

THE harvest

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHICO • COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE MAGAZINE • 2016



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Meet the Dean

John Unruh Takes the Helm of the College of Agriculture

FOOD FOR *thought*



This space is normally reserved for the dean of the College of Agriculture to share a few words. Since our dean, Dr. John Unruh, is both brand-new and the focus of this issue's cover story, I am commandeering this page to pay tribute to the wonderful deans I have worked with over the years.

The first was Tom Dickenson, who was dean when I was a student here in the late 1990s. I remember thinking how cool it was when I learned the dean knew my name! Dr. Dickenson presided over the college during a turbulent time in our history—the 1992 budget crisis that nearly gutted the agriculture program. Under his leadership, the College of Agriculture was able to weather the crisis, paving the way for our future success.

Charlie Crabb became dean during my senior year in 1999, and I had the opportunity to introduce him at the Fall Festival that year. As I interviewed him in preparation, I was so impressed with his approach to engaging the agriculture community in advancing the college's mission. That proved to be one of Dr. Crabb's lasting legacies as he worked to build goodwill

between the college and the industry that would hire our graduates. Student recruitment, hiring, faculty research, and industry support all grew during his tenure as dean.

Jennifer Ryder Fox replaced Dr. Crabb in 2006, and six months later she hired me as the college's development officer. She was the first female dean of agriculture in the California State University system and one of the first in the country. Dr. Fox is a role model for women in agriculture. She remains a dear mentor and friend to me. I have never known anyone who cares more, works harder, or has more fun while doing it. Enrollment in the College of Agriculture more than doubled under her leadership, and our reputation as a college was never stronger.

I took it as a deep personal loss when Dr. Fox retired in 2014. Luckily for all of us, our associate dean, Dave Daley, accepted the position of interim dean and led the College of Agriculture seamlessly through two years of transition. Anyone who knows Dave appreciates how extraordinary he is. While serving as dean, he continued to manage the University Farm, teach classes, advise students, serve as first vice president of the California Cattlemen's Association, and run his own family's ranch—all without missing a beat. On a personal note, I owe Dave a deep debt of gratitude for his support and encouragement throughout my career, going back to my days as an undergraduate when he was my academic advisor.

I am thrilled that Dr. Unruh is the newest dean of this college that I love so much. He follows in a long line of exceptional leaders and will build upon the success that each of them has helped to shape.

If you have stories about a dean or faculty member from throughout our 63-year history, I would love to hear them. Please e-mail me at sdeforest@csuchico.edu.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sarah DeForest".

Sarah DeForest
Director of External Relations

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WHAT'S GROWING ON



Students Attend PMA Conference

The Produce Marketing Association (PMA) held its annual Foodservice Conference in Monterey from July 29–31, 2016. This was the second year California State University, Chico agriculture students attended. The weekend offered students Clarissa Chairez, Gwen Christiansen, Kaeli McCarther, and Erica Vietor mentorship with professionals in the industry, access to workshops, informational sessions with guest speakers, Salinas Valley produce plant tours,

admittance to the conference trade show, and insight into the industry as a whole.

The PMA Career Pathways Program works to bring students without an extensive background in produce together with industry professionals. Students learn about potential career and internship opportunities with dozens of companies from California and around the globe. The Career Pathways Program is a partnership between PMA, its members, and select colleges and universities around the country. The CSU, Chico program is coordinated by College of Agriculture lecturer Marnie Dalton, who also attended the conference.

◀ *Kaeli McCarther (left) and Clarissa Chairez (right) with PMA's Megan Nash (center)*

Record Sales at U-pick Peach Orchard

The ever-popular U-pick peach orchard at the University Farm surpassed its sales records in 2016 with \$50,000 in peach sales in less than one week. The orchard opened to the public on August 2, selling 11,000 pounds of peaches worth \$17,000 in its opening day. University Farm Orchards and Crops Technician Jeff Boles said the farm's student employees were a big reason for the successful season.

"On opening day we easily had 40 cars lined up at both entrances to the farm, which could have been overwhelming, but our students stepped up to the challenge," Boles said. "They were calm, professional, and took time to answer questions and lift peaches for those who couldn't."



The three-acre peach orchard is usually open for about a week in early August, depending on the season. A peach hotline at 530-898-4989 has up-to-the-minute information about peach availability.

21st Annual Golf Tournament

The 21st annual Superior Ag/Tri Counties Bank Golf Classic took place at Butte Creek Country Club in Chico on Monday, June 6. The Wells Fargo Commercial Lending Team of Luke Reimers, Ryan O'Donnell, Tadd Brothers, Joe Rhodes, Greg Jones, and Ray Block took first place in the shotgun scramble tournament. The event raised more than \$50,000 for scholarships and academic programs in the College of Agriculture.

The 2017 tournament is scheduled for June 12 at Butte Creek Country Club. For more information, contact Sarah DeForest at 530-898-3737.





USA President Kaeli McCarther receives the Club of the Year Award from Interim Dean Dave Daley

Star Students and Club of the Year Recognized

The 2016 College of Agriculture Star Students and Club of the Year awards were announced at the biannual Dean's Luncheon on May 11, 2016. Interim Dean Dave Daley made the presentations. The 2015 Star Students are listed below, and each student is profiled on the College of Agriculture website at www.csuchico.edu/ag/about/star-students.

This year, United Students of Agriculture (USA) was chosen as the College of Agriculture's club of the year, earning a \$500 award from Superior Ag. One of the newest student organizations in the College of Agriculture, USA is an affiliate of the national Minorities in

Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS). The club strives to promote the agricultural sciences and related fields in a positive manner among ethnic minorities and pledges to work for the inclusion, achievement, and advancement of all people in the agricultural sciences.

Club President Kaeli McCarther said the organization is filling an unmet need.

"This club is unique in our college because all of the other clubs and organizations are specific-interest-oriented. We are more general in terms of our purposes," she said. "Joining us is a great way to get involved if students feel they would like to be involved with something less specific."

Report Details Ag's Economic Contribution

Agriculture's contribution to Northeastern California's economy grew in 2014 over the previous year, according to the latest in a series of annual reports from the Agribusiness Institute at CSU, Chico. One in five jobs and 21 percent of all economic activity in the region were connected to agriculture, up from 17 percent in 2013. Higher commodity prices contributed to the increase in economic activity and even offset a significant decrease in rice production in 2014, according to the report's author, agricultural business professor Eric Houk.

The report covers economic activity in Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, and Yuba Counties. *The Contribution of Agriculture to Northeastern California's Economy in 2014* is supported by a three-year grant from the Agricultural Research Institute to quantify the significance of agricultural production, processing, and related industries to the overall economy of northeastern California. The full report is available on the College of Agriculture's website, www.csuchico.edu/ag.

Professor Wins Award for Doctoral Dissertation

Animal science professor Michael Chao received the 2016 Lowe R. and Mavis M. Folsom Distinguished Doctoral Dissertation Award from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) at an award luncheon in Lincoln on April 12. Professor Chao completed his doctoral degree in animal science under professor Chris Calkins. His award-winning dissertation is titled "Impact of Wet Distillers Grains Plus Solubles and Antioxidants on a Basic Mechanism of Beef Tenderization." He joined the faculty in the CSU, Chico College of Agriculture in 2015 and specializes in meat science.



Professor Michael Chao (right) receives the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Distinguished Doctoral Dissertation Award from Larry Berger, head of UNL's Department of Animal Science.

Take a Look at Our Star Students

Each year, the CSU, Chico College of Agriculture recognizes one exemplary student within each discipline as a Star Student. To view the complete articles on all of our past Star Students, visit our website at www.csuchico.edu/ag/about/star-students.



Luke Benton

MAJOR:
Agricultural Business

HOMETOWN:
Dixon



Haylee Fonseca

MAJOR:
Agricultural Science
and Education

HOMETOWN: Woodland



Jacquelyn Wasche

MAJOR:
Crops, Horticulture, and
Land Resource Management

HOMETOWN: Oroville



Joel Wisniewski

MAJOR:
Animal Science

HOMETOWN:
Wendell, Idaho

California Agricultural Seminar

New Course Gets Up Close and Personal
with California's Top Crops



Dave Daley has had a dream for years. The associate dean of the College of Agriculture wanted to offer a travel course that would get students out of the classroom and into the fields, processing plants, and boardrooms that make up California agriculture.

“Alumni from the 1970s and 1980s tell us about a weeklong field trip where they got to visit everything from a cattle ranch to a flower market, and learn firsthand about the issues that producers face in this state,” Daley said. “We thought it would be a great way to open students’ eyes to the diversity of California agriculture.”

His dream was realized in the spring of 2016 with the California Agricultural Seminar. Thirty-one students met weekly with Daley to study the top agricultural commodities in the state and hear from guest speakers about production cycles, markets, and regulatory issues that impact their products. The highlight of the course was a five-day trip to California’s Central Valley to tour farms and processing plants and hear about the opportunities and challenges in agriculture.

Agricultural business major Elizabeth Carvalho said most students came to the class pretty familiar with one or two commodities, but the diversity of the field trip was a real eye-opener.

“I think we focus on what is growing around us or what we have been exposed to growing up and tend to put blinders on as far as other commodities grown in the state,” Carvalho said. “I actually think this class should be a requirement.”

The field trip began March 31 at the Port of

Stockton, where Port Director Richard Aschieris shared the role of California’s ports and transportation in the state’s complex agricultural system. The first day also included a visit to Yosemite Jersey Dairy in Hilmar, which milks 1,800 cows per day, and Duarte Nursery in Hughson for an overview of rootstock cloning through tissue culture.

Day two of the trip included a tour of the world’s largest privately held winery, Gallo Winery in Modesto, followed by Farmer’s Warehouse in

Keyes, where Chico State alumnus Jay Gilbert and his staff introduced the class to livestock nutrition sales and feed milling. Fiscalini Cheese in Modesto offered a chance for the class to explore farmstead cheese production, and nearby Ratto Bros. Produce provided a tour of its 1,000 acres of farmland and 70,000-square-foot cooling and packing house.

The next morning started with a presentation by Mel Machado, Blue Diamond Growers’ director of member relations, about almond production





and marketing. During lunch at Woolgrowers in Los Banos, alumnus Jason Peltier of the San Luis and Delta-Mendota Water Authority discussed the challenges and complexities of California's water system. The trip continued further south with a stop at Turlock Fruit Company's R&N Packing in Firebaugh to witness asparagus harvest and packing. Later that night, at Harris Ranch Inn and Restaurant near Coalinga, alumnus Tyler Bramble with Alltech shared about technology and career opportunities in livestock nutrition.

The final day of the tour on April 2 featured tours of Harris Ranch Feeding Company, which feeds 250,000 cattle per year, and Harris Farm's Horse Division for a look at horse racing and equine production in California.

"I felt prepared to see some amazing places, but I didn't truly grasp the amount of knowledge that I would be receiving. Each and every day was unique,"

agricultural business major Nicole Hardoy said. "Overall this trip taught me more about California agriculture production than many of the classes I have taken in my life."

Many students noted how inspired they were to meet young, energetic professionals who were blazing new trails in agriculture. Rylee Pedotti, a political science major who is minoring in agriculture, said, "Getting to meet people like Brian Fiscalini and Geoff and Anthony at Ratto Bros. made me optimistic about agriculture. California

agriculture is alive and well, and is showing great promise for the future."

Daley said the California Agricultural Seminar accomplished what he had hoped that it would.

"It truly opened students' eyes to the scope and diversity of California agriculture," he said. "I think the takeaway message for students is that our industry is big and diverse, and the opportunities available to them are limited only by their tenacity and their imaginations." ■

The field trip was funded through donations from alumni, advisory board members, and agricultural businesses. Plans are underway to take the class to the Central Coast in 2017. For more information and to support the California Agricultural Seminar, please contact Sarah DeForest at 530-898-3737 or sdeforest@csuchico.edu, or donate online at www.csuchico.edu/givetoAG.



FACULTY FOCUS

Baohui Song

Cultivating China Connections

China is a powerful force upon California's agricultural economy. According to the California Department of Food and Agriculture's latest statistics, China is the third-largest export market for California agricultural products and the No. 1 export destination for beef products and cotton.

For the past nine years, agricultural business professor Baohui Song has worked to build partnerships with colleagues in China to better understand and prepare students for the trade dynamics between the nation's most populous state and the world's most populous country.

Song, a native of China who earned both his bachelor's and master's degrees at Shenyang Agricultural University (SAU), joined the CSU, Chico College of Agriculture in 2007 after receiving his PhD in agricultural economics from the University of Kentucky. With interests in agricultural marketing and international trade, Song reached out to his alma mater in Northeast China, and in 2014, the presidents of both CSU, Chico and SAU signed a memorandum of understanding formalizing academic and cultural exchanges and research cooperation between the two universities.

Since then, the College of Agriculture has hosted six visiting scholars from various universities in China. They spend between six months and a year sitting in on classes, participating in cultural exchange activities on and off campus, exploring California, and conducting academic research.

"Hosting the visiting scholars is one of my favorite parts about this partnership," Song said. "They are eager to learn about American culture and examine their research disciplines from a California perspective."

Song has also traveled to China every summer to teach as an adjunct professor, and he spent the 2015 fall semester on sabbatical there, teaching courses in microeconomics, international trade, and agricultural marketing at Huazhong Agricultural University and SAU.



"Having the opportunity to visit China regularly enhances my teaching here at Chico State by giving me a lot of examples I can use in class," Song said. "I'm able to see firsthand things like Chinese consumption patterns and trade opportunities that will impact California agriculture. I also share pictures and examples from California with the students there."

Song said the differences between Chinese and American students keep him on his toes.

"Mathematically, the Chinese college students are farther along than the American students, who generally require an overview of calculus before we can dig into the course content in ag markets and pricing, for example," Song said. "On the other hand, students at Chico State are much more interactive and engaged in classroom discussion. When I ask a question, our students are likely to answer, whereas in China, they are more quiet."

In addition to teaching, research, and hosting visiting Chinese scholars, Song also serves as an English abstract editor for *Research of Agricultural Modernization*, a scientific journal produced by the Chinese Academy of Sciences. He has revised more

than 230 English abstracts for the journal.

As the partnership between CSU, Chico and SAU evolves, Song hopes that undergraduate students from CSU, Chico will take advantage of the opportunity to study abroad in China and that more faculty from the College of Agriculture can travel to China during summer breaks.

"We've had some interest but so far haven't had students make the trip," he said.

For now, Song is happy to serve as an ambassador for cultural exchange and mutual understanding between his home country and his adopted home. ■



Triple Threat

Three Separate Student Teams Win National Competitions

When the CSU, Chico Academic Quadrathlon team won the Western Section American Society of Animal Science competition in April, it was the first time that a team from a non-land-grant university qualified to compete in the national contest. When that team beat out Purdue University, Texas A&M, and University of Rhode Island to win the national Academic Quadrathlon in July, it took a lot of people by surprise.

“Very few people at the American Society of Animal Sciences meeting even knew who Chico State was,” said team coach and animal science professor Kasey DeAtley. “Then it came out that we were a non-land-grant. My colleagues were surprised because it’s usually the big Midwest and Southern land-grant colleges that win the title every year.”

DeAtley believes that the very fact that Chico State is not a research-based land-grant institution is part of what makes her students so successful.

“Our focus is more on teaching than on research

and extension, so our students have the opportunity to do much more hands-on learning and get out of the traditional classroom setting. The University Farm enables that to happen,” she said.

Senior animal science majors Julie Allen, Heather Foxworthy, Kenzi Wattenburger, and Joel Wisniewski comprised the Academic Quadrathlon team, which completed four competition areas over the course of two days. The competition began July 18 in Logan, Utah, with a lab practicum at the Utah State University farm. Each of the four teams, which had won their regional competitions, rotated through nine hands-on stations ranging from equipment identification to saddling a horse to artificially inseminating a dairy cow. That afternoon, the teams were given 60 minutes to take a 200-question exam covering any topic they may have learned in their undergraduate animal science education. Day two began with an oral presentation on the public perception of food safety, for which the team had 60



Heather Foxworthy, Julie Allen, Kenzi Wattenburger and Joel Wisniewski compete in the Academic Quadrathlon



Rangeland Cup team of Alex Orozco Lopez, Kaylie Bohm, Grace Woodmansee, and Kevin Kunkel ▲

minutes to prepare. The final area of competition was a Jeopardy-style quiz bowl.

The broad and integrated focus of the animal science program at CSU, Chico helped prepare the team to do well in the competition, DeAtley said.

“This is an incredible accomplishment for our students, and it’s a testament to the excellent hands-on education they received at Chico State, including experience working with several different livestock species at the University Farm,” she said.

The Academic Quadrathlon team was not DeAtley’s only national-winning team in the past year. She also coached two Rangeland Cup teams, one of which won the Society of Rangeland Management’s (SRM) Rangeland Cup competition at SRM’s annual meeting in Corpus Christi, Texas, in February. In the Rangeland Cup competition, teams are given a scenario several months before the competition and are challenged to develop a poster presentation in response to the scenario, which they then delivered at the SRM meeting in February. The 2016 scenario asked students to develop a plan using social media to promote the field of rangeland science and management. The winning team of Kaylee Bohm, Kevin Kunkel, Alex Orozco Lopez, and Grace Woodmansee created a Tumblr account where they posted pictures and examples of various rangeland regions. Their poster presentation impressed the judges, who named them the 2016 Rangeland Cup champions.

The win was a big accomplishment, considering it was only the second year that CSU, Chico has fielded a Rangeland Cup team, DeAtley said.

“There was a large contingent from California at the Society of Rangeland Management meeting, and they were blown away by how far our range science program has come in a short period of time. Range scientists are now calling us when they want to hire students or graduates,” she said.

“This is an incredible accomplishment for our students, and it’s a testament to the excellent hands-on education they received at Chico State.”

It’s not only the animal and range science program that is turning heads around the nation. Earlier in the academic year, five students from the College of Agriculture won the Food Distribution Research Society’s student marketing case competition in Philadelphia. Luke Benton, Dante DiSano, Angela Faryan, Seanna

Griffis, and Enrique Piñon represented CSU, Chico against eight other teams from around the country on October 11, 2015.

The team was tasked with developing a business and marketing plan for a new product of mushroom and beef-blend burgers. They then delivered their plan to a panel of industry judges. After making it through to the finals, the team competed against three other teams to win the national title.

Kevin Delaney, vice president of sales and marketing at To-Jo Mushrooms, Inc., judged the team in the finals.

“The team from CSU, Chico did an exceptional job,” he said. “At every step in the process, the students exhibited great teamwork and showed tremendous passion for their work. I am confident the quality of work displayed by this team is a direct reflection of the level of talent and potential these students possess.”

Team member Piñon credits coach Marnie Dalton, an agricultural business lecturer in the College of Agriculture, for mentoring and supporting the team throughout the journey.

“The key to our team’s success would have to be the preparation that Marnie provided us with,” Piñon said. “I couldn’t be more proud to be part of such an immensely talented team. To bring home the national title to CSU, Chico is a big deal to us as a whole, and I know that the team’s success wouldn’t have been possible without all members involved.”

College of Agriculture Dean John Unruh echoes Piñon’s comments about the role of faculty in student success.

“We obviously have extraordinary students in the College of Agriculture. But when you pair their talents with the dedication of our faculty, who frequently go above and beyond their job descriptions to help students succeed, you have a truly winning combination,” Unruh said. ■



▲ Food Marketing team of Dante DiSano, Seanna Griffis, coach Marnie Dalton, Luke Benton, Angela Faryan, and Enrique Piñon



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New Dean Takes the Helm of the College of Agriculture

John Unruh was in junior high the first time he heard about Chico State.

“I took a steer to the Pacific International Livestock Exposition and stood in the lineup next to a student from Chico State. While we waited for the judge’s comments, we began to visit about cattle and college. I was extremely impressed, as I really looked up to college students, and it meant a lot to me that this college student took the time to visit with a young kid,” Unruh said. “We never really know the seeds that we’re planting.”

Unruh would remember that experience for the next 40 years of his life. He would recall it while competing against the Chico State Livestock Judging Team as an undergraduate at Washington State University and later as a coach. It would come to mind when he heard about friends and children of friends going to school at Chico State. He still thought about that memory in 2015 when he received a phone call from a recruiter inviting him to apply for the dean’s position in the College of Agriculture at California State University, Chico.

“I’ve always admired Chico’s approach to agricultural education, with a focus on undergraduate instruction,” Unruh said. “In particular, the emphasis on experiential learning through the University Farm fit my thinking and philosophy about education. I wasn’t necessarily looking for a job at the time, but I think it’s always important to look at new opportunities and see how a person can use their experiences and make meaningful contributions during their career.”

That openness to new challenges has led Unruh through a productive and distinguished career as a meat scientist, professor, coach, and administrator, and now to his new role as dean of the College of Agriculture, which he assumed on August 1, 2016.

Unruh grew up on a diversified crop and cattle farm near Warden, Washington. College was not on

his agenda as a child, as he planned to work on the farm with his father as an adult. That plan changed in high school.

“We model ourselves after folks we respect, and I had an excellent math teacher in high school who inspired me,” Unruh said.

With hopes of following in the footsteps of his favorite teacher, Unruh accepted a scholarship to play football at Bethel College in North Newton, Kansas. Injuries eventually sidelined him and forced him to reconsider his future.

“As I thought about what I really wanted to do with my life, I came back to my love of animal agriculture from growing up on the farm.”

“As I thought about what I really wanted to do with my life, I came back to my love of animal agriculture from growing up on the farm. That crossroad was a good experience for me because I discovered what I was truly passionate about.”

Unruh transferred to Washington State University (WSU) to major in animal science. A professor and mentor, Everett Martin, encouraged him to work in the meat laboratory. Unruh also competed on the livestock judging team and the live animal/carcass evaluation team, fueling the love of competition that football once fulfilled.

When he graduated in 1979 with a bachelor’s in animal science, the national farming economy was on the brink of collapse. Unruh



delayed his planned return to the family farm by entering the master's program in animal science at WSU. Martin, his mentor, gave him the chance to coach the livestock judging team and the live animal/carcass evaluation team. Two years later, with farms around the nation still struggling, Unruh again postponed his return home by continuing his education at Kansas State University. He earned his PhD in animal sciences and industry with an emphasis on meat science and beef production in 1984.

With his PhD in hand, Unruh returned to Washington State University to work in extension and focus on meat science and swine production.

"That was a very gratifying part of my career, to be able to work with producers," Unruh said. "We started a Washington Barrow Futurity, reintroduced Swine Information Day, and grew the program over the years. I really liked the interaction across the livestock industry."

Always open to new opportunities, Unruh applied for a faculty position at Kansas State University in 1988. His new position as a meat scientist included 70 percent teaching and 30 percent research responsibilities. His research interests integrated animal production and management, carcass composition and quality, and sensory evaluation of meat.

"The position also included coaching the meat judging team, which was exciting to me," Unruh said.

"It also gave me the opportunity to be associated with one of the best meat science programs in the country."

Over the next eight years, Unruh coached what came to be one of the most successful collegiate meat judging dynasties in the nation. From 1989 to 1996, his teams won two national championships and four reserve national championships.

"I'm a competitive person. I like to be successful," Unruh said. "Even more, I get enjoyment from seeing students setting goals and being successful in achieving them."

As a coach, Unruh saw his role less as teaching students the skills of meat judging, and more about helping them shape the right attitude for success. He remembers one team he coached that was really struggling.

"We were on our way to Houston after the worst workout of my coaching career," Unruh recalls.

"The students were bright, intelligent, and knew how to judge. They just didn't believe in their capabilities. We sat around a table at a rest stop, and together we came up with SAM, which I've used in coaching and other endeavors since then. SAM stood for self-confidence, positive attitude, and mental toughness. During the contest, they all wrote SAM on their hands and referred to it whenever they felt themselves faltering. Our two teams came away from Houston with first- and second-place team finishes and six of the top ten individuals."

After coaching the meat judging team for eight years, Unruh was ready for a new challenge. He was appointed to a position at Kansas State that included responsibilities within the international agriculture program. As associate director of the International Meat and Livestock Program, he worked with producers in Costa Rica to develop a beef carcass evaluation system. Working with their universities,





they were able to build a meat sensory evaluation lab and conduct beef quality research projects. He also brought in several international groups for short courses at Kansas State.

In 2009, a new opportunity presented itself in the form of chair of the undergraduate food science program at Kansas State. In his role as chair, Unruh coordinated the teaching and advising for three curriculum options within the food science program.

“It was a chance for me to expand my breadth of knowledge into other areas in the food sciences. I experienced a bigger picture of education, and it was extremely gratifying to see the program nearly double from 127 to 230 students.”

Throughout his career, Unruh and his wife, Judy, who grew up in Idaho, dreamed of returning to the West Coast. So when the dean position at Chico State became available, its geographical location was one of the first factors that attracted them.

“Chico has a lot of similarities to the areas where Judy and I each grew up, with the mountains, recreational opportunities, and public lands. Plus it’s within a few hours of the ocean, which we love. Chico really feels like coming home,” Unruh said.

Since moving to Chico in July, the community has not disappointed the Unruhs.

“We appreciate the friendliness and people welcoming us to the community,” Unruh said. “I wear my College of Agriculture hat around town and people stop me and ask, ‘Did you know they

have a farm?’ The community here has really taken ownership and pride in the University Farm and the College of Agriculture, and I’m proud to be a part of that.”

“I’m at a point in my career in which I’ve had many gratifying experiences, and now I want to utilize and apply what I’ve learned in a new endeavor.”

Having worked in progressively broader administrative roles over the course of his career, Unruh is excited about leading the College of Agriculture.

He embraces the opportunity to work with producers in California’s large and diverse agriculture industry.

“I’m looking forward to learning about fruit and nut trees and vegetable production, along with continuing to learn on the animal side. I really want to meet producers from across the state and see how we can work together to build the human capital for California agriculture.”

Unruh says he was impressed with the faculty and staff of the college during his interview process, and

he will draw upon his experience and success as a coach to lead them to greater heights.

“The faculty and staff here have such a great attitude and a strong desire to help students succeed. I really want to help with the direction and goal-setting, and work with folks on an individual basis to help maximize their potential,” he said.

Unruh’s appointment is the result of an extensive nationwide search for the next dean of the College of Agriculture. Search committee chair Brad Dodson, a professor in the College of Agriculture, said the college is pleased to have recruited such a talented and passionate individual.

“Dr. Unruh has a strong reputation for teaching, research, and program development. Hands-on learning and student success are at the forefront of everything he has done in his career.”

In his first year as dean, Unruh plans to travel throughout the state, learning about California agriculture and meeting with Chico State alumni and supporters.

“The College of Agriculture at Chico State has 63 years of history, culture, and contributions to California agriculture. I want to learn as much as I can so we can build on its rich history of excellence in experiential education and student success,” Unruh said. “This college is poised to have a transformational impact on agriculture within California and beyond.” ■

Dustin Bush Hired as Development Officer

Dustin Bush joined the University in September as the associate director of development for the College of Agriculture. Bush reports to the Office of University Advancement and will work closely with the College of Agriculture dean, faculty, alumni, and the community to build private philanthropic support for our students and programs.

Bush is from San Juan Bautista and earned his bachelor's degree in agricultural business from Fresno State. He worked for several years in livestock feed sales, including with A.L. Gilbert Company and Bar Ale.

In 2013, Bush moved to Chico to join his wife, Paige, in her hometown. Drawn to Chico's rich agricultural heritage, Bush decided to pursue a job that would allow him to plant roots in the community.

"I wanted a job where I could make a difference and help the agricultural community grow and thrive," Bush said. "I could see that a strong, vibrant agriculture program at Chico State is one of the strengths of the community, and I was excited when the development position opened over the summer."

Coming from another CSU agriculture program, Bush was familiar with the hands-on, practical approach to agriculture education. What he has found in the College of Agriculture is a close-knit group of faculty and staff who strive to make a difference in students' lives.

"I really love the family atmosphere here," Bush said. "They have embraced me in the past couple of months and made me feel at home, and I see them doing the same with students. Faculty have a clear passion for teaching and give students a broad range of hands-on experiences to help them find their own niche in the agriculture profession."

Bush looks forward to reaching out to College of Agriculture alumni and the agriculture community to reconnect them with the University. ■



"I really love the family atmosphere here," Bush said. "They have embraced me in the past couple of months and made me feel at home, and I see them doing the same with students. Faculty have a clear passion for teaching and give students a broad range of hands-on experiences to help them find their own niche in the agriculture profession."

Dr. Christine Carroll Joins Faculty

The College of Agriculture added its sixth tenure-track professor in agricultural business this fall with the hire of Christine Carroll. A Seattle-area native, Carroll earned her bachelor's degree in economics at Arizona State University (ASU). As she sought a graduate program that would allow her to focus on applied economics, faculty at ASU encouraged her to look into agriculture.

"I've always been interested in food, and I realized that agricultural economics would allow me to work with numbers, have access to good data, and explore issues that matter to all of us," Carroll said.



Carroll entered the PhD program in agricultural economics at UC Davis, where her doctoral dissertation looked for economically viable control options for Verticillium wilt in lettuce crops in Monterey and the Salinas Valley.

"The disease impacts a variety of crops, but it is new to lettuce in the past 10 to 20 years," Carroll said. "The best method for controlling it is methyl bromide, but that has been all but banned for anything other than strawberries, so I worked with plant pathologists to look for new ways of dealing with Verticillium wilt."

"I liked the idea that there are no departmental boundaries in the College of Agriculture," she said. "It is neat to be in a place that is automatically set up to facilitate collaboration."

The research project, and the collaboration with growers, plant pathologists, and other disciplines, got her hooked on agricultural economics.

"I really enjoy studying how growers make management decisions, especially related to disease and pest control," Carroll said. "So many factors influence their decision on how to deal with a particular disease or pest, such as environmental concerns, consumer perception, cost, market opportunities, and more."

Carroll joined the College of Agriculture in part because of the interdisciplinary structure of the college, which she sees as an opportunity to build cross-disciplinary collaborations.

"I liked the idea that there are no departmental boundaries in the College of Agriculture," she said. "It is neat to be in a place that is automatically set up to facilitate collaboration."

Carroll is teaching agribusiness management and agricultural policy in her first semester. She and her husband, Dorsey Kindler, relocated to Chico from Ohio in August. They are enjoying the climate in Northern California, as well as the access to outdoor activities such as mountain biking and skiing. ■

2016 Distinguished Alumna:

Keely Martin Bosler

Photos by Jason Halley | Story by Erica Vietor and Sarah DeForest



It's 275 miles from the State Capitol steps in Sacramento to the home where Keely Martin Bosler grew up in Fort Jones, California. Sometimes the distance feels worlds apart to the College of Agriculture's 2016 Distinguished Alumna, who serves as cabinet secretary to Governor Jerry Brown. Nestled in the picturesque Scott Valley, between Mount Shasta and the Oregon border, Fort Jones has a population of just 687. How did the small-town daughter of dairy farmers from far Northern California wind up as a top advisor to the governor of the nation's most populous state? For Bosler, the road to Sacramento ran through Chico State.

The daughter of Charlie and Marlene Martin loved growing up on her family's dairy and alfalfa farm, but she couldn't wait to leave home. She joined the Future Farmers of America (FFA) chapter at Etna High School and went on to serve as the president of the FFA's Superior Region, which is headquartered at the CSU, Chico University Farm. Through frequent visits to campus for FFA events and meetings, she got to know the College of Agriculture and fell in love with the college town.

"Chico was an easy choice. The faculty knew me here and wanted me to come," Bosler recalls. "And it was just far enough away from home that I felt like I was really going somewhere."

She entered Chico State as an agricultural business major. She knew that her tolerance for risk was too low to go into production agriculture, and her 18-year-old logic told her that "business is where you make the money."

Once she was on campus, Bosler made the most of her time. As a freshman, she enrolled in the General Studies Thematic Program, a yearlong immersion in general education that was team-taught by five different professors. During her college career, Bosler was also the president for the Students for Responsible Agriculture and a member of the Young Cattlemen's Association (YCA), competed on the ethics bowl team, volunteered with Community Action Volunteers in Education (CAVE),

worked at the Associated Students Bookstore, helped with Summer Orientation, and assisted with a variety of College of Agriculture events. One of her most formative experiences was competing on the Chico State Livestock Judging Team, coached by Professor Dave Daley.

"I had such a great experience," she said. "Professors like Dr. Daley are so passionate about sparking excitement for learning. Livestock judging is not just about evaluating livestock. It's about communication, hard work, and learning how to be a part of a team."

One of her biggest life lessons came during a livestock judging team practice when Keely admits to having monopolized the conversation with her trademark "type A" enthusiasm. In not so many words, Daley brusquely told her to stop talking. Shocked and hurt, she eventually came to appreciate the lesson.

"Being a part of a team means that everyone has a chance to express their opinions. I needed the reminder to be quiet and listen," she said.

Bosler graduated summa cum laude from CSU, Chico in 1997. Inspired by an economics class she had enjoyed, she entered Cornell University to pursue a master's degree in applied economics.

"As an undergraduate, I thought economics was fascinating and fun. I found out in graduate school that it's actually really hard," Bosler said.

Despite the program's rigor, Bosler graduated from Cornell with her master's degree in 2001 and earned the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association's Outstanding Master's Thesis Award for her thesis analyzing United States apple export markets.

Unsure what to do with her new master's degree, Bosler applied for a job with the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) in Sacramento.

"I didn't really know what the LAO did, but I wanted to move back to California and be closer to my family," she said. "It turned out to be a perfect fit."



“I’m a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work, the more I have of it.”

Working for the LAO, which provides the California legislature with nonpartisan fiscal and policy analysis, Bosler discovered that she loved public policy.

“There’s never a dull moment. There’s always a problem to be solved. There’s always something new to learn,” she said.

Bosler’s curiosity and drive has led her to multiple offices and positions in the state government, including the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, and the Department of Finance, where she served as chief deputy director from 2013 until early 2016. Throughout her career, Bosler has developed a reputation as a practical, grounded problem solver. Her common-sense approach as the governor’s primary spokesperson on the state budget is one of the reasons Brown appointed Bosler as his cabinet secretary in February 2016. As cabinet secretary, Bosler is the one of the governor’s top policy advisors and oversees the cabinet, which is composed of the secretaries of each major state agency.

Despite her demanding career, Bosler’s family is her top priority. She is married to fellow Chico State alumnus Mitchell Bosler (BS, Mechanical Engineering, ’98), and together they have two young

daughters, Alessandra and Henrietta. Bosler serves on the site counsel at her daughter’s school and is also a member of the Capital School Planning Task Force at CSU, Sacramento. It’s her strong personal community, including her in-laws Bob and Sally Bosler, whose support allows her pursue her career while raising a family.

“That’s something I always stress to students and young professionals, is the importance of building a community,” Bosler said. “The friends you make in college become the basis of your network throughout your career. With a sturdy support system, you will always have people who care for you and help you through life.”

Bosler also takes time to give back to her alma mater, serving on the advisory council for the College of Agriculture.

“Having attended one other university, and observing other colleges through my work, it’s clear to me that CSU, Chico excels in its focus on teaching, with professors who truly want to teach and engage with their students,” she said.

Bosler received the College of Agriculture’s Distinguished Alumni Award at a ceremony in the Bell Memorial Union on April 8, 2016. While on campus she spoke with several classes, telling students, “It’s OK if you don’t know today exactly

what you’re going to do with your life. College is a rite of passage where you demonstrate that you can show up, do the work, learn, and build upon your learning. Your job right now is to be a sponge and soak everything up.”

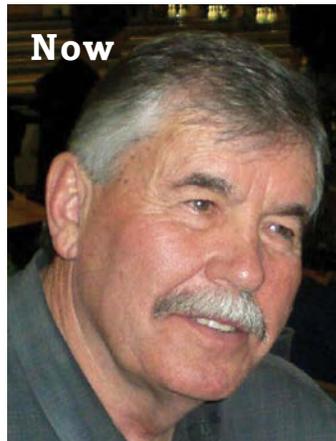
Bosler advised students to keep an open mind about their futures. “I remember being in my early 20s and feeling like I wasn’t getting ahead as quickly as I should. But just be patient, take advantage of opportunities, and realize that life doesn’t always end up how one envisions it—and that’s perfectly OK.”

Bosler considers it to be an honor to be selected as the 2016 CSU, Chico College of Agriculture Distinguished Alumna.

“When I look at the list of past distinguished alumni, I am truly humbled to take my place next to such influential individuals. I have always been proud to be from this campus and this college,” she said.

Bosler returned to campus again on May 17 to serve as the commencement speaker for the College of Agriculture, where she quoted Thomas Jefferson, saying, “I’m a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work, the more I have of it.” ■

Where Are They Now?



1960s

Tom Dowd (Agricultural Business, '69)

Tom is retired from a career that included numerous positions within California agriculture, including 26 years as a pest control advisor (PCA), first with Big Valley Ag Services and then as an independent PCA. Tom recommends the PCA profession to any students interested in plant science, pest management, and crop nutrition. He notes that his agriculture degree from CSU, Chico has served him well throughout his career.

Toxictom40@hotmail.com

1970s

Jim Currin (Agricultural Business, '70)

Owner, Currin Appraisals—Chico
Jimmy.Currin@att.net

Larry Massa (Animal Science, '73)

Owner, Massa & Sons—Willows
massaranch@gmail.com

Don Meyer (Agriculture, '73)

Owner, Meyer Suffolks—Adin

Carol (Bickford) Buckman (Agriculture, '74)

Owner, Beaver Creek Ranch—McArthur

1980s

Brad Rowland (Agricultural Business, '81)

Partner, Ellis Ranch & Clayton Vineyards;
Owner, Electric Shaver Company—Suisun Valley
bradrowland@msn.com

Dan Fissell (Agriculture—Range Management, '83)

Range Conservationist, US Forest Service, Mt. Hood National Forest—Dufur, Ore.
dfissell@fs.fed.us

1990s

Amy (Mickelson) Beadle (Agricultural Business, '96)

Statewide Project Manager, California Community Colleges Technology Center—Chico
abeadle@ccctechcenter.org

Megan Pettis (Agricultural Business, '98)

Principal, Valley High School and Dublin Adult Education—Dublin
pettismegan@dublinusd.org

2000s

Melissa (Wolf) Macfarlane (Animal Science, '00)

Nursery Manager,
Driscoll's Berries—Cottonwood
melissa.macfarlane@driscolls.com

Robert Safford (Animal Science, '00)

Agriculture Instructor,
Corning High School—Vina
rsafford@cornings.org

Leah (Taylor) Luepke (Animal Science, '01)

Quality Assurance Manager, Rolling Hills Nut Company—Hickman
Leah@rollinghillsnut.com

Kevin Reed (Agricultural Business, '01)

Harbert Oil Company, Inc.—Bieber
kevin@harbertoil.com

Marcie (Zane) Skelton (Agriscience and Education, '01)

Agriculture Commissioner and Sealer of Weights and Measures, Glenn County Department of Agriculture—Willows
mskelton@countyofglenn.net

Steven Schohr (Agricultural Business, '03)

Owner, Schohr Herefords—Gridley
steven@schohr-herefords.com

Stacey Henderson (Animal Science, '05)

Stacey earned her master's degree in rangeland management from Montana State University in 2008 and conducted field research for the university on invasive plants and insects upon completing her degree. She moved to North Carolina and worked for the Center for Integrated Pest Management at North Carolina State University, where she helped develop a secure USDA database of biological characteristics of pests of concern in the United States. She earned a graduate certificate in Geographical Information Systems from North Carolina State University and works as a ranger and natural resource specialist for both Falls Lake and Jordan Lake State Recreational Areas in North Carolina.

staceehenderson@gmail.com

Amanda (Farrah) Schohr (Animal Science, '05)

Agriculture Instructor, Marysville High School; Co-Owner, Schohr Herefords—Gridley
afarah@mjsud.com

Katie (Reid) Harris
 (Agriscience and Education, '06;
 Master's in Ag Education, '14)
 Agriculture Instructor,
 Indian Valley Academy—Quincy
 kharris@plumascharterschool.org

Megan Medley (Land Stewardship, '06)
 Timber Resource Assistant, US Forest Service—
 Whitmire, South Carolina
 mmedley@fs.fed.us

David Perry (Agricultural Business, '08)
 Owner/Operator, Perry Family Farms and Perry &
 Son Trucking—Princeton
 Dperry4240@yahoo.com

2010s

Eileen Whitcomb (Animal Science, '10)
 Program Technician, Yamhill/Clackamas/
 Multnomah Farm Service Agency—
 McMinnville, Oregon
 Eileen.Whitcomb@or.usda.gov

Meri Burt (Agricultural Business, '13)
 Credit Analyst, American Ag Credit—Reno, Nevada
 mburt@agloan.com

Jenna Wirkner
 (Agricultural Business, '13)
 Tasting Room Manager,
 Matchbook Winery—Zamora
 jwirkner@crewvines.com

Christa (Miguel) Douglass
 (Agriscience and Education, '14)
 GAP/Food Safety Consultant,
 Wilbur-Ellis—Pascoe, Washington
 cdouglass@wilburellis.com

Justin Edson
 (Agriscience and Education, '14)
 Lecturer, CSU, Chico—Chico
 jcedson@csuchico.edu

Paige Fulmer
 (Agriscience and Education, '14)
 Agriculture Instructor,
 Big Valley High School—Beiber
 fulmerpaige@yahoo.com

Jennifer Weber
 (Agricultural Business, '15)
 Financial Specialist, Northwest Farm Credit
 Services—Central Point, Oregon
 jennifer.weber@northwestfcs.com



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Spotlight on Giving

New Scholarship Honors Chico Entrepreneur

A new scholarship in the College of Agriculture honors global entrepreneur Mr. Dwarka Wadhwa who passed away in 2016. Mr. Wadhwa began marketing nuts and dried fruit as a teenager in India and Afghanistan in the 1950s. In 1990, he moved to California with his family to secure a stable source of almonds to supply customers all over the world. Mr. Wadhwa and his daughter and son-in-law, Versha and Mohnish Seth, settled in Chico, where in 2001 they established Farmers International, Inc., an almond growing, processing, and exporting company.

Mohnish Seth attributes the family's success to his father-in-law's tenacity. "He was mild-natured when you spoke with him, but at the same time, extremely determined and strong-willed. His dedication toward his work was totally selfless and limitless. Mr. Wadhwa's passion for his business paved the path to pinnacles for the entire family," Seth said.

The Seths established a new scholarship in the College of Agriculture to honor their father. The Dwarka Wadhwa Memorial—Farmers International Scholarship will be awarded to one agriculture major each year beginning in 2017.





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- January** 21 Swine Day
- 23 Spring classes begin
- 27 Ag Social at the Red Bluff Bull and Gelding Sale
- February** 8 Alumni Breakfast at the Colusa Farm Show
- 10 Invitational Parliamentary Procedure Contest
- 11 Sheep and Goat Education Day
- 21 Career and Internship Fair
- March** 11 FFA Field Day
- 13-17 Spring Break
- April** 7 Ag Day at the Farm
- May** 19 College of Agriculture Commencement
- June** 12 Superior Ag Golf Tournament

CONTRIBUTORS

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Editor
 Sarah DeForest

Contributing Writers
 Sarah DeForest
 Erica Vietor

Cover Photography
 Jason Halley

Designer
 Ashley Penning

Copy Editor
 Ashley Gebb

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College of Agriculture
 California State University, Chico
 Chico, CA 95929-0440
 Phone: 530-898-3737
 Fax: 530-898-5845
 Email: sdeforest@csuchico.edu
 www.csuchico.edu/ag

