

THE HARVEST

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE ANNUAL MAGAZINE

2017



TEACHING THE TEACHERS PAGE 10

# Food for Thought

From the Dean's Desk

As I enter my second year at Chico State, I have appreciated the opportunity to interact with many of our alumni, donors, and agricultural leaders. I knew before moving to Chico from Manhattan, Kansas, where my wife and I spent more than 20 years, that I was in for a new experience in agriculture. Even with that expectation, I've been blown away by what I've seen. From riding in a rice harvester in Richvale, to watching artichoke pickers walk the rows in Castroville, to touring the country's largest olive oil processing plant in Artois, nothing could prepare me for the rich diversity and tremendous volume of California agriculture. I am grateful to everyone who has welcomed our students, faculty, and me personally, for field trips, farm visits, and tours.

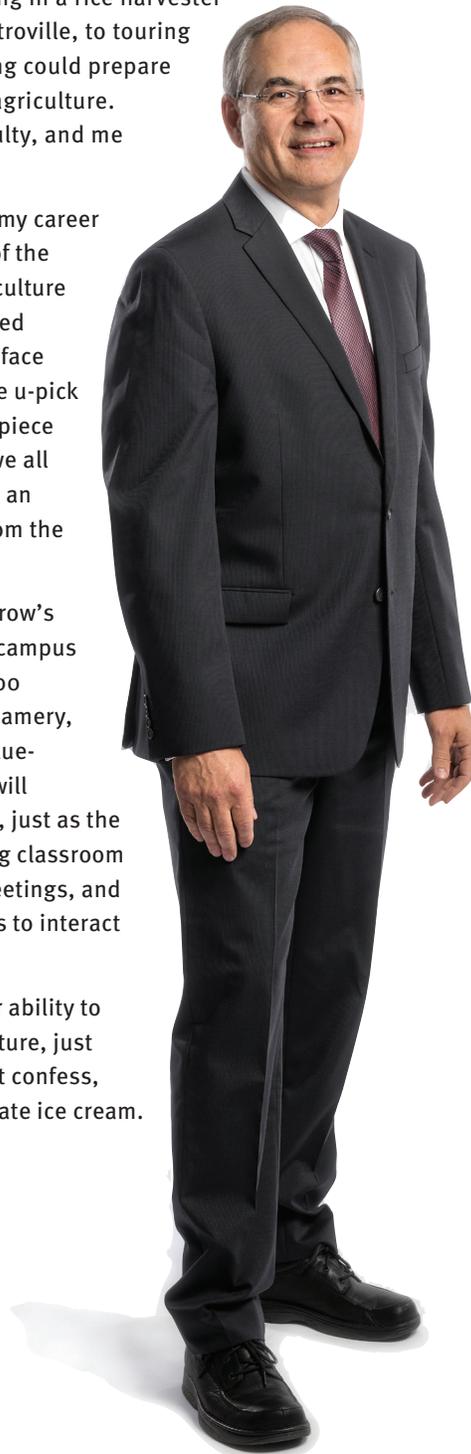
I am a big proponent of hands-on education. Over the course of my career I've seen the difference it makes when we can get students out of the classroom to meet and work alongside professionals in the agriculture industry. For us at Chico State, that includes our own very talented faculty and staff who work at the University Farm. I love the interface between the farm and the community through events such as the u-pick peach season. For nearly 60 years, the farm has been the centerpiece of experiential education in livestock and crop production. But we all know that agriculture is more than just growing a crop or raising an animal. Agriculture is a complex system of value-added steps from the soil to the consumer's plate.

That's why I'm so excited about the Agriculture Center for Tomorrow's Leaders described on page 22. It's one of the lead projects that campus leaders are championing as part of the University's first-ever \$100 million comprehensive fundraising campaign. The farmstead creamery, supported by our organic dairy, will add food processing and value-added marketing to our educational curriculum. The farm store will serve as a real-world agriculture marketing and sales laboratory, just as the farm itself is the living laboratory for growing food. The adjoining classroom and meeting space at the University Farm will host seminars, meetings, and community events, providing a connection point for our students to interact with agricultural associations and industry leaders.

The Agriculture Center for Tomorrow's Leaders will transform our ability to prepare students for careers in the agriculture industry of the future, just as the University Farm did when it was purchased in 1960. I must confess, though, I'm also looking forward to my first spoonful of Chico State ice cream. Now that's exciting!



John Unruh, PhD  
Dean



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*Transforming Tomorrow*

# What's Growing On

## News and Events



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3. Jamie Conner



4. (Left to right) Professor Michael Chao, Zach Bauer, Toni Duarte, Cole James, and Patricia Garcia



5. Chico State Range Management team, pictured with Coach Kasey DeAtley

### 1 Honors Earned at the American Society of Agronomy, California Chapter Conference

Seniors Laura Boots and Suzette Turner (below) earned honors at the 2017 Annual California Plant and Soil Conference hosted by the American Society of Agronomy California Chapter at the Fresno Convention Center in January. Boots took second place in the undergraduate poster contest, and Turner won a \$1,000 scholarship in the student essay competition.

Boots' research for which she entered her poster focuses on walnut shell-based biochar and its use in providing potassium to support plant productivity. Turner's essay, which was featured in the conference proceedings, focused on a plan for building soil health in an established walnut orchard in California's Central Valley. She also presented her research on biochar and compost applications' effects on crop growth and soil health at the conference.



1. Suzette Turner (left) and Laura Boots (right)

### 2 Animal Science Students Win Regional Academic Quadrathlon

For the second year in a row, four animal science students at California State University, Chico took first place in the American Society of Animal Science (ASAS) Western Section Academic Quadrathlon in Corvallis, Oregon on April 7–8, 2017. Jamie Conner, Emily Dulany, Ben Grismer, and Rebecca Swanson competed against Oregon State University, New Mexico State University and University of Utah, earning them a chance to defend their national title at the ASAS academic quadrathlon in Baltimore, Maryland July 8–12, 2017, where they placed third.

The academic quadrathlon consists of four separate events: written exam, Jeopardy-style quiz bowl, and oral presentation and laboratory practicums. The team was coached by professors Patrick Doyle and Kasey DeAtley.

### 3 Conner Places Third in Undergraduate Research Poster Competition

Seniors Jamie Conner and Rebecca Swanson traveled to Fargo, North Dakota June 20–23, 2017, and represented Chico State in the Undergraduate Research Poster Competition at the Western Section American Society of Animal Science Annual Meeting. Conner placed third for her poster titled *Effects of Supplementing CRINA® Ruminant Blend Essential Oil to Suffolk X Hampshire Feeder Lambs on Growth, Intake, Feed Efficiency, and Carcass Traits*. Swanson's project was titled *Post-Weaning Growth Performance and Feed Efficiency of Commercial and Half-Blood Lowline-Angus Heifers*.

### 4 Students Attend Reciprocal Meat Conference

Four students from Chico State, along with Professor Michael Chao, attended the American Meat Science Association's 70th annual Reciprocal Meat Conference (RMC) at Texas A&M University June 16–21, 2017. Zach Bauer, Toni Duarte, Patricia Garcia, and Cole James competed the undergraduate quiz bowl competition, Iron Chef culinary art competition, and taste of RMC product development competition. They also attended career and networking fair and mentor program, and Patricia Garcia presented a poster on her research into alternative goat harvesting techniques.

As part of the Taste of RMC competition, the students created a Greek-style lamb burger meal kit, which drew the attention of spice industry professionals for its trendy flavor. The RMC brings together more than 800 professional members from academia, government, and industry in animal production fields.

### 5 Students Serve as National Officers for Society of Range Management

Seven Chico State students attended the Society for Range Management (SRM) annual conference in St. George, Utah from January 29–February 2, 2017, and two of them were elected to national offices. Ariana Altier, Zach Bauer, Bridgette Eldridge, Danielle Hedglin, Emily Krahn, Andrea Oliver-LaCome, and Alex Orozco-Lopez made the trip, along with animal science professor Kasey DeAtley. Orozco-Lopez was elected secretary of the SRM Student Conclave, and Oliver-LaCome will serve as the public relations chair for the Young Professionals Conclave.

All seven students competed against 14 other schools in the Rangeland Cup, a competition that emphasizes critical thinking though group work on current topics pertaining to rangeland management. Teams demonstrate interactive communication skills and group problem-solving by creating a poster on the topic and presenting it to a panel of judges. The topic focused on the ecological and socioeconomic effects of federal land transfer to state control.



6. (Left to right) Crops and Horticulture Club officers Clarissa Chairez, Carlos Iniguez, Stephanie Alvarado, and Jason DeGraff

## 6 Star Students and Club of the Year Recognized

The Chico State Crops and Horticulture Club was named the College of Agriculture's Club of the Year at the biannual Dean's Luncheon on May 4, 2017. Dean John Unruh made the presentation, commending the organization for their outreach, involvement, and service to the college during the past year. The Crops and Horticulture Club provides networking opportunities, professional development, and community outreach for students who are interested in a career in the plant sciences.

The 2017 Star Students were also announced during the Dean's Lunch. The students were selected by the faculty in their respective disciplines for contributions to the overall success of the college. They are listed on the next page, and each student is profiled on the College of Agriculture website: [www.csuchico.edu/ag/about/star-students](http://www.csuchico.edu/ag/about/star-students).

## Dowse Earns Second in National Spreadsheet Competition

Sophomore Austin Dowse placed second in the Earl O. Heady Decision Sciences Spreadsheet Competition during the Agricultural Applied Economics Association (AAEA) Annual Meeting in Chicago, Illinois. July 29–August 1, 2017. Dowse submitted a spreadsheet and poster titled *Net Economic Benefit of Converting from Naoh to KOH in Fruit Processing at Pacific Coast Producers, Oroville Plant*.



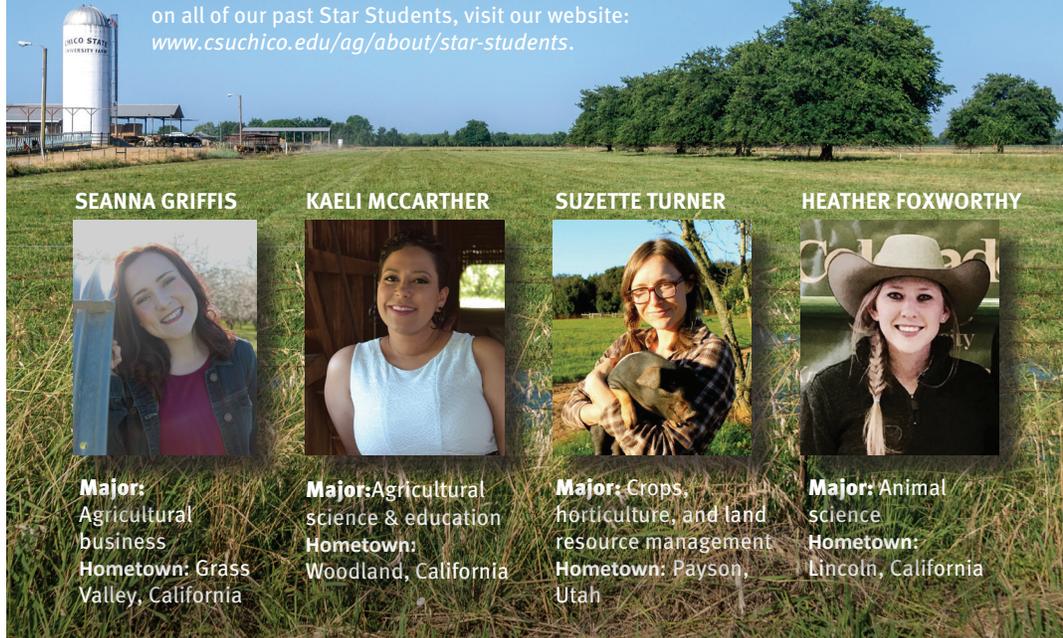
During the AAEA conference, Dowse was one of six Chico State students who competed in the Academic Quiz Bowl competition, coached by Professor Baohui Song. "They did well at the conference and had a great opportunity to interact with peers from the nation and to tour the city," Song said.

CSU Chico

College of Agriculture

# STAR STUDENTS

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



SEANNA GRIFFIS



**Major:** Agricultural business  
**Hometown:** Grass Valley, California

KAELI MCCARTHER



**Major:** Agricultural science & education  
**Hometown:** Woodland, California

SUZETTE TURNER



**Major:** Crops, horticulture, and land resource management  
**Hometown:** Payson, Utah

HEATHER FOXWORTHY



**Major:** Animal science  
**Hometown:** Lincoln, California

CA Jobs in Ag  
7.6%

## Report Details Ag's Economic Contribution

Despite a sharp drop in commodity prices in 2015, agriculture continued to account for one in five jobs in Northeastern California and 18.4 percent of the region's economic activity, according to the latest annual report from the Agribusiness Institute (ABI) at California State University, Chico. By comparison, at the statewide level, agriculture contributed an estimated 7.6 percent of the state's jobs and 6.7 percent of its total economic activity. The 13 counties in the study area produced \$4.2 billion worth of agricultural products in 2015, which was down 8.6 percent from the previous year due to decreased global commodity prices.

*The Contribution of Agriculture to Northeastern California's Economy in 2015* was written by ABI Director Eric Houk, a professor of agricultural business in the College of Agriculture. The full report is available on the College of Agriculture's website: [www.csuchico.edu/ag](http://www.csuchico.edu/ag).



## 22nd Annual Golf Tournament

The Chubb Agribusiness team of Tony Catalano, Bill Helms, Brian Diendorf, T.J. Taylor, Travis Schletewitz, and Rick Russell won the 22nd annual Superior Ag/Tri Counties Bank Golf Classic on Monday, June 12. The fundraiser at Butte Creek Country Club brought in more than \$50,000 for scholarships and academic programs in the College of Agriculture.

The 2018 tournament is scheduled for **June 11** at Butte Creek Country Club. For more information contact Sarah DeForest at 530-898-3737.

Save The Date!





“I want to be able to find students from different backgrounds who may not be exposed to agriculture.”

# How One Student's Efforts Continue to Drive Diversity in AG

Originally published in Inside Chico State. Photos by Jason Halley

**K**aeli McCarther has always stood out among her peers. In high school, she developed a name for herself by diving headlong into every opportunity that was presented to her, including clubs, band, and the Future Farmers of America (FFA). Her senior year, she outperformed 13 other students in an audition to become the Pioneer High School Class of 2012 graduation speaker. And in 2015, she was the first in her immediate family to pursue a university education.

When she joined the Chico State College of Agriculture that year as a transfer student from Sierra College, she stood out for another reason that was unfamiliar to her.

"I was the brownest person in all of my ag classes," said McCarther.

While the College of Agriculture's 2015 incoming class was the most diverse in its 62-year history with minorities comprising half the class, less than four percent of its new freshmen and transfer students identified as black. Rather than giving in to a feeling of isolation, McCarther launched a new student organization that would celebrate diversity in agriculture and give students from all backgrounds a place to connect.

With the encouragement of her professors, McCarther and a group of fellow students created the United Students of Agriculture (USA), an affiliate

of the national Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS). The club held its first meeting in December of 2015 with a standing-room-only crowd, and McCarther was elected president.

"I wanted USA to be a place for people to form connections and feel like they're not alone," McCarther said. "When I first got here I mistakenly thought that I was the only person in my classes who didn't have an ag background. I now know that nothing could be further from the truth, and USA helped me to build my community at Chico State."

In its first year, USA was named the College of Agriculture's Club of the Year for its strategic and goal-oriented work to promote agriculture. The club meets monthly to hear guest speakers, conduct workshops, and just check in with one another, and all of its activities align with the organization's guiding pillars of career preparation, outreach, philanthropy, and mentorship.

The role of connector and mentor is not new to McCarther. She always knew she wanted to work with kids, but she assumed it would be in music. It took her years to discover the career pathway of agriculture education.

"I needed a biology class my freshman year of high school so I enrolled in ag biology. I didn't even know what ag was until the first day of school," McCarther recalled.

As McCarther learned more about agriculture through the FFA program at Woodland's Pioneer High School, she became fascinated with the role it has played in developing modern civilizations.

"For me it comes down to an anthropological perspective. The development of agriculture has freed us as humans to set down roots in a place, rather than surviving as hunters and gatherers. The reason we exist the way we do today is because of agriculture," she explained.

As rewarding and intriguing as she found agriculture as a subject area, McCarther still entered Sierra College with other career goals in mind. She started as a deaf studies major planning to pursue a career in teaching. She enrolled in an animal science course to fulfill her life sciences requirement and realized how much she missed agriculture.

"Two weeks into the class, I thought, 'Crap. Now I have to change my major.'"

She earned associates degrees in natural sciences and behavioral sciences in the spring of 2015, and there was never any question that she would transfer to Chico State. She had visited on multiple occasions during high school for both band and FFA competitions, so she felt drawn to the campus.

"I was so excited to learn that there was this major called agricultural education, and that I could combine my love of



“I’ve always felt really supported and loved here.”

teaching and of agriculture,” McCarther said. “When I met the faculty at Choose Chico, that’s when I realized I was going to love it here.”

From Professor Mollie Aschenbrenner, whose first lecture in her “Intro to Ag Education” class left McCarther nearly in tears with inspiration, to her advisor Brad Dodson, whose office she visits almost daily, and USA club advisor Garrett Liles, who McCarther counts as a mentor and friend, the faculty in the College of Agriculture have continued to impress her.

“Our faculty are the best on the planet. I have always felt really supported and loved here,” she said.

In addition to her leadership in both USA and Collegiate FFA, McCarther has gained agricultural experience by attending agricultural conferences, working as a research assistant at the University Farm’s organic dairy, and enrolling in a directed work experience course at the Organic Vegetable Project (OVP), which led to a paid position as field manager.

“Working at the OVP was life-changing. I showed up in the first week and [project manager] Tina Candelo-Mize put me to

work picking peppers. I had never had any prior production experience, and it gave me lots of ideas I can apply to student projects when I start teaching high school,” she said.

McCarther hopes to eventually teach agriculture in a diverse, low-income school.

“My passion has become not just agricultural literacy but also diversity within agriculture. I want to be able to find students from different backgrounds who may not be exposed to agriculture. I’m



looking for the little Kaelis of the world,” she said.

The first in her immediate family to earn a bachelor’s degree, she also wants to inspire young students, starting with her own nephews, to aspire to higher education.

“I heard a statistic once that if someone in the family is educated, it lifts up the entire family. I want to set the bar high for my nephews. When things get tough, I remind myself that I’m here to show them what you can do with an education,” she said.

The one-time high school graduation speaker added two more speaking engagements to her long list of honors in 2017. McCarther served as the student reflections speaker for both the College of Agriculture commencement ceremony and the Black Graduation Celebration.

*Kaeli McCarther visits with University President Gayle E. Hutchinson as they line up for the College of Agriculture 2017 Commencement processional.*

## Freshman Elected to State FFA Office

**H**unter Andrade is a generation removed from production agriculture, but a conversion experience through 4-H and FFA has turned the Tracy, California native into a deep-rooted agricultural advocate. Her election as the 2017–2018 state reporter of the 80,000-member California FFA Organization now gives her a platform to share her passion with high school students around the state.

Andrade's father, Ralph, is a chiropractor and her mother, Julie, is a former teacher. Because of her dad's passion for gardening, the family always grew food in their backyard. When Hunter was old enough to enter 4-H, her dad, who had worked in packing sheds and on his father's small cattle ranch in his youth, registered her to raise sheep.

"I won showmanship my first year, and it occurred to me that I was doing something I really loved, and I was good at it. Eventually I bought my own ewe and started a breeding project so that I would have sheep to work with year-round," Andrade recalled.

When she entered Tracy High School, Andrade enrolled in the FFA program to join the ranks of the blue-jacket-clad teenagers she had looked up to while in 4-H. She competed in creed speaking during her freshman year, and she ran for chapter secretary and won. In the ensuing years she competed in impromptu speaking, extemporaneous speaking, livestock judging, and agricultural sales. She continued to move up to the chapter officer ranks, serving as treasurer in her sophomore year and president in her junior year, when she was also elected secretary of the Delta Cal Section. The next logical step in her leadership journey was to run for state office.

"I realized I had a lot of individuals who had really poured into me and pushed me to achieve things I didn't know were in me," Andrade said.

"I saw state office as a chance to give back and pour into other students."

When she didn't win a state officer position during her senior year of high school, she put that ambition behind her and moved forward into her college career as an agriculture major at Chico State.

"I never expected that I would run for state office again," she said.

But early on in her freshman year Andrade found herself joining her friends who were ag education majors in their professional development activities.

"I got involved in FFA conferences and workshops, and I had the chance to interact with FFA members in the Superior Region of Northeastern California. It was a different experience as a college student and made me realize again that every student has a story just waiting to be uncovered," Andrade said. "It hit home for me again that I was a lucky one who had someone recognize unique potential in me and helped me to capitalize on it. Not every student has that, but every student deserves it."

At the California State FFA Conference in Fresno in April, Andrade ran for state office again, and this time she won. As the state FFA reporter, Andrade joins her team of five other FFA leaders who are spending the year living at the California FFA Center in Galt and representing their members throughout the state. With a rigorous travel schedule in front of them, the team will visit and teach at high school FFA chapters, attend industry tours, visit colleges, present conference workshops, and plan and execute the organization's first state conference outside of Fresno in more than 20 years. With some 6,000 FFA members now attending, the conference will move to Anaheim for at least the next two years to accommodate growth.

Of her first few months in office, Andrade said, "The experience has been eye-opening.



**"Brace yourselves! This generation of students who are coming up now is willing to step up, and we are passionate about agriculture."**

We've already met so many members with great stories and great futures and so much potential to be cultivated."

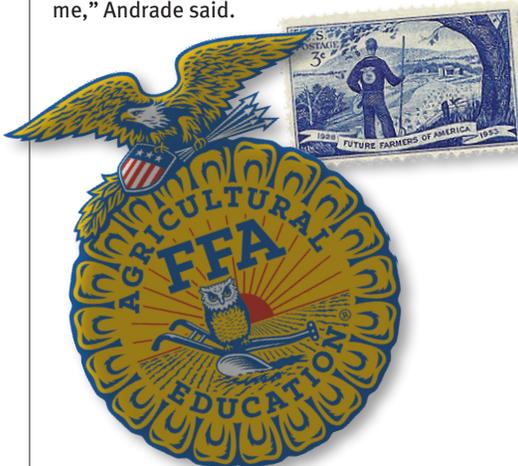
When her year of service is completed, Andrade is looking forward to returning to Chico State to begin her sophomore year.

She said, "Chico State has allowed me to grow in ways I never imagined. I've made great friends, I've taken amazing classes, and I love

the area. I've really come to think of Chico as 'Chic-home!'"

For now, Andrade is thrilled to be an ambassador for the organization that helped her become who she is today, and she has a message for the agriculture industry:

"Brace yourselves! This generation of students who are coming up now is willing to step up, and we are passionate about agriculture. It's going to be an awesome time for the industry as we enter our careers."



# Students to Watch

Student Leadership in Action

## STEM Program Serves Underrepresented Students in Agriculture

When education, business, and government leaders consider the critical need for science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education, the discipline of agriculture may not automatically come to mind. But a new grant-funded program at CSU, Chico is advancing STEM disciplines among underrepresented students while integrating agriculture with the more traditional STEM programs of natural science and engineering.

The \$4.2 million Hispanic-Serving Institutions—Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics (HSI STEM) grant from the US Department of Education was made possible when the University's Hispanic student enrollment surpassed 25 percent of the total student body in 2014. That grant resulted in the creation of the Chico STEM Connections Collaborative, known as CSC<sup>2</sup>, to increase the recruitment, retention, and graduation rates for Hispanic, low-income, or first-generation students majoring in engineering, computer science, construction management, natural sciences, and agriculture.

In collaboration with Chico State's Colleges of Engineering, Computer Science, and Construction Management (ECC), Natural Sciences, and Agriculture, the program provides additional support and resources to students enrolled in the program. Services include academic assistance and advising, navigating financial aid services and scholarship applications, professional development and career awareness, and undergraduate research opportunities.

CSC<sup>2</sup> Agriculture Coordinator Carolyn Masi believes among the program's top benefits is the sense of community it builds. "I think the biggest component is joining a community of students who have similar backgrounds and who come from similar places," Masi said. "Many of our students are the first in their families to pursue higher education, so being among a cohort of students who are learning

together how college works can help ease the uncertainty."

The CSC<sup>2</sup> program launched its first undergraduate research program this past summer to provide students with faculty mentorship and hands-on experience in research topics in their field of study while earning a \$3,500 stipend. The program included two agriculture-related projects. Senior agriculture major Miguel Alvarez worked with agriculture professor Rich Rosecrance on a study looking at "the interaction of light inception and mechanical pruning on olive fruit return bloom and quality."

Junior agriculture majors Melinda Gonzales and Jackelin Villegas joined engineering majors Andres Duran, Melissa Renteria-Santana, and Josue Viveros on a cross-disciplinary collaboration to study "the effects of mechanical vibration on *Oryza sativa* germination." Their project was mentored by agriculture professor Garrett Liles and engineering

professor Dennis O'Connor.

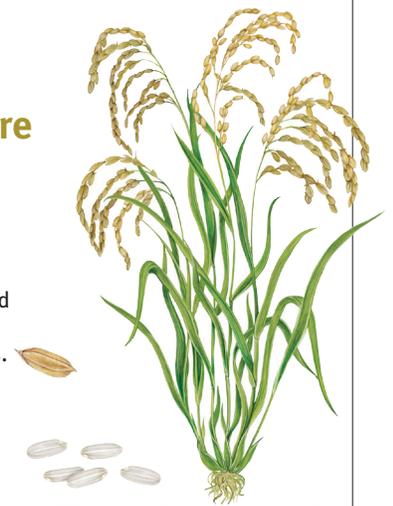
Liles said it was fun for faculty to watch how working across disciplinary boundaries encouraged each participant to stretch their thinking about their chosen majors.

"It was really awesome how this group came together and chased down a bunch of ideas to flush out the research methods," he told the audience at the group's research presentation in August.

"This project pushed us to think creatively and build relationships that we would not otherwise have explored," Gonzales said. "There is so much potential for improvement in agriculture through engineering, but both disciplines need to be at the table."

The CSC<sup>2</sup> program is in the first of its five-year grant program.

*Josue Viveros, Melissa Reuteria-Santana, Jackelin Villegas, Andres Duran, and Melinda Gonzales collaborated on a cross-disciplinary project to study the effects of mechanical vibration on *Oryza sativa* germination.*



"There is so much potential for improvement in agriculture through engineering, but both disciplines need to be at the table."



## Peer Advisors Expand Student Advising Options

Sophomore Breanna Holbert had questions when she first came to Chico State. “How do I get involved? What clubs are available? Where can I get plugged into a job? How do I work efficiently to graduate in the ag education program?” I had a lot of questions, but those were my main ones,” Holbert recalled.

As peer advisors in the College of Agriculture, Holbert and fellow agriculture education major Hanali Tapia-Palacios now have the experience, training, and empathy to help other students navigate the complexities of college life. They are the first student employees in a new program to offer peer mentoring and advising to freshmen and sophomores majoring in agriculture—the first of its kind to partner with Academic Advising at Chico State.

College of Agriculture Student Success Coordinator Ashley Person and Program Coordinator Patrick Doyle developed the framework for the peer advising program in the fall of 2016.

“As our enrollment has grown, we’ve had to get creative to ensure our students have the connection and touchpoints that our smaller college was known for. We saw this as a way to expand our reach and make sure that students have access to good, accurate advising that they may or may not receive on the bench in front of Plumas Hall,” Person said, referring to the popular hangout spot where generations of agriculture students have congregated.

Tapia-Palacios, who was hired first, went through a rigorous three-week training period provided by the campus Office of Academic Advising, giving her the tools she needed to understand graduation requirements, campus and community resources, counseling techniques, and career planning. Holbert joined the peer advising staff midway through the spring semester, so much of her training was on-the-job with the guidance of both Tapia-Palacios and Person. Person supervises the peer advisors and provides ongoing training as new questions arise.

Holbert and Tapia-Palacios hold regular office hours in Plumas Hall 104, meeting one-on-one with freshmen and sophomore students to advise on class schedules, involvement opportunities, and simple career planning. Students



Peer advisors Breanna Holbert and Hanali Tapia-Palacios help ag students navigate college life.

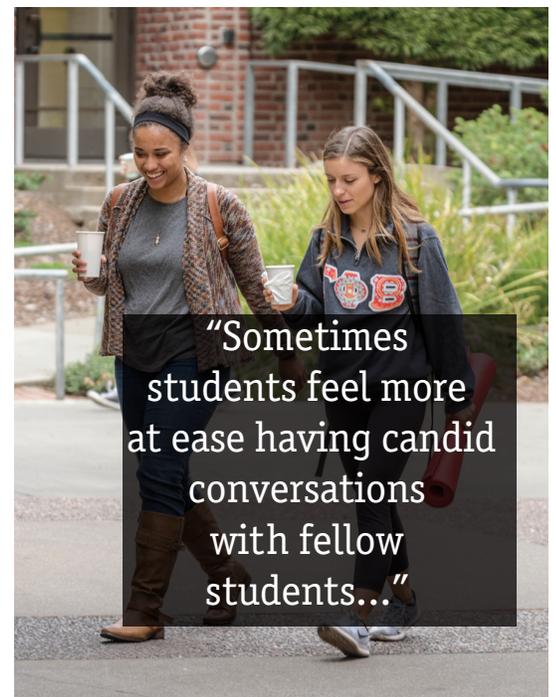
can visit the peer advisors when their assigned advisor is unavailable and when talking with a fellow student feels more comfortable than meeting with a professor.

“Sometimes students feel more at ease having candid conversations with fellow students, so Hanali and Breanna have had a wonderful impact in just the first few months,” Person said.

Holbert and Tapia-Palacios both said they get tremendous satisfaction from advising fellow students.

“If not for the community I surround myself with, I wouldn’t be as successful as I am today,” Holbert said. “When people come through that door with questions, or just wanting to hang out for a bit, they recharge me.”

Tapia-Palacios added, “I’ve grown so much as a person in these last few months, both professionally and personally. As I advise students who are walking through difficult or challenging situations, I’ve learned better how to handle difficult and challenging things in my own life.”



“Sometimes students feel more at ease having candid conversations with fellow students...”

Peer advisor Breanna Holbert enjoys coffee and conversation with fellow agriculture student Kelcie Jones.

# More About Ag

Going Inside the Chico State Ag Program

Ag Education Program  
Has Generational Impact

# TEACHING THE TEACHERS

*"I feel so privileged to walk with our students through this stage in their lives." —Chico State professor Mollie Aschenbrener*

**I**t may have taken Dane White five tries to find the right college for him. But there was never any doubt as to what he was going to study.

“By my sophomore year of high school, I knew in my heart that I wanted to be an agriculture teacher,” White said.

It would take stops at Cuesta College, Butte College, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, and Humboldt State before he enrolled at Chico State and found that same confidence in his choice of school.

“It was pretty clear to me shortly after arriving on campus that I was going to stay at Chico State,” White recalled. “The second you walk through the halls at Chico, you get the sense that you—as your own self—matters.”

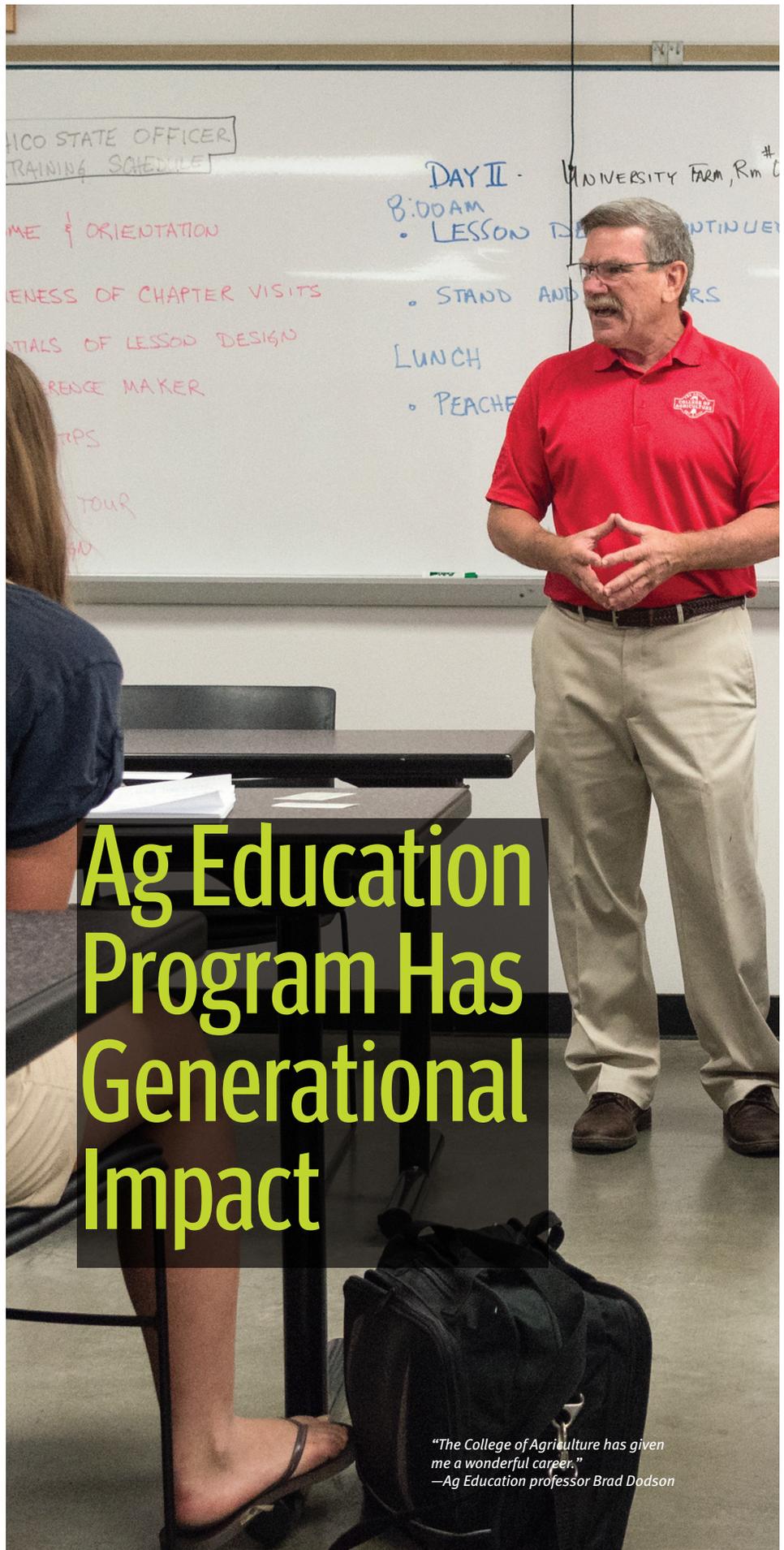
It didn’t hurt that he was following in the footsteps of his own Eureka High School agriculture teacher and mentor, Sandy Lovfald, who earned her bachelor’s degree in agriculture at Chico State in 1982.

“She is amazing. I’ve had lots of great role models, but if not for Sandy, I’m not sure anyone would have recognized the talents I had as a young teenager,” White said. “She wouldn’t let me settle for anything less than what I should be.”

Having earned three degrees at Chico State (BS, Agriculture Education, ’06; Credential, ’08; MS, Agricultural Education, ’15), White is now entering his eleventh year of teaching agriculture at Galt High School, where he’s made it his goal to encourage and prod his students in the same way Lovfald pushed him.

“Students say I’m kind of scary,” White said. “Not that I’m mean, but that I have high expectations of them, and I don’t let any nonsense get in the way of them seeking their highest potential.”

“While a lot of places say they are student-centered, I don’t know of any place where that’s more true than Chico.”



# Ag Education Program Has Generational Impact

“The College of Agriculture has given me a wonderful career.”  
—Ag Education professor Brad Dodson



Professor Mike Spiess is known as the technology guru in the California agricultural education network.

Photo: Beiron Anderson, 2017

White's former student Jessica Brand (Agriculture Education, '17) would agree.

"[White] encouraged me, but he didn't withhold critical feedback that was beneficial. He didn't push aggressively, but he saw potential that a lot of people might have overlooked," Brand said.

Brand followed White—and his own mentor Lovfald—into the agriculture teaching credential at Chico State. She is currently student teaching at Las Plumas High School in Oroville, and she now has a better appreciation for the dedication White and other teachers have for their students.

"I didn't understand the energy it takes," Brand said. "My colleagues and I have spent hours after school talking about individual students and what it might take to inspire them. It's a cool feeling to be involved in that way, knowing I was once on the other side."

**B**rand, White, and Lovfald are just three of the hundreds of agriculture teachers who have entered the profession through Chico State since the agriculture education program began in 1972 with the hiring of experienced agriculture teacher Dennis Hampton. Hampton was a Chico State graduate himself, having earned his bachelor's degree in animal science in 1961.

"Prior to 1972, Chico State frequently had up to a dozen students graduate each year who wanted to teach agriculture, but their only options for a credential at the time were UC Davis and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo," Hampton said.

Hampton and his fellow faculty developed the curriculum and established a series of classes that would make up the degree program. He also reached out to the ag teaching community to see how the new ag education program could help meet their needs.

"We coordinated the FFA Field Day and brought the FFA leadership program to Chico State. We began hosting some of the regional California Agricultural Teacher's Association (CATA) meetings, and we started a teacher in-service program for ag teachers," Hampton said.

While Hampton essentially ran a one-person department in the agricultural education program, he found the faculty at Chico State to

be exceptionally supportive.

"When you're teaching students how to become agriculture teachers, you rely upon all the agriculture disciplines, and the faculty in the ag department were on board from the beginning," Hampton said.

Hampton retired in 2000 and was replaced by Professor Brad Dodson, who has led the Chico State agriculture education program for the past 17 years. The 2017–2018 academic year will be his last as he finishes the Faculty Early Retirement Program.

"The College of Agriculture has given me a wonderful career, and I'm grateful," Dodson said. "Philosophically, this has been a perfect

match for me. We are still student-centered here, and while a lot of places say they are student-centered, I don't know of any place where that's more true than Chico."

That focus on student success on an individual level provides a great example for

**"Ag programs at the high school level are growing, with many schools now employing seven, eight, or nine ag teachers."**

# More About Ag

Exploring the Chico State Ag Program

how high school teachers should approach agricultural education, Galt agriculture teacher Dane White said.

“In the College of Agriculture at Chico State, you matter. It’s the underlying ethic that guides the school,” he said. “I know that at Galt High School, kids will thrive, someone will expect more from them, and they will feel valued and loved. That’s what I see modeled at Chico State. Even today when I run into my former faculty, they really seem to care about what I’m up to and how I’m doing.”

While all teachers have the opportunity to influence students in a positive way, Dodson said that is particularly true of agriculture teachers, who spend countless hours with their students outside of the classroom.

“It’s a very demanding job,” Dodson said. “First and foremost, you have to love kids. We’re really in the kid business.”

**A**n unrelenting work ethic is another key facet to success as an ag teacher, Dodson said.

“We look for students who are jumping into activities within the college. It gives us an indication of who is going to get involved in their schools and communities. That’s why service learning is such an important component of our curriculum.”

Haylee Fonseca (Agriculture Education, ’16; Credential, ’17) is one of many examples Dodson points to of an agriculture education major who took advantage of every learning opportunity she could at Chico State. From serving as president of the Collegiate Future Farmers of America (CFFA) to co-chairing the massive CSU, Chico/Butte College FFA Field Day, Fonseca never shied away from a challenge.

“Dr. Dodson and the faculty at Chico State gave me the confidence to step up, take charge, and take on leadership roles without being hesitant about my capabilities,” Fonseca said.

Now a fully-credentialed teacher, Fonseca works at East Nicolaus High School, where in addition to teaching agriculture, she is also the campus leadership director, advising the Associated Students, leading spirit events, and reaching out to the community. She was ready to take on the leadership role in part because of the preparation she received at Chico State, where Dodson has developed a national reputation in leadership development.

“FFA is a great vehicle for leadership development,” Dodson said, “But back when I was an ag teacher at Lemoore High School, I felt totally ill-equipped to teach leadership skills.”

Since making the move to higher education, much of Dodson’s professional development activities have centered around leadership capacity and development. He was part of a national task force that began creating leadership-focused resources for ag teachers, including the widely used chapter officer development program *Mpower*. He later worked with the National FFA Organization to create a program called *LifeKnowledge*. The team developed some 200 lesson plans for every skill they could think of that employers might desire.

“This position at Chico State has always allowed me to focus on the activities I think are important,” Dodson said. “I was free to

federal water districts in California. Spiess is known as the technology guru within the state agriculture education network, having developed a registration and tabulations program for career development events and judging contests that is used throughout California, Arizona, Florida, and Canada.

“Brad [Dodson] and I complement each other really well,” Spiess said. “We have different professional expertise, and we’re both happy to do the things that the other doesn’t necessarily enjoy,” Spiess said.

Spiess served as program coordinator for the College of Agriculture from 2012 to 2016,



do professional development my own way, which for me meant developing resources for agriculture teachers.”

**W**hile Dennis Hampton spearheaded the ag education program alone in its formative years, Dodson has been joined for most of his tenure by fellow agriculture education professor Mike Spiess (Agriculture Mechanics, ’79).

“I was excited to get back to the North State and get back to Chico,” Spiess said. “But the biggest attraction for me was the College of Agriculture. A college without departments is heaven for an ag ed teacher.”

Spiess’ experience in ag mechanics and irrigation systems, and his affinity for information technology, made him a perfect fit in the growing agriculture program at Chico State. He quickly secured a grant from the United States Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) that launched an Irrigation Training Facility at the University Farm, which Spiess continues to oversee. He is currently in the middle of a five-year water conservation project with the BOR, providing technical outreach for

guiding workload, curriculum, and course offerings for the whole college. Like Dodson, Spiess is now in the Faculty Early Retirement Program, having reduced his hours to part time as he transitions into retirement over a five-year period.

Another key figure in the ag education team at Chico State is Professor Mollie Aschenbrener. Aschenbrener joined the College of Agriculture in 2007 fresh out of her PhD program at the University of Missouri. She grew up in Pendleton, Oregon and served as an Oregon state FFA officer before moving south to Cal Poly for her undergraduate studies. After teaching agriculture at Paso Robles High School for 11 years, Aschenbrener felt the call to become a teacher educator.

“Having come up through an agriculture program myself, and seeing it in my own classroom, I know the impact that agriculture teachers have,” Aschenbrener said. “What I love about working with future teachers is that I get to give them a glimpse of the difference they are going to make in this world.”



Cesar Hidalgo, a student in Tommy Henderson's Agricultural Machine Systems, is a senior majoring in agriculture with an option in agricultural science and education. When he graduates in 2018, he plans to enter the credential program and teach agricultural mechanics and animal science near his hometown of El Nido in the Central Valley.

Her passion for agriculture and agricultural education is surpassed only by her care for her students.

“College can be fun and exciting and inspiring, but these years can also be stressful, lonely, and confusing at the same time,” Aschenbrener said. “I feel so privileged to walk with our students through this stage in their lives.”

In order to further support the ag education profession, the College of Agriculture in 2012 launched a master’s degree in agricultural education, which Aschenbrener leads. The master’s program is part of a consortium of universities throughout the United States that work together to deliver an online program that allows teachers to pursue their master’s degree while they are still working.

As Dodson and Spiess both make their ways towards retirement, the newest faculty member to join Chico State is Thomas Henderson, a PhD candidate from Oregon State University (OSU) who taught for 10 years in the San Joaquin Valley. A stellar lineup of experienced agriculture teachers also complements the tenure-track faculty in the College of Agriculture. In recent years, they have included John Pitter, Alyssa Schager, Kaytie Ettlin, Christine Henderson, Roy Beck, and Bonnie Baxter.

Aschenbrener, Dodson, and Spiess all agree that the highlight of their profession is the opportunity to work with students through their bachelor’s and credential programs, then watch as they progress through their careers as teachers.

“The great thing about teaching ag education is that you get to see former students regularly at conferences and professional meetings,” Spiess said. “It is so rewarding to see them become teachers and do good work in their schools and their communities.”

The need for qualified agriculture teachers has never been greater. In 2017, Dodson estimates there were 150 ag education positions open in the state of California, and among the five institutions that offer credentials in ag education, there were only 52 candidates.

“The trend is not going to change,” Dodson said. “Ag programs at the high school level are growing, with many schools now employing seven, eight, or nine ag teachers. Plus, the California FFA Association just admitted seventh and eighth graders into FFA, which will further legitimize ag education at the junior high level.”

For its part, the College of Agriculture at Chico State is striving to help fill the demand. A record 27 students earned their single subject teaching credential in agriculture during the 2016–2017 academic year.

**CALIFORNIA AG EDUCATION**

Estimated number of agriculture teacher **RETIREMENTS** in 5–7 years

**82\***

**IN THE PAST TEN YEARS**  
California hired **317** additional ag teachers and opened **43** new agriculture programs\*\*

\*Statewide Summary (2015) Teacher Information, [www.calaged.org](http://www.calaged.org)

\*\*Summary of California Agricultural Teaching Opportunities & Placement from 2002–Present Report. Agricultural & Home Economics Education Unit. California Department of Education, January 4, 2016.

# AG ED

## Henderson Joins Ag Education Faculty



Prior to being recruited for a teaching position in the College of Agriculture, Thomas “Tommy” Henderson admitted that he didn’t know a whole lot about Chico State. The California Polytechnic State University graduate taught high school agriculture in Paso Robles and Dinuba for 10 years, so he had brought FFA students to activities at the University Farm, but his attention during those visits was focused more on his students’ performance than on the characteristics of the University.

Two years into his PhD program at Oregon State University, he was approached by the agricultural education faculty at Chico State to consider a part-time teaching position in agricultural education and mechanics as Professor Mike Spiess downsized his teaching schedule in preparation for retirement.

“It was a hard decision. I thought about it and talked about it a lot with my family, and we decided to make the leap,” Henderson said.

He saw that the door was open to come back and teach in California,

re-connect with his professional colleagues in the California Agricultural Teacher’s Association (CATA), and give back to the profession that has given him so much.

Henderson and his wife Christine, who is a former agriculture teacher herself, moved their two young daughters to Chico in August 2016, and both Hendersons began lecturing in the College of Agriculture. He has never regretted that choice.

“My first day walking across campus and trying to find Plumas Hall, a student held the door open

for me. I thought to myself, ‘This is a different place,’” Henderson said.

Following a national search, Henderson was hired into a tenure-track faculty position in agricultural education beginning in 2017. He will submit his dissertation in December.

“Tommy is a perfect fit at Chico State,” Dean John Unruh said. “He is creative, engaging, passionate about student success, and he goes above and beyond to connect students with opportunities in agriculture.”

As a teacher educator, Henderson brings his 10 years of experience in the high school classroom to share with future teachers, but he sees his role more as a facilitator than an expert.

“There’s this stereotype that the professor holds all the knowledge and that they will transfer it to their students. That’s just not the case,” Henderson said. “I’m a strong proponent of giving students opportunities and experiences and allowing them to discover the skills and talents they hold within themselves.”

# Alumni Hires

A Big Ag Welcome

TRAVIS HEFFNER

## Alumnus returns to his roots at the University Farm

Travis Heffner has always been drawn to Chico State. The Central Point, Oregon native attended Lassen College and Modesto Junior College along the way, but Chico State was his ultimate destination. Once he arrived, he competed on the Livestock Judging Team, worked at the Beef Unit, and he even met his wife, Darby (Animal Science, '06), at the University Farm. So nearly a decade after he graduated in animal science in 2008, when the opportunity arose to return to work at the University Farm, Heffner jumped at the chance.

"The farm was incredibly important to me when I was a student, and I really couldn't believe that I would have the chance to come back and work here," Heffner said.

In the intervening years, Heffner worked for both registered and commercial beef cattle operations, fed dairy heifers, raised pigs, and worked for an irrigation business, all the while keeping up on the College of Agriculture and the University Farm through Darby, who manages the farm's organic dairy, and as he volunteered at livestock judging contests. Then in the spring of 2017, when long-time livestock technician Don Sinnott left the University Farm to work for nearby Rancho Llano Seco, Heffner was hired as an emergency temporary hire. He later applied for and was hired into the permanent staff position.

As a livestock technician, Heffner works alongside farm staff and College of Agriculture faculty to guide and direct the hands-on opportunities for students at the University Farm livestock units. He says his career has come full circle back to where it began.

"It's fun for me to be back at the beef unit, working with students who are in the same position I was 10 years ago," Heffner said. "It's exciting to see their excitement and enthusiasm for the career path I chose myself."

Heffner said that the University Farm has come a long way since he was a student.

"The crops and orchards have grown and improved. We have new technology on the livestock side, like the GrowSafe feeding system, which is a great resource for faculty and students," Heffner said. "Even things I never would have noticed back then, like the cleanliness and appearance of the facilities, is something that makes me proud to be a part of today."

As they work together now at the University Farm, Travis and Darby are also raising the next generation of Chico State devotees. Their daughter Hadlee was born in late 2016.

# HAYDN CLEMENT

## Alumnus Balances the Old with the New at Chico State Meat Lab

**H**aydn Clement comes from a family of meat cutters and agriculture teachers. The Chico State alumnus has found a way to blend the two traditions in his new role as the Chico State Meat Lab technician.

The 2014 graduate in agricultural science and education, who also earned his master's degree in agricultural education in 2016, returned in June to the meat lab where he worked for three years throughout college.

"My grandfather was a first-generation immigrant from Portugal who started a butcher shop in Hanford. I never got the chance to meet him, but I feel like I'm getting to know him through the work I do," Clement said.

Clement grew up working alongside his father in the family's mobile slaughter business, so he had more experience than most students when he joined the meat lab as a student employee in 2011. Under the tutelage of former meat lab technicians Adam Knapp and James Richards, Clement expanded his knowledge of meat science and meat processing. But at the time, he didn't expect to make it his career.

"My dad, two of his brothers, and two of my sisters are all ag teachers," Clement said. "I never wanted to teach ag until I started volunteering as a high school livestock judging coach, then I realized that I felt more and more drawn to teaching."

He changed his major from agricultural business to agricultural science and

education, and upon graduation in 2014 he entered the master's program in agricultural education and went to work for Livestock Judging Coach Clay Carlson as an assistant coach.

"I discovered that the college environment is really where I wanted to be. I enjoyed working with students at that caliber and stage of maturity," Clement said.

When his former supervisor James Richards decided to leave the meat lab in May to pursue a career in law, Clement saw the meat lab technician position as a chance to blend his family traditions and professional experiences in meat processing and education.

"Here I am cutting meat on a daily basis, but I really see myself as a teacher," Clement said. "I'm teaching our students science on a practical level, and giving them a chance to apply it."

Eventually, he plans to provide select students with more autonomy and responsibility, similar to how the University Farm livestock units operate.

"I would like to see students take ownership over various aspects of the meat lab," Clement said. "For example, I could see a student having management over the jerky product line, trying out new flavors and

working on packaging and marketing."

Clement is dedicated to continuing the meat lab's tradition of quality while introducing new products and promotions to engage and serve the Chico community. He enjoys the challenge of serving a retail market, which is open to the public on Thursdays and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"I've always been really proud of the meat lab. I'm proud that it is 100 percent student-run, and I'm proud to continue providing our customers with a premium product," Clement said.



## Global Entrepreneur Named 2017 Distinguished Alumnus



**T**he oldest of five brothers, Jose Manuel Leal da Costa grew up on a diversified farm in Portugal where the family grew rice, corn, oats, wheat, and raised dairy sheep and beef cattle.

“At that time, agriculture in the United States was about 40 years ahead of Portugal. It still is,” Costa said. “I knew I would have to leave home if I wanted to continue my studies.”

His first stop in the United States was at Queen’s College in New York. He only lasted one semester.

“The first time it snowed, I got out of there,” Costa recalled.



His stepmother had a niece living in Chico, where he knew there was an agricultural college, so he decided to check it out. The weather in Chico was much more to his liking, mirroring the Mediterranean climate of his native Portugal, and he decided to stay.

During his first semester at Chico State, Costa took a class from animal science professor Wes “Doc” Patton, now retired. The two struck up a lifelong friendship, aided by the hospitality of Patton’s wife, Jane. Costa was soon visiting the Patton’s on their Orland ranch after classes and on weekends.

“I like to help. Jane likes to cook. It was a perfect match,” Costa said.

While at Chico State, Costa also met his wife, Azita, a fellow international student, from Iran. They both graduated in agriculture in 1984 and returned to his homeland of Portugal to start their life together. But despite their degrees from an esteemed American university, the couple encountered resistance to their ideas for farm and business development.

“All we heard was ‘That will not work. This is not California,’” Costa said.

They packed up again and moved back to California’s Bay Area, where they started

a new business importing marble tiles. Soon, they expanded into marble and granite fabrication, and Plamar USA is now the largest solid surface fabrication and installation company in the western United States.

Costa now splits his time between California and Portugal, where he founded and serves as a board member for Amieira Marina, an organization created as part of Portugal’s \$1.7 billion investment in the Alqueva dam and lake project. Amieira Marina is a national and international tourist destination and includes a Michelin-recommended restaurant, Amieira Marina Panorama. Costa has also been involved with Herdade das Amendoas Doces since 2012, a soil preparation and irrigation implementation project that has since become the largest almond project in Portugal.

Jose and Azita raised two children. His



*Distinguished Alumnus Jose Manuel Leal da Costa (left) celebrates with his son Jose Dariush, wife Azita, and daughter Sondra.*

daughter, Sondra, recently graduated from Santa Clara University, and his son, Jose Dariush, after earning his bachelor’s degree in Portugal, followed in his parents’ footsteps and spent a year at Chico State learning all that he could about agriculture. He now manages the family’s almond farm in Portugal.

Jose Leal da Costa was selected as the 2017 Distinguished Alumnus for the College of Agriculture and was honored at the annual campuswide Distinguished Alumni Dinner on March 25, 2017.

# Alumni News

Where Are They Now

## Spotlighting an Alum 2000s



### Nick Nelson (Agricultural Science and Education, '01)

Nick Nelson is an animal science instructor at Blue Mountain Community College in Pendleton, Oregon and was elected president of the National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE) for the 2017–18 year. NAAE is a profession association representing more than 7,800 agricultural educators throughout the country. Nelson and his wife, Chrissy, have two children. They also raise and sell Red Angus cattle and market bulls through the Lorenzen Ranches Program.

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## 1960s

**Dennis Sites (Agronomy, '64)**  
Agriculture Business Management Consultant—Salinas  
[dsitesagmt@aol.com](mailto:dsitesagmt@aol.com)

**Gil Stresser (Agricultural Business, '69)**  
Commercial Banker, Retired—Yuba City  
[gils@reagan.com](mailto:gils@reagan.com)

## 1970s

**Larry Bell (Agriculture, '77; Credential, '79)**  
Retired—Mount Shasta  
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**Wes Truax (Agricultural Business, '73)**  
Owner, Truax Cattle—Macdoel  
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**Jeff Kunde (Agriculture, '78)**  
Winegrower and Chairman of the Board, Kunde Family Winery—Kenwood  
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## 1980s

**Doug Weigand (Animal Science, '80)**  
Senior Vice President, Relationship Manager, Redding Bank of Commerce—Redding  
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**Hugh Mooney (Agriculture, '84; Credential, '90)**  
Education Programs Consultant, California Department of Education—Sacramento  
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**Harry Sampson (Animal Science, '87; Credential, '94)**  
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**Jeannine Sampson (Agriculture, '88)**  
Ranch Manager, Sampson Sheep—Gazelle  
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## 1990s

**Aaron Albaugh (Agricultural Business, '90)**  
Owner, Frosty Acres Ranch—Adin  
[albaughaaroon@yahoo.com](mailto:albaughaaroon@yahoo.com)

**Jodi Aceves (Agricultural Science, '94)**  
Senior Deputy Agriculture Commissioner, Siskiyou County Department of Agriculture—Yreka  
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**Devon Brewer (Crop Science, '97)**  
Gardener, National Park Service, San Francisco Maritime National Historic Park—San Francisco  
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## 2000s

**Logan Smith (Animal Science, '02)**  
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**Megan Huber (Agricultural Business, '04)**  
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**Nicole Jansen (Agricultural Business, '06)**  
Agronomist, DuPont Pioneer—Connell, Washington  
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**Austin Large (Agricultural Science and Education, '07)**  
Executive Director, Texas FFA Association—Austin, Texas  
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**Amy (Sparks) Rose (Agricultural Business, '08)**  
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**Casey Rose (Agricultural Business, '08)**  
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**Breanne Ramos (BS, Agricultural Business, '09)**  
Executive Director, Merced County Farm Bureau—Los Banos  
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## 2010s

### Shannon Kelley (Agricultural Science and Education, '10)

Agriculture Teacher, Everett Alvarez High School—Salinas  
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### Kendall (Capote) Samuelson (Animal Science, '10)

Assistant Professor of Feedlot Nutrition and Management, West Texas A&M University—Canyon, Texas  
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### Lesley Miller (Agricultural Business, '11)

Agriculture Real Estate Appraiser, Agri-Access—Boise, Idaho  
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### Stephanie Serna (BS, Agricultural Science and Education, '11; MS, Agricultural Education '16)

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### Jordan Baumgartner (Animal Science)

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### Ashley Van Buren (Animal Science, '12)

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### Luke Milliron (Crops, Horticulture, and Land Resource Management, '13)

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### Michael Ackley-Grady (Animal Science, '14)

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### Ashley Pipkin (Agriculture, '14)

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### Chris Putz (Agricultural Business, '14)

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### Kristina Short (Crops, Horticulture, and Land Resource Management, '14)

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Congrats to the Class of 2017

### Claire Vasquez (Agricultural Business, '14)

Sales & Marketing Assistant, Windset Farms—Santa Maria  
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### Katie (Stroud) Eason (Animal Science)

Owner, Katie Eason Photography—Adin  
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### Puja Shah (Animal Science, '15)

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### JP Thompson (Agricultural Business, '15)

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### Luke Benton (Agricultural Business, '16)

Pest Control Advisor, Wilbur Ellis Co.—Dixon  
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### Angela Faryan (Animal Science, '16)

Territory Business Manager—Cattle/Equine, Zoetis—Bend, Oregon  
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### Lindee Jones (Crops, Horticulture and Land Resource Management, '16)

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### Vince Pellegrini (Agricultural Science and Education, '16)

Training Specialist, Facebook—San Francisco  
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We'd love to hear from you!  
Drop us a line or send an email.  
It's a great way to build your professional network and catch up with old friends.

## Where Are You Now?

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHICO COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE MAGAZINE

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Graduation Year \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

THE HARVEST

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- DePue Warehouse Company
- Deseret Farms
- Diamond Foods, Inc.
- DPR Construction, Inc.
- Driscoll Berries
- Durham Pump, Inc.
- E. Franklin Larrabee & Associates
- East Coast Pub & Grill
- Eaton Drilling Co, Inc.
- Edward Jones
- Emerald Farms
- Empire Nut Company, LLC
- Far Horizon Insurance
- Far West Rice, Inc.
- Farm Credit Services of Colusa-Glenn
- Farm Credit West, FLCA
- Farm Data Systems, Inc.
- Farmers' Rice Cooperative
- Feather River College Foundation, Inc.
- Food Industry Foundation
- Foothill Warehouse Co, LLC
- Golden State Farm Credit
- Great Harvest Bread Company
- Green Tree Nursery
- GSA Farms, Inc.
- Harris Ranch Beef Company
- Hart Farms
- Healthy Solutions Insurance
- Helena Chemical Company
- Hunt & Sons, Inc.
- Industrial Power Products
- InterWest Insurance Services, LLC
- Irrigation Matters
- J. Mark Atlas Attorney at Law
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- K-Coe Isom
- Kelly Miller Insurance Associates
- Keyawa Orchards, Inc.
- Knight Farms
- Land IQ, LLC
- Lassen Land Company
- Lomo Cold Storage
- Lundberg Family Farms
- M & T Chico Ranch
- Madison Bear Garden
- Martin Orchards
- Martin's Dusters, Inc.
- Midway Steakhouse
- Mooney Farms
- Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company
- Nelson Irrigation Corporation
- Norene Ranches, Inc.
- North Valley Ag Services
- North Valley Cotton Gin
- Northern California Water Association

Omega Walnut, Inc.  
 Orland Livestock Commission  
 Yard, Inc.  
 Pacific Coast Producers  
 Pacific Distributing, Inc.  
 Peterson Ranch  
 Prudential Agricultural  
 Investments  
 R. Gorrill Ranch Enterprises  
 Rabobank, N.A.  
 Red Bluff FFA  
 Redding Bank of Commerce  
 Rice Researchers, Inc.  
 Richard Hughes Dairy  
 River Valley Community Bank  
 Riverwest Processing, Inc.  
 Santa Maria & Company  
 Select Harvest USA, LLC  
 Severn Trent Environmental  
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 Sierra Nevada Cheese Company  
 Silgan Containers Corporation  
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 Sun Valley Rice Company, LLC  
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# Transforming Tomorrow

## How Donors are Making a Difference in the College of Agriculture

To learn more about any of these projects, or to find out how you can make a difference in the College of Agriculture, contact Dustin Bush, associate director of development, at 530-898-6605 or by email at [dwbush@csuchico.edu](mailto:dwbush@csuchico.edu).

## California Agriculture Seminar

The second annual donor-funded California Agriculture Seminar took 30 students and six faculty and staff to San Francisco, Dixon, and the Salinas Valley to explore the breadth, diversity, and reach of California agriculture. From a retail flower market in downtown San Francisco, to the nation's largest lamb processing plant in Dixon, to a variety of produce growers, packers, and shippers in the Salinas Valley, students learned how broad and surprising are the opportunities in agriculture. Here are some of their observations:

"I got to see parts of agriculture that I had never really been exposed to before and I found it extremely interesting. I also became more **confident in speaking professionally** with possible future employers."  
—*Briana Pentecost-Moore*

"Growing up in the livestock industry, having the chance to learn about crops, lettuce, broccoli, cauliflower, strawberries, and artichokes was **one of the most eye opening experiences ever.**" —*Justine Henderson*

"Every plant we visited was unique in their own way, not only what they processed and produced, but the way they ran their business. What they all had in common was the **ability to remain relevant to their market.**

All of these companies have been able to adjust to today's agricultural changes which include labor shortage, food safety and innovation." —*Gerardo Calderon*

"I will remember these experiences forever. I will definitely be donating to the trip in the near future so that the many students in the years to come get to have this experience, it **truly is special!**" —*Jason DeGraff*

"The trip was a **highlight of my last semester** of college as well as a highlight of my college career. I cannot express my thanks enough to the College of Ag and everyone involved in making this trip possible." —*Trevor Flock*



## Agriculture Complex for Tomorrow's Leaders

The first major gift toward a new state-of-the-art farmstead creamery, farm store, and educational center has been received from an anonymous donor. The Chico State alumnus pledged \$500,000 to support construction of the Agriculture Complex for Tomorrow's Leaders at the University Farm, which will provide space for experiential learning in agricultural education, entrepreneurship, dairy food processing, value-added marketing, business management, and sustainable agriculture.

Fundraising continues toward the construction of the center, which will process and package milk products from the Chico State Organic Dairy, provide a centralized place for students to market the products they grow on the University Farm, and offer a meeting and classroom location for industry conferences, seminars, meetings, and community events. The College of Agriculture's goal is to raise \$7.5 million for construction and operation of the multi-faceted facility.



## Spotlight on Giving

### Memorial Gift to Organic Dairy Production Award

A Chico native returned to the University Farm in May to honor her grandfather with a gift to the College of Agriculture. Judith Lenhart grew up in Chico and now lives in Portland. She and her sons, Steven and Jim, toured the organic dairy and the University Farm, and she ultimately made a \$3,000 donation to the Chico State Organic Dairy Production Award in memory of her grandfather, Charles Maupin, who passed away in 1960. Maupin operated a dairy in Orland and was very supportive of youth education.

The Organic Dairy Production Award was established in 2016 to encourage students who are passionate about the organic dairy industry and plan to pursue a career in the industry after graduation. In its first year, it was awarded to eight students from the Chico State Dairy Management Team. The top award went to Kate Carlson, a senior animal science major who plans to enter graduate school after graduation.



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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### JANUARY

- 20 Swine Day
- 22 Spring classes begin
- 26 Ag Social at the Red Bluff Bull and Gelding Sale

### FEBRUARY



- 7 Alumni Breakfast at the Colusa Farm Show
- 10 Invitational Parliamentary Procedure Contest
- 10 Sheep Day
- 22 Agriculture Career and Internship Fair

### MARCH

- 10 FFA Field Day
- 18-25 Spring Break

### APRIL

- 6 Ag Day at the Farm

### MAY

- 18 College of Agriculture Commencement

### JUNE

- 6 Superior Ag Golf Tournament

## CONTRIBUTORS TO THE HARVEST



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