



COLLEGE OF
**Agricultural Sciences
and Natural Resources**

A&M-COMMERCE

SPRING 2021

NEWSLETTER



GREETINGS FROM THE DEAN!

We have exciting news at Texas A&M University - Commerce: College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. We plan to be back to a sense of normalcy this coming fall semester. Plans have been made to teach 74% face to face courses this fall, whereas we taught 76% in person in the Fall of 2019. Faculty and staff are looking forward to working with students and one another in this manner again. And, we hosted FFA contests, conventions and workshops late this spring and will continue into early summer.



We want to brag a little as we have increased in enrollment 89% over the past 6 years. That is faster than any other college at A&M Commerce or compared to other institutions within the A&M system. Along with more students we continue to engage them in organizations, competitive teams, fraternities and sororities. We made note of accolades for the rodeo and meat judging team in our Holiday Newsletter, and now we can add another with the Stock Horse team winning champion team at a recent Stock Horse of Texas competition.

Newsletter Highlights:

- New Breeding Program at TAMU-C Equine Center
- CASNR Hosts Texas FFA Area V and VI CDE's
- Lion's Rodeo Finishes The Spring Semester Strong
- Student Spotlights Give Recognition to Exceptional Students in CASNR
- Historical Cold Weather Sweeps Texas and Cancels Classes
- TAMU-C Expands Into North Dallas
- Exciting Happenings Around Campus
- Stock Horse and Showteam Updates
- CASNR Works Alongside Residential Living and Learning for Women in Agriculture
- Sigma Alpha Makes Big Plans for the Future of the Sorority
- A Look into the Achievements of CASNR's Wildlife and Agri-Business Programs

As mentioned before, we have a fundraising and marketing drive for CASNR programs that will enhance scholarships and facilities at the farm. Currently, we have raised 60% of the needed funds and pledges to name the university farm for Dr. A. C. “Buck” Hughes. Dr. Hughes was tremendously instrumental in the development and growth of both the department and farm during the 1950’s through 1980. He spent 33 years (1947-1980) serving East Texas State University Agriculture.

In addition, we have embraced new programs in the college and recently received approvals at all levels. We have new academic programs in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems, Veterinary Biomedical Technology, and Agricultural Leadership and Communication. This includes the Family and Consumer Science teacher certification. We are very excited about these programs as they will add more curriculum to our existing programs and enhance our offerings for potential students.

Let us remember that we would not be at the university if it were not for our students. We provide learning and career opportunities for them for a lifetime as we are all lifelong learners. I am honored to serve as the Dean for the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) for Texas A&M University-Commerce and wish everyone a safe summer.



Dr. Randy Harp, CASNR Dean





Historical Winter Storms Cover Texas In Snow

In late February, many Texans experienced a winter like no other. Substantial snow covered the Lone Star State canceling school for over a week and causing power outages across the grid.

On the night of February 10th, substantial rainfall began to cover Northeast Texas as temperatures dropped into the twenties. Emails were sent to students postponing school for the following day until 1 PM. As the night went on the temperatures plummeted and students awoke to ice-covered cars, sidewalks, and roads. This prompted Texas A&M University-Commerce officials to cancel classes and on-cam-

pus activities on February 11th. The campus opened at 10:00 a.m. on February 12th and closed at 5:00 p.m. that afternoon, with emails being sent to students canceling all campus activities and classes until February 17th due to expected inclement weather.

As the weekend approached, the temperatures continued to drop. Sunday morning, February 14th, brought a prolific amount of snow which left the campus blanketed in pure white. Classes for the remainder of the week were cancelled as the snow lingered. Students, professors, and staff alike were faced with many challenges as internet and phone service outages suspended communication temporarily. People across Texas began to lose power as rolling blackouts were placed in effect in an effort to conserve energy. The Sam Rayburn Student Center opened to off-campus students without power and water. Eventually the Morris Recreation Center was opened for off-campus students to shower or fill bottles with water. The Texas A&M University - Commerce campus reopened on Monday, February 22nd.



The historically record breaking winter storm, which has been unofficially named Uri by The Weather Channel, affected many states including Texas. Areas of Northeast Texas received three to ten inches of snow from Sunday to Monday with five to seven inches falling on Tuesday to Wednesday. The unprecedented weather left many Texans devastated as people were left without water and power for hours. Churches opened their doors to those in need of food and warmth. Restaurants shutdown due to frozen water pipes. Road conditions became increasingly dangerous. Many ranchers and farmers were faced with caring for livestock under conditions they had never experienced before. Once again the Texan spirit shined through as strangers opened their



homes to others, people paid for one another's meals, gas stations gave out free water, and many other acts of kindness were displayed. People from other states even pooled their resources to help. This just goes to show that even in the darkest of times compassion and resilience stay at the forefront.

CASNR Launches New Breeding Program at Mary Bonham Equine Center



Sassy in a Benz proudly presents her foal, a filly deemed Clover.

The Mary Bonham Equine Center was a buzz with new life this Spring as foaling season was in full swing.

This semester marked the first breeding season for the TAMU-C Equine Studies program as a result of the generous donations of a broodmare named “Sassy in a Benz”, or Sadie as she is called, and a stud named “Play Dual Rey”, or Reymond. Three broodmares, leased by the college, were also used in the breeding program. We welcomed five healthy foals, three fillies and two colts. Students enjoyed being able to see foals playing in their paddocks as they came to classes at

the Mary Bonham Equine Pavilion.

Using the newly renovated breeding lab, mares and stallions are examined and bred on site. This gives students the opportunity to experience new hands-on learning in their Equine Studies classes. The lab features new equipment such as brand new stocks, ultrasound, and a densimeter utilized for breeding soundness exams. Mares and foals are kept in the breeding barn under supervision during nursing and growth.

Each mare was monitored during the foaling process by students in the Equine Reproduction class under the supervision of their professor, Dr. Megan Owen, and the Equine Manager, Ms. Lindsey Victorson, as part of a group assignment. Once students formed a group, they began tracking their assigned mares progression towards foaling. Groups were responsible for determining the best time to move their mare into the foaling barn. After moving the mare, each group then began “foal watch” which meant close supervision awaiting the foals arrival. Students were able to experience the births first hand and gain knowledge about the foaling process. They also ensured that the foals reached their post-foaling milestones, including standing and nursing. Each group then observed the growth and health of their assigned

foals until the end of the Spring semester.

Ms. Lindsey Victorson was happy to share her vision for the breeding program, “Our plan is to raise quality western performance horses that can excel in the stock horse events such as working cow horse and reining.” Foals will be used for hands-on learning in a variety of Equine Studies classes. The program shows to be a promising investment as mares continue to be bred, with plans to market foals. Marketable foals will be sold at leading industry sales. This will also serve students greatly in learning how to raise and train maturing foals for sale. Those that remain at the farm will be used as replacement lesson horses while those sold will begin their western performance horse careers. “The program is off to a great start and I hope it continues to grow and improve.”, Victorson says.

Photos by Leah Brooks, Animal Science (Pre-Veterinary Medicine).

TOP RIGHT Sassy in a Benz illustrates the use of the newly installed stocks for exams and equine care.

BOTTOM RIGHT TAMU-C’s April Love grazes in the green pastures with her colt.

BOTTOM LEFT the TAMU-C mares greet one of the new foals.



Livestock Show Team Update

The Texas A&M University - Commerce Livestock Show Team continues to see success from their hard-work and dedication. Each semester the team grows in number and experience, as well as in spirit. In December, the team traveled to the Hereford Heritage Show in Abilene, TX with two hereford heifers and a bull. Each project placed around the middle of their classes respectively.

This semester, the focus of the Show Team has shifted to developing a set of embryo calves that were produced on the TAMU-C Educational Farm. Show Team coach, Garrett Malone expressed his approval saying that, "The calves are turning out nicely and show much potential." The Show Team is excited to see their herd grow with each new calf and project.

Service is also a big part of who the TAMU-C Livestock Show Team is. The team has helped with the maintenance and operation of livestock shows in the area alongside the Ag Ambassadors. This has helped the Show Team to make connections and



impressions within the community. Traveling to the Metch Polled Hereford Scholarship show, the Van Zandt County Heifer Show, and beyond has helped the team gain new experiences in leadership which carries over into the show ring.

At TAMU-C, we are proud of what the Show Team continues to do each semester. They represent the college with poise and excellence. The team welcomes every opportunity and experience they have. Each member of the team works diligently to further their passion for agriculture and livestock.

- CASNR POINTS OF PRIDE -



★ STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS ★

Yves Kacou

Ivory Coast, West Africa

Agriculture is a world-wide industry. Some seek out international careers in the field, much like Yves Kacou. Having graduated *magna cum laude* with his Bachelors of Science in Agribusiness, Kacou looks forward to a successful summer working to complete his Masters in Agricultural Sciences focusing on Ag Business. As a child, Kacou traveled often but always found himself near animals and having a mindset for a future career in agriculture. He wishes to combine his love for animals with his knowledge of finance and business. “My main focus in the Ag Business field is to consult farmers in the cattle industry. In the finance world we have resources such as benchmarking, forecasting, and things related to supply and demand that can be utilized to help farmers grow and improve their business.” Kacou truly has a heart for equipping farmers with the proper resources and management.

Like many students in CASNR, Kacou also enjoys being involved in extracurricular activities. He was the president of TAMU-C Ag Business Club and has also been involved in the Livestock Show Team and Meat Judging Team. Kacou said of his participation in each, “Being a part of these groups has helped me connect with like-minded people. In the Ag Business Club, we got to discuss and gather ideas for our future careers through different opportunities we’ve had in networking.” He also noted some very influential people in his college career. Among such was his first line of contact with TAMU-C, Ms. Maggie Salem. “I just want to give her special thanks because she helped give me confidence and made me feel welcome during my first visit,” he remarked.

Kacou looks forward to someday returning to the Ivory Coast to help improve the already successful agricultural industry there. “You just can’t go wrong with agriculture, because it’s a part of life. It will always be there.”



Madison Wynne

Garland, TX



Passion for agriculture is the driving force behind many students in CASNR. Madison Wynne is one such student that applies this passion to every aspect of her life. A sophomore studying Ag Science with an emphasis in Education, Wynne says

she is constantly wanting to learn. “I found that I just can’t stop talking about agriculture. I have a passion and drive for it. I like to think of myself as a sponge always absorbing as much as I can and learning. So I decided that Ag Education is my route because you’re raising awareness and teaching people about agriculture. Then you’re able to help influence and reach your community.” Wynne also has a double major in the Ag Leadership and Communications (ALC) program. With her first major being complete in three years, Wynne wanted to utilize the four years that students usually take for their college education and believes that incorporating ALC will benefit her as a future educator. She is also heavily involved as an assistant coach for the TAMU-C meat judging team and part of the Ag Ambassador program.

Wynne is not only very invested in her education but she is also invested in advocating for agriculture. In December of 2020, she received the honor of being named 2021 Miss Agriculture Advocacy Ambassador for the state of Texas. Wynne previously held the title for Hunt County. In this role, she has the opportunity to experience new things and meet new people. “With being Miss Agriculture Advocacy Ambassador, you get what you put into the title. So I really wanted to utilize my time by being involved with different community service projects and by learning more about sectors of the agricultural industry that I am not familiar with,” Wynne stated. She is now preparing to compete at the national level for Miss United States Agriculture in Orlando, Florida in June.

College of Agricultural and Natural Resources hosts the Area V and VI Career Development Events

After the emotional and unprecedented cancellation of Texas FFA Career Development Events last spring due to COVID-19, this spring saw the return of face-to-face Texas FFA Career Development Events across Texas.

Faculty and staff from the College of Agricultural Science and Natural Resources worked for months leading up to the events. The College hosted eleven contests over the course of two days including: Agricultural Technology and Mechanical Systems, Ag Sales, Dairy Cattle, Entomology, Farm Business Management, Floriculture, Livestock Evaluation, Milk Quality and Products, Nursery/Landscape, Poultry Evaluation, and Veterinary Science contests.

These contests hosted 1,700 high school students, from 521 competing teams, and 156 FFA



chapters from Texas FFA's Area V and VI. Area V and VI stretch from the west of Ft. Worth to Texarkana and the Red River to the south of Interstate 20. Texas FFA Career Development Events are the application of what a student learns in a high school agricultural science classroom. From the Texas FFA website, "the events are designed to assist in the preparation

for a career in agriculture by testing and challenging a student's technical, leadership, interpersonal, and teamwork skills in addition to testing their knowledge of the subject matter."

A new feature to the Career Development Events activities, specifically in relation to the academic programs the College has, was the “Student Takeover” of the College’s Facebook page by Agricultural Leadership and Communications major and CASNR Newsletter Student Editor, Cami Froneberger. Froneberger visited each event at the Hopkins County Civic Center, the Plant Science Center, and the TAMU-C main campus visiting with faculty, staff, and agricultural science teachers, and documenting the day with photos and videos of the contests. Froneberger said of the day, “To me, it was really interesting doing the Student Takeover because I had always been around CDEs and LDEs working them in the past but that day was different for me because I got to see how the whole event was facilitated. It was also an opportunity to experience my major in Agricultural Leadership and Communications practically. I was able to photograph, write, run the social media for an organization, and interview people involved with the event. The event was huge and took me hours to work through all of the events and locations but I really enjoyed seeing the students compete and seeing everyone back on campus again.”



You can check out Cami’s day documenting the CDEs starting [here](#).



CDE Superintendent, Dr. Keith Frost stated, “I was very impressed with the way our faculty came together to host an event of this size and complexity, under conditions and limitations never faced before as a result of COVID, and make it run so well. The overwhelming feedback from the FFA Advisors focused on how much they enjoyed being able to bring their students to a face-to-face event again and how they appreciated the work that went into making it happen.”



CASNR Dean, Dr. Randy Harp was “tickled and happy to be able to host the Bi-Area CDE contest and add some normalcy to our lives and the campus in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was great to see young people and agricultural science teachers from northeast Texas back on campus.”

- TOP RIGHT** a student surveys bulls in the Livestock Judging contest.
- TOP LEFT** the Vet Science contest was a success thanks to all who volunteered their time and pets.
- BOTTOM LEFT** students in the Ag Mech contest put their wits to the test.

The Texas A&M System announces expansion into North Dallas

Texas A&M University - Commerce will be expanding into the Dallas area with a new site in Dallas to bring a new opportunities to students.

Texas A&M University-Commerce will soon be making a high-profile expansion into North Dallas, John Sharp, Chancellor of The Texas A&M University System announced today. The university will be taking over the top two floors of 8750 North Central Expressway, where it will set up headquarters for its education and business colleges.

“This new Dallas site opens exciting opportunities for A&M-Commerce and its students,” said Elaine Mendoza, chairman of the A&M System Board of Regents. “This instructional site will offer in-demand academic programs taught by incredible faculty at a prime metropolitan location.”

“We’ve had our eye on Dallas for some time now, and this location, right across from NorthPark Mall — where more than 322,000 people pass by every day — gives us a very visible presence to let everyone know we’ve arrived,” said Chancellor John Sharp. “We’re excited to bring more accessible, affordable, high-quality educational opportunities to Dallas.”

The A&M-Commerce College of Business and College of Education and Human Services will eventually offer several of their academic programs at the new site. Both colleges’ deans will have their offices at the new location to better serve the students. The university also plans to offer bachelor’s degrees in sustainable agriculture and food systems, agribusiness, and agricultural sciences at the Dallas site. Both a bachelor’s and master’s in fine arts in visual communications will also be available.

According to A&M-Commerce President Mark Rudin (pictured above), classes will begin November 1, 2021 at the new location. Rudin explained the new Dallas site will also promote synergies with corporate partners in program and workforce development and reskilling. He emphasized that the university’s close contact with the region’s dynamic business climate will ignite innovation.





The site’s proximity to Dallas College campuses and several independent school districts will also encourage working relationships with the university’s educational partners, Rudin said. The new Dallas location will offer enrollment management, financial aid, career services, student success teams, academic advising and technical support. It will boast tech-enabled shared spaces, an on-site fitness center, food services and ample parking. The site is also on the Dallas Area Rapid Transit light-rail line, making it easily accessible to students.

“This central location will bring us to the forefront of higher education in the Dallas area,” Rudin said. “It will enable A&M-Commerce to fully and effectively serve the educational needs of both rural and urban students across North Texas.”

Entos Design of Dallas will direct interior design work on the new campus. A&M-Commerce alumni Chip Harper, chief, founder and chairman and Jordan Harper, CEO of Harrison, Walker & Harper (HWH) of Paris, Texas, were instrumental in locating the site, and Lawrence Gardner, President of OMS Strategic Advisors represented the lease negotiations on behalf of The Texas A&M University System, Rudin said. With the expansion into the new Dallas site, A&M-Commerce — which already operates extended locations in Frisco, McKinney and Mesquite — will substantially increase its footprint in the Metroplex.

Press release courtesy of The Texas A&M University System

News Across Campus

Chick-fil-a Opens On Campus, Brings New Business To Commerce



Students gladly welcomed a new addition to the Sam Rayburn Student Center this spring when Chick-fil-a officially opened. This is not only exciting for the students and faculty of TAMU-C but for the Commerce community as well, as it is open to the public. With the opening of Chick-fil-a on campus, new job opportunities were also opened to students. The widely popular fast-food franchise is off to a great start and looks to remain successful for years to come.

CASNR Works Towards Women in Agricultural Living and Learning Community

This past year CASNR Faculty member, Ms. Maggie Salem, has been working with TAMU-C Residential Living and Learning to create a space for young women interested in agriculture to live and learn together on campus.

The Women in Agriculture Living and Learning Community (Women in Ag LLC) is a space for women who are interested in and/or majoring in Agricultural Sciences, including Animal Sciences, Plant Sciences, Food Studies, Equine Sciences, Wildlife and Conservation, Agricultural Leadership and Communications, Agricultural Education, Livestock Show and Judging Teams, Equine Showing and Judging Teams, Meat Judging Team, and Sigma Alpha members.

This is a community of women with similar interests living, learning, growing, engaging, and experiencing university life...together. Salem stated, "Research shows students who engage in campus life and activities have better grades and are more likely



to graduate. It is as simple as living with people who understand you and have similar interests as you. My hope is that in addition to the academic benefits, those who live in the LLC develop lifelong friendships that will benefit them as people but also in their professional lives."

News Across Campus

Future Lions Given the Chance to Jump Start Their College Career

Texas A&M University-Commerce is presenting the Rising Lions Program this summer. This program is an exciting summer opportunity which aims to better prepare incoming freshmen for future academic success. Graduated high school students will be able to experience campus life before the fall semester begins.

The program provides resources and support to assist in a smooth transition into college life. Students will be able to jump-start their education by taking two classes during the Summer II semester starting July 12th. Students in the program will also benefit from a personal mentor, small class sizes, and a ready-to-assist Academic Success Team including an Academic Advisor, Student Concierge, and a Financial Aid Advisor. Additionally, these students will have the opportunity to remain in the same residence hall once the fall semester starts.



The Lion Food Pantry Offers Help To Students In Need

In the midst of rising food insecurities among college students, The Lion Food Pantry was organized to aid students facing hardships and difficulties. When college students are faced with such needs it can cause a strain on their daily life as well as their academic success. Hunger can directly affect a student's performance and engagement which will limit their potential to have a fulfilling college experience.

The Lion Food Pantry serves as a resource providing a variety of food items as well as personal care products. In using this temporary, judgement-free haven, students can receive extra help when money for the

month is low or they are facing an emergency situation. If students find themselves needing more long-term assistance, they are encouraged to take advantage of the services offered by the CARE Team in the Office of the Dean of Students. The Lion Food Pantry is sustained by the generosity of donors.

The pantry seeks donations of perishable and non-perishable food items as well as personal care

items and small household items.

Those who wish to donate to the pantry can drop off items during open hours. For more information, contact the pantry at Lion-Pantry@tamuc.edu



Stock Horse Team Update

At CASNR, we take pride in every team that works to be their best in competition. One such team is that of the A&M-Commerce Stock Horse Team. Stock Horse Team coach and equine instructor, Nathan Wells, works diligently alongside his students to train and improve their skills. Such dedication to horsemanship can be seen through the team's many achievements.

The Stock Horse Team worked to accomplish their goals and show impressive results throughout the semester. The team traveled to the Stock Horse of Texas Show held in Bryan, Texas during March where they were named the Division II Champion Team. In 2020, the team was named Reserve Champions at the same show. This high honor is a result of much growth and improvement for the team.

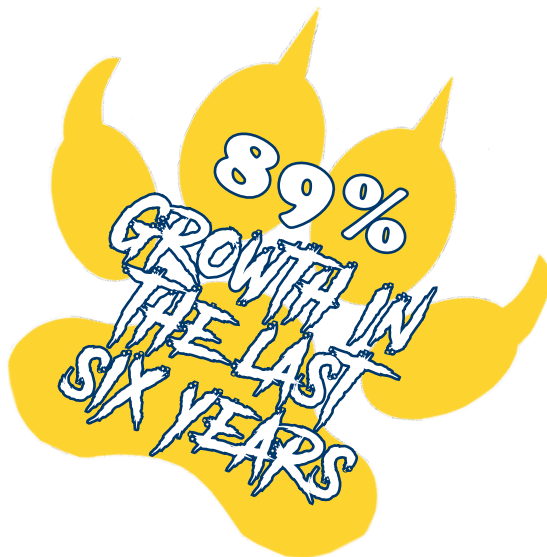
Members of this year's Stock Horse Team include Chance Clipper, Christine Bodman, Kelsey Jordan, Mya Rooke, Jennifer Yates, and Savana Wood.



Wood is also the team manager. Each member of the team worked tirelessly to further themselves in competition and placed very well in their respective events.

Later in the semester, the team also traveled to Sweetwater, TX for the American Stock Horse Association Collegiate Championship Show. They then went on to Lubbock for the National Ranch and Stock Horse Alliance Collegiate Showdown where the team placed fourth in Division II. In wrapping up the season, the team stated that they look forward to another rewarding semester when they come back in the fall. The team plans to practice throughout the summer to continue to advance and accomplish their goals before their return to competition.

- CASNR POINTS OF PRIDE -



★ STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS ★

Lyric Waugh Allen, TX

CASNR is very proud of every student that graduates and moves on to follow their dreams. Lyric Waugh is a recent graduate of TAMU-C. After earning her Bachelor's of Science in Animal Science with a Pre-Veterinary Medicine Concentration in May of 2020, Waugh says she "hit the ground running". She has been prepping for veterinary school since high school and is anticipating this fall when she will be part of the inaugural class at Texas Tech's College of Veterinary Medicine. After going through the application process and receiving news of her acceptance in April, she was completely in shock that she is finally getting to do what she has always dreamed of. Waugh comes from a heavy background in agriculture having grown up in a family that lives and breathes cattle ranching. She chose Texas Tech's brand new Veterinary School for many reasons but her main focus is the community. "Texas Tech is very rural based. They are very community based and have even partnered with their local vet clinics for fourth year students to work at during clinicals."

Waugh has worked at a very prominent mixed practice veterinary clinic in Allen, TX for seven years. "Working at the clinic has really helped remind me that there will be good days as well as bad days but the biggest thing for me that comes with being a vet is giving back to the community." Attending TAMU-C also helped contribute to her love for community. She noted that Commerce is big enough to feel like a university but small enough to feel like family.

In the future, Waugh hopes to focus on reproduction in beef cattle. "I am just very excited for the future. It's still so unreal that I got into Tech and I get to be a part of history. I just can't wait to grow my education for the next four years and share that with my classmates."



Thomas Aquino San Jose, CA



There are many opportunities within CASNR that students can take advantage of for their education. One such opportunity is that of being a Graduate Assistant (GA). Thomas Aquino graduated this spring with his Bachelor's of Science in Animal Science. He is now taking the opportunity of being a GA under the supervision of Animal Science Assistant Professor, Brooke Clemmons. "I am really looking forward to my next two years working towards my masters degree. I know it's going to help me grow as a person and professional," Aquino remarked. While being a GA, he will also be completing a research project over the difference in microbes located in the first stomach, or rumen, of various cattle breeds.

Involvement is a very big part of the college experience for Aquino. He has been a part of many organizations in CASNR including the Ag Ambassadors program, Livestock Show Team, and working with the Lions Rodeo Team. Aquino is someone that will always jump in to lend a helping hand in any area. He stated, "If you're just going to class and then back to your dorm, you're not really getting much of an experience. Involvement is the college experience. It's how you meet people, build friendships, and gain practical knowledge." This also comes from being very involved in 4-H and FFA during high school. Aquino also accomplished obtaining his FFA American Degree.

Aquino credits his being at Commerce to CASNR Dean, Dr. Randy Harp. "I always tell this story, but it was a Sunday afternoon that we met. He took time out of his personal life to meet with me to tour the farm. And three years later, I am so glad that I chose Commerce." Aquino hopes to one day obtain his PhD and possibly give back to future students at TAMU-C by returning as a professor.

Sigma Alpha SORORITY



Newly elected Sigma Alpha officers (R-L) Parliamentarian Nicole Thomas, Secretary Macey Cheatham, First Vice President Madison Owens, President Tayler Manley, Second Vice President Hailey Byrd, Treasurer Emily Jennings, and Recruitment Chair Shelby Bryson.

As a relatively new chapter, Sigma Alpha is still focused on continuing the internal “construction” of their operations. The agricultural sorority is continuing to make big changes to keep up with national sorority standards as well as to fit in with the diverse greek community at TAMU-C. They had the opportunity to work alongside the TAMU-C Panhellenic Council to become associate members for this upcoming year and the foreseeable future.

Sigma Alpha advisor, Ms. Maggie Salem, was awarded “A&M-Commerce Student Organization Advisor of the Year”. Madison Owens, the sorority’s newly elected First Vice President, stated

fondly of Ms. Salem, “She is an amazing role model for the women in our sorority because she constantly embodies the meaning of a “Professional Woman in Agriculture”.” Multiple members of the chapter were nominated for other student organization awards such as the William Leonidas Mayo Student Leader Award, Lion Student Leader Award, Ripple Award, Unsung Hero Award, and Student Organization of the Year. In addition to these honors, Sigma Alpha was named 2nd place in Service and 3rd place in Leadership for the 2020 Sigma Alpha Regional Pillar awards. For their spring fundraiser, the sorority was able to raise \$1,755 for their philanthropy, Heifer International.

Future goals for Sigma Alpha are to continue to increase membership, focus on a smooth transition into TAMU-C Greek Life as an associate member of the Panhellenic Council, raise community awareness of their growing sorority, and spread the word about their philanthropy. In addition to these local goals, a regional goal the group has is to be named first place in Scholarship, Leadership, Fellowship, and Service at the 2021 Regional Pillar Awards.

This spring, Sigma Alpha also elected a new Executive Board for the 2021-2022 year.

“During the summer, our executive board has an extensive list of goals we would like to achieve before the start of the upcoming semester,” Owens continued to report.

The executive board plans to meet multiple times throughout the summer to discuss chapter affairs and planning. The service committee has a philanthropy week in the works for the Fall 2021 semester. The purpose of this week is to raise awareness and funds for the sorority’s philanthropy, Heifer International. They also plan to attend the upcoming Mane Event and Orientation as well as Student Organization Showcase events throughout the summer and early fall. Members look forward to meeting incoming students and telling them about their sorority.

Sigma Alpha has big goals for their chapter for this upcoming year. The executive board cannot wait to work together to selflessly serve the members of their chapter and continue towards excellence.

If you would like to contact Sigma Alpha, a great way to reach out is through social media @SigmaAlphaTAMUC or by email sigmaalphata-muc@gmail.com.



Maggie Salem (middle) receives A&M-Commerce Student Organization Advisor of the Year. Pictured with Taylor Manley, Sigma Alpha President, and Haley Byrd, 2nd Vice President.



Article information submitted by Madison Owens, Sigma Alpha First Vice President

Wildlife and Conservation Faculty and Staff Earn Recognition

Wildlife and Conservation Science (WCS) major, Brittany Stover, was selected to present her research poster, “Evaluating Translocations for Quail Restoration” at Texas Undergraduate Research Day at the Capitol. Per the events website the purpose of this event is to showcase the experiences of undergraduate students engaged in research for Texas legislators and the public through high-quality poster presentations. The program highlights how research conducted by undergraduate students positively impacts Texas, and Texans, with the theme: Transforming Texas Through Undergraduate Research.

Curt Vandenburg and Sarah Currier, CASNR graduate assistants in The Quail Research Laboratory, were recently selected to present posters of their research. Vandenburg presented “Analysis of Predator Avoidance Behavior in California Valley Quail” at the Annual Research Symposium for the Federation of North Texas Area Universities. This annual event gives our graduate students the opportunity to connect and share their research, in the form of poster presentations, with students and faculty from each of the three participating Federation universities (UNT, TWU and Texas A&M University-Commerce) and compete for cash awards. Currier was selected to present “An analysis of weight loss and stress physiology of California valley quail during a simulated translocation” at the International Society for Wildlife Endocrinology Virtual Event on August 16-17, 2021.



WCS faculty member and advisor, Dr. Kelly Reyna, was selected to represent the United States as a member of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) SSC Galliformes Specialist. The IUCN SSC Galliformes Specialist Group (GSG) is committed to the world wide conservation and sustainable management of all native populations of Galliformes species and their habitats. Reyna was also selected to be an associate editor for the 9th National Quail Symposium Proceedings. This will be the ninth in the series of national quail symposia dating back to 1972.



You can see more about the Wildlife and Conservation Science program at the link here:

[Wildlife and Conservation Science BS, Texas A&M University-Commerce - YouTube](#)

Find The Quail Research Laboratory website here: [The Quail Research Laboratory | Texas A&M University-Commerce \(tamuc.edu\)](#)

TOP students studying Wildlife and Conservation Science work with quail
BOTTOM quail photographed by Cami Froneberger

Agribusiness Graduate Students Recieve Special Honor

CASNR graduate student studying AgriBusiness, James Augustin, has had recent success with his research. Augustin was selected to present his poster “An Analysis of Livestock Prices in Nicaragua” at the 2020 Federation of North Texas Universities and 11th Graduate Student Research Symposium. He was also selected to present his paper “A Case Study of Livestock Prices in Nicaragua” at the Southern Agricultural Economics Association Annual Meeting and to present this research at the University of North Texas at Dallas STEM Graduate Speaker Series.

Augustin was also recognized as a “Change Maker in Leadership” at the Intercultural Engagement and Leadership Award Ceremony this spring along with fellow AgriBusiness student, Hayden Chrisman, who was recognized as “Change Maker in Inclusion” by the organization. The Intercultural Engagement and Leadership office defines “Change Maker” as someone who works actively to effect positive social change.

On September 1st, 2020, CASNR faculty member in AgriBusiness, Dr. Jose Lopez was awarded with an exciting research grant, funding \$400,435 for his project titled “Texas Farm Business Management and Benchmarking Education and Outreach Alliance”. Lopez received this research grant from Farm Bench Management and Benchmarking (FBMB) Competitive Grants Program, National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The objective of this project is to form an alliance between TAMU-C, West Texas A&M University, and regional Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service agencies. In creating this alliance, the project will resolve local farm producers and institutions’ financial complications within the agricultural industry, establish a broad network among farm institutions for the purpose of collecting financial data, provide financial management consultations, and incorporate useful tools for farm financial strategies.

Lopez plans to work with his project team in order to implement these goals in pursuit of connecting farm institutions regionally with the knowledge and tools required to succeed. This partnership seeks to support the intellectual and collaborative efforts of regional farm institutions by supporting Texas farm management producers to solve agricultural and educational challenges.

If you are an agricultural producer and would like to learn more about what this project may do for you, please submit your contact information here: [Texas Agricultural Producers](#).



ABOVE (R-L) James Augustin, Dr. Jose Lopez, and Hayden Chrisman



Lions Rodeo Team



Coming out of an eventful spring semester, the Texas A&M University - Commerce Lions Rodeo Team is excited for what the future holds. The team boasts thirty-eight members with impressive rankings in competition. Lions Rodeo Team coach, Dameon White, was very proud to brag on the results of this semester's hardwork and dedication. "We have had a great year even through COVID-19 restrictions and recruiting. The kids have really stepped up," he said with a smile.

This semester, the Lions Rodeo hosted their second annual rodeo on the nights of January 29th and 30th. Sanctioned by the NIRA, the rodeo was held in

Sulphur Springs at the Hopkins County Civic Center. Altogether the rodeo was a success for the team with the women's team taking first place for their second consecutive year and the men's team coming in second place. Many individuals on the team placed very well with Ty Harris taking home Men's All Around and Alyssa Lockhart named Women's Reserve All Around Champion. The rodeo received a great turnout from the community and from competing colleges. Thirteen college rodeo teams were in attendance including Sam Houston, Stephen F. Austin, Texas A&M, and Panola College, as well as a few others included in the Southern Region.

White expressed his gratitude to all those that pitched in to make the rodeo a success. “Having a rodeo is good for the community as well as students, faculty, and staff because they get to see what rodeo athletes really do.” Prep for the third annual rodeo is already underway for the last weekend of January 2022.

Among some achievements earned by the Lions Rodeo Team is being the top women’s team in the nation for 2020. The team hopes to receive this honor again in the future. Coach White has also been named Rodeo Coach Of The Year for three consecutive years from 2018 to 2020. The team now looks forward to the College National Finals Rodeo, hosted in Casper, Wyoming, June 13-19.

This coming fall semester looks to be very promising with new students joining the team. White reported that there are twelve to fourteen recruits, both transfers and incoming freshmen. These students come from

many different states ranging from Washington to Florida but they all have one thing in common, which is the love for rodeo. “These students are not only good in the arena, but they are also exceptional in the classroom,” White expressed with excitement. He was also happy to report that the team has signed the number one steer wrestler in the nation with winnings at the NFR, Jr. American, and High School Finals under his belt. Athletes will jump start their semester with the first rodeo of the fall three weeks after the first class day.

Keep up with the team’s accomplishments and travels through their Facebook page @Texas A&M University - Commerce Rodeo Team. The page is managed by team member and graduate student, Morgan Williams.





STUDENT EDITOR SPOTLIGHT



Agricultural Leadership and Communications (ALC) major, Cami Froneberger, completed her ALC internship this past semester serving as the Student Editor for the 2021 CASNR Spring Newsletter.

Q: Did you have any goals coming into this position?

A: My biggest goal was to broaden my experience with photography and graphic design. I have always enjoyed those two things but never had the opportunity to cultivate and invest in my love for those activities. My goal was to really grow in those areas.

Q: What sort of writing or creative activities do you enjoy outside of the classroom?

A: I particularly enjoy creative writing. It's always been a dream of mine to write and publish a book. I have always enjoyed Louis L'Amour, his style and sense of storytelling are like no other. So if I were to publish a book, it would be within the western genre of fiction. I had never really tried journalism prior to this internship, I had only ever worked in the creative writing area. I really appreciated being able to experience journalism by interviewing people and taking photographs, in addition to realizing I have an interest in journalism. I would say that is where my career interests lie now...in agricultural journalism.

Q: What would your dream job be?

A: I think it would be really fun to work for the AQHA Journal. I also really enjoy the publications that Texas Co-op Power puts out every month. The design and content they put into those publications is really impressive as well as admirable. I have an interest in human interest stories particularly in agriculture. For example, this month Texas Co-op Power published an article about a group of women who own sheep and alpacas and they make yarn from the fleece. I find those stories fascinating. I think it would be interesting to highlight people in agriculture like that, to photograph them and write their stories.

Q: How do you think this experience has helped you with your goals?

A: This experience has really helped me learn journalism, all parts of it. It has also helped me figure out my own style when writing. I also learned better how to work with cameras, computers, software, and other equipment used in this discipline. I really think this whole experience has helped me grow a lot as a person. It definitely pushed me outside of my comfort zone and has brought new, rewarding experiences. I've met a lot of people, which I think has been the most rewarding part of this experience for me personally. I am really thankful to the College of Ag and Ms. Salem for giving me this opportunity.

“The Ag Leadership and Communications major has a required internship as part of the curriculum. This is intended to give ALC students a practical experience in applying what they have learned in the classroom in addition to supplying them with contacts and experiences they can use and apply in their careers. Cami far exceeded my expectations. She is naturally gifted in the areas of communications, journalism and photography specifically in addition to coming to each assignment and activity with a positive attitude and infectious enthusiasm. I am so pleased to have her serve as an example and set the standards in this new program.”

- ALC Program Coordinator, Ms. Maggie Salem



Got something you want to see in the newsletter?
Let us know!
Email Ms. Maggie Salem at maggie.salem@tamuc.edu



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