

Holiday 2021

NEWSLETTER

A glimpse into the
Horticulture
department's
poinsettia production
pg. 10



COLLEGE OF
**Agricultural Sciences
and Natural Resources**

A&M-COMMERCE

Dean's Note

It's that time of year again, Christmas lights, shopping, candy canes, pumpkins, shorter daylight, holiday parades and cheer, football and basketball games, and most importantly, family. This is a time where we stop and think of how much we are truly blessed. During Thanksgiving week, it was easy to remember all our ancestors that decided to honor a day to give thanks to God for their blessings and opportunities. They had hardships and burdens that were devastating, however they gave thanks and counted their blessings. Thornton Wilder may have said it best: "We can only be said to be alive in those moments when our hearts are conscious of our treasures." Yes, we continue to be in a pandemic that affects many of our students, faculty, staff and their families. It has been a blessing to be back to school this fall, in person. Thus, some normalcy has returned. The College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) grew again from 594 to 625 students from Fall of 2020 to Fall 2021. Even though we have been in a pandemic, we have been blessed with new and more students than the past.

We are blessed to have three new faculty and staff members join the CASNR team. I want to introduce you to these new faculty members.

Dr. Jared Mumm is an animal science instructor and the Livestock Judging Team coordinator and coach. Dr. Will Doss will add expertise in Agricultural Education and Ag Mechanics instruction. He will take on this role as Dr. Doug LaVergne, Associate Dean assumes the lead role as an administrator at the Texas A&M Commerce at Dallas campus, where Texas A&M-Commerce has

expanded. This new location is at 8750 North Central Expressway in Dallas. CASNR will be offering three degree programs at this new location, while the Colleges of Education and Business will offer the majority of the degree programs at our newest campus expansion. Maggie Salem became Dr. Maggie Salem as she completed all requirements for her doctorate. Congratulations to all three Drs. Salem, Mumm, and Doss for completing a doctorate this past year and taking on a new role with our college. We also welcome Mrs. Catrina Soto as our new Veterinary Biomedical Technology lab coordinator. She brings several years of experience in the Veterinary Science industry.

One of the high points of excitement this fall is the awarding of funding for a new Agricultural Teaching, Research, and Expo facility at the university farm. We are not planning to replace any current facilities based on our recent growth and planned growth for the future. We will simply add these facilities to enhance our educational and exposition opportunities. Texas A&M University–Commerce (TAMUC) President, Dr. Rudin has initiated a task force that will be planning these facilities. We want to thank several of our friends in the legislature for their support and confidence to enhance transformation funding for agriculture and education for east Texas.

We have much to brag about regarding our students and competitive teams. Our Rodeo team continues to do well and leads the region as we finish the fall events. Our Meat Judging Team completed the fall contests as Reserve National Champions while our Stock Horse Team and Horse Judging Team fared well again. The Stock Horse Team was Reserve Regional Champions.



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"We are truly proud of all our students and for the faculty that advise them and the staff that support."

Our livestock show team continues to go to more shows, increasing the number of heifers being shown and increasing the number of students participating. One especially high note was that we had the Reserve Supreme Hereford Heifer at the East Texas State Fair and our students received the outstanding herdsman award for their professionalism. Most recently, we competed in a new competition with one of our new faculty members working with our students. It was a two-day virtual contest. With 28 different universities participating, and our first time to compete, we placed 4th. Teams ahead of us were: Michigan State, Texas A&M, and Ohio State. In addition, many of our students (both graduate and undergraduate) continue to complete their research projects and make presentations at regional and national conferences. We are truly proud of all our students and for the faculty that advise them and the staff that support.

As an update for fundraising, we initiated the naming of the university farm one year ago. Based on Texas A&M System policies, in order to name any facility, there are funding requirements. Thus, we are soliciting for the naming opportunity of Dr. A. C. "Buck" Hughes for the university farm. 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. We are two-thirds the way to our goal for being able to name the farm. Thank you to all that have contributed and we encourage others that will support this effort.

Let us remember that we would not be at the university, if not for our students. We provide learning and career opportunities for them for a lifetime. Therefore, spread the good word and send potential students our way. I genuinely appreciate everyone's support.

I wish each of you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



Dr. Randy Harp, CASNR Dean

OVERVIEW

CASNR Welcomes New Faces

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Meet Our Team

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UPCOMING EVENTS

JANUARY 28 & 29

Lions Rodeo

Hopkins County Civic Center

Sulphur Springs, TX

10 AM & 7 PM

More Information to come!

APRIL 23

AGR Pink Rose Formal

Webb Hill Country Club

Wolfe City, TX

AGR & Alumni golf at 9 AM

**Formal to follow in the
evening**

More Information to come!

APRIL 26

CASNR Ag Honors Banquet

Rayburn Student Center

Conference Rooms

Texas A&M University -

Commerce

6 PM - 9 PM

More Information to come!

APRIL 30

Sigma Alpha Emerald Ball

Webb Hill Country Club

Wolfe City, TX

More Information to come!

Oh No...The Dorpers Are Coming!

BY MADISON WYNNE

Despite the impact of COVID-19, Texas A&M University-Commerce does not stop its continued growth within the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR). As the CASNR family begins to grow and new programs are established, so are new learning opportunities - one of which is the new sheep and goat facility. Located by the current plant science center, the sheep and goat center brings an official home for the small ruminant animals where students will be able to utilize course knowledge in a hands-on learning experience. With current finishing touches being added to the center, there are hopes that the animal science faculty can have dorpers stomping ground very soon.

The faculty working hard behind the scenes in decision making includes, but is not limited to, Dr. Megan Owen, Dr. Douglas Eborn, and Dr. Jared Mumm. Speaking with the faculty first hand, they have hopes of

this facility being an essential learning tool for courses such as Sheep and Goat Management, Artificial Breeding, Reproduction, and so much more. “Our goal and our mission here at the school is teaching and getting kids the opportunity to develop skills that they are not going to get elsewhere,” says Mumm. Mumm claims that this facility can offer more opportunity for species-specific interests that makes the college stand out from other university programs. Eborn speaks of his hopes to get an operation going in the future, similar to the current cattle operation, where students can get hands-on experience with the production and sales of dorper lambs.

As for the dorpers, the hunt for a flock is still on! The faculty are exploring different breeders and seeking to build new networks with the dorper world. Of course, there are future hopes of expanding the operation and getting new experiential learning opportunities, but the primary focus for the staff is to get this operation started up and running for classroom teaching. There is no exact date written in stone as to when the facility will be functional; however, the center is being touched up and the staff can confidently say it will be operating soon.

SHEEP AND GOAT LOGO BY SHELBY BRYSON



Twin Oaks Farm Update

BY SHELBY BRYSON

The Twin Oaks Farm has big plans for the upcoming semesters as they build back from the pandemic blow of the Spring 2020 semester. The farm has plans to hire back a full staff of students in the near future and to plant a numerous amount of berry bushes, fruit trees, and a variety of vegetables for class demonstrations. The farm staff is also considering bringing in a flock of laying hens to utilize the facilities the farm already possesses.

A HEART FOR STUDENTS

CASNR Alumna Named New Texas FFA Executive Director

BY EMILY JENNINGS



Jennifer Jackson was named the new Texas FFA Executive Director in October. An alumna of Texas A&M University - Commerce, Jackson spent 15 years as an agricultural science teacher in Frisco, Wylie, and Van Alstyne and served on numerous state and national committees. Jackson says that the thing that she remembers most about her time at Commerce is the people. She was a part of a very small teaching block and said professors like Dr. Williams were very instrumental in helping her, and that all of the staff were incredibly kind and helpful in preparing them to become Ag teachers. As students, they were challenged to think about various scenarios they might face in the future, which helped prepare them for teaching. Jackson says that one of the most challenging parts of becoming an Ag teacher is transitioning quickly from a college student to an adult who will influence young minds.

Prior to becoming the Executive Director, Jackson served as the Student Recognition and Scholarship Coordinator and coordinated the competitive events hosted by Texas FFA including the final rounds of contests held at the Texas FFA State Convention. In 2020, she was named Ag Teacher of the year by the Texas Agriculture Teachers Association. It is her strong background in these fields that equips her to be a strong asset to the organization. As the Executive Director, Jackson

"Everything that I did was still enabling me to work with students."

BOTTOM Jennifer Jackson attends the Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas Conference





ABOVE Jackson is surrounded by the Texas State Officer Team at the State Fair of Texas
BELOW Jackson is photographed with students from her time at Wylie ISD



Jackson's passion for students is a driving force in every aspect of her life.

is responsible for providing “oversight, management, development and direction for the Texas FFA Association.” Jackson was extremely happy in the classroom and didn’t really want to leave. However, when the position for Student Recognition and Scholarship Coordinator became available, she knew she had to apply. This is something she had envisioned for herself for several years and she fell in love with her role. Jackson stated, “Everything that I did was still enabling me to work with students, I get to work with you all at State Convention, I get to interact with teachers all the time... I just loved every aspect of the job.” While she was sad to see former Executive Director Austin Large go, she knew God was calling her to apply for the position of Executive Director. Jackson says that so far she has had a wonderful experience in this position.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF JENNIFER JACKSON



LIVESTOCK JUDGING: THE FIRST OF MANY CLINICS, AND A DAY TO REMEMBER

BY SHELBY BRYSON

Texas A&M University-Commerce's College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) has grown tremendously in recent years. With the new addition of judging teams - the most recent addition being the Livestock Judging Team - team coach Dr. Jared Mumm and the CASNR team found a perfect outreach opportunity.

The College of Agriculture had the opportunity to host a livestock judging clinic on Saturday, November 6th, 2021 with the help of many surrounding farms, businesses, and alumni. Bear Creek Farms provided a class of cattle, Lacey Profit - a CASNR Alumni - graciously provided two classes of does, and the classes of market sheep and market goats were purchased through the Harvest Festival in Southeast Texas by the University's farm. The university's show team members assisted with the presentation of the animals in each class, setting the livestock up for accurate judging. Along with the livestock show team, graduate students, university staff, farm staff, and even students with no prior

connection to agriculture helped the day flow smoothly.

Dr. Jared Mumm emphasized, "It was a group effort to get all of the stock together. We had 4-H teams from Hunt and Hopkins County attend. There were roughly twenty 4-H kids and their parents, making it about thirty people in attendance on the 4-H side of things."

The clinic was not only open to 4-H Chapters, but also to various Junior Colleges. There were Junior Colleges in attendance from Fort Scott, Kansas and Murray State College, from the State of Oklahoma. These teams of junior college students were made up of freshman and sophomore students.

In total, almost 60 students attended the clinic. Dr. Jared Mumm expressed that, "It was an all-around amazing day - not only to spend the day with the future of the College of Agriculture but also to show off our facilities." These efforts were a great way to continue with a strong community outreach, and to proceed with showcasing the college's programs while also creating positive experiences for young people that could hopefully continue their journey here at Commerce.



Livestock Show Team Update

BY SHELBY BRYSON

The TAMUC Livestock Showteam had a record number of members this semester with eighteen students participating, as well as a record number of calves in the barn. The team has traveled near and far exhibiting the college's livestock. They have competed in the Louisiana State Fair, the Hereford Heritage Show, and the East Texas State Fair. They have also represented the university in many smaller livestock shows and sales.



TOP LEFT TAMUC Show team displays new Stall Signs at Louisiana State Fair
BOTTOM LEFT Members of the Livestock Show Team stand proudly with the fruits of their labor

Student Spotlight: Chase Hartin

SACHSE, TEXAS

BY CAMI FRONEBERGER

Agriculture is a many faceted industry with opportunities that range from one area to the next. CASNR is proud to offer degrees and programs that will help students gain knowledge to achieve a career in any sector. By pairing a Bachelor's degree in Animal Science with a minor in Agronomy, recent graduate Chase Hartin can incorporate soil science into his future career. A Sachse, Texas native, Hartin helped his high school FFA get started as president while finding a love for agriculture himself. "I've always wanted to do something that could change the agricultural industry," Hartin expressed. "Agronomy is the main aspect of life. Crops feed the world. Humans have to eat, animals have to eat. So being a part of the soil science sector gives me so many opportunities to work for change in areas of seed production, crop production, soil analysis, and so much more."

Hartin has taken advantage of many of the opportunities students have in CASNR, such as becoming a student worker at the TAMUC Educational Farm. This has helped him gain the knowledge he needs for his future in getting hands-on experience with a variety of livestock species. Hartin stated he gets to experience a little bit of both worlds working at the farm seeing relationships between the livestock and plants or soil. He has also enjoyed getting to work alongside students from every walk of life and learning from them as well.

Under the guidance of Dr. Curtis Jones, Hartin is now working to attain his Masters in Agricultural Sciences along with a thesis. He credits his success and desire to learn to the staff and faculty of CASNR. "At the end of the day, most of the professors know your name and you can go talk to them whenever you need help. They're all so willing to help however they can and can even have potential resources for you further down the road. I think that's pretty special."



FEATURE BY MADISON WYNNE
WINNER OF THE NEWSLETTER COVER PHOTO CONTEST

POINSETTIAS UTILIZED AS HORTICULTURE LEARNING TOOL

If there is something that the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) is all about, it is the way they educate their students. Here at Texas A&M University-Commerce (TAMUC), there are many opportunities to grow as an agriculturist, especially in the classroom. In the Greenhouse Management (PLS 430) course this fall, students were able to get hands-on learning about poinsettia production through taking on a number of poinsettias and being responsible for their individual productions. Students observed and conducted tests to create high quality poinsettias that were sold and distributed throughout and beyond Hunt

County, Texas. The class consisted of 11 students and their professor, Dr. Harp. Along with this poinsettia production, the students obtained a variety of greenhouse information that is beneficial for future horticulturists, agriculture educators, and even hobbyists. On top of all the quality information, students were invested in group projects that taught them how to create and start up a business, the costs of starting a greenhouse-related business, and guidance on how to work with a business partnership. Interested in taking this course or getting invested with CASNR? Contact Mrs. Casey Richards at Casey.Richards@tamuc.edu.



RIGHT Coloring poinsettias show the diversity of the plant
ABOVE Poinsettias sit in the forefront of the Horticulture Greenhouse

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MADISON WYNNE



HORTICULTURE RESEARCH TEAM PRESENTATIONS, GRANTS, AND TEAMWORK...OH MY!

In August, graduate students Taryn Bazhaw and Beatriz Ruiz presented their research at the American Society for Horticultural Science (ASHS) National Meeting in Denver, CO. Bazhaw presented research titled, Factors Influencing Honeybee (*Apis mellifera*) Visits to Crepe Myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*) and Ruiz presented research titled, Mechanical Control of Crepe Myrtle Bark Scale (*Acanthococcus lagerstroemiae*).

Additionally, Horticulture and Greenhouse Program Director and Professor, Dr. Derald Harp was awarded a \$229,856 grant from the USDA in September with the goal of funding research on plant drought response and insect pollination in collaboration with Tarleton State University.

Staying busy, the Horticulture Research Team is also a regular presence at the Greenville Farmers Market. The Team, along with students involved in the Horticulture program, produced and sold over 350 garden chrysanthemums, 250 flats of pansies, 300 ornamental kale and cabbage, 150 Swiss chard, and over 600 poinsettias this year in addition to assisting with beautification efforts on campus.



RIGHT Beatriz Ruiz at the ASHS National Conference in Denver, Colorado.

BOTTOM Planting of Petey's (Pedro Castillo) Dwarf Crepe Myrtle trial by the PLS 450 Landscape Management class.



Collegiate FFA Update

The TAMUC Chapter of Collegiate FFA was reestablished this semester (Fall 2021) and currently has twenty-five members with an officer team that was elected this semester as well. The advisor over the Chapter, Dr. Keith Frost, stated, “Even though this is a Collegiate FFA, the goal we have here is to establish A.L.E.C.S.A,



BY SHELBY BRYSON

the Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications Student Association.” The chapter also has plans on facilitating a formal dance for people with special needs and several food drives in the upcoming spring semester.

CASNR Welcomes New Faces



The students, faculty, and staff of Texas A&M University–Commerce are pleased to welcome two new members within the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. Dr. William Doss and Dr. Jared Mumm will be great assets to the department and both are very excited to be on the team. Both are well versed and knowledgeable within their respected fields and we look forward to the impact they make here at TAMUC.

BY HAILEY BYRD

A true East Texas Native, Dr. William Doss grew up on his family’s commercial fish farm in Grand Saline, Texas. From an early age, Doss has been enthralled with mechanics as he participated in ag mech competitions within FFA and recognized the skills he wanted to develop from those experiences. After completing his undergraduate and master’s degree at Texas A&M University, he taught Agricultural Education at the high school level for a few years. He then went back and earned his PhD from Texas Tech University and found his way to A&M - Commerce. Here, he will be teaching Ag Mechanic classes under the Agricultural Leadership, Communication, and Education program. Some goals he has for the future are to increase the number of students within the ag mechanics sector of the program and to establish an Ag Me-

chanics Minor to help with boosting these numbers. The department sends a heartfelt welcome to Dr. William Doss and looks forward to the great things he will accomplish for CASNR.



Coming to us from Kimberly, Idaho, Dr. Jared Mumm will prove to be an outstanding staff member due to his strong connection to agriculture. Mumm has been invested in the pig industry from a young age, showing swine at various Midwest major shows and later on serving as an FFA officer for the state of Idaho. Earning his PhD from Kansas State University, Dr. Mumm makes it a goal to, “increase the number of opportunities students have to get out into the world.” Here at A&M-Commerce, he will have the ability to expand on that goal as the new Instructor and Judging Team Coordinator. He will oversee the coaching of the livestock judging teams and coordinate their travels to contests across the country. So far, Mumm enjoys the smalltown atmosphere Commerce has to offer and being able to have a connection with all of the professors

in CASNR. We continue to welcome Dr. Jared Mumm and anticipate the positive leadership he will display throughout his time here at TAMUC.





ALPHA GAMMA RHO

Sigma Alpha SORORITY

This year Sigma Alpha was able to experience their first Panhellenic recruitment after being invited to join in the Spring of 2021. During fall recruitment, Sigma Alpha doubled their membership. The ladies of this organization expressed that they feel nothing but love from the other Greek organizations on campus and that the other women have expressed nothing but excitement about this new step for Sigma Alpha. Sigma Alpha is also working to grow their relationships with other Greek organizations through recruitment and finals week gifts, among other things.

Sigma Alpha is increasing their presence on campus through philanthropy events such as their first ever “Sig-hetti Dinner” where all the proceeds go to Heifer International, a global nonprofit organization working to eliminate poverty. Sigma Alpha is also participating in more local community service projects such as volunteering for the Eco-Lions trash pick ups, participating in other organization's philanthropy events, and volunteering at Leadership Development Events and Career Development Events hosted by the College of Ag.

The men of Alpha Gamma Rho had a successful recruitment this year as well, as they initiated nine new members and tripled in size. The members of AGR have been networking with other AGR chapters across the nation to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood. Oklahoma State University's AGR chapter visited our

BY EMILY JENNINGS AND HAILEY BYRD

campus to help with recruitment this year - a major help for this chapter as many of the members could not participate in recruitment because they serve as executive officers of the Interfraternity Council. However, Oklahoma State University was not the only chapter that the men made connections with, as they attended the Southwest Classic game at Globe Life Field with the Texas A&M University and Arkansas State University AGR chapters.



ABOVE Members of Sigma Alpha and AGR at the 2021 homecoming tailgate



ABOVE Members of Sigma Alpha and Alpha Gamma Rho pictured at the Ag Olympics, a CASNR tradition

As mentioned above, two of the men of AGR serve as executive officers of the Interfraternity Council. Parker Youngman, AGR President, serves as the IFC Treasurer and Dylan Hanna, AGR Vice-President, serves as the IFC President. Holding these positions have allowed the men of AGR to build relations with the other Greek fraternities and sororities on campus. The men of AGR also participate in various community service opportunities; they have completed highway trash pick ups, donated and participated in other's philanthropy events, and are working towards creating their own philanthropy event.

Sigma Alpha and Alpha Gamma Rho are nationally recognized as brother and sister organizations. Our local chapters of Sigma Alpha and Alpha Gamma Rho work together to host events across campus, the

most recent being Homecoming. Alumni from both organizations attended the event and everyone gathered together as a family to eat, play games, and enjoy the football game. Sigma Alpha and AGR also collaborated with the Ag Ambassadors, an organization in the College of Agriculture, to host the annual Ag Olympics. Students and faculty compete in quizzes, cowboy jousting, the hay bale toss, and more for a chance to win gift cards.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF SIGMA ALPHA AND ALPHA GAMMA RHO

Horse Judging Team Update

BY SHELBY BRYSON

The Horse Judging team and their Coach, Graduate Student Jory Goetz, had a very successful and busy semester. They competed in cities across the United States from College Station, Texas, to Columbus, Ohio, moving on to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and ending in Fort Worth, Texas. The team experienced great success throughout their Fall 2021 season and hope to continue this trend throughout the next semester.

TOP RIGHT Horse Judging Team members at the AQHA World Show, in Oklahoma City, OK. Pictured are Jack Womack, Morgan Swartz, Layne Gano, Kirsten Polk, and Coach Jory Goetz, also pictured is AQHA Vice President, Ken Banks

BOTTOM RIGHT Pictured are Horse Judging Team members, Jack Womack, Layne Gano, and Morgan Swartz at the All American Quarter Horse Congress in Columbus, OH



Student Spotlight: Inma Ortiz-Prieto

HUELVA, SPAIN

BY CAMI FRONEBERGER

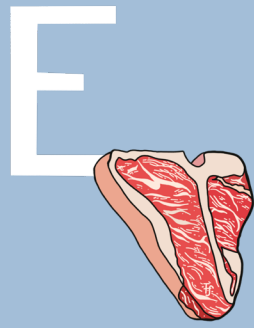
Infectious positivity radiates from many and this can be an asset in college as well as career. Inma Ortiz-Prieto, a junior majoring in Agricultural Science and Technology with an emphasis in Ornamental Horticulture is one such student whose positivity can be seen in every aspect of her educational career. Ortiz-Prieto is driven by a love for golf and plants combined. As a member of the Lions Women's Golf Team, she sees the importance of the growth and maintenance of the greens that she plays on. Being a student athlete has also taught Ortiz-Prieto dedication to her team and her education.

Ortiz-Prieto grew up on a golf course as well as surrounded by agriculture. Crop production is very prominent in Huelva, Spain, Ortiz-Prieto's hometown. Her whole life has been heavily influenced by crops and plant production. This, in turn, influenced her decision to move to America for educational opportunities. She stated Texas posed the best choice for education in the horticultural field. She hopes to continue her studies while specifically focusing on turfgrass management.

The experiences she has had at TAMUC has led Ortiz-Prieto to prize connections she makes with people in and around the community. She was proud to express she has met President Rudin along with athletics director, Tim McMurray. "Wherever you find nice people," she stated. "It doesn't matter how long you've known them or where you are."

When it comes to her golf career, Ortiz-Prieto credits her success to the support of her professors, teammates, and coaches. She believes in the power of teamwork and encouragement. Ortiz-Prieto quoted her coaches, "You only need one person to change the team." She truly embodies this statement and it is seen in her positive attitude and team spirit. "I try to encourage people. I really enjoy the happiness of others."





Texas A&M University-Commerce “Meats” Success At The National Competition

BY SHELBY BRYSON

ET DESIGNED BY SHELBY BRYSON

The Texas A&M University-Commerce Meat Judging Team completed their season on October 31st in Friona, Texas.

In response to student interest and as an aid to training the team, The College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources added the first meat science course to their curriculum, ANS-397 Meat Selection and Grading. This course allows students to gain knowledge about the standards of the meat industry as well as give the opportunity for other students to join the Meat Judging Team. Meat Judging Coach and ANS-397 instructor, Ms. Haley Cole, has designed the course curriculum to progress from the basics of into the more challenging aspects of Meat Evaluation. Coach Cole has stated she is using the course to teach anyone looking for more information regarding the industry, as well as using it to prepare her next competition team. The students who take the course and then choose to compete in the next competitive year, are referred to as the Junior Team.

The first judging workout of the fall was held the last weekend of September, two Junior Team mem-



The Judging Team posed in front of a road side sign in Friona, Texas following the conclusion of the High Plains Contest.

bers (Animal Science major, Luz Medina and Agricultural Leadership and Communications major, Shelby Bryson) joined the four members of the Senior Competitive Team (AgriBusiness major, Kris Barr, Animal Science major, Katherine Bivens, double major in Agricultural Leadership and Communications and Agricultural Education, Maddie Wynne, and graduate student, Yves Kacou).

The workout weekend was held at West Texas A&M University in Canyon, Texas. West Texas University’s Meat Science Department was welcoming host to the teams and had multiple pork carcass, pork cuts, beef carcass, and beef cuts classes available. The teams then traveled from Canyon to Lubbock, Texas to attend a workout at Texas Tech where the teams judged multiple classes of Pork, Beef, and Lamb. At the conclusion of the workout weekend, Ms. Cole offered Shelby Bryson a spot on the Senior Team.

The following weeks were busy weeks for the team and included trips to west Texas to practice Quality Grading and Yield Grading beef carcass rails at Caviness Beef in Hereford, Texas, to Nebraska Beef

in Omaha, Nebraska, and to The University of Nebraska-Lincoln to practice grading before The American Royal Intercollegiate Meat Judging Competition facilitated by The American Meat Science Association (AMSA) in Omaha, Nebraska

At the conclusion of the AMSA competition, the Senior Team placed Second Team in Pork Judging, Second Team in Beef Judging, Second Team in Placings, Second Team in Questions, and third place overall A-Division team. Individual awards were given as follows:

Madison Wynne: High Individual in Pork Judging, Beef Judging, Questions, and Third Overall individual. Kris Barr was Sixth Overall Individual, Katherine Bivens was Sixteenth Overall Individual, Shelby Bryson was Eighteenth Overall Individual, Yves Kacou was Sixth Place Alternate.

Just over a week later, the Texas A&M-Com-

merce Meat Judging Team was on the road once again. The team departed Tuesday October 26th for San Antonio and immediately left the next day for Corpus Christi, Texas where the team spent three days Quality and Yield Grading beef carcass rails at South Texas Beef before they headed to attend a meat judging working at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas. Coach Cole stated that finding beef packing plants open to the public that do not require a COVID vaccination record is rather difficult compared to pre-COVID-19 guidelines and virtually eliminates all of the major companies.

The High Plains Intercollegiate Meat Judging Competition is the final competition of the season and was held on October 31, 2021. The Senior Team attended the competition held at the Cargill Friona Plant. At the conclusion of the competition, The Texas A&M-Commerce's Meat Judging Team won High Team Lamb Judging, Second High Team Beef Grading, Second High Team Beef Judging, Second High Team Overall Beef, Second High Team in Total Placings, Third High Team Pork Judging, for fun, the Team won Most-Creative at the AMSA Costume Party that followed the banquet. Individual awards are as follows: Madison Wynne earned high individual Pork Judging and Second High Overall Individual. Kris Barr was High Individual in Questions and Seventh High Overall Individual. Katherine Bivens was Second High Individual in Beef Judging and Eighth High Overall Individual. Shelby Bryson was Eighth Individual in Lamb Judging, Thirteenth Overall Individual, and was the Rachel Hamilton Award Recipient. The Rachel Hamilton award is awarded to the student who exhibits the award namesake's love for meat judging, collegiality, and positivity. Most notable, however, was the Senior Team winning the Reserve National Championship in the A-Division.

TOP LEFT The 2021 meat judging team from right to left: Katherine Bivens, Kris Barr, Madison Wynn, Coach Haley Cole, Shelby Bryson, Yves Kacou
BOTTOM LEFT The team in Hereford, Texas at the High Plains Awards banquet costume after-party dressed as USDA Ribeye Quality Grade Cards. The team won Most Creative



TAMUC RECEIVES FUNDS TOWARDS CONSTRUCTION OF NEW AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION COMPLEX

A bill that includes almost \$45 million in funding for the construction of an agricultural education complex at Texas A&M University-Commerce passed to the Governor’s desk on Tuesday, October 12, 2021. Senate Bill 52, which was filed on October 12 during the third special session of the 87th Texas Legislature, was signed in both the House of Representatives and the Senate on October 19. It approves the issuance of revenue bonds to fund capital projects at multiple public higher education institutions across the state.

The bill calls for A&M-Commerce to receive \$44,922,833 for the completion of a proposed agricultural complex. The complex would provide A&M-Commerce with food processing labs, field labs, and space for educational conferences, agricultural expos and competitions.

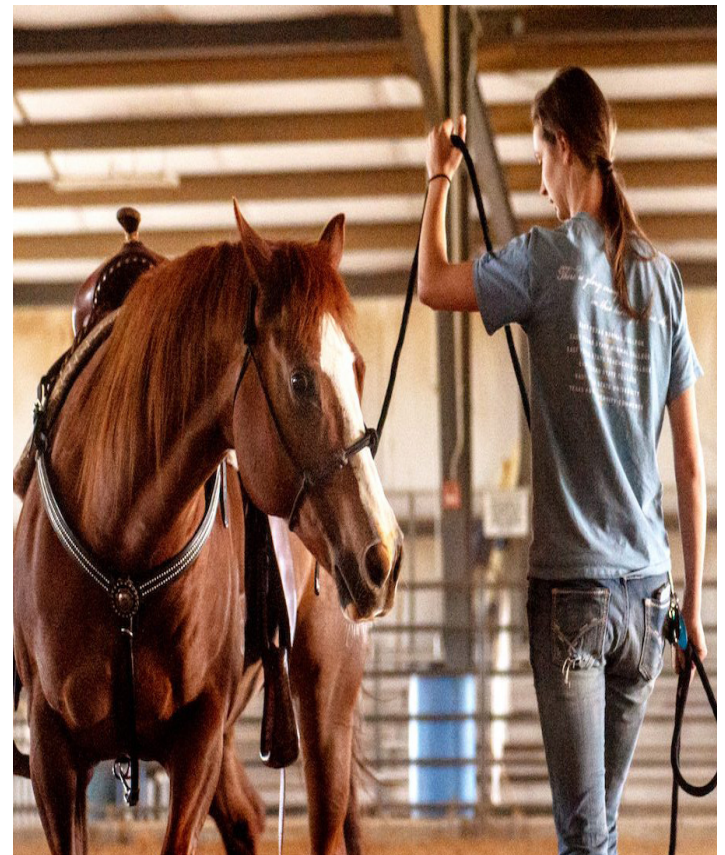
The proposed complex will serve the people of rural and urban Texas as a dynamic hub for agricultural research, teaching, economic development, international student exchange, and knowledge transfer initiatives in a wide range of fields, including sustainable agriculture, animal science, urban agriculture, equine studies and more. With the recent COVID-19 pandemic, the regional demand for training and consulting is escalating as small businesses and local growers are being asked to supply sustainable food sources to prevent future food shortages across the state. This facility would help provide the educational opportunities needed to help alleviate these issues.

Randy Harp, Ph.D., dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources at A&M-Commerce, touted the impact that this new facility will have on agricultural education in the region. “These facilities

will be transformational for our university and for East Texas. The value of education, both teaching and research, will be immeasurable for our students for many years to come,” Harp said. “At the same time, the economic impact for this region of the state will truly benefit all citizens. I am excited and proud to have the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources at A&M Commerce represent and serve our stakeholders in the agricultural industry for East Texas.”

The full article can be found at:

[Texas Legislature Approves Nearly \\$45 Million to Fund Construction of New Agricultural Education Complex at TAMUC](#)





LEFT Emily Jennings, Dr. Maggie Salem, Alyssa Chapman, and Jessica Stephens representing CASNR at the AFA Leaders Conference in Kansas City, MO.

BY MALLORY ANDERSON

CASNR STUDENTS ATTEND AGRICULTURE FUTURE OF AMERICA LEADERS CONFERENCE

The College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources was the recipient of the University Growth Initiative grant from Agriculture Future of America, a group aimed at fostering professionalism, intellectualism and entrepreneurialism through experiential opportunities for agriculture students.

The AFA Leaders Conference is a professional development opportunity offering students a chance to network with peers and agricultural industry leaders while being introduced to career and internship opportunities in the agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources industries. The conference hosted 750 undergraduate students from 45 states.

The University Growth Initiative was created in 2007 and provides funding for students to attend the AFA Leaders Conference, among other benefits. Dr. Maggie Salem, Assistant Professor of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications, applied for the Initiative and received the grant enabling herself and three students to attend the conference at no cost. This is the first year for Texas A&M University-Commerce to receive the grant. Other recipients this year

were Delta State University, Middle Tennessee State University, Lincoln Land Community College and Delaware State University.

Emily Jennings, an Agricultural Leadership and Communications major from Maud, TX, Jessica Stephens, an Agricultural Leadership and Communications major from Canton, TX, and Alyssa Chapman, an Agricultural Education major from Emory, Texas attended the conference in Kansas City, MO in early October with Dr. Maggie Salem.

Emily Jennings expressed she had a wonderful time attending the AFA Leaders Conference in Kansas City, Missouri. She had the opportunity to network with industry professionals and a fantastic group of other student leaders. She was able to attend many different sessions with topics such as transitioning from college to careers, how to negotiate job offers, and what it's like being a young professional in today's world. Jennings finished by saying, "I walked away from this conference with more confidence in myself and my abilities, connections that will take me far in my career, and knowledge about the various opportunities that await me."

TAMUC STOCK HORSE TEAM'S DEDICATION LEAVES NO TIME FOR "HORISING" AROUND

BY SIERRA SCHUENEMAN

Hard work and dedication to perfecting your craft has been instilled in every mind within the agricultural community. No matter what event you are participating in, you go out and do the best that you possibly can. We have great pride within the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources when our teams compete and represent us at the highest levels.

One team that is no stranger to the winner's circle is the TAMUC Stock Horse Team. The team is led by coach and equine instructor, Nathan Wells. Wells has been a staff member of TAMUC since 2017 and continues to make sure that his students have the necessary skill set to be successful both inside the stock horse arena and the classroom. With a background in breaking and training colts as well as animal science, Wells' dedication to giving equine partners the knowledge they need to succeed sets him apart from the rest.

The TAMUC Stock Horse team is a Division II team, meaning the team consists of four riders that compete in either the Limited, Intermediate, or Novice division. On top of taking care of their own horses, practicing, and traveling to shows, the team members must also be full-time students and maintain a GPA of a 2.0 or greater. As the fall semester rolled around, there were three brand new faces to the team: Hannah Smart, Alessandra Guillen and Olivia Dailey, along with returning member, Chance Clipper. These four worked diligently to achieve goals they had set and saw a tremendous amount of improvement over the course of just a few months of participating in shows.

The first Stock Horse of Texas show of the Fall took place in Bryan, Texas, where the team earned their spot as Reserve Champion among the Division II schools. Chance Clipper was the Limited Non-Pro All-

Around winner, this is a first for TAMUC and Chance. The final show of the semester was the Stock Horse of Texas World Show in Abilene, Texas. Olivia Dailey had a great show, placing 6th overall in the Novice All-Around among over 60 exhibitors. Chance Clipper finished in the Top Ten All-Around for the Limited Non-Pro Division, having competed with 34 other exhibitors.

Wells had this to say of his team, "It is amazing to see the desire to do great. One of my new girls went from placing in between fifteenth through twenty during the first shows of the semester to being in the top ten of every event towards the end." The fall semester shows have ended, but the team has set goals for the spring semester and are working towards them at full speed. "This team is like a family. They'll support you when you are on the top or bottom. They'll push you to get to the top, though," Wells continued. "I am more than excited to see where they go in the spring semester."

BOTTOM Coach Wells working up the plan of attack for the Lions.





LEFT Michaela Bledsoe enjoys Korean cuisine

PUTTING CULTURE IN AGRICULTURE

BY SHELBY BRYSON

TAMU-C alumna's Commerce to Dallas metroplex commute takes her to places she has long aspired to go

Michaela Bledsoe, a 2020 Texas A&M university-Commerce (TAMUC) Master recipient, has found and learned to embrace the “culture” in Agriculture. In the midst of her time at TAMUC, Bledsoe was also making trips 70 miles away to Brookhaven Community College to take foreign language courses in Korean. Little did she know at that time that the weekly commute from Commerce to the Dallas Metroplex, would soon take her to places she has aspired to go.

During her time at Brookhaven, Michaela had been approached by a professor that had an abroad opportunity that intrigued her. There was a 12-month contract job opportunity available at a private school in South Korea. The contract was for an English instructor at an English Academy. In Korea their schooling offers specialties in areas such as English, Military, Arts, and more. These academies are referred to as Hagwon’s.

Upon her arrival in December of 2020, due to Covid-19 regulations, once she landed in Korea, Bledsoe arrived at her temporary quarantine house. Thus, seeming to start her journey into this new experience. During her time in quarantine she had begun to document all of her new encounters with daily videos. These videos would then go on and become posts on Bledsoe's social media and act as a way to keep her friends and family back home-side up to date with her experiences.

Bledsoe has always, even before her encounters in Korea, possessed an admiration for some of their common culturestic values. Her interest in the culture is part of the driving force that brought her to this opportunity. That being said, there have been some cultural adjustments that have been present. Bledsoe explained the time she has spent adjusting to becoming a minority in a new setting, but with a support system

RIGHT the Metro Farm, a hydroponic lettuce garden in the subway helps to educate people in the community of Gimpo and surrounding areas



that came built in with her position at the Academy and furthermore in the friendships that she began to form, she began to adjust and thrive in her environment.

In her town Gimpo, Unyang in South Korea, Bledsoe has stumbled across many hidden gems that really show off the style of agriculture in the community as well as show the attitudes towards the industry. When asked how their approach to the agricultural industry differs from the U.S. Bledsoe responded, “That was one of my most driving forces to want to experience what it's like.” She continued to explain, “They quite literally put the ‘urban’ in Urban Agriculture.” Bledsoe went on to explain how even though the school she teaches at is found in the midst of a city, agriculture is still amplified in some of the most unique ways. She stated one of the most intriguing features along the streets and through the city is that every tree you come across has their scientific name, common name, and a brief description of that tree on or around it. This being one of the more simplest signs of agriculture shown

through the community, but it just goes to show how overlooked common knowledge of the trees and plants around us can be.

Bledsoe had discussed how there are an abundance of different urban community gardens scattered throughout her community in Gimpo and surrounding areas. She recalled an experience when she and a group of friends decided to venture out into the city. They decided to take the subway to one of the surrounding communities for a night out and upon arrival, stepped off of the train to be greeted by an underground garden. This underground garden was a full sized hydroponic lettuce garden. In the midst of everything. Not only is this hydroponic system fully functioning, but the operators of the garden were there to explain to anyone who had questions regarding the process. Bledsoe went on to explain that the level of willingness to educate the public regarding agriculture as a whole, even if she is in a city, has been extremely gratifying.

As Bledsoe's contract comes to an end she stated, "The community here is wholesome and utterly welcoming, but nothing beats home (Texas)." With so many new experiences to graciously say Bledsoe has under her belt, she has stressed that she is extremely excited to return where her heart calls home. Her time in Korea has been exciting, diversifying, and most importantly educational, but Bledsoe has said that she has missed her family, friends, and her dogs a little extra once the homesickness kicked in.

When it comes to what Michaela is looking forward to when she is stateside? Her plan is to find the

nearest Texas BBQ shop and enjoy what home tastes like once again. Soon after her return, she will begin her journey to fulfilling her dream of becoming a junior college agriculture instructor. Bledsoe stated, "Teaching English has been an amazing experience, but I do plan on continuing my career in agriculture." She explained that although she had thoroughly enjoyed her time at Texas A&M-Commerce, she really appreciated her time at the junior college level and the amount of knowledge she had received in those two years. With her passion lying in junior college education, she is looking forward to applying to surrounding campuses and embarking on this new journey to give back to incoming students.

ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF MICHAELA BLEDSOE



RIGHT Bledsoa visits Thanks Nature Cafe where guests get to meet their two resident sheep
ABOVE Korean Architecture photographed on Bledsoe's trip near Busan, South Korea



CASNR Alumni Receive Recognition as 2021 Ag Teachers Hall of Fame Inductees

BY CAMI FRONEBERGER

During the week of July 19th-23rd, Ag Teachers from across the great state of Texas met at The Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas (ATAT) Professional Development Conference in Corpus Christi. From the ATAT website, “The event is designed to enhance teaching methods, keep up with developments in curriculum, learn more about industry-based student certifications, and network with leaders in our profession.” A new feature within the ATAT is the creation of the The Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame was created to recognize agricultural science teachers whose “careers, achievements, and contributions stand exemplary”. Inductees are those that have substantially influenced students through providing leadership opportunities, success in career paths, and personal growth over an extended period of time. Inductees’ success is seen through their influence in the classroom, FFA activities, and in their communities.



Four alumni from Texas A&M University-Commerce, formerly known as East Texas State University, were inaugural members inducted into the ATAT Hall of Fame. Gary Dan Allen (B.S.-‘76, M.S.- ‘80), Tommy Jack Davidson (B.S.- ‘57), Tammy Glasscock (B.S.- ‘85, M.S.- ‘87), and Marty Spradlin (B.S.- ‘80, M.S.- ‘80).



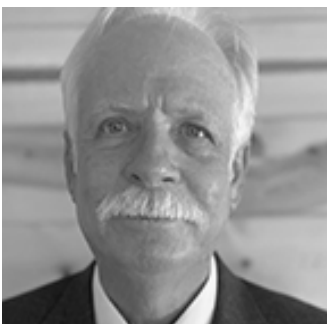
Gary Dan Allen

1976-1977 Plano Senior
1977-1980 Plano Vines High
1980-2005 Allen
2007- 2016 Bonham



Tammy Glasscock

1985 - 1990 Forney
1990 - 2018 Pilot Point



Marty Spradlin

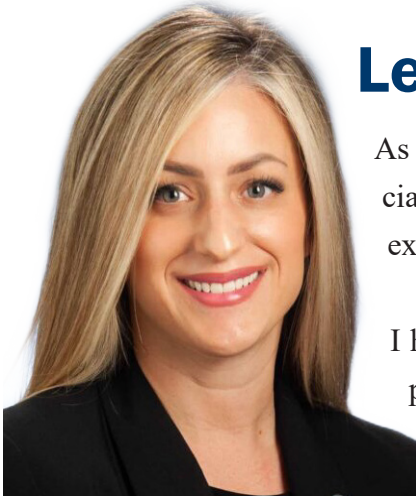
1981-1995 Hooks
1995-1997 Dekalb
1997-2002 Daingerfield
2002-2012 Mt. Pleasant



Tommy Jack Davidson

1959 - 1966 Forney
1966 - 1969 Comanche
1969 - 2008 Cooke County College

Meet Our Team



Letter from the Editor

As digital and instant-connected the world has become, there is still something special associated with reading about your alma mater from those who are currently experiencing what you now hold as memories.

I hope you are able to remember with fondness and reconnect through the stories primarily researched and written by the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources students.

In that regard I am pleased to introduce you to the CASNR Newsletter Team. They have spent much time, energy, and effort learning the intricacies of journalism, digital media, graphic design, and teamwork this semester to bring you the 2021 CASNR Holiday Newsletter.

Thank you for staying engaged. I hope you have a wonderful and enjoyable holiday season.

Editor, Dr. Maggie Salem



Cami Froneberger, Student Editor

Cami Froneberger was born and raised in Sulphur Springs, Texas, what she considers to be the heart of Northeast Texas. She is majoring in Agricultural Leadership and Communications with a minor in Animal Science. A senior set to graduate in May, Froneberger is also a member of Sigma Alpha. She is currently looking forward to the Spring semester as she will be interning with the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association in Fort Worth, TX beginning in January. Her passion for agricultural communications continues to drive her further in her educational career. Cami has served as the Student Editor for the past two semesters and has been instrumental in the development of the publication as she is responsible for the graphic design and layout aspects. While Cami will be stepping down next semester as she begins her transition from student to professional, she will still serve a supporting role in the development of the newsletter. Cami is excited to assist the new Student Editors in their roles in an effort to support the growth and evolution of the publication.

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Meet Our Team

This semester three Ag Leadership, Education, and Communications students were given the opportunity to gain experience through an internship with the CASNR Newsletter.

Emily Jennings

Emily Jennings is originally from the small town of Maud, Texas. She is a senior Agricultural Leadership and Communications major with a dual minor in Economics and Finance. She looks forward to graduating in May and will be continuing on to a master's program in Agribusiness. Outside of the CASNR internship, she serves as the Treasurer of Sigma Alpha and is an Honors College Scholar. Jennings stated she thoroughly enjoyed this internship and everything she learned during her time with the newsletter team.



Hailey Byrd

Hailey Byrd hails from the northeast Texas town of Daingerfield. She is a sophomore majoring in Agricultural Leadership and Communications with a minor in Public Relations. Hailey is a skilled writer and has uncovered a natural talent for journalism. Outside of being an intern with CASNR, she resides on the Executive Board for Sigma Alpha, a professional agriculture based sorority on campus and is an Honors College scholar. Along with this, Byrd operates a registered Beefmaster cattle herd back home, HMB Beefmasters, specializing in show heifers and herd bulls. Her passion is deeply rooted in agriculture and she hopes to further her endeavors within this amazing industry.



Shelby Bryson

Shelby Bryson hails from the “Gateway to Texas” also known as Clarksville, Texas. She is a senior majoring in Agriculture Leadership and Communications with a minor in Agribusiness. Outside of her time within the CASNR internship, she is a member of Sigma Alpha and is part of the Executive Board, a valued member on the TAMUC Meat Judging Team, and operates a Registered Maine-Anjou cattle herd on her family ranch in Clarksville, Texas. Shelby has great talent for graphic design and has intentions on continuing to foster her talent and hone her skills within Agricultural Communications.



GROW YOUR PASSION IN AGRICULTURE



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



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