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# CASNR Chronicle



November 2016

As this fall semester arrived, we in CASNR welcomed 230 brand new first-year students with an overall high school GPA of 3.95 and ACT score of 26.2. Having this bright a class coming in challenges us to provide not only rigor in the classroom, but continue to offer experiential learning at its best. CASNR students engage in undergraduate research, international experiences, service learning, internships, leadership activities, and charitable giving, and many of our freshmen are part of our celebrated CASNR Living Learning Community. The semester goes by quickly and is more than half over. We are quickly approaching graduation time for many of our students. I remember all too well what they were like when they arrived on campus and can truly celebrate the transformation that they have undergone as a result of their time with us!



*Caula A. Beryl*

Caula A. Beryl, Dean

*Into the Woods—*

**Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries' Fall Camp**



CASNR's Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries (FWF) is focused on a mastery learning approach, emphasizing practical, hands-on experiences in the field of study. The undergraduate FWF science degrees include an intensive fall camp program that tends to be the highlight of students' academic experience.

Fall camp is a semester-long block schedule that FWF students are required to take in the fall of their senior year. Three camps are provided for FWF students: a forestry camp, a wildlife and fisheries camp, and an urban forestry camp. A student's FWF concentration determines the camp in which they participate. [Read more here.](#)

## Constructing Tomorrow



One hundred percent job placement with starting salaries of \$50,000-\$70,000 is enough to attract nearly any college student to an academic major. The construction science program within the Department of Biosystems Engineering and Soil Science provides its students with experiential learning opportunities, internships, and a rapidly growing academic program.

In the last five years, what started as a pilot program has blossomed into a powerful and exciting program for CASNR students. Just in the last two and a half years, the number of construction science students has increased from around thirty to about 110. This growth is driven largely by industry professionals who see value in these students and the faculty who are passionate about educating their students to be the best candidates for their future careers. [Read more here.](#)

**Students Complete 1,157-Mile Tour of the Tennessee River**



Four states, five days, 1,157 miles, and all the catfish they could eat. A dozen College of Architecture and Design students have completed their tour of the Tennessee River, but their work has just begun.

The students are part of the Governor's Chair Tennessee River Studio led by Brad Collett, assistant professor of landscape architecture. They traveled along the Tennessee River through Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, and Kentucky to understand the influences and impacts on the river system.

The Tennessee River Studio, the second studio in the UT-ORNL Governor's Chair for High Performance Energy Practices in Urban Environments, is investigating twenty-first-century challenges facing the Tennessee River and its 40,000-square-mile watershed. [Read more here.](#)

## **Fabulous CASNR Faculty**

*by Anna Ingleburger*



Writer and social commentator Maggie Gallagher says, "Of all the hard jobs around, one of the hardest is being a good teacher." It is true, being a teacher or professor is a challenging role in which there is always paperwork to be done, questions to be answered, lectures to

prepare, and standards to meet, but more difficult than any of those things is being an effective, compassionate, encouraging, and personable teacher all of the time. Nevertheless, the faculty in UT's College of Agricultural

Sciences and Natural Resources have mastered each of these characteristics in their roles as educators.

While the time spent in the classroom is important, the time spent outside of it is where these faculty members really shine. There are many examples that show the true passion that CASNR faculty have for their students, but the three most common and impactful ones are in advising, coaching, and impromptu meetings. [Read more here.](#)

*From Serving to Learning—*

### **Challenges Veterans Face Returning to Study**

*by Andrew Casteel*



As a current undergraduate student, I had many fears beginning my freshman year at a university. Would I find my class? Would I have to cross over an aisle of people to get to an open seat? What if my roommate and I did not get along? Simplistic fears, but fears nonetheless. Many people have been in this situation, or a situation similar to this, but few have taken the time to consider the fears or challenges veterans returning to an academic setting may face.

Not only will they have similar fears as those of recent high school graduates, but veterans also face the challenges of readjusting to a civilian lifestyle. In

addition, they may have dependents or spouses who rely on them for support. This results in additional stress on top of that imposed by academic work for many veterans seeking a higher education.

Jennie Ivey, assistant professor in Animal Science at the University of Tennessee, comments, "It is important to remember that veterans look at the world differently than we do because of their experiences." [Read more here.](#)  
*(Photo courtesy of UT Knoxville Veteran Student Services.)*

## A Bridge to the Future



The Colleges of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, Arts and Sciences, and Engineering came together last June to host the third annual Intercollegiate Summer Bridge Program (ISB).

Under the direction of Craig Pickett, CASNR coordinator for student life and diversity programs, along with John Hoffschneider (College of Engineering), Shanna Pendergrast (College of Arts and Sciences), and Morgan Ridgell (College of Arts and Sciences), close to thirty students gained valuable insight into what college is like. Academic courses gave them a real glimpse into the pace and rigor of college life. In a college/life planning class facilitated by Pickett, the students learned about résumés, internships, interviewing skills, academic resources, financial aid, leadership styles, teambuilding, and effective communication. [Read more here.](#)

## Students Experience the Gardens and Cultures of Japan

Plant Sciences associate professor Garry Menendez wanted to take students somewhere special for his tenth study abroad adventure. In May, sixteen willing and adventurous students joined him in traveling to Japan, a country that from an initial viewpoint has many similarities to East Tennessee—but with perhaps just a bit of a different accent.



Students from not only Plant Sciences but also Animal Science, Food Science, Business, Biology, Anthropology, and Architecture braved tight train schedules and plenty of raw fish as they absorbed all that Japan has to offer.

Beyond the bustle of Tokyo, students experienced much of central Honshu before making their way to Hiroshima, Takamatsu, and completing the experience in Osaka. Garden design and history filled many young minds in addition to gaining a better understanding of the very diverse array of Japanese religions, food, and architecture. Sketching and painting lessons were common as were some instruction on how to capture the true spirit of a foreign country through photography.

Many testimonials attest to the fact that participating in a CASNR study abroad adventure is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Next up for Menendez? Spain and Portugal in 2017.

## Fun & Competition at Fall Festival



Food, fun, and good friends rang through Brehm Arena the week before Halloween, as the CASNR Ambassadors hosted the 2016 Fall Festival. For this year's event, the Ambassadors encouraged

participation from student organizations by making it a competition among the groups.

Several contests were held, including a Cornhole Tournament, chili cookoff, pumpkin decorating, and a pet costume contest. Oakley Perry, a student in Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications, won the chili cookoff with his delicious white bean chili entry. The Cornhole Tournament was won by a Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries duo, Will Gore and Joe Hall. In the intensely competitive pumpkin decorating contest sponsored by the Ag Business Club, the winning pumpkin was entered by Rachel Eatherly, a graduate student in Agricultural and Resource Economics. The pet costume contest was won by Animal Science student Mautrice Lee. Each of the winners was awarded a CASNR goody bag that included some CASNR items that were sure to spread school spirit! Some of the items included CASNR cups, pens, and drawstring bags. Winners from each event were also awarded points toward the club or organization they were representing. The student organization that had the most points at the end of the night won a pizza party for their next meeting.

At the end of the event, the overall festival champions were the members of Collegiate 4-H. The CASNR Ambassadors also sold Fall Festival T-shirts. They are still available in the CASNR Dean's Office (126 Morgan Hall) for \$10 while supplies last.





Big Orange Give launched Monday, November 14! The week-long online fundraising campaign has a goal to raise \$1 million by November 18.

Here at the UT College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, we have a goal to raise \$30,000 to support student scholarships, research, and other academic needs. Small gifts from friends, alumni, and other supports will have huge impacts this week. CASNR started the week trying to raise \$20,000, but generous donors to the College have already surpassed CASNR's original goal!

Clearly our donors believe in the work our students, faculty, and staff are doing. Our students and faculty are solving problems such as how to feed a growing world, how to be better stewards of our resources, and how new technologies can impact food, fiber, and natural resources systems. Simply put, we have a global impact.

Your support not only funds scholarships for students to become tomorrow's thought leaders, but your gift will have an immediate impact through research using new laboratory technology and the recruiting and retaining of the very best faculty possible.

Visit [bigorangegive.utk.edu/casnr](http://bigorangegive.utk.edu/casnr) to donate today to help CASNR reach our new \$30,000 goal during this week's Big Orange Give!

## CASNR Team at 2016 National FFA Convention & Expo



This October, an estimated 69,000 teachers, guests, and blue corduroy clad FFA members traveled to Indianapolis, Indiana, to attend the 89th Annual National FFA Convention and Expo. These students had the opportunity to compete in national career and leadership development events, listen to speakers, attend concerts, and meet with representatives from companies in all areas of the agricultural industry.

The expo featured a "Collegiate Connection" section where colleges and universities from across the country had the opportunity to connect with the students in attendance. The University of Tennessee was represented by CASNR staff and ambassadors, Kyle Hensley, Craig Pickett, Elena Smith, Dalton Teel, and Ty Wolaver. This dynamic and enthusiastic team was available to pass out information to prospective students and answer the many questions that the FFA students had about the College, its offerings, and college life.

In all, the event was a success with an estimated 3,000 prospective students, alumni, and chapter advisors from all across the country visiting the booth space and learning about CASNR.

### **Distinguished Honor for UT Forestry Student**

Joshua Granger has been selected by the Society of American Foresters to receive the 2016 Ben Meadows Scholarship for Academic



Achievement. This national award includes a \$2,500 stipend and publication of Josh's photo and biographical information in the Ben Meadows catalog for one year.

Josh is coadvised by John Zobel and David Buckley and earned an MS degree in biology at the University of Nebraska before coming to UT. He recently completed his master's degree in statistics from the University of Tennessee and plans to complete his doctoral degree in natural resources in 2017.

He is presenting a portion of his research at the Society of American Foresters national convention in Madison, Wisconsin, this month. Thank you, Josh, for really knowing how to represent your advisors, department, and College!

### **UT MANRRS Students Prep for Careers Ahead**



The UT MANRRS (Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences) chapter continues to serve as a support network for underrepresented students who are pursuing academic areas of interest within science, technology, engineering, agriculture, and mathematics.

Originally designated as a student organization for the College of Agricultural

Sciences and Natural Resources, the chapter now serves as an organization with members spanning several colleges throughout the University of Tennessee. The UT Knoxville Chapter, advised by Craig Pickett, coordinator for student life and diversity, and Sharon Jean-Philippe, associate professor of urban forestry, took fourteen undergraduate and graduate student members to the Fall 2016 Regional Cluster, a three-day professional development summit in Atlanta, Georgia. Close to 250 students from colleges and universities throughout the South attended this year's regional summit.

During the conference, students attended professional development workshops and seminars and sat in on keynote addresses from leading figures in the agriculture industry. They also participated in an "Opportunity Fair" to meet with representatives from agricultural, governmental, private, and academic organizations from across the nation to learn about the organizations, discuss internship opportunities, and conduct first-round interviews for summer positions. [Read more here.](#)

### **CASNR Career Fair a Success!**



At the thirty-second annual CASNR Career Fair held on September 28, 410 students took advantage of the opportunity to visit face-to-face with representatives from thirty-seven different organizations offering internships, jobs, and other opportunities.

Some of the companies represented included Case Farms, Cobb-Vantress, Farm Credit Mid-America, JBS, Pictsweet, Tennessee Farmer's Cooperative, Tyson Foods, and UGA Extension. Joining the CASNR Career Fair for the first time were Earthadelic, Evergreen Packaging, and Reliance Partners. Five USDA organizations and three Tennessee state organizations also participated. Seven UT groups presented graduate programs of study as well as study abroad opportunities.

The distribution of students who took part was freshman, 31 percent;

sophomore, 15 percent; junior, 21 percent; senior, 27 percent; master's, 4 percent; and doctoral, 2 percent. The high attendance by freshman can be attributed, at least in part, to two professors in the Animal Science department, Cheryl Kojima and Michael Smith, who made attending the fair an assignment for class because they want their students to think ahead and begin networking with employers. They both believe it is never too early to explore internship and full-time job opportunities. [Read more here.](#)

### **Résumés that Land Jobs**

Without a résumé, a student cannot be considered as prepared as others for the workforce. Without a good résumé, a student will have problems even entering the workforce!



Thirty-five students received help preparing for the CASNR Career Fair by getting a résumé critique from career development personnel at the Résumé Doctor Workshop held September 15.

Students commented that the help was beneficial and well appreciated. The breakdown of students participating included thirteen doctoral candidates, six master's students, six seniors, one junior, two sophomores, and seven freshmen.

Four members of the UT Center for Career Development staff along with Emily Gray from CASNR provided one-on-one comments and suggestions for improving students' résumés. Additional career-related advice and materials were also provided to help students get ready for interacting with potential employers. For the seventh year, Gamma Sigma Delta, the honor society of agriculture, sponsored the event by providing pizza and soft drinks. Always ready to support student success, the CASNR Ambassadors helped by providing logistical support for the event.

### **CASNR's Habitat Playhouse Wins at Bristol**



Holston Habitat was excited to share with CASNR that the UT "Battle of the Habitat" Playhouse was delivered and set up last week. Students in construction science at the University of Tennessee competed with students at Virginia Tech to build playhouses that were offered to the public to show their support by buying raffle tickets. The playhouse that earned the most tickets was declared the winner during pregame activities at the momentous Battle of Bristol. Smokey's Doghouse with its whimsical design and colorful orange and white checkerboard roof

won the honors by a landslide!

Jeanna of Elizabethton, Tennessee won Smokey's Doghouse and had it delivered to her granddaughter Kate in Bristol, Tennessee.

Habitat for Humanity thanks the students of construction science for all they did to make Jeanna and Kate's dreams of "homeownership" come true!

## **Professor Explores Alternative to MBA**

*by Tina M. Johnson*



A research article coauthored by Carlos Trejo-Pech, assistant professor of agribusiness finance in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, has received the prestigious 2016 Best Paper Award in academic research from the Financial Education Association (FEA). The FEA is a professional association of finance academicians devoted to financial education.

The winning paper, "Assessing the CFA University Recognition Program: A Survey Based Analysis," was coauthored with Terrance Grieb and Magdy Noguera from the University of Idaho. The trio received the Best Paper Award in September at the 2016 FEA Conference held in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

The paper focused on the process of establishing and administrating a CFA-URP (Chartered Financial Analyst University Recognition Program) within a finance major. The CFA designation has been referred to as a substitute for an MBA for those pursuing careers in investments and wealth management.

An interesting finding from the research is that faculty reported significant curriculum improvement due to the CFA-URP in two academic domains: alternative investments and ethical and professional standards. [Read more here.](#)

## Important Dates Ahead

- **First Study Day**—Wednesday, November 30
- **Classes End**—Thursday, December 1
- **Second Study Day**—Friday, December 2
- **Exams**—Saturday-Friday, December 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
- **Graduate Hooding**—Thursday, December 8, at 7:00 p.m. (Thompson-Boling Arena)
- **Commencement**—Friday, December 9, at 4:00 p.m. (Thompson-Boling Arena)

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