



SPRING 2022

NEWSLETTER

**College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
Texas A&M University - Commerce**

**A look into the success of
CASNR CDE Events
pg. 13**

A PUBLICATION BY CURRENT STUDENTS FOR FORMER STUDENTS

Dean's Note

It is spring time at Texas A&M University - Commerce. We are enjoying the Bluebonnets, Indian Paintbrushes, Crimson Clover, Dogwoods, Bradford Pear blooms, greener grasses, and oh yes, allergies. Many of our students, faculty, and staff are ending the semester, after several activities and being back in face to face classes. We are truly thankful that the pandemic has somewhat subsided and we can engage and interact with students on campus again. However, it has been noted that a good number of students are still home working, helping with family, and taking online courses.

As the university is moving to Division I athletics this summer, CASNR is moving forward to continue offering educational and career opportunities for our students. We are very proud of the student accomplishments this spring. Our competitive teams (Livestock Show, Rodeo, Meat Judging, Horticulture, Horse Judging and Stock Horse) have all made us proud with their accolades. You will see some of these later in the newsletter. In addition, we started an Invitational Texas FFA CDE (Career Development Events/Judging Contests) this year in late March, and we conducted state qualifying contests for Texas FFA Areas V and VI in mid-April. Over 2,400 students competed for the right to go to their respective state contests.

We encourage students to be engaged in research activities with faculty and graduate students. Furthermore, we provide support for our students and encourage them to reach personal goals and to go beyond their expected destination.

Update, we are gaining ground and getting closer for Dr. Rudin (President of Texas A&M University - Commerce) to present to the Board of Regents for the Texas A&M System to name the farm after longtime Department Head, Dr. A. C. "Buck" Hughes. We are sprucing up the farm units and making great strides to provide an educational climate for our students with hands-on learning.

We are thankful to the legislature for awarding Texas A&M University - Commerce with a Tuition Revenue Bond funding of 44.9 Million dollars to expand facilities at the university farm. Plans are being made with architects to send our request to the Texas A&M System for approval soon. After we obtain approval, we will go into the bidding process to start construction. We are hopeful that we can begin to break ground in early in 2023.

"Be kind to unkind people, they need it the most"

Have a great summer and be safe,

Dr. Randy Harp,
CASNR Dean



Meet Our Team



Letter from the Editor

You may have noticed we have added the tagline, “A Publication From Current Students For Former Students” to the cover page. As this publication has grown and evolved, students have taken over this newsletter and made it their own. The students working on this newsletter understand, and hold with deep respect, those that have paved the way and come before them and aim to communicate to

CASNR alum the good and exciting things still happening on campus.

As digital, instant-connected, and impersonal in some cases, as the world has become, there is something special associated with recounting and remembering friendships, professors, classes, labs at the farm, and the transformative times the university experience imparts. I hope you enjoy reading about your alma mater from those who are currently living what you now hold as memories.

I hope you are able to remember your time at East Texas State or Texas A&M University - Commerce with fondness and reconnect to that time through their stories.

In that regard, I am pleased to introduce you to this edition’s CASNR Newsletter Team. They have spent much time, energy, and effort learning the intricacies of journalism, digital media, graphic design, teamwork, and deadlines, this semester to bring you the 2022 CASNR Spring Newsletter.

Dr. Maggie R.P. Salem, Editor

Hailey Byrd, Student Co-Editor



Hailey Byrd hails from the northeast Texas town of Daingerfield. She is a sophomore majoring in Agricultural Leadership and Communications with a minor in Marketing. Byrd is a skilled writer and has uncovered a natural talent for journalism and editing. 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 continue to pursue this passion and merge it with a career in agricultural marketing, agricultural literacy, and promotion.

Shelby Bryson, Student Co-Editor

Shelby Bryson reigns from the small lowland community, Lone Star, between Clarksville and Bogata, Tx. She graduated this spring with a Bachelors in Agricultural Leadership and Communications with a minor in Agribusiness. Bryson has been an active member of the Meat Judging Team, Sigma Alpha, Ag Ambassadors and pursues photography as a hobby. In fact, most of the photos in this newsletter edition were taken by Bryson. Additionally, she operates a registered Maine-Anjou and Simmental cattle herd back home with her grandfather. She also owns and operates a graphic design business, Twisted Sisters Design Co. She plans to improve her skills in graphic design as her business grows. Bryson plans to pursue an Alternative Teaching Certification from TAMUC and already has a career teaching agricultural science starting in the fall.



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Upcoming Events



Homecoming
Football Game
October 22nd, 2022

Ag Day

Football Game
November 5th, 2022



Student Spotlight: Nicole Thomas

By: Shelby Bryson

Nicole Thomas, a recently graduated Animal Science major, came to TAMUC as a transfer student from Northeast Texas Community College. Thomas has used her time in CASNR to take action and grow as a professional young woman by being involved in the professional agricultural sorority Sigma Alpha as well as taking on an Agricultural Leadership and Communications minor. Even though she is young she has a wide variety of experience.

At the end of Thomas' high school journey, she earned an Artificial Insemination Certification Mentorship with Champion Genetics in Canton, Tx. This experience soon turned into a business, Rocking NP Beefmasters and Breeding Services, this endeavor has supported her through her collegiate career. Thomas' charismatic personality has helped build a positive reputation within the Beefmaster breed and her business continues to expand across Texas and surrounding states.

During the summer of 2021, Thomas was inducted as a Lone Star Beefmaster Breeders Association board member and will be playing a key role in production of affiliate shows and sales in the future. She has also earned a position as a contracted breeder with ABS Global, a leader in the bovine genetics industry, where she performs embryonic transfers as well as artificial inseminations. Her plans are to continue to add value to the cattle breeding industry as well as continue to grow as a professional woman in agriculture.



Students Represent the College of Agriculture at the Annual Research Synopsis.

By: Emily Jennings

The TAMUC Annual Research Symposium is a chance for students to showcase their research for a chance to win prize money. The College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources was well-represented with 11 students presenting their research. Wildlife Management Senior, Moth Castagna, won first place in the Poster Presentation category with their research titled “A Population Survey of Anurans in Relation to Urban Proximity” and Agricultural Leadership and Communications

senior, Emily Jennings, won first place in the Oral Presentations category with her research, “A Biographical Narrative Investigation Exploring the Hiring Practices and Decision-Making Process for Watermelon Farmers in Texas.”

Castagna’s research concluded habitat changes that come with urbanization negatively impact species size, diversity, and abundance - meaning the smallest frogs were found at the urban site and the largest frogs were found at the rural location. This can likely be tied directly to water quality and quantity, as both of these factors

often decrease with urban proximity through heightened levels of impermeable surfaces, runoff, and pollution.

Castagna expresses, “I feel very honored to have won the first place poster award for the College of Ag, and I truly enjoyed sharing my research with anyone who would listen!”

Jennings’ research explored what factors influence a Texas watermelon farmer’s hiring decisions and discovered that reliability and skill were the most important factors for the participant. The data found, when combined with other comprehensive studies, can help influence law surrounding farm and migrant labor.

Jennings says, “I am very grateful for the opportunity to share my research with others and honored to have won first place in the Oral Presentation category!”



Student Spotlight:

Kirsten Polk

By: Hailey Byrd



One’s educational path should be a fun and interesting journey and TAMUC has done a great job of providing this exact experience for fellow student Kirsten Polk. Coming to us from Wichita Falls, Tx, Polk is a sophomore majoring in Psychology with a minor in Family and Consumer Sciences. She has great enthusiasm and states that her time here, “has been a blast!” Although her major is not rooted in agriculture, her minor allows her to be just as active within the College as any scholar majoring in agriculture. She enjoys being a member of the Horse Judging Team and traveling across the United States to compete in competitions. Polk’s advice for students is to “just get involved, any way you can,” which is exactly what she has done from the moment she arrived. With a few more years to go, Polk is sure to leave a positive mark on our campus.

Student Spotlight:

Jory Goetz

By: Shelby Bryson

Jory Goetz, a Colorado native, has found a home at Texas A&M University - Commerce. Goetz has had an eventful academic career. He was involved in many aspects of the equine program at The University of Wyoming. During his time there he was a member of the Horse Judging Team, Equestrian Team, and Stock Horse Team. Not only was he a member, but Goetz volunteered his time to help coach these teams. After making a connection with Ms. Haley Cole, a former University of Wyoming and Texas A&M University - Commerce graduate, Goetz relocated to northeast Texas. His time here has been nothing short of successful. He has been the coach for the new Horse Judging Team for CASNR and his team has raked in many high rankings. The future is still developing for Goetz, however he does see his love for CASNR growing and plans to continue contributing and promoting the Equine Studies program at TAMUC. Goetz has found passion in teaching students the possibilities the equine industry holds and he has done an excellent job in doing so.



TAMUC "Meats" a New Season Head On

By : Shelby Bryson
& Haliey Byrd

The TAMUC Meats Judging Team has traveled to and competed in a number of competitions across the United States and brought home numerous team and individual awards. Consisting of five members, Shelby Bryson, Cole Christner, Kira Martin, Luz Medina, and Jessica Stephens, and is coached by Ms. Haley Cole, this group of students has proven quite competitive. The team won Reserve Champion Overall team at Southwest Invitational hosted by Texas Tech, earning Champion Lamb Judging and Bryson placing as Reserve Champion Individual. Competing at the Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo went well the team was named Reserve Champion team Overall and received High Team in Lamb and Beef Judging in addition to Questions. The team also earned Reserve Champions placing at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, and were named High Team in Lamb Judging, Overall Beef, and in Questions. They placed 2nd Team in Beef Judging, 3rd Team in Beef Grading, and 3rd Team in Pork Judging. Many individual awards were received as well, Medina earning Reserve Champion Individual, Martin 3rd High Individual, Bryson 8th High Individual in Questions, and Stephens 9th High Individual in Lamb Judging. Retired team members Kris Barr and Katherine Bivens accompanied the team on this eventful trip serving as assistant coaches. Along with these competitions, the Meats Judging Team helped facilitate the Iowa State Processed and Fresh Meats Contest. Ms. Cole served as the Pork Carcass Official and Dr. Harp was the contest Superintendent. The



Meats Judging Team continues to represent the College and TAMUC well with their continued success.



AGRICULTURAL LEADERSHIP & COMMUNICATIONS STUDENT

EXPANDS HORIZONS AT THE

TEXAS AND SOUTHWEST CATTLE RAISERS ASSOCIATION



Growing up in northeast Texas, Cami Froneberger fondly remembers riding by properties within Hopkins County and seeing the blue gate signs proudly displayed by Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association (TSCRA) members. Her family frequently visited the Cattle Raisers Museum in Fort Worth where she remembers looking at the exhibits that featured important aspects of the cattle industry such as branding practices, cattle protection, essential cowboy attire, types of barbed wire, and so much more. Little did she know of the connection she would have to the association in the coming years.

This spring, Froneberger was honored to hold the role of Spring Intern with the association. As a senior majoring in Ag Leadership and Communications with a minor in Animal Science, this role allowed her to flourish in a professional setting while learning more about the work of the TSCRA. “I was one of four interns chosen for this position. Myself and three other young ladies were given an amazing opportunity to work together as a team in several different aspects of the association,” Froneberger stated. She was given jobs in office administration, communication, member relations, event coordination, as well as a variety of other responsibilities. A large portion of her time with the

association was spent further experiencing her desired field of agricultural communications. She was given assignments in writing, graphic design, photography, and was even able to help with production of the association’s podcast, TSCRA Talk.

One of the biggest opportunities afforded to Froneberger during her time with the TSCRA was being asked to travel to Goliad County, Tx to photograph the Parks Ranch for the association’s nomination for the Environmental Stewardship Award (ESA). This award is given by the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA) to highlight sustainability and conservation practices utilized by farmers and ranchers within the beef industry. As part of the nomination package, Froneberger was responsible for photographing the wildlife, cattle, and sustainability practices on the ranch. She then worked with a committee to design and format a packet including her photos and an article written about the ranch for submission to the NCBA. Froneberger happily shared what the experience was like for her, “When my supervisor called me about this assignment I was overjoyed. This was my first really big photography assignment and my first time photographing ranch life. I will never forget getting to meet David Crow, the owner of the ranch, and exploring over 4,000 acres of native coastal prairie.”



March brings about the biggest event for the TSCRA, Cattle Raisers Convention. This year was the 145th convention and Froneberger, along with her fellow spring interns, were given the task of selecting twenty interns to assist with convention facilitation. The ladies worked together to supervise the convention interns along with maintaining their other appointed convention roles. Froneberger was given charge of registration, general information, merchandise, and high school activities at the convention. She worked to promote high school involvement by coordinating a Youth Scavenger Hunt. The convention's expo hall boasted 250 exhibitors with 30 exhibitors participating in the annual Expo Bingo. Froneberger was able to coordinate and design the card for the Expo Bingo. Along with designing the bingo card and scavenger hunt card, she was also responsible for designing several flyers used for the convention. She was also given the chance to create gifs for the TSCRA's social media pages and a filter for the app, Snapchat, that attendees could take advantage of during the event.

"It was unbelievably surreal to see the designs I worked so hard on leading up to convention in the hands of attendees. Convention consisted of a week of long days that led into late nights but it was the most rewarding aspect of this internship. I made so many professional connections and even got to sit in the same room as our distinguished keynote speakers, Red Steagall and former President George W. Bush. I got to see the hard work my intern team put into the event pay off in such a phenomenal way," Froneberger recounted.

The semester also came with some fun out-of-town excursions for the spring interns. Each of the ladies were given assignments at different events across Texas that allowed them to attend as representatives of the Cattle Raisers.

Froneberger attended the San Saba Soil and Water Conservation District's Annual Spring Ag Field Day along with

Special Ranger H.D. Brittain. They were able to mingle with attendees and share the mission of the TSCRA. The team collectively ventured to Austin, Tx to visit the Texas Beef Council's headquarters and spend a day with the TSCRA Government Relations team at the Capital. "The trip to Austin was so much fun!", Froneberger exclaimed. "At the Texas Beef Council headquarters we learned more about their three core missions which are research, promotion, and education. The conversations we had were just so valuable. They taught us so much about how they are constantly working to put beef on the menu and genuinely make it more marketable to consumers. We even got to grill our own steaks for lunch." The visit at the Capital included learning more from the TSCRA Government Relations team about their role in lobbying for cattle raisers and land owners in Texas. They gave new insight on what working within the legislature is like. The intern team also met with the faculty of their respective representatives. Each intern was also given the chance to do a ride along with a Special Ranger. Froneberger rode along with Special Ranger John Bradshaw. She stated, "I got to spend the day helping investigate a case Special Ranger Bradshaw is currently working on. It really gave me the chance to see him in action and really get a glimpse into a day in the life of a Special Ranger."

When asked what her favorite part of her internship was, Froneberger smiled, "I have to say my favorite part of the internship was the connections I have made. This internship really gave me the opportunity to grow as a person, as a professional. Getting to apply my skills to a real life setting was so rewarding but I will also walk away from this internship with some really great friends and acquaintances." She graduated May 14th and will continue her educational journey this fall through the Texas Tech Ag Communications program. Along with this, Froneberger has also recently a Digital Marketing Specialist position with agriculture investment company, Harvest Returns. Her journey is far from its end and she optimistically strives toward the future.



Leadership in Kansas City, Missouri

By: Hailey Byrd

Leadership means a great deal to the students of CASNR. A few of our scholars dove deeper into this concept as they traveled to Kansas City, Mo to attend a leadership seminar hosted for Sigma Alpha and Alpha Gamma Rho chapters across the nation. Hailey Byrd and Lannie Farris represented Sigma Alpha and Dylan Hanna, Holton Pemberton, and Jatou Rottman were the representatives for Alpha Gamma Rho. This seminar was geared toward developing and growing the skills needed to be a successful leader. These undergraduates were also able to connect with professionals throughout the industry and network with sisters and brothers in agriculture from chapters across the country. The Beta Lambda chapter President of Alpha Gamma Rho, Dylan Hanna, spoke fondly of his time on this trip saying, “The experience was eye opening as we were exposed to many facets of agriculture that we do not often see where we are from. Being able to talk and make connections with agriculturists from across the country was exhilarating as we all shared the same passions, just in different ways!” Leadership Seminar allowed these students to dive deeper into the realm of leadership and take home a great deal of useful knowledge that can be applied to their lives as leaders in agriculture.



The TAMUC Horse Judging Team has had an outstanding run this semester bringing home various awards. The team consists of five students, Laye Gano, Amadis Palacios, Kylee Phillips, Kirsten Polk, and Cora Reynolds. Starting out the season in Fort Worth, Tx, at the NRCHA Collegiate Judging Contest, Phillips took home 9th High Individual Overall. Their next trip took them all the way to Gainesville, FL, to the NHJTCA Spring Collegiate Contest and, with no surprise, the team performed well. The team received 2nd High Team in Performance and 3rd High Team Overall, along with various individual awards. Phillips received 1st High Individual in Placings, 5th High Individual in Performance, and 7th High Individual Overall. Polk brought home 4th High Individual in Placings and 8th High Individual in Performance, and Gano was named 10th High Individual in Performance. The team had another great turnout in Lincoln, Ne at the Husker Judging Contest, receiving 5th High Halter Team, 5th High Performance Team, 5th High Reasons Team and topped it off with 5th High Team Overall. These members have traveled many miles and earned much success. When asked about his team, Jory Goetz says, “It was a great season with great results! We are very proud of how far the team has come and how much they have grown! I am very proud to coach this group of upstanding girls. We are excited to see how they compete in the fall and what opportunities will open for them.” This team is sure to continue to soar in the future!

Horse Judging Team Cleans House Across the Nation



CASNR

Goes Big in the Big Easy!

American Association for Agricultural Education

Our Agricultural Leadership, Education, & Communications faculty represented CASNR exceptionally well at the 2022 American Association for Agricultural Education (AAAE) Southern Conference held in New Orleans, La. Dr. Maggie Salem, Dr. Keith Frost, and Dr. Will Doss presented four manuscripts and one poster at the annual conference.

Dr. Maggie Salem presented a manuscript titled, “Early Career Teachers’ Struggles with ELL/ESL Stakeholders in SBAE: A Phenomenological Investigation.” Dr. Keith Frost presented, “Defining Programmatic Balance: A Modified Delphi Study.”

Dr. Will Doss presented a poster titled, “A Comparison of Paper and Online Survey Responses.” Dr. Doss also had two manuscripts designated as Distinguished Manuscripts, “The Effects of Survey Response Model and Incentives on Response Rates” and “Identifying Challenges Faced by School-Based Agricultural Education Teachers.” The former received the honor of 2022 Southern AAAE Outstanding Presentation.

Dr. Salem, Dr. Doss, and Ms. Casey Richards presented papers and posters at the National AAAE Conference in May. Dr. Salem presented, “Early Career Teachers’ Struggles with Lack of Practical Skills.” While Dr. Doss presented, “A Cost Analysis Comparing Survey Modes, Incentives, and Response Rates,” and, along with Ms. Richards, “Comparing Challenges Faced by School-Based Agricultural Education Teachers by Region.” Dr. Salem’s poster was awarded the 2022 AAAE National Conference Second Place Research Poster Award.

We are extremely proud of these faculty members, the success of this team, and the research they are doing within their discipline.



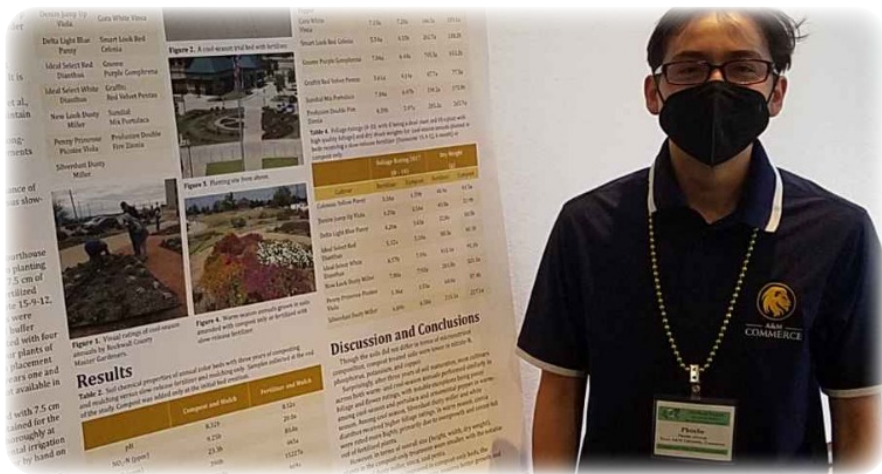
Big Easy Continued...

American Society for Horticultural Science

Congratulations are in order as the first Horticulture Judging Team competed at the American Society for Horticultural Science - Southern Region meeting in New Orleans. It was a great experience and they are already thinking about competing at Oklahoma City next year! Additionally, the following undergraduate and graduate posters were presented:

Phoebe Alvarez, Steve George, and Dr. Derald Harp presented research titled, "Comparison of slow-release fertilizer and long-term composting for performance of cool and warm-season annuals." This project was supported by the Rockwall County Commissioners Court and Rockwall County AgriLife Extension, with assistance from the Rockwall County Master Gardeners. Madison Wynne and Dr. Derald Harp presented, "Greenhouse growth of Hosta and Salvia 'Mystic Spires' in peat-lite, bark, wood fiber, and coir substrates." This project was funded by Texas A&M University - Commerce Undergraduate Research Grant.

Graduate students, Pedro Castillo, Taryn Bazhaw, Michaela Bledsoe, and Dr. Derald Harp presented, "Use of high nitrate, deammonified water for nursery production of summer annuals." This project funded by Fritz Industries, Inc. from Mesquite, Tx. Beatriz Ruiz, Phoebe Alvarez, Jesse Parsons, and Dr. Derald Harp presented, "Flowering in 'Natchez' crepe myrtle (*Lagerstroemia x fauriei*) in relation to crepe myrtle bark scale (*Acanthococcus lagerstroemiae*) and sooty mold (*Capnodium* sp.) incidence." This project funded by USDA-NIFA-SCRI.



Three undergraduate students (Emily Jennings, Emily Joie, and Megan Evans) participated in the Southern Agricultural Economics Association (SAEA) Quiz Bowl competition. The team was coached by Dr. Jose Lopez and finished with a strong fourth place in the nation. This competition is a respective part of the Southern Rural Sociological Association (SRSA) Conference. Along with this team accomplishment, Dr. Bakhtavoryan presented a selected paper in the Demand and Price Analysis section. The following was presented at the Southern Rural Sociological Association (SRSA) Conference:



“Federal Financial Benchmarking: Outreaching and Recruiting Agricultural Producers Online.” This was presented by Henry Flowers and Dr. Jose Lopez. “Farm Business Management and Benchmarking in Time of COVID-19.” This was presented by Dr. Jose Lopez, Kelley Smith, Henry Flowers, and Yves Kacou. “Federal Financial Benchmarking: Outreaching and Recruiting Agricultural Producers through Professionally Networking.” This was presented by Kelley Smith, and Dr. Jose Lopez.

Food Systems Graduate Assistants, Hailey Cooper, Clanci Richardson, and Kasey Curtin, also presented in New Orleans. Cooper and Dr. Bob Williams presented a poster, “Food security challenges for university freshmen and their families during the shutdown semester of a pandemic,” in the American Association for Agricultural Education section. Richardson and Curtin presented a poster, “Developing urban agricultural educators for the 21st century,” in the Southern Rural Sociological Association section.

Student Spotlight: Jessica Stevens

By: Shelby Bryson

Jessica Stephens came to Texas A&M University - Commerce as an Agricultural Leadership and Communications, freshman in the Fall of 2021. Stevens has found she enjoys leadership roles and applied for and was awarded a position as an Agriculture Future of America (AFA) Ambassador. Through this, she will be working closely with corporate relations, as well as assisting with various conferences and activities in Kansas City, Mo and throughout the United States. Stephens has accomplished a great deal within her short time at TAMUC as she is also a member of the award winning Meats Judging Team in addition to being a Registered Beekeeper of nearly nine years. Before college, Stephens was actively involved in 4-H and FFA, serving as a district officer and competing in Public Speaking events.





The Dorpers Are Here!

By: Hailey Byrd & Madison Wynne

If you recall in our last newsletter, we shared an update regarding the new Sheep and Meat Goat Teaching Unit and the hopes of adding a flock of sheep to the CASNR Research and Teaching Farm. With much excitement, we are pleased to announce we have introduced a Dorper Sheep flock to the facilities and students.

The finishing touches on the Sheep and Meat Goat Facility were completed at the end of the fall 21' semester and the Dorpers were introduced soon after. Many faculty

worked diligently behind the scenes in decision making including, but not limited to, Dr. Megan Owen, Dr. Douglas Eborn, and Dr. Jared Mumm. Dr. Mumm shares, "The lambs are being utilized for undergraduate research regarding parasite resistance and treatment protocols. Students have been largely involved in learning more about sheep and goat handling and care as we treat and handle the animals weekly. Goals of this program beyond offering practical, applicable parasite resistance research to the community are two-fold. First, these animals provide hands-on education for our students in the areas of sheep handling and management. Secondly, the ewe lambs will be screened for performance and parasite resistance and the highest quality animals will be making the backbone of our dorper population at the Sheep and Meat Goat Teaching Unit." Clearly, students have experienced a great deal of learning from the flock. Dr. Mumm adds, "This will offer students future opportunities to work with sheep every semester through all aspects of production, aiding in their hands-on approach to robust animal science education at TAMUC!"

The flock of Dorpers that have been introduced to the campus farm have been of great asset to students' success. Many classes use the flock of sheep in hands-on learning experiences and have gained an abundance of knowledge from these interactions. The College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources are ecstatic about the many opportunities that will come from this new endeavor!

TAMUC offers many opportunities for students to grow and thrive. Grad student, Henry Flowers, shared that he has enjoyed his experience here due to the strong connections he has made with the professors and staff in our program. After earning his Master's degree in Agricultural Sciences, Flowers plans to continue his educational journey and earn his Ph.D. with a focus on Crop Sciences. Aside from his academic life, Flowers enjoys being involved in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources as an active member of the CASNR Agriculture Ambassadors reaching out to incoming college students and relaying information on opportunities CASNR has to offer. He also enjoys being a part of Lions For Christ as he devotes a portion of his time to volunteering and serving the Commerce community with this group. Flowers shares that his time at our university has been rewarding as he has made lifelong connections and in the future he plans to take the knowledge he has gained back to his home country of Guatemala to help improve their agricultural industry.

Student Spotlight: Henry Flowers



By: Hailey Byrd

CASNR Hosts Successful CDE Event

On April 11th and 12th, The College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources hosted 609 FFA Career Development teams, encompassing 2436 high school FFA members, for the Texas FFA Area V and VI CDE contests. CDE Superintendent, Dr. Keith Frost, stated that, "In order to pull off such a complex undertaking where CASNR hosts a dozen different CDEs across two counties and plays host to over 2400 regional FFA members it takes the combined efforts of the entire college. I am continually impressed by how so many faculty, staff, and students are able to band together to make it all happen so well and so smoothly. This event is a key interface between CASNR, AST Teachers from across northeast Texas, and FFA members. Not only does it help us forge relationships and connections, but the event showcases our university to potential future Lions."

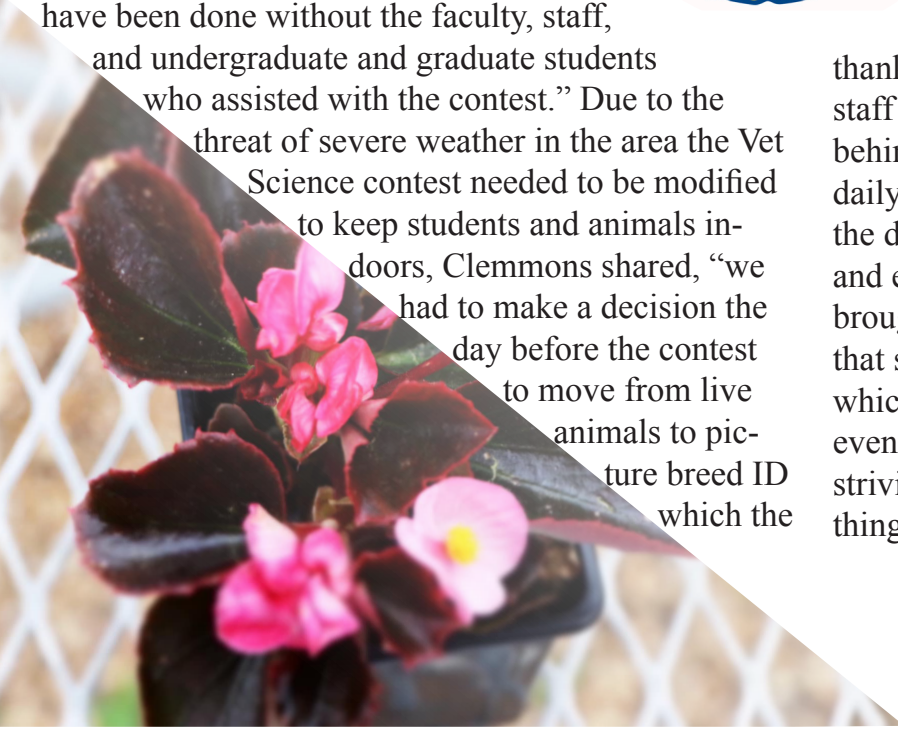
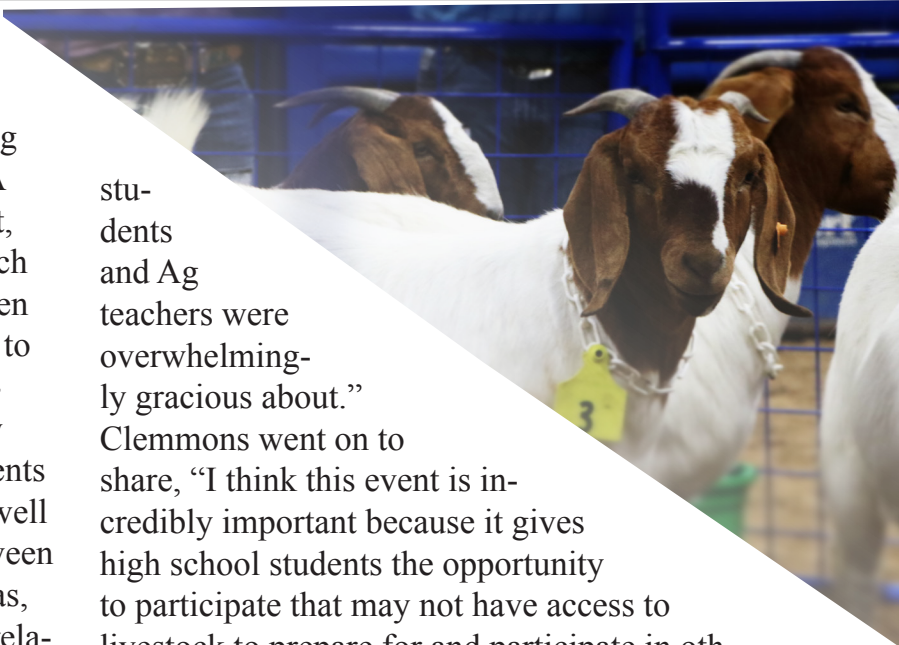
It is clear that it takes a large support system to put on such a successful event. Dr. Brooke Clemmons, the Vet Science CDE Coordinator, shared her thoughts on the contest saying, "Overall, the event went well! We had 110 teams with over 400 high school students competing. Putting on a contest of this magnitude with so many moving parts takes a team effort to run smoothly, and it couldn't have been done without the faculty, staff,

and undergraduate and graduate students who assisted with the contest." Due to the threat of severe weather in the area the Vet Science contest needed to be modified to keep students and animals indoors, Clemmons shared, "we had to make a decision the day before the contest to move from live animals to picture breed ID which the

students and Ag teachers were overwhelmingly gracious about." Clemmons went on to share, "I think this event is incredibly important because it gives high school students the opportunity to participate that may not have access to livestock to prepare for and participate in other animal-related CDEs. We had stakeholders from within and outside the university participate as judges for the event which allowed all of those involved to

directly engage with the community, and for the community to see the wonderful events, time, and effort that goes into such a large contest. We certainly had our challenges and hiccups, but we are looking forward to an even more successful (and likely larger) event next year!"

Working primarily with the Livestock Evaluation CDE, Dr. Mumm expresses his utmost thanks to all who helped in making this event a success saying, "I don't have enough thanks to pour out for the students, professors and farm staff that helped fill in blanks and make the event work behind the scenes from animal handling, washing and daily care, to moving and maintaining the animals on the day of the contest. The institutional knowledge and experience with this particular event that so many brought to the table was invaluable. Industry members that served as officials or provided livestock, some of which came from well over 3 hours away gave this event the feel and quality of a national competition and striving for that caliber of competition will be something we look to duplicate at every turn.



CASNR CDE EVENTS Continued...

Lastly, thank you to the FFA chapters and students who put their faith in us at Commerce to prepare them for the state judging contest and allow them to learn and grow in their passions for the livestock industry and judging at our events. Things like this would not be possible without the continued support of chapters and schools that trust us with their young people knowing that Texas A&M University - Commerce provides livestock, learning, and competition of the highest quality. We will continue striving to provide all three of those aspects and I am confident in doing so with the highest quality of passionate volunteers and helpful support system.”

Contest Assistant Superintendent, Dr. Maggie Salem shared how pleased she was to see the growth of the contests each year, “this means more and more students are being exposed to the opportunities in choosing agriculture as a career choice. Of course, we are always excited to show off our beautiful campus by hosting these students. FFA members evaluated wool, livestock, poultry, flowers, insects, and plants; they demonstrated knowledge in agribusiness, veterinary science, and agricultural mechanics. These students will be leaders in the food, fiber, and natural resources industries, feeding, clothing, sheltering, and making our world a better and more beautiful place.”

Agricultural Leadership and Communications major, Shelby Bryson was on “Special Assignment: CDEs.” This assignment required Bryson to travel and photograph each contest over the course of two days and she shares that, “Having the opportunity to work with all of the CDE contests was a great experience alone, and to be able to work on my photography skills was just icing on the cake. I managed to capture a some pretty cool and intriguing photos of Texas A&M University - Commerce affiliates, FFA members, and livestock.”

It is evident that the Area V and Area VI CDE contest means a great deal to CASNR as these competitions align with the exact mission that the college is trying to fulfill; exposing students to the agricultural industry through real world experiences.

Featured on the previous page and below are Bryson’s selected photos from the Livestock, Nursery and Landscape, Entomology, Agricultural Mechanics, and Floriculture CDE’s.



CASNR HONORS BANQUET PRODUCES

ACCOLADES UPON ACCOLADES

On April 27th, CASNR was delighted to share space with our wonderful students, alumni, sponsors, supporters, scholarship recipients, and CASNR honorees at the 2022 College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources Honors Banquet. We have not been able to hold this special event the past two years due to the pandemic, so being able to host it once more brought a great deal of normalcy to the college.

Many recognitions and awards were received during the evening including Outstanding Student Awards throughout CASNR. Students who received this accolade have performed with their utmost potential within their respective realm. These students are as followed:

Outstanding Agribusiness Student,
Emily Joie

Outstanding Agriculture Student,
Jolee Derrick

Outstanding Ag Leadership & Communications Student,
Cami Froneberger

Outstanding Animal Science Student,
Tori Copeland

Outstanding Animal Science Pre-Vet Student,
Leigh Jimenez-Price

Outstanding Equine Student,
Alessandra Guillen

Outstanding Ornamental Horticulture Student,
William Davis

Outstanding Sustainable Ag & Food Systems Student,
Laura Fincher

Outstanding Teacher Certification Student,
Allison Boyd

Outstanding Veterinary Biomedical Tech Student,
Kate Harrison

Outstanding Wildlife Student,
Gabriella Rodriguez-Sanchez

Outstanding Student Service Award,
Cami Froneberger

Outstanding Graduate Student,
Thomas Aquino



Banquet Continued...

CASNR is home to various student organizations with all of them harboring amazing qualities and useful skills that students can utilize outside of college. This year's Outstanding Student Organization was bestowed upon Sigma Alpha, a professional sorority that takes pride in cultivating professional women in agriculture.



Along with student oriented awards, many alumni were recognized as well. The following Graduates of Distinction have made a major impact on the agricultural industry and continue to serve those around them wholeheartedly. Dr. Shannon Arnold, a professor of Agricultural Education and Technology Education at Montana State University, Wayne Davenport, who serves as Senior Director of Development at Tarleton State University, Chad Stephenson, the Regional Vice-President and Branch Manager of Heritage Land Bank, along with Jennifer Jackson, the Executive Director at Texas State FFA, received the prestigious award of being a Graduate of Distinction.

Paulette Aguilar, from Quitman ISD, and Matt Byrd from Hawkins ISD, received the Alumni Teacher of the Year award. These two individuals were recognized as they strive to serve the agricultural community through educating today's youth inside and outside of the classroom.



A few Good Neighbor Awards were received by Terry Driggers with Driggers Realty, Bear Creek Farms, Loyd Nations with iCEV Multimedia, and Marty Spradlin at Five S Ranch.

Lastly, the Legislative Alumni awarded was awarded to Ben Scholz who has been a key figure within CASNR over the years.

After the banquet, Ms. Haley Cole stated, "The Ag Honors Banquet was an opportunity to recognize our incredible donors, stakeholders, and outstanding students. We have had so much exciting growth within the College of Ag throughout the recent years and we loved sharing it with everyone who attended. This was my first year participating in the Ag Banquet and there was such an overwhelming feeling of community and fellowship shared by everyone. I cannot commend our hard-working faculty, staff, and student body enough on all that they continue to accomplish despite the pandemic and other hardships. Of course, none of this would have been possible without the generosity of our scholarship donors, and banquet sponsors. My favorite portion of the banquet was having all of the current meat judging students chat with past meat judges (Mr. Steve Thurman and Mr. Marty Spradlin) from when the college was East Texas State University!"

The CASNR family had an amazing time bonding with one another as we all share the same passions for agriculture. Everyone is looking forward to next spring when the Honors Agricultural Banquet will commence once more. Congratulations to all of those recognized!

