made new, exciting memories. I will always be grateful for the opportunity to travel there and learn about the agriculture as well as the culture of Jamaica. I will cherish my two weeks in the tropical country because I know that the experience changed me for the better and broadened my outlook of the world. I not only got wet, but I felt the rain as it washed over me and experienced something so spectacular in those two weeks that I will never quite be the same." (Daniel Love, junior in Animal Science)

"By visiting Jamaica, I truly realized that with my undergraduate major there are a plethora of careers in addition to veterinary medicine, which is my goal, that I would enjoy going into after I graduate. It is very easy to sit down in Knoxville behind my computer and say I could do all these different things with my major, but when I actually experienced going through a poultry processing plant, seeing bovine artificial insemination take place and visiting an aquaculture farm, it was possible to experience how much I enjoyed these things. Because of these hands-on opportunities I now feel much more secure in my future career opportunities." (Drew Nix, sophomore in Animal Science)

Learning in Italy

When you reflect on your time in college, can you recall an event that truly changed the way you saw yourself and the world? For 15 lucky UT students, the answer is easy. Garry Menendez, professor in Plant Science, led a study abroad experience for 16 days in May through the iconic and glorious gardens of Italy, as well as the picturesque countryside and numerous large and small cities. The adventure began in Rome and then proceeded through Tivoli, Florence, Tuscany, Cinque Terre, Lago Maggiore, Lago di Como, Verona and finished in breathtaking Venice. This was the seventh such adventure for Garry Menendez, and he has plans to keep the memories coming as he is finalizing an itinerary through Scotland and England for late July and early August 2014.

One student says, “This trip was truly an investment because I gained so much from it. It has been said that you remember the things you do more than the physical possessions you receive or have. Therefore, my trip to Italy was money well-spent because this was surely the trip of a lifetime.”

Menendez mentions that this experience for so many diverse students (12 different majors represented) would not have been possible without the help from the College of Agricultural and Natural Resources and the Department of Plant Sciences. “For a few students, this was their first experience with flying, let alone venturing out of the country. An experience like this really changes lives and how students see not only the world, but more importantly themselves,” Menendez states.

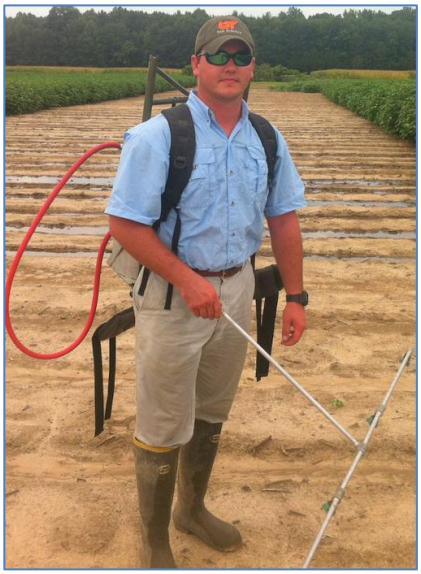
A Few of the Many CASNR Students on Summer Internships

(In their own words)

Cory Vineyard, B.S. in Agricultural and Resource Economics
Summer Internship at Mississippi State University in "High Cotton"

"This past summer I had the opportunity to conduct an internship with Darrin Dodds, the Extension cotton specialist for Mississippi State University. The internship consisted of helping Dodds and Plant Sciences graduate students conduct research on topics that will help cotton farmers throughout Mississippi and the rest of the midsouth. Most of this research was focused on nitrogen levels in conjunction with plant bug populations, the economics of planting cotton vs. soybeans behind wheat, and sprayer tip calibrations for herbicides against Glyphosate–Resistant Palmer Amaranth (pigweed).

I also had to come up with a special project of my own to present during the fall semester back in Knoxville. Since I am a food and agricultural business major, I chose to look at the economics of irrigation and plant growth regulator application in regard to final yield output. I found that the top five profit margins were with dry land cotton and, depending on variety selection, it was more feasible to rely on a certain plant growth regulator application option.



I am planning on going to graduate school after I finish my undergraduate studies and conduct my thesis on an issue with cotton. Being from East Tennessee, this summer was a new and exciting adventure into the world of cotton. With cotton acreage going down each year in the United States, I hope that this research and research conducted in the future will put cotton back on top of the list of commodities grown in this region. I would like to thank Mr. Jim Nunn, Nunn Cotton Co., for his time and the effort that made this internship possible."

Ravin Thomasson (junior studying wildlife) in Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge, Massachusetts

“I will never forget this summer. I actually lived on an island working with endangered bird species. One very special moment was when a technician reached inside the vegetation and pulled out this chick and put it in my hands.

This was the best summer ever! “

Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge is located on the southeasternmost tip of Cape Cod, Mass. The majority of the refuge is comprised of barrier islands that divide Nantucket Sound and the Atlantic Ocean. The refuge works to manage federally protected species, such as the piping plover, roseate tern and other coastal species.

Kemia Amin (senior in Food Science and Technology) at the Cowgirl Creamery

"My time with Cowgirl Creamery exposed me to different areas of the business as well as their hands on approach to organic products and farming sustainability. I had an amazing well-rounded experience, but my main work was in cheese making and food safety. A big part of what I did was help update their HACCP program as well as create and edit prerequisite programs in the food safety program. I identified new critical control points and documented the measuring and monitoring them, all of which go into a food safety and HACCP program. I also updated the training manual with pictures to help cheese making training and reviewing. The pictures are used to instruct and reference proper processes of cheese such as proper wrapping of cheese (where the sticker goes etc.), proper grading of cheese (grading based on appearance, shape, size, and given an A, B, or C), too big vs. too small cheeses, etc.

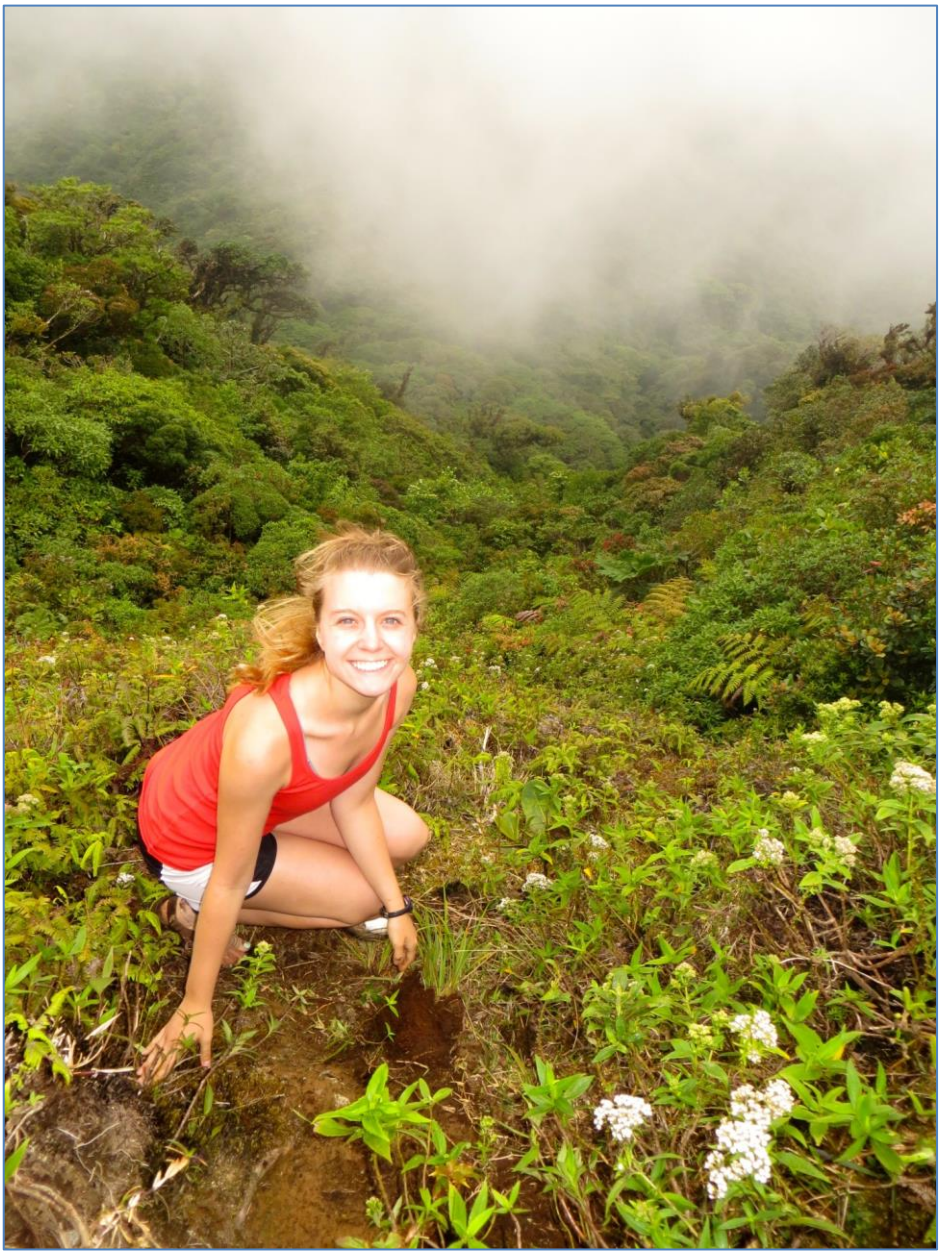
I got so much out of the internship that I sometimes have a hard time explaining the impact it had on me. I came into the internship having basic text understanding of cheese making, but no industry experience. I had never worked on a HACCP plan, let alone knew what had to go into one. There is a course offered that goes into quality control and food safety, but I had not yet had the course. I learned how to do the HACCP program based on the little background I had and my own research in the Cowgirl Creamery office. This experience was beyond learning how to make cheese or learning the ins and outs of food safety; this internship taught me how to be diligent and problem solve on my own. I improved my critical thinking and learned how to multitask many different projects. I was held to a high standard and pushed myself to meet those expectations. This internship taught me a lot that the classroom cannot. I was put in a situation where I had to apply my knowledge as well as learn through experience. This internship has forever impacted my future. I know more about the industry, but most of all I learned more about myself."

Alyssa Clements, senior in Animal Science at the National Pork Board, Clive, IA

"This summer I had the opportunity to work as an intern in the Science and Technology Department of the National Pork Board. I had the opportunity to meet with leading researchers in the swine industry that were presenting new research for the first time that has the chance to greatly improve the industry for all of those involved. I was able to travel to many committee meetings and national industry conventions throughout the Midwest and meet industry leaders and company representatives. I was able to present my own survey research to the National Pork Board Animal Science committee at the end of the summer. The most interesting thing I learned during my internship was the policy and procedure behind every decision made at the National Pork Board."

Alana Burnham (junior in Environmental and Soil Science) in Costa Rica and Minnesota

"Yes, my research experiences, both here in Minnesota and in Costa Rica, are very relevant to my studies at UT. I'm studying environmental and soil sciences, with a concentration in environmental science. I'm interested in how our changing climate is affecting ecosystems and their functioning. I got to see firsthand how climate change is affecting two disparate yet equally vital ecosystems – boreal peatland forest and tropical cloud forest. I fell in love with the rainforest and the unique array of flora and fauna it plays host to. However less charismatic, the Minnesota site is also very important; this highly vulnerable area harbors great stores of carbon that could have drastic feedbacks in the environment. My time in Costa Rica and Minnesota made me more passionate to protect key areas like them.



Conducting research has taught me invaluable lessons. When you read a scientific article, you don't realize how much you have to think on your feet as a scientist. Doing my own field research and watching and learning from those with experience has opened my eyes to what goes on behind the scenes. It's really forced me to learn to plan ahead, but be able to make quick decisions and deal with problems along the way. These aren't the things you can learn in the classroom. I think it's given me an invaluable toolbox, one that I hope I can use in graduate school and beyond."

Undergraduate Research and its Impact

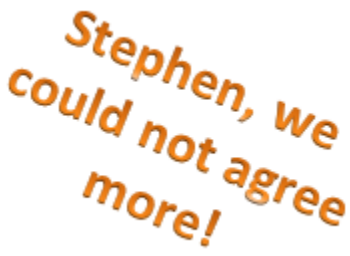
As the dean of CASNR, I enjoy getting emails from our students. In June this year, I received an email that really brought home to me the impact that undergraduate research has on students' lives. This email was from Stephen Nelson and was entitled, "A Letter of Thanks." I asked his permission to share it in the CASNR Chronicle because what he says is so important, not only to a dean, but to all of us.

"My name is Stephen. I graduated this past May with a degree in wildlife and fisheries management with a minor in forestry. I was also the awardee of the Edward Neal Duncan Outstanding Undergraduate Research Award both this year (2013) and last year. I just wanted to contact you and express my appreciation that the college has awards to recognize research achievements done on a undergraduate level. I, for better or for worse, have a GPA that is lacking what most people would consider a measure of success during my college career. While my GPA isn't great, I feel that the knowledge and hands-on experiences I obtained while conducting undergraduate research projects far outweighs anything a higher GPA could provide. Throughout my tenure as an undergraduate student, I have worked on several (five total) undergraduate research projects ranging from the Entomology and Plant Pathology Department, Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries Department, as well as the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology. Not only have I conducted these undergraduate research projects, but I have also assisted on numerous other projects that graduate students or major professors were conducting. I would also like to take the opportunity to stress how much I gained from working in departments outside of my major. Some of the best experiences and teaching opportunities I received here were from the Entomology and Plant Pathology and Ecology and Evolutionary Biology departments. The learning process, as you are well aware, is never complete. The experiences I obtained from working in these "outside" departments, especially the Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Department, helped develop my drive for research and shape my future goals.

"At a time when finances are tight, I just thought it was worth telling you that supporting undergraduate research (in the form of scholarships, grants, or support to major professors) as well as rewarding hard work completed by undergraduates is a worthy expense and one that I feel is critical if UT is to meet the new goal of becoming a 'Top 25 Public Research Institution.'

Thank you,

Stephen Nelson"



Prize Approach to Entrepreneurship in the Classroom

The graduate course, AGNR 530 Entrepreneurship and Discovery Commercialization, breaks ground with a new valuable prize for the Best Business Idea and Plan. It is only fitting that the course instructor for AGNR 530 is Fred Tompkins, a distinguished professor and an out-of-the-box thinker in a big way. This course is designed to help students who are thinking about starting and leading their own technology-based company learn how to be successful. The course features more than 20 outside speakers on topics of value including intellectual property, patent law, business and transactional law, immigration and employment law, accounting and financial management, venture capital, federal funding agencies, technology opportunity evaluation, business management, business plan development, market size assessment, development of strategic alliances, intellectual property licensing, business launch and incubation, and finally, exit and harvest strategies.

The course is designed for doctoral students and postdoctoral researchers in science, technology and engineering fields – some of the very people who drive the generation of new technology.

"This course is designed to help you discover if starting and growing a technology company is a real career option for you … if it is your passion. If you find that launching an entrepreneurial venture is right for you, and if you put forward the best business idea and execution plan, we have some resources to help you get started."

This year will be the first time that a prize package valued at $20,000 will be awarded to the member of the class. What does that fortunate participant have to do to win the prize? That person must develop the "best" business idea and plan and then work to act on the plan in 2014. Elements of the AGNR 530 Entrepreneurship Prize for 2013 include the following services and providers:

Legal services for chartering your new business and creating the formation documents (Jon Peyton, Esq., Kennerly Montgomery Finley, PC)

Legal services related to protecting and managing your intellectual property (Andy Neely, Esq., Luedeka Neely Group, PC)

QuickBooks Pro accounting software along with assistance in setting up your new company's accounting system (Gabe Beck, CPA)

Business assistance, coaching, and mentoring as a client company (Technology 20/20, John Morris, CEO)

One year's free rent in the Fairview Technology Incubator (Knox County Development Corporation, Todd Napier, CEO)

SBIR proposal preparation assistance as you seek to access federal agency funds (LaunchTN, Jim Stefansic, Commercialization Director)

Since the first time the course was taught in fall 2010, several new Tennessee-based companies have been launched and students from more than 15 disciplines have participated!

Graduate Scientific Writing Class Goes Global

Robert Trigiano, professor in Entomology and Plant Pathology, has had many opportunities during his career to travel to foreign destinations for conferences, presenting research findings and evaluating graduate student programs. However, not until the last several years has he had the pleasure (and at times the challenge) of teaching at six universities and institutions in countries including Germany, China and Brazil. The topic "Scientific Writing – From Concept to Publication" was taught entirely in English to graduate students and faculty without the aid of translators. "Obviously, there are some challenges and limitations to teaching English (in English) to non-native English speakers, but surprisingly these issues are overcome with patience, various teaching methods, adaptability, flexibility and mutual respect," he asserts. The heart of the workshop includes 18 distinct topics that range from plagiarism to presentations and from how to write various sections of manuscripts to how to deal with the review process and editors. Depending on the needs of the institution and the time allotted for presentation, the workshop syllabus has been adapted to be delivered in either 8, 12 or 15 hours. The eight-hour workshop consists of just the "bare essentials," and the 15-hour workshop is the most comprehensive. In the 15-hour course, participants actually submit their own written materials (for example, topic sentences) for practice and then the submissions are presented via PowerPoint and critiqued by the entire class. All of these institutions encourage (if not demand) that their faculty and students publish in western European and United States journals as well as make scientific presentations in English, the international language of science. At the end of the workshop, a change inventory survey is administered to assess how the participants feel that their knowledge and competency has changed. Thus far, data from five universities and institutes indicate that the workshop is having its desired effect!

Trigiano also co-teaches a semesterlong course (EPP 675) on the same topic for graduate students!

Joint MLA Program Gets a New Chair

This last year, the master's in landscape architecture (MLA) program achieved accreditation. This month, the joint program between the College of Architecture and Design and CASNR has achieved another milestone. The program gained a talented and visionary new chair.

Gale Fulton joins us from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with a strong publication record, professional real-life experience with nationally recognized firms, and much success in national competitions.

Fulton is happy to be a Tennessee Vol and clearly sees a bright future for this young but thriving program. "There is huge potential for creativity and innovation made available by the cross-college structure of the graduate landscape architecture program. By fusing the scientific research being done in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources with the speculative and exploratory modes of thinking employed by designers in the College of Architecture and Design, new social and ecological possibilities can be brought forth, which may aid us in tackling difficult environmental problems we currently face or help to usher in completely new modes of inhabiting our landscapes. While I have only been on the ground in Knoxville for a very short time, I have already had several exciting conversations with colleagues from both colleges that lead me to believe this partnership will lead to many exciting new directions and collaborations."

Fulton has expertise in urban design and policy planning related to stormwater management, ecological infrastructure, architectural and landscape architectural theory and landscape intelligence. He brings with him a broad national and international perspective from his experiences teaching landscape architecture and urban design at the University of Adelaide in South Australia, Pennsylvania State University and the University of Colorado at Denver.

The Job Outlook for Agriculture Continues to Be Strong

A recent publication released by the Center on Education and the Workforce of the Georgetown Public Policy Institute detailed the unemployment rates and median salaries for graduates of various college disciplines. The authors, Anthony P. Carnevale and Ban Cheah, point out that "not all college degrees are created equal."

Their data from 2010-11 indicate that recent agriculture graduates have the third lowest unemployment rate (6.7 percent) of the 16 discipline areas studied. The picture is even brighter for those college graduates in agriculture with some experience – an unemployment rate of only 3.4 percent. It is still good advice to pursue a graduate degree and well worth the investment of time and effort. Holders of a graduate degree in agriculture experienced only a 2.3 percent unemployment rate!

Salary data from the same publication show that recent graduates in agriculture can expect a median salary of $33,000 while those with some experience can expect median salaries of $51,000. Holders of graduate degrees in agriculture fare much better with median salaries of $67,000!

An article published this February in The Wall Street Journal declares that the "Farm Boom Sows Job Bounty" reaffirming the observation that agriculture is a good field to be in right now.

When you consider how necessary agriculture is to our existence, it is clear that it is vital – we all eat and that is not likely to change!

From a Wall Street Journal article published Feb. 13, 2013.

Don't Forget.....

Enjoy all your favorite Ag Day activities while visiting with current and former faculty, staff and students. This year Ag Day will be held in the newly renovated Brehm Animal Science Arena. During Ag Day, departments will be showcasing their take on 'If you think you know Ag, think again.'