

THE

HARVEST

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE ANNUAL MAGAZINE

2020



Food for Thought

From the Dean's Desk



What a year. I keep saying it and I keep hearing it, and I don't believe the sentiment needs any further elaboration. The year 2020 has been a universally strange experience. For those of us in agriculture, who are used to plotting crop rotations, breeding schedules, and marketing plans years and even decades into the future, how do we plan for the future when public health guidelines, consumer demand, and distribution channels might change in the blink of an eye?

Likewise, here in the University, our faculty, staff, students, and administrators have had our share of challenges adapting to a mostly virtual environment. While the University Farm has remained in operation as part of agriculture's essential industry, student, faculty, and public access to the farm has varied over the months as we try to follow state and county guidelines. You can read about some of the ways we have shifted and adapted in "COVID Course Corrections," included in this issue of the *Harvest Magazine*.

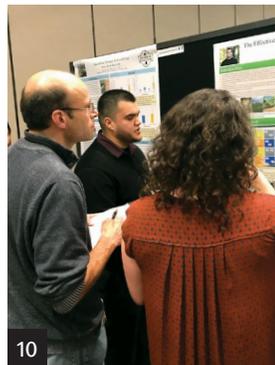
You can also read stories of inspiration. I am truly inspired by so many of our students' stories and by the innovation and dedication of our faculty and staff as they seek to serve our students well. More than any of the stress, uncertainty, and loss that 2020 has wrought, it is the chance to see these faces every day that I miss the most. It's the warm smiles and greetings from students in the hallway. It's the amusing chatter I overhear as I walk past the benches in front of Plumas Hall. It's the ability to pop into a colleague's office to ask a question and the robust debate at faculty meetings. It's these tiny vignettes of human interaction with people I enjoy and respect that make me yearn for a return to "normal," whatever that will look like in the months and years to come.

I miss you, too. I miss seeing and visiting with our alumni and friends at events on and off campus. I'm wishing you all health and wellness, because I know our Wildcat family is strong and resilient, and I believe that the College of Agriculture family is strongest of all.

John Unruh
John Unruh, PhD
Dean, College of Agriculture
California State University, Chico

THE HARVEST

- 2** Outstanding Faculty Awards
- 4** Holbert Elected AS President
- 5** Student Leaders Elected to AS
- 6** International Student Spotlight
Tao Huang
- 7** Agricultural Exploration in
Puerto Rico
- 10** Poster Power: Undergraduate
Research Poster Competitions
Empower Student Success
- 13** Meat Judging Team Established
at Chico State
- 14** Livestock Judging Team
Makes History
- 16** Never Alone: Student Success
Office Helps AG Students
- 18** A Nourishing Partnership:
OVP Supplies Food Pantry with
Fresh, Local Goodness
- 20** COVID Course Corrections
- 22** Faculty Focus: Tatevik Avetisyan
- 23** Equipment Donations Advance
Farm Operations
- 24** Superior Ag Merges with
Advisory Council
- 25** We Salute the Class of 2020
- 26** Thank You to Our Donors
- 28** Where Are They Now?



SHARE YOUR STORY

Are you a Chico State Ag grad with a story to share about your Chico Experience? If so, please email sdeforest@csuchico.edu.



Chico State Makes List of Best Colleges for An Agriculture Degree

Chico State was ranked No. 12 in the nation on a GradReports list of top bachelor's programs in agriculture. The rankings are based on median early-career salary data from the US Department of Education's resource, College Scorecard. The rankings also include the median total debt from College Scorecard, which represents the debt accumulated by student borrowers of federal loans who completed a degree in the indicated field of study.

FACULTY AWARDS SHOWCASE EXCELLENCE AND LEADERSHIP

Outstanding Faculty Service Award

The University's Faculty Recognition and Support Committee selected Professor Betsy Boyd to receive the 2020 Outstanding Faculty Service Award. Boyd has served nearly 10 years on the Academic Senate, including two years as the youngest member ever to have been elected chair of the faculty governing body, a role that she resumed once more in 2020.

Boyd also represents Chico State on the systemwide California State University Academic Senate. Her service to campus and the College of Agriculture is extensive, including the Curriculum Advisory Board, University Budget Committee, Academic Affairs Budget Task Force Committee, and most recently as the program coordinator for the College of Agriculture.



Betsy Boyd

Outstanding New Project Director Award

Professor Garrett Liles was notified in March that he received the 2020 Outstanding New Project Director Award from Chico State Enterprises. The award is in recognition of Liles' research and scholarly accomplishments and contributions to his field, as well as his grant writing, grant management activity, and potential for future success. The overarching goals of Liles' research is to quantify soil and ecosystem properties to better understand the effects of land use management and disturbance across landscapes. Together these activities probe the complexities of biogeochemistry from carbon cycling and stability in soils through watershed and regional scales. He is also proud to be a founding member of the CSU, Chico Regenerative Agriculture Initiative, leading the development of the Regenerative Ag Demonstration lab (RAD Lab). This lab aims to provide high throughput low cost analysis to support quantification of soil properties and monitor soil health across agricultural, range, and forest ecosystems in Northern California.



Garrett Liles

Outstanding Research Mentor Award

Hossein Zakeri was recognized with the University's Outstanding Research Mentor award in a surprise visit to his classroom in early spring by President Gayle Hutchinson and her entourage. Shortly after arriving at Chico State in 2014, Zakeri developed a legume research program that has attracted more than \$1 million in research funding, supporting 25 undergraduate students, two graduate students, and a postdoctoral researcher. Two dozen of his students have presented posters at regional and national conferences, with many winning awards, and numerous more have given talks in classrooms, during field days, and at other events.



Hossein Zakeri

Professional Achievement Honors

Professor Baohui Song is one of five Chico State faculty members selected as recipients of the University's Professional Achievement Honors, which recognize exemplary teacher-scholar achievement on campus. The agricultural business professor has authored and peer-reviewed journal articles in both English and Chinese, two of which were published in the *Journal of Agricultural and Applied Economics*. Song currently serves as chair of the China section of the Agriculture & Applied Economics Association (AAEA), a chapter dedicated to collaborating with AAEA members around the world on issues related to agriculture in China. He has hosted a number of visiting scholars from China and serves as a bridge between two corners of the world in agricultural academia and fellowship.



Baohui Song



What's Growing On

News and Events



From left, Marco Fernandez, Jocelyn Prieto-Garcia, and Chloe Dugger

Ortiz Elected State FFA Sentinel

Freshman ag education major Maico Ortiz (above, left) was elected sentinel of the California FFA in the organization's first-ever online election in May. Ortiz is one of six state officers who represent the 87,000 members of California FFA. Ortiz came to Chico State from Galt FFA, where he served as the Central Region vice president, facilitated Greenhand Leadership Conferences, was a sub-committee chair at the State Leadership Conference, was a member of the State Champion Agricultural Issues team and served as the chapter FFA president. Ortiz's supervised experience included raising market livestock, managing the Warrior Grown small animal cooperative, and working at Cattleman's Livestock Market.

Sigma Alpha Named 2020 Club of the Year

Sigma Alpha—Alpha Iota Chapter (above) was named the College of Agriculture's 2020 Club of the Year. Sigma Alpha is a professional agricultural sorority that promotes its members in all facets of agriculture and encourages them to strive for achievement in scholarship, leadership, and service. The Club of the Year Award includes a \$500 contribution to the organization from Superior Ag, whose sole mission is to bolster programs in the College of Agriculture at California State University, Chico.



Students Shine at Plant and Soil Conference

Chico State students swept the undergraduate poster presentation awards at the 2020 Plant and Soil Conference in Fresno, February 4–5. Marco Fernandez placed first, Jocelyn Prieto-Garcia placed second, and Chloe Dugger placed third. Professors Hossein Zakeri, Kyle Brasier, and Ana Medic advised and mentored the team of students, who enjoyed the educational sessions and networking the conference provided. (Full story on page 10.)

Students Compete in Virtual Animal Science Poster Competition

Kelley Duggan (pictured right) won first place in the Western Section American Society of Animal Science (ASAS) Undergraduate Poster Competition held virtually during the ASAS Annual Meeting, July 19–23, 2020. Megan Banwarth, Taylor Lacey, and Jonathan Najera also competed. Each student prepared a poster, a three-minute recording and then participated in a question and answer session. In addition to the undergraduate students' success, 2017 graduate Rebecca Swanson, who just completed her master's in animal science at the University of Nebraska, was honored as a Young Scholar during the opening session of the meeting. Swanson is starting a PhD at Mississippi State in animal science with an emphasis in nutritional fetal programming. Faculty, including Kasey DeAtley, Patrick Doyle, Celina Phillips, and Logan Smith, were instrumental in executing the student portion of the Western Section conference, which Chico State had originally been planning to host.



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/students/star-students.



SAMMIE POLDERVAART
Major: Animal science
Hometown: Orland



GRACE CHRISTIANSON
Major: Crops, horticulture, and land resource management
Hometown: Chico



ABIGAIL PFISTER
Major: Agricultural business
Hometown: Gridley



EMILY FULLER
Major: Agricultural Science and education
Hometown: Fortuna

LEADING FROM THE HEART



Holbert Elected AS President

When Breanna Holbert first heard about the South African philosophy of Unbunto in her “Access and Equity in Education” class, she was captivated. *I am because we are.*

“I am who I am because of the people around me, and I’ve felt that way all my life,” the senior agriculture education major recalled. “Whether it was growing up in Lodi when my family was struggling through economic turmoil or starting college and had my friends around me, I am the fabric of the people whom I surround myself with.”

She thought, too, about her fellow Chico State students. The ones who sat next to her in class, who passed by her walking across campus, who stood in line for coffee at Common Grounds. The ones she had never met, though she represented them as the 2019–20 Associated Students director of Legislative Affairs.

“I think about all Chico State students, and each one of us is the fabric of the institution we come from. I’ve had nothing but positive experiences in the College of Agriculture, but I don’t think it’s the same for all students in all majors. I want Chico State to be a positive experience for everyone,” Holbert said.

Holbert harnessed that caring concern for her fellow students and launched her campaign for AS president in the spring 2020 with the theme, “I am because we are.” Primarily through Instagram, Holbert laid out her case for how she would focus on students’ basic needs, safety, and equity. On April 1, in a virtual election held

just days after Chico State shifted entirely online, Holbert won the office of president. Running a \$22 million corporation, while leading a team of 17 elected AS officers and student senators, and serving as the voice of more than 16,000 students is no easy task.

“...each one of us is the fabric of the institution we come from”

—Breanna Holbert

Add a global pandemic to the mix, and it’s definitely not the job Holbert thought she was getting into.

“When [the COVID-19 pandemic] first started, I was fine, and I thought, ‘We’ll get out of this, we’ll be together and back to normal in the fall.’ So, I started planning for that, and when I heard that we wouldn’t be coming back in the fall, I thought, ‘Oh crap,’” Holbert said.

Holbert’s biggest concern, as always, was for her fellow students. She worried about their health, both physically and emotionally. She worried for their economic stability. She worried for their ability to continue or begin their studies. But then she looked for the silver linings.

“I think we have a really cool opportunity to include people who haven’t been included before, whether it’s students who live remotely and have had to attend Chico State from home prior to the pandemic, or the ability to provide accessibility to our programs and clubs because it’s now online and available to a lot more people who didn’t have access before,” she said.

The killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis in May, and the nationwide protests that followed, further compounded the unprecedented challenges Holbert has faced as AS president. As a Black woman, Holbert has had to process her own life experiences and thoughts around race, while leading campus efforts to build a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion for all students. It’s a role she embraces and plans to pursue throughout her career.

“I know how it is to be a person of color just in general and especially in predominately white spaces and predominately white narratives,”

she said. “My goal is to become an ag teacher and show students of color, ‘hey, look, there are opportunities for you in agriculture. It doesn’t have to just be this predominately white narrative. Agriculture is for literally everyone.”

As an example of success in agriculture for a person of color, Holbert needs to look no further than herself. She joined the FFA her freshman year of high school because she thought it would be fun to play with plants. There at Tokay High School, she found a passion for agriculture and a joy of leadership that kept growing with each successive level she achieved. She was elected chapter historian, then chapter treasurer. She ran for sectional office and served as sentinel. She worked her way up to regional treasurer, then state secretary. The culmination of her FFA leadership career came in October 2017, when she was elected president of the 800,000-member National FFA Organization and spent the following year traveling more than 100,000 miles in service to the FFA.

Since returning to Chico State, Holbert hasn’t slowed down. She resumed her job as a peer advisor for the College of Agriculture, mentoring her fellow ag students as they navigate their academic plans. She joined the Summer Orientation team, helping incoming students get connected to Chico State. She worked at Broken Oak Acres, a flower farm in Glenn where she earned her necessary internship credits. She has focused her elected leadership roles on the Associated Students, serving first as director of legislative affairs and now president.

For all of Holbert’s service and leadership, the accolades are finally catching up with her. She earned the Bell Family National Leadership Scholarship from the College of Agriculture upon her return from serving as national FFA officer. The Chico State Office of Diversity and Inclusion selected her as the 2020 recipient of the Teach Back award, which recognizes one student each year from whom faculty and staff have learned in the area of diversity education. Most recently, Holbert received the \$15,000 Trustee Emeritus Ali C. Razi Scholarship as the highest scoring applicant among all the applicants for the California State University Trustees Award from all 23 CSU campuses.

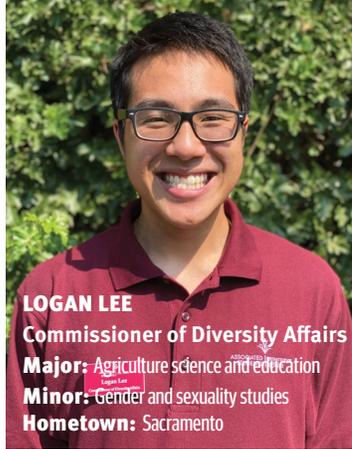
Katie Peterson, associate director of AS Programs and Government Services, said Holbert demonstrates leadership skills far beyond her age.

“Bre has an incredible ability to navigate very diverse spaces where people may hold contrasting views and somehow find a way to make each person feel heard while also discovering common ground that they can work from. In a world full of controversy and contention, Bre is leading the way to create new paths forward,” Peterson said.

So, what comes next for this perpetual leader?

“I think personally I’ve been feeling this is probably going to be one of my last big titles for a while,” Holbert said. “I’m going to enter the credential program and become an agriculture teacher, and maybe I will someday pursue politics, or maybe do something with school board. But for now, I just want to take this moment with the AS and see how it feels to give it all one last time.”

“Well,” she clarified, “one last time for a while.” ■



LOGAN LEE
Commissioner of Diversity Affairs
Major: Agriculture science and education
Minor: Gender and sexuality studies
Hometown: Sacramento



MICHELLE BORGES
College of Agriculture Student Senator
Major: Agriculture communications
Minor: Agricultural business
Hometown: Oakdale

Ag Students Join Breanna Holbert on AS Officer Team

Growing up in Sacramento, the child of Hmong refugees, **Logan Lee** knew that agriculture was a big part of his family’s past. He heard stories his grandmother told about walking miles over mountains daily to get to property where her family farmed. Lee’s family took pride in their backyard garden while he was growing up, but agriculture didn’t interest him as a career path until the Rio Linda High School FFA program visited his middle school to recruit.

“Even though I didn’t grow up in the agriculture industry, I thought to myself, ‘Why not give it a try?’” Lee recounted.

Lee’s leadership journey began in FFA, where he served as both chapter reporter and vice president. And though he loved his FFA experience, it was not without some bumps in the road. While running for state FFA office, Lee recalls being told by an interviewer that the committee really enjoyed him, but that he didn’t have the “look” of a state officer.

Discouraged but persistent, he turned his leadership aspirations to Chico State.

“What I love about Chico State is that we do really value diversity here,” Lee said. “I’ve been told ‘no’ so many times, that when it came to the decision to run for [Associated Students] commissioner of Diversity Affairs, I was like, ‘What’s the worst-case scenario? They say no? I’m just going to move on to the next thing and try something else.’”

But the voters said yes, and Lee was elected the 2020–21 AS commissioner of Diversity Affairs, where his role is to advocate for diversity efforts on campus, develop programming to highlight student diversity, and share the voices of Chico State students.

Ultimately, Lee hopes to become a high school agricultural mechanics teacher and help students from all backgrounds find their place in agriculture.

“Agriculture and the FFA have come a long way (in embracing diversity among its members), but we still have a long way to go. I want my students to know that they are valued and that they’re really fortunate to be in this program. We just need more ideas and more perspectives,” Lee said. ■

The daughter of two agriculture teachers, **Michelle Borges** was involved in 4-H and FFA from a young age and quickly learned that not everyone was as agriculturally literate as she. A summer internship at the Stanislaus County Farm Bureau, where she witnessed the impact of various regulations on farmers’ ability to grow food, further cemented her passion for agriculture communications. Borges vowed to help correct misconceptions about agriculture by pursuing a career in public relations and marketing with an emphasis on digital communication.

While Chico State wasn’t her first choice growing up, visiting the campus and sitting down with Professors Mollie Aschenbrener, Tommy Henderson, and Alyssa Schager changed her mind.

“They totally sold me, and I fell in love with the program and the town. They made me feel super welcomed, like this could be my second home,” Borges said.

That was despite—or maybe because—Chico State didn’t yet have an agriculture communications degree, though Aschenbrener was working on developing one. Borges became one of the program’s first students.

“I just think it’s so cool that I’m helping Dr. A develop this major and be part of that experience,” she said.

The former president of Hughson High School’s Associated Student Body and its FFA chapter, Borges sought leadership opportunities at Chico State and decided during her freshman year to run for the College of Agriculture senator. In this role, Borges holds weekly office hours to gather questions and input from students in the College of Agriculture so that she can speak for them on all AS matters.

“Each college has a student senator to represent them at all of the meetings for Associated Students, so I feel like I’m that voice for the College of Agriculture within the Associated Students,” Borges explained.

Being the voice for agriculture. That’s a job she hopes to continue long after her year of service is complete. ■

International Student Spotlight

Tao Huang

The Long Way Home

When COVID-19 forced Chico State to transition to virtual instruction in March, many students struggled with the decision of whether to return home to their permanent residences. For **Tao Huang**, an international student studying abroad in Chico for the year, going home wasn't even a choice. The agriculture major with an emphasis in plant science was 9,800 kilometers from his hometown of Changzhou, China, and not much closer to his enrolled university in Nagano, Japan.

"All my plans have been ruthlessly cancelled, just like my flight," Tao said.

For four months, Tao was stuck in his apartment in University Village, unable to return home due to cancelled flights and travel restrictions, but also missing out on the ability to explore the attractions that drew him to California.

"It's very sad. I've never been to Napa or Los Angeles, I lost a lot of money because I couldn't go back to Japan, and I will be out of school starting next semester," Tao said.

Tao's frustration with COVID-19 is not unlike that of other students lamenting the loss of what they expected the school year to look like. But with his trademark optimism, Tao is always looking for the bright side.

"I don't regret my decision to come to Chico," he said. "After all, I'm not a prophet, I couldn't have foreseen that this would happen. I've learned a lot in this year, and I've got

Tao Huang brought his Pipa to Chico, a musical reminder of his home in Changzhou, China.

a lot of help from my friends. Facing adversity, I think about how to solve the problem, rather than complaining repeatedly because I understand that complaining can only increase negative emotions, and that will never help to solve the problem."

Tao grew up in Changzhou, a city of 4.5 million people along the southern bank of the Yangtze River in China's Jiangnan region. His vivid description of the city conveys pride and nostalgia for the home he hasn't seen in two years.

"My hometown is a typical Jiangnan city," Tao said. "The climate is warm and humid, and small bridges and rivers can be seen everywhere. In spring, there are plum and willow, in summer there are lotus in pools, in autumn the sweet-scented Osmanthus pervades the whole city, in winter there is snow and the bells come from the temple."

What Changzhou didn't offer Tao was exposure to agriculture. He studied politics and history in high school and majored in Japanese language and literature in college. Upon earning his bachelor's degree at Suzhou University of Science and Technology, Tao spent a year working for a Japanese company, but he was soon disillusioned with city life and began to explore other opportunities. That quest led him to Shinshu University in Nagano, Japan. The school's strong agricultural program, with its large experimental forest and productive research farm, combined with his love for nature and the beauty of the high mountain region, drew him there to study agriculture.

Aspirational, entrepreneurial, and independent,

nontraditional student Tao carefully crafted plans to make his mark in agriculture. His ultimate goal is to build an integrated bio resource development company that will contribute to the promotion of new energy sources, secure agricultural production, improve modes of production, and protect the Earth's environment. Aiming to learn all he could in pursuit of this goal, Tao set his sights on California.

"At first, I just thought that California's agriculture was very famous, so I decided to come to the United States to see for myself, and then I learned about Chico State through the exchange program of my home school. Chico State's agricultural research is quite famous, and it meets my needs very well, so I applied to study in Chico," Tao explained.

He arrived at Chico State in August 2019 and sought opportunities for agricultural education and cultural connection.

"Life here is very different from what I have experienced before, and I have experienced the cultural differences between East and West in this year," Tao said. "First of all, there's more freedom in the class, there's more interaction between students and professors outside of the lectures, and there's more opportunities for discussion and experimentation. Students are able to organize their own activities, and that's great!"

One of his favorite memories from his time in Chico took place on Christmas.

"I was invited to a local friend's home, having dinner, shopping, and opening gifts together. It let me really feel that, 'Oh! I'm in America now.'"

During his year in Chico, Tao made an impression on those who meet him. Sarah DeForest taught Tao in both "Agricultural Leadership" in the fall 2019 semester and the "California Agricultural Seminar" in the spring 2020 semester.

"Tao is a delight to have in the classroom," DeForest said. "He is intelligent, always smiling, and he immediately endears his fellow students to him with his joyful curiosity. To top it off, he is one of the best writers I've ever had for a student, and English is something like his third or fourth language!"

After his long exile in Chico, unable to find flights to China, and restricted as a foreign visa-holder from entering Japan, Tao finally returned home to China in early August. He hopes to return to his studies in Japan next semester.

"I still complain sometimes, 'Why did COVID-19 happen this year? It completely destroyed my exchange study and all my plans.' Fortunately, I am still alive, and I still have my future," Tao said. ■



Agricultural Exploration in Puerto Rico



**El futuro
pertenece a
aquellos que están
dispuestos a
ensuciarse
las manos**

Written by Taylor Lacey

Those words printed on the back of one Puerto Rican's t-shirt translate to "The future belongs to those who are willing to get their hands dirty," and they sum up the experiences of 10 Chico State College of Agriculture students who toured Puerto Rico over their winter break in 2020.

On this 10-day agricultural exploration trip led by agricultural education professor **Tommy Henderson**, students gained a new perspective of learning through doing. The experience included learning about tropical agricultural crops and new livestock management methods, immersing themselves in a new culture, discovering the impact of natural disasters on the island, and completing a service-learning project in rebuilding a greenhouse at a middle school agriculture program.

Funded through a Student Learning Fee grant, the trip posed educational benefits to students through hands-on experiences in agriculture. After taking part in facilitating a similar undergraduate trip during his doctoral program at Oregon State University, Henderson recruited a team and began the process of writing the grant and planning the trip.

With nearly one thousand students in the College of Agriculture, the selection process to determine the students who would take part was not taken lightly. After mandatory meetings, a lengthy application with writing prompts, blind application reviews, and in-person interviews, the group was narrowed down to 10 students who would use this pilot experience to share with their peers and jumpstart their own careers in agriculture. *(Continued on page 8)*

The future belongs to those who are willing to get their hands dirty.

The group, which represented all majors in the College of Agriculture from freshman to senior status, was comprised of **Damian Arceo, Michelle Borges, Jonelle Gilardi, Adriana Gudino, Alejandra Gonzales-Zuniga, Matt Hamon, Taylor Lacey, Taylor Richardson, Brianne Shannon, and Tyler Yates.**

Borges decided to go on the trip to learn about and understand global agriculture firsthand.

“As an agricultural communications major, it’s extremely important to effectively communicate and understand agriculture to help fix the many misconceptions agriculture faces,” she said. “Going on the trip, I was able to gain this knowledge while also experiencing the culture of Puerto Rico.”

Hot, humid air and light rain greeted the group at the airport in San Juan, Puerto Rico, where they drove to an ecolodge in the El Yunque National Rainforest, their first home base. On the way, the group tasted the local culture with mofongo, a traditional dish with mashed plantains, for dinner. Once the group arrived at the ecolodge, the song of the coqui frogs and the first of many night hikes ended the night.

During the first full day on the island, the group was pushed to their limits with a 10-mile hike through the El Yunque National Rainforest led by a local scientist, Daniel. Due to the ecological devastation from the Hurricane Maria in 2017, much of the trail included muddy paths with downed trees. Climbing up the mountainside while using palm leaves as cover during rainy downpours, the group made it to the end of the trek, looking down to the coast and across the water to the outlying islands.

Although the tropical views and immersion in local culture were a common theme throughout the trip, the agricultural takeaways were the main goal, and each day, new tours and experiences added to the allure.

Hamon, the lone crops, horticulture, and land resource management major, joined the trip in order to gain experiences away from his own family’s farm and expand his knowledge.

“I had never traveled out of the country before or flown in a plane, so the trip really allowed me to broaden my horizons and experience a new element of agriculture. As I aspire to be a [pest control advisor] I hope to take what I have learned from the trip and employ it to my career,” he said.

Each day on the island allowed students to explore new avenues of agriculture that wouldn’t be possible in California such as plantain, passionfruit, yuca, and coffee farms, while learning from the locals who were willing to share their stories.

“It was a great opportunity to speak with native Spanish speakers and find out that we were learning and practicing some of the same agriculture practices and dealing with the same problems that they have,” Hamon said.

In addition to the tropical produce, new practices for some familiar commodities were also observed through touring a citrus farm, meat processing plant, and dairy.

lives of these FFA members, allowing them to have their hands-on horticulture experiences back,” Shannon added.

Much of the logistics of the trip were made possible through the collaboration with agricultural education professor Edley Santiago, at the University of Mayaguez. Along with coordination with the middle school, setting up many of the agricultural tours, and taking part in the tours with her two sons, the professor housed the group for their final night on the island, led them in preparing a traditional meal on the Three Kings Holiday, and took several of the students to a traditional mass for the holiday.

“On the actual day of the Three Kings, [Santiago] showed us how Puerto Rican’s celebrate and the traditions they have for the holiday and attend the holiday mass with her family at their local Catholic Church. This was a very unique experience because the mass was all the same but in Spanish but there was a sense of passion and pride as the Puerto Rican’s sang in the church to the Three Kings songs,” Shannon said. “I personally thought it was incredible how even after so much hardship the Puerto Rican people always had a positive attitude and always pushed forward.”

“Nothing would have been possible without all of [Santiago’s] help in planning, educating and even at times, translating for the Chico State students. She is a wonderful human,

I am so thankful to have met her, and if I am ever in Puerto Rico again visiting her would be the first thing I’d do,” she added.

Following the trip, students returned to Chico State to share their experiences with peers, faculty, and staff while hosting a presentation. Each of the travelers contributed to the experience through preparing Puerto Rican dishes for the audience to enjoy and presented through a PowerPoint of photographs, their learning objectives and meaningful takeaways from the trip.

“Being an ag ed major I’m always looking for ways to expand my knowledge of the agriculture industry for my future students. Our trip to Puerto Rico not only allowed me to understand agriculture in a tropical climate but allowed me to experience Puerto Rico’s rich culture and meet some amazing individuals on the island,” Richardson said. “I left Puerto Rico with a new outlook on agriculture, agriculture education and life



Alejandra Gonzales-Zuniga sets off on a trek through El Yunque National Rainforest

Adding to the already rich experiences gained through agriculture, the group was also able to give back to the island through a service-learning project at a local middle school on the west side of the island. Following the devastation of the hurricane, the middle school agriculture program was not able to rebuild their greenhouse and thus was missing out on hands-on experiences in agriculture.

After acquiring monetary donations in addition to seeds and planter trays, the group shipped boxes of supplies to the school for the students to use in addition to rebuilding the destroyed greenhouse. In addition to support from the agriculture teacher, principal, and other staff members, a local passerby also decided to join in on the labor until the sun was down and the project was finally completed.

“This service project was the most fulfilling part of the entire trip, as I knew that what we had done that day would greatly impact the



“We were learning and practicing some of the same agriculture practices and dealing with the same problems that they have.”

– Matt Hamon

A

in general. It was a truly life changing experience.”

Highlighting the short term, yet high impact of the trip, senior Adriana Gudino will present on the group’s experiences at the 2020 North American Conference for Teachers in Agriculture.

“Being able to represent the College of Agriculture through this exploration trip was truly an honor. Not only did I gain so much knowledge from all the industry tours, but I developed a new perspective and appreciation for the wonderful island. I am beyond excited to share what I learned in my classroom as a future agriculture instructor,” she said.

Shannon agreed. “It would be an understatement to say that the Exploration in Agriculture trip to Puerto Rico was the best experience I have ever had,” she said. ■



B

- A | Students tour a passionfruit farm in Puerto Rico.
- B | Rebuilding the greenhouse at a middle school damaged by Hurricane Maria was one of the most fulfilling aspects of the trip for Brianne Shannon.
- C | Puerto Rican professor Edley Santiago hosted a traditional meal for students in her home.
- D | The group takes a break from their service project at a middle school in Puerto Rico.
- E | Stunning vistas of El Yunque National Rainforest greeted students at their ec lodge southeast of San Juan.
- F | Students suit up to tour a slaughterhouse in Puerto Rico.



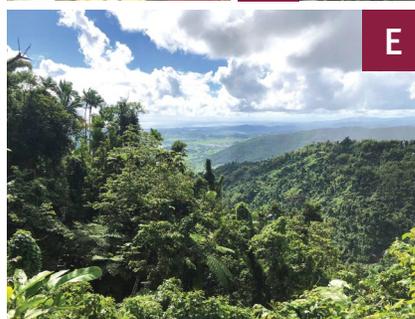
C



D



F



E

the best experience I have ever had

POSTER POWER

Undergraduate Research Poster Competitions Empower Student Success

Marco Fernandez wanted to do something meaningful with his life. The Watsonville native grew up in the strawberry fields, where his family had worked for 30 years. He spent every weekend and summer vacation he could in those fields, riding his bike up and down the rows. He loved it.

“I knew that ag was a great industry. I didn’t want to just work in the fields though, in harvest or other strenuous labor. I wanted to explore all the other opportunities in agriculture,” Fernandez said.

He knew that would take a college degree, something no other male in his family had achieved. As a first-generation college student, following two older sisters who both graduated from Fresno State, Fernandez was so proud to find himself at Chico State, majoring in agriculture with an option in crops, horticulture, and land resource management.

“Chico gave me an incredible opportunity,” Fernandez said. “I love the teachers. I love the resources this campus provides. They offer so many different opportunities to succeed.”

But Fernandez has even higher aspirations. He wants to become the first in his family to get a master’s degree. Following lecture one day in his plant protection materials class, he approached Professor Ana Medic with questions about the path to graduate school. After a series of conversations, Medic invited Fernandez to a meeting of Biological Nitrogen Fixation (BNF) group. The informal research club included plant science professors and students interested in undergraduate research.

“I started learning from my peers and my professors, and research really intrigued Fernandez said. “You have to know what

you’re doing. From setting up experiments and selecting the right experimental design, to collecting data and doing data entry, to analyzing the data and sharing the results, research is incredibly rewarding.”

He soon joined the Chico STEM Connections (CSC2) program and earned a stipend to conduct his own research. In 2019, Fernandez and his research partner Raul Saldivar conducted an experiment on various weed management methods for fava bean production. They looked at the effects of flame, mechanical, and herbicidal weed control on maximizing fava bean biomass and pod production. And though the flame method appeared promising in terms of weed control, Fernandez said they



Marco Fernandez (kneeling) works with Professor Hossein Zakeri to fine tune their flame treatment for weed management in fava beans.

may have overdone it, causing stunted growth in the fava beans, too. Fernandez and Saldivar

hoped to replicate their trial with a lighter flame application in 2020, but COVID-19 interrupted their plans.

As much as he enjoyed the experimentation process and the satisfaction of contributing to applied agricultural research, Fernandez said the greatest reward has been improving his communication skills.

“I’ve always been very nervous talking in front of people, and I viewed public speaking as my weakness,” he said.

Presenting his research to classes and audiences repeatedly over the past two years helped to build his confidence, and in February 2020, Fernandez won 1st place in the undergraduate research poster competition at the California Plant and Soil Conference in Fresno. Excited as he was for that validation of his hard work, what made Fernandez most proud was that Chico State swept the competition. His fellow students Jocelyn Prieto-Garcia and Chloe Dugger won 2nd and 3rd places, respectively.

It wasn’t the only impressive showing in an undergraduate research competition for Chico State students last year. Dugger also won 1st place (for the second year in a row) in the undergraduate research poster competition at the 2019 joint annual meeting of the Soil Science Society of America (SSSA), American Society of Agronomy (ASA), and Crop Science Society of America (CSSA) in San Antonio in November. Saul Estrada placed 3rd.

In the animal science program, **Kelley Duggan** won 1st place in the Western Section American Society of Animal Science (ASAS) undergraduate poster competition, held virtually during the ASAS annual meeting in July. She had previously placed 2nd in the
(Continued on page 12)



2019–20 Undergraduate Research Poster Competitors

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF AGRONOMY, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

Chloe Dugger, 1st Place
Saul Estrada, 3rd Place

*Amanda Cox
Marco Fernandez
Taylor Ford
Jocelyn Prieto-Garcia
Raul Saldivar*

CALIFORNIA PLANT AND SOIL CONFERENCE, FRESNO

Marco Fernandez, 1st Place
Jocelyn Prieto-Garcia, 2nd Place
Chloe Dugger, 3rd Place

*Hunter Andrade
Consuelo Baez-Vega
Amanda Cox
Saul Estrada
William Perez-Rois
Raul Saldivar Menchaca
Steve Wallin*

CSU, CHICO UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH COMPETITION

Kelley Duggan, 2nd Place

WESTERN SECTION AMERICAN SOCIETY OF ANIMAL SCIENCE (VIRTUAL)

Kelley Duggan, 1st Place

*Megan Banwarth
Taylor Lacey
Jonathan Najera*

WESTERN SOCIETY OF CROP SCIENCE 2019

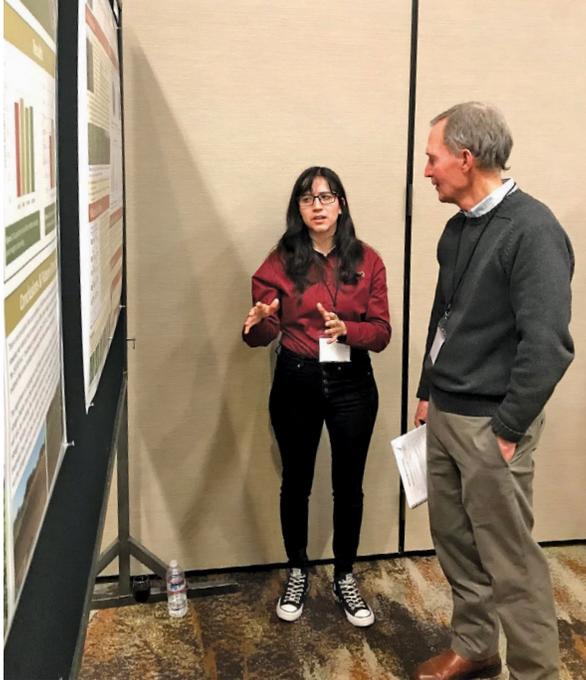
Amanda Cox and Saul Estrada,
2nd Place

*Marco Fernandez
Jocelyn Prieto-Garcia*

WESTERN SOCIETY OF CROP SCIENCE 2020 (VIRTUAL)

*Consuelo Baez-Vega
Erik Spitzer*

Kelley Duggan's research studied the effect of high altitude on reproductive performance of Angus heifers located in south central Wyoming. A highlight of her experience was working on the ranch where the dataset was collected.



Consuelo Baez-Vega discusses her research poster with an attendee during the California Plant and Soil Conference in Fresno in February, 2020

science and engineering group at the CSU, Chico Student Research Competition in March. Duggan's research studied the effect of high altitude on reproductive performance of Angus heifers located in south central Wyoming. The study used a historical data set from Colorado State University, where Duggan enrolled in graduate school after graduating from Chico State in May.

The project was the latest in an impressive research resume Duggan compiled while an undergraduate at Chico State. Beginning in her freshman year, she worked with a Cal Poly San Luis Obispo graduate student to collect and analyze rumen samples from beef cattle at the University Farm to study protein availability of native California grasses. She also worked with Tehama County beef cattle extension agent Josh Davy to conduct a mineral survey using blood samples from cattle herds throughout Northern California, which found manganese deficiency to be common throughout the state.

Digging into research as an undergraduate further solidified the career ambitions Duggan had considered since realizing that her father, Scott Duggan's, job as a livestock extension agent in Redmond, Oregon, where she grew up, looked pretty fun.

"I knew that I would need a master's degree for a job like that," Duggan said. "When I got into doing the research with Kasey (DeAtley), I enjoyed it and wanted to continue. Kasey encouraged and helped me make the connections at Colorado State to get into grad school."

Research has not only provided a career path for Duggan. It has shaped how she looks at life.

"All the work we do in terms of really considering a problem and setting up the research properly to be able to replicate it and reduce variables, that's a valuable lesson in how to think critically about any problem that presents itself," Duggan said. "It's a good way to look at life, to step back and remove emotions, and critically think your way through things."

Crops, horticulture, and land resource management major **Consuelo Baez-Vega** found the process of presenting her research at a professional meeting to be a valuable learning lesson. At her first conference, the California Plant Science and Horticulture Conference in Fresno in February, Baez-Vega had no trouble talking to the attendees about her research until she realized they were judging her.

"At first, I was doing fine, but the moment I realized they were judges, my brain just stopped working," she recalled.

Baez-Vega collected herself and pushed through the nerves as best she could.

"That was a learning lesson for me," she said. "It took that experience for me to realize I needed to be more well-prepared and ready to talk with the professionals about my work."

Baez-Vega and her research partner John Sanchez expanded upon Fernandez' and Saldivar's work in fava bean weed management by adding more compound treatments that paired the flame, mechanical, and herbicidal treatments in various combinations.

Plant Science professor **Ana Medic** is one of many College of Agriculture faculty who mentor students through the research process.

"For our students who really get into research, I try to encourage them to participate in at least one conference," Medic said. "It's a valuable skill that gives them experience in talking about something they are passionate about. It prepares them for job interviews, it prepares them to communicate with growers, it gives them a little bit more confidence to push the boundaries of what they think they can do."

No matter what educational background they may come from, Medic and her colleagues have found that students who engage in applied agricultural research as undergraduates are more likely to pursue graduate school. Medic said the exposure and networking they get when they attend conferences can open up whole new worlds of opportunity for students like Fernandez, Duggan, and Baez-Vega, who are each in various stages of their road to graduate school. Duggan is already at Colorado State University, where she started the master's program in animal breeding and genetics in August. Fernandez plans to enter either Cal Poly San Luis Obispo or University of Idaho to study plant pathology in 2021. And Baez-Vega, in her senior year, is just beginning graduate school exploration.

Wherever they may end up, Medic said she gets great satisfaction in seeing the process of self-discovery unfold through the lens of agricultural research.



Baez-Vega collects data in her fava bean research plot.

"At the beginning they doubt themselves, and slowly you see that growth. Whether it takes a semester, a year, or longer, they begin to see that they don't have limitations," Medic said. "They begin to realize that they can achieve more than they, and maybe even their families, envisioned. It's beautiful and inspiring." ■



Meat Judging Team

Established at Chico State



The College of Agriculture launched a meat judging team in 2020. It was the culmination of a goal more than a decade in the making for coach **Crystal Waters**, who briefly left Chico State in the midst of her undergraduate education to compete on the meat judging team at Texas Tech. She returned to Chico to complete her bachelor's degree in 2008 and used her masters' program to start the first meat judging team on the west coast at Fresno State. Texas A&M recruited her to coach their team while earning her PhD, and in 2014 she coached the Aggie team to a reserve national championship. But all along her goal was to return to Chico State and start a meat judging program here.

In 2017, she got her chance when she was hired as a meat science instructor, and in the fall 2019, she started training her first recruits. The team of **Doug Bernal, Garrett Bunyard, Courtney King, Kaitlyn Loomas, Alexandra Nisson, Amanda Prentice, Madison Redding, and Sarah Sutherland** kicked off their competition with a satisfying 8th place finish at the 2020 National Western Stock Show in Denver, Colorado. Their first outing included a 5th place finish in beef judging, and senior Kaitlyn Loomas placed 5th high individual in beef judging.

Meats judging is composed of four parts: beef carcass grading, species carcass evaluation, wholesale cuts specifications, and written reasons to justify their placings. On contest day,

the morning session includes the evaluation of five classes of wholesale cuts and carcasses where a set of written reasons is turned in for points. The contest continues into the afternoon with specifications classes, yield and quality grading, and five more evaluation classes. For students on the team, competing is an opportunity to explore future careers in the industry while networking with large companies and traveling to renowned facilities like Cargill, JBS, Superior Farms, and Harris Ranch.

"My favorite part was traveling with the team because on the road we have few distractions and are solely focused on meat judging. Even though we have very long days of practicing, we still manage to have fun together and lots of laughs," Loomas said. "Being on the meat judging team has solidified my post-graduate decision to stay in this field and continue to learn more about the meat industry. I plan on going to graduate school to pursue a master's degree in food safety and meat science."

The team's second competition was at the Houston Livestock Show on March 7. At that contest the team placed 9th, and Bernal placed 4th in placings, bringing home the team's first plaque.

"That was an amazing trip," Waters said. "The team had their best day in the cooler and met or beat all of their team and individual goals."

Unfortunately, the inaugural team's best day of competition would also be their last, as the COVID-19 pandemic ended their competitive

Crystal Waters (top right) coaches the first Chico State Meat Judging Team, launched in 2020.

season. By running a team every other year in even years, the meat judging team's schedule is designed to complement the livestock judging team, which competes in odd years. Waters will recruit the next team from her 2021 live animal and carcass evaluation class in hopes that team travel and competition can resume in 2022.

Despite their abbreviated season, Waters, who has coached a reserve national champion team, said the 2020 Chico State Meat Judging Team holds a special place in her heart.

"They were all very competitive, very driven. We might not have been the top team at the contests, but they were like a family. They loved each other and they loved judging," Waters said. "For me, that's the best part. Yes, winning and getting your name called is awesome, but really it's the bonds that I've watched develop amongst these team members that matters. They will be a family for the rest of their lives." ■



Livestock Judging Team MAKES HISTORY



The last time the Chico State Livestock Judging Team placed in the top five at the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE) in Louisville, Kentucky, the year was 1997, and **Clay Carlson** was on the team.

"We were a pretty good team. We were a competitive group, and we really pushed each other. We had some really smart kids, not including me," Carlson chuckled modestly. The 1997 team, coached by Dave Daley, placed 5th at the contest, which is considered the national finals of collegiate livestock judging. It was a remarkable accomplishment. Twenty-two years later in 2019, the Chico State Livestock Judging Team finally cracked the top five once again, this time with a 3rd place finish and with Carlson at the helm as coach. The team was comprised of **Kylie Burriss, Mikayla Duchi, Nathan Johnson, Madison Morgan, Noa Taipin, and Jared Wolf. Kelley Duggan, Samantha Bright, and Megan Rivera** also competed throughout the season and contributed points to the team's successful run, which included 2nd at the Arizona National Livestock Show, 5th at the Houston Livestock Show, 1st at

the Western Fall Classic in Medford, Oregon, and 8th at both the National Barrow Show in Austin, Minnesota, and the American Royal in Kansas City, Missouri.

Among the trophies the team accumulated on their way to their 3rd place NAILE finish was 2nd high team in cattle, 2nd high team in performance cattle, 2nd high team in overall performance and 4th high team in sheep and goats. Nathan Johnson placed 7th high individual in cattle. And while each member of the team had great days throughout the year, Mikayla Duchi was the star of the team at NAILE. She placed 7th high overall, 6th high in reasons, and 4th high in sheep and goats. Duchi also won a \$500 scholarship from Rodeo Austin as one of the top three women in the contest.

Having judged competitively since 8th grade, Duchi said the moment was very meaningful. "Livestock judging has dictated my life, including where I chose to go to college and what I want to do with my career," Duchi said. "When I heard my name called, I started crying. That was the biggest achievement I've had so far in my life."

Going into the 2019 competitive year, after 20 years of coaching, Carlson had a feeling this team was special. Five of the students had judged together at Linn-Benton Community College in Albany, Oregon. Another had competed at San Joaquin Delta College in Stockton.

"I knew they were going to be good. They came to me pretty good. Then we had some other kids who might not have had the judging experience, but they were very intelligent and competitive people as well. I knew those kids were hungry. And I knew they wanted to prove to themselves," Carlson said.

Carlson had coached talented, smart, competitive teams before. But it takes a rare combination of livestock evaluation, communication skills, competitive drive, and plain old luck to beat livestock judging powerhouses like Texas A&M and Texas Tech. "The stars kind of aligned," he said. "They worked as hard as I've ever had a team work. They did everything I asked them to do, and it just so happened that the day when it meant everything, when it was the most important day, they put as many things together as they could."



“They worked as hard as I've ever had a team work.”
–Clay Carlson

(Left to right) Clay Carlson, Jared Wolf, Nathan Johnson, Megan Rivera, Mikayla Duchi, Kylie Burriss, Noa Taipin, Samantha Bright, Kelley Duggan, Madison Morgan

In an event that combines the ability to evaluate and place various livestock species with the communication skills of being able to verbally justify the placing, Carlson knew that the team’s strength lie in its ability to place the animals correctly one through four.

“I squeezed as much out of them in (oral) reasons as I possibly could, but I knew we couldn’t out-talk some of the other teams like Kansas State (who placed 2nd). Our team’s strength was in marking cards. These kids see livestock very well,” Carlson said.

Duchi said the ability to accurately judge a class was something Carlson really emphasized.

“In terms of evaluating animals and teaching kids how to evaluate animals, Clay is phenomenal,” Duchi said. “He taught us not to get distracted by any of the weird trends happening in industry, but just to stick to the basics. I don’t think anything we accomplished this year would have been possible if we had anyone other than Clay coaching us.”

The Livestock Judging Team competes every other year, so 2020 has been a rebuilding year

for the team. And while the 2019 team left a remarkable impact on the program, Carlson knows that every team is different, and as long as they show up ready to work, he will work even harder to get them ready for the big stage. “This next team doesn’t have the same level of experience as 2019’s, and the circumstances with COVID-19 are really weird because we can’t travel to practice this fall,” Carlson said. “We’ll see what we end up with.”

No matter the potential of any given team, Carlson sets out with the mindset that they are going to make it into the top five at a national competition.

“I might have to be a little more creative and see if I can squeeze every last ounce of sweat out of them trying to get that done,” he said.

That competitive spirit is what drew Carlson to livestock judging in the first place. The former high school and college basketball player wasn’t even supposed to be on that 1997 judging team. He was getting ready to graduate in the fall of 1996, but Daley invited him to take the livestock evaluation class that semester, and he discovered he was pretty good at it.

“After I was done playing basketball, I found out I still had a competitive itch to scratch. I decided to stick around and compete on the 1997 [judging] team,” he recalled.

Although livestock judging was completely different than the athletic sports he had grown up with, he was drawn to the mental test. Tall, short, athletic or not, none of the physical aspects mattered, he said. Livestock judging was a new challenge. It was fun. He enjoyed it.

After graduation, Carlson attended graduate school at the University of Arizona, where he was hired to rebuild the livestock judging team. It was there that he met his wife, Rhiannon, and in 2001 the couple returned to Northern California, where Clay took over the role of Chico State Livestock Judging coach from his mentor, Dave Daley. Since then he’s coached 11 teams, traveled hundreds of thousands of miles, and looked at more cattle, sheep, pigs, goats, and horses than he can begin to count. It’s that chance to see the country and tour livestock operations in nearly every state that he views as his gift from livestock judging. Plus, that competitive itch just won’t go away. ■



Never Alone

Student Success Office HELPS AG STUDENTS NAVIGATE All Things College

(Above and top right) Angel De Trinidad

The first contact **Angel De Trinidad** remembers having with the College of Agriculture's Student Success Office was a phone call he received from its coordinator at the time, Ashley Person. He had just been accepted to Chico State for the 2018 fall semester, but he had missed the deadline to apply for any University-wide scholarships. However, Person was on the other end of the line asking him to apply for the prestigious Bell Family Presidential Scholarship within the College of Agriculture.

"That was a life-changing phone call for me," De Trinidad said. "Receiving the Bell Family Presidential Scholarship has helped me get where I am now, and I completely attribute a lot of my success to that opportunity that came from that one phone call."

De Trinidad, who is from Orange in Southern California, is now a junior majoring in plant and soil science, enjoying an active and transformational collegiate career, and serving as the

newest peer advisor in the **College of Agriculture's Student Success Office**.

From recruiting students like De Trinidad with scholarships and other outreach, to advising and guiding current students throughout their college years, to coordinating career preparation and employment services, the Student Success Office is a one-stop shop for students in the College of Agriculture to access the resources they need to be successful at Chico State.

For an increasingly diverse student population with growing numbers of first-generation college students, advising and retention specialist Jemie Rocca explained the Student Success Office is there to help students navigate college life.

"Just getting to college is such a big accomplishment, and navigating how to be successful can be really difficult for many students and their families," she said. "My vision for our office is to help students learn where to find resources and how to be advocates for themselves."

Within a college known for its family-like

atmosphere, the Student Success Office serves as home base. From their office on the first floor of Plumas Hall, Rocca and Chico STEM Connections Collaborative (CSC2) Coordinator Lindsey Jeffery provide a welcoming environment for students to come for guidance in tackling all sorts of issues. From study skills and time management techniques, to what classes they need to graduate, to how to handle a difficult roommate, or even where to get the best tacos in Chico, no topic is too big or too small for the Student Success Office to field.

"We are here to support the students and their entire college experience," Jeffery said. "Their education is the most important aspect because that's why they are here, but sometimes they just need someone to talk to. We'll chat about their lives back home, what food they miss, what's going on in their lives apart from school."

That open-door, anything-goes atmosphere has definitely helped De Trinidad work through some decisions.

"I probably abuse it with the amount of advising I get," he said with a laugh.

“I’m constantly changing my mind and constantly curious about the pursuit of knowledge, so I feel like when a resource like the Student Success Office is available to students, why not take advantage of it?”

In September, De Trinidad joined the staff in the Student Success Office, wanting to help other students utilize the available resources that have helped him succeed so much.

He was hired as a student peer advisor alongside senior agricultural education major and Associated Students President Breanna Holbert, who has worked for the Student Success Office since her freshman year. As peer advisors, the team meets primarily with freshmen and sophomores to help them map out their academic plans and answer questions that they, too, had when they were new to Chico State. It’s a role that De Trinidad has held informally, having served as a resident advisor for the College of Agriculture’s theme housing in University Village the prior year.

“As an RA, I was able to help my freshmen get acquainted with the University and with the agriculture program. I’m a big planner, so I definitely shared a little bit of that, helping my freshman look at their career interests, create a four-year plan and access the resources available to them,” De Trinidad said.

All of the advising tools that the Student Success Office and peer advisors provide are designed to empower, not replace, the primary relationships between students and their faculty advisors.

“We tell students that their faculty advisors are going to be their mentors, their career guides, the ones who help them find internship opportunities and graduate programs,” Rocca said. “Our office is here to help lift the administrative burden, to help [students] find the right forms and check the right boxes and take the right classes to ensure they graduate, so that when they meet with their major advisor, the conversation can be more rich and meaningful than ‘which class do I need to take first?’”

The architect of the Student Success Office is Interim Associate Dean Patrick

Doyle, who began developing the team in 2015, when he served as the College of Agriculture’s program coordinator. The model has been so successful that his first hire, Ashley Person, was recruited by the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences to recreate the program in the University’s largest academic college, and other colleges at Chico State have adopted similar



models for student success.

Doyle said student retention and success is the metric by which the College of Agriculture is evaluated, and the challenges students face are larger now than he’s previously witnessed in his 20 years at Chico State.

“This group of students has experienced fire, flood, and COVID-19, but College of Agriculture students are resilient,” Doyle said. “I am very proud of our students. They have really stepped up and are facing their challenges head on. It is our responsibility to support them the best we can with the tools we have at our disposal.”

Doyle said the Student Success Office has transitioned its services to virtual student support without missing a beat. In addition to continuing the Peer Advisor Program, the office is adding a tutor program for agriculture courses that will roll out this academic year. While the University operates mostly virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Student Success Office’s meetings are currently happening through Zoom, phone call, and email.

Virtual or not, De Trinidad is just glad the Student Success Office is there to help all agriculture students, but especially first-generation college students like him.

“My family didn’t know a lot about college, so I kind of felt like I was on my own coming to Chico State. But in hindsight thanks to the Student Success office and how great the College of Agriculture, I realize now that I was never on my own,” De Trinidad said. “So, I want other students to realize that they’re not on their own, that they don’t have to do it alone. They just have to take advantage of the resources that are out there.” ■

(Left to right) Student Success Office staff Lindsey Jeffery, Patrick Doyle, and Jamie Rocca



OVP Supplies Food Pantry with Fresh, Local Goodness

A Nourishing Partnership



It's 6 a.m. on a mid-August morning at the University Farm. The temperature is forecast to top 100 degrees, so Organic Vegetable Project (OVP) coordinator **Scott Grist** arrives early to start harvest before the heat becomes oppressive. He has four part-time student employees, and in a couple weeks when school begins they will be joined by directed work experience students who can help tend and manage the three-acre project. But today he's on his own.



Six miles away near the Chico State campus, Tiarra Blanche is getting ready for work. Blanche graduated in May with her bachelor's degree in social work and entered the University's master's program in the same field. She is interning through the Chico State Basic Needs Project at the Hungry Wildcat Food Pantry, tracking student use of the food pantry to better understand issues of hunger, homelessness, and financial insecurity among students at Chico State.

Grist and Blanche have never met, but they share one important connection: The lettuce, squash, and sweet peppers Grist is harvesting this morning will be on Blanche's dinner plate tonight. Not only does she intern at the Hungry Wildcat Food Pantry, but ever since she discovered the food pantry during her freshman year, Blanche has been one of its most faithful and grateful customers.

"I lived in University Village and had the smallest meal plan, so I had to figure out what to eat the other 15 meals of the week," Blanche said. "I honestly didn't think healthy eating was affordable, but the food pantry has really helped me eat healthy and try new things and not have to worry about being able to afford it."

Affordability has always been a concern for college students. Top Ramen, anyone? But the current statistics on housing and food insecurity are startling. A 2018 Calstate Phase II research survey indicated that some 8,000 students, or 50 percent of the Chico State student body, suffered from low to very low food security. Nearly half of all Chico State students could be eligible to receive Federal Pell Grant funding and CalFresh USDA SNAP assistance. Systemwide, an estimated 1 out of 10 California State University students live in unstable housing situations, and post-2018 Camp Fire preliminary research suggested that more than 14 percent of Chico State students experience some form of homelessness during an academic year.

The Hungry Wildcat Food Pantry is located in the Student Services Center, centralized enough to make it easy to get to, but tucked

along the building's quieter eastern side to provide safe, confidential access for students seeking services from the Chico State Basic Needs Project. The pantry is open from 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m., Monday through Friday year-round, even remaining open during recent disasters including the Camp Fire and the campus' COVID-19 pandemic closure. As a COVID-19 safety precaution, students no longer browse openly, but now are greeted at the entrance by staff, who collect their student ID numbers and put together a shopping bag based upon their needs and preferences.



From its origins in 2013, when Division of Student Affairs budget director Kathleen Moroney started stocking non-perishable food in her office to hand out to students experiencing food insecurity, the Hungry Wildcat Food Pantry is now one of the largest university food pantries in the United States, hosting up to 250 visitors per day and distributing more than 60 tons of food and hygiene products in 2019. That growth is due

in no small part to the energy and creativity of Chico State Basic Needs Project Administrator **Joe Picard**. He heard about Moroney's efforts while working as the marketing director for the University and wanted to get involved. Picard started as a volunteer, and after four years of dedicated effort, he was hired full time. From the beginning, Picard set to work bringing awareness to food insecurity on campus, building partnerships, and with help from the Associated Students, the Student Philanthropy Council, and generous donors raised enough funds to expand the food pantry into a new department addressing all of students' basic needs. He now manages the mind-bending logistics of sourcing and distributing food from an ever-changing carousel of farms, restaurants, food banks, and donors, while sharing excess items among other local organizations that work with the poor.

The Organic Vegetable Project became one of the food pantry's earliest partners while the pantry still operated out of Moroney's office. Picard, who frequently purchased produce from the OVP's weekly campus farm stand, saw an opportunity to add fresh organic produce to the pantry's offerings. But without a place to refrigerate the items, Picard created a voucher system instead. He designed a "Veggie Buck," photocopied 20 of them, and gave them to Moroney to hand out to students. At the same time, he placed a donation jar on the OVP's market table each week.

"It started with \$20 out of my pocket, and we basically created this trusted currency that was riding on nothing but the hope that people would donate into that mason jar," Picard said.

The micro-investment worked, and in the three semesters that veggie bucks were offered, the value of the produce purchased with veggie bucks only exceeded the donations to the jar on one occasion. Additional donations and an AS Sustainability Grant started coming in, and little by little, the Hungry Wildcat Food Pantry became the

OVP's biggest customer. Now Grist estimates that nearly one-third of his annual harvest from the OVP goes to the food pantry. For his part, Picard says that nearly 60 percent of the fresh produce offered through the food pantry comes from the OVP.

Stephanie Navarrete, a junior agriculture education major, loves knowing that many of the fresh items she finds at the food pantry came from the University Farm.

"A lot of people on campus don't know about the University Farm, so I get excited when I go into the food pantry and the staff will say, 'Here, take some peaches, these were grown on the Chico State Farm,'" Navarrete said.

In addition to supplying the Hungry Wildcat Food Pantry, the OVP offers a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, sells produce to the campus dining halls as well as local restaurants and retailers, and serves as a research and demonstration site for the Center for Regenerative Agriculture and Resilient Systems. In all, more than 50 varieties of produce are grown each year on the three-acre site.

But like all of the production units on the University Farm, the OVP's primary mission is education. One year into his job as the project's coordinator, that's the piece that Grist finds most challenging and most rewarding.

"We're not like a normal farming business where we're taking in straight profits. Our job here is to educate students in how to farm," Grist said. "That slows things down sometimes because students come with such varying levels of experience, and then they are only here for so long, so just about every day is a training day."

When students are engaged and eager to learn, Grist will take all the time they need.

"I've had students who are so happy to be here, and they're right beside me asking me questions about every little thing, and I love that. I really enjoy the teaching process," he said.

Joe Picard has seen a lot of produce in his four years of managing the food pantry, and when it comes to quality, he said the OVP supplies the best. He credits the skills and experience of Grist, who joined the University Farm after two years with the local GRUB CSA, and Grist's predecessor Colleen Wofchuck.

"The quality of the organic vegetables [Grist is] growing at the OVP are hard to match," Picard said. "He plants and grows this giant red, butter and bib mega-lettuce that is outstanding. When I inspect the delivery, I stand there in grateful awe, knowing what we are distributing is best produce in the county," Picard said. "Students enjoy meeting Scott the Farmer, and for many of our students this is their first access to a farmer or organic produce. We hand them a rutabaga and say 'look it up and cook it.' The next day they come by the pantry smiling ear-to-ear with new cooking confidence, sharing their cooking stories."

For students like Navarrete and Blanche, who regularly use and appreciate the Hungry Wildcat Food Pantry, they just want other students to feel comfortable using what they believe is an amazing resource the University provides. Blanche hopes more students will visit the food pantry and help shed the misconceptions around programs such as this.

"I think for a lot of us, even when we might be struggling, there's this sense that, 'maybe it's not bad enough yet, maybe someone else needs it more than I do,'" Blanche said. "No! This resource is here for us—for all of us! The donors and funders want to see it utilized, and the more we use it, the more we reduce the stigma that keeps the hungry students away." ■



Chico Cares is the annual fundraising campaign for the Chico State Basic Needs Project (<https://chicocares.csuchico.edu>). These funds go directly to students in the form of purchased food, emergency grants, emergency shelter, homeless rapid re-housing services, and student internships.

To help support the Chico State Organic Vegetable Project, or any of the hands-on opportunities at the University Farm, visit www.csuchico.edu/givetoag or contact Associate Director of Development Dustin Bush at dwbush@csuchico.edu or 530-898-6605.

COVID Course Corrections

Peach Sales Pivot for Safety's Sake

A popular Chico summertime tradition, the University Farm's **U-pick Peach event** was transformed into a three-day drive-thru peach sale that yielded more than \$40,000. At \$2.50 per pound, that's more than 16,000 pounds, or 1,600 10-pound flats of peaches, each one carefully picked and packed by the hard-working farm staff and students. While many customers waited in their vehicles for over an hour to get their peaches, some even travelled for several hours to get there.

Peaches from the University Farm also made their way into Sierra Nevada Brewing Co.'s latest release, a Farm Trail Harvest Baltic Porter crafted in partnership with several local farms and released during the 2020 Sierra Oro Farm Trail's virtual passport weekend on October 10. ■



JOURNAL CLUB Keeps Agricultural Research Rolling



The BNF group takes a break from their research, pre-COVID-19.

What do researchers do when they can't do research? They talk about it. At least that's what one group in the College of Agriculture did when their work was put on pause.

When the COVID-19 restrictions meant undergraduates in Professor Hossein Zakeri's Biological Nitrogen Fixation (BNF) research group couldn't get out into the fields to collect data on their research plots, they started a club to keep connected with one another and keep learning. The **Journal Club** was the brainchild of Zakeri's postdoctoral researcher Kyle Brasier.

"We have a really committed group of about 10 students working on various research projects, and we needed a way to keep them engaged and connected without putting them at risk," Brasier said. "A lot of these students are getting paid through various grants, so we wanted to offer meaningful work that would advance their research."

Each week Brasier and Zakeri sent a discussion topic or a published journal article to the group and expected them to come to the weekly Zoom call prepared to discuss the reading.

One of those students was Amanda Cox, an agriculture science and education major who graduated in May with honors and entered Oregon State University to pursue her master's degree in soil science.

"Taking a look at different articles, not only the content of them, but the way they are formatted, structured, and worded, has definitely helped my critical thinking skills," Cox said. "We all come with different points of view, and so the discussion really opens my eyes to new ways to look at things." ■



60th Anniversary Celebration Postponed

In April 1960, the fledgling agriculture department at Chico State College moved on to the Navarra-Hengst Ranch south of Chico. It was the culmination of more than three years of effort by faculty, staff, industry leaders, and especially State Senator Paul Byrne, who secured more than \$1 million in state funding before his death in 1962 for the purchase and development of the Chico State farm.

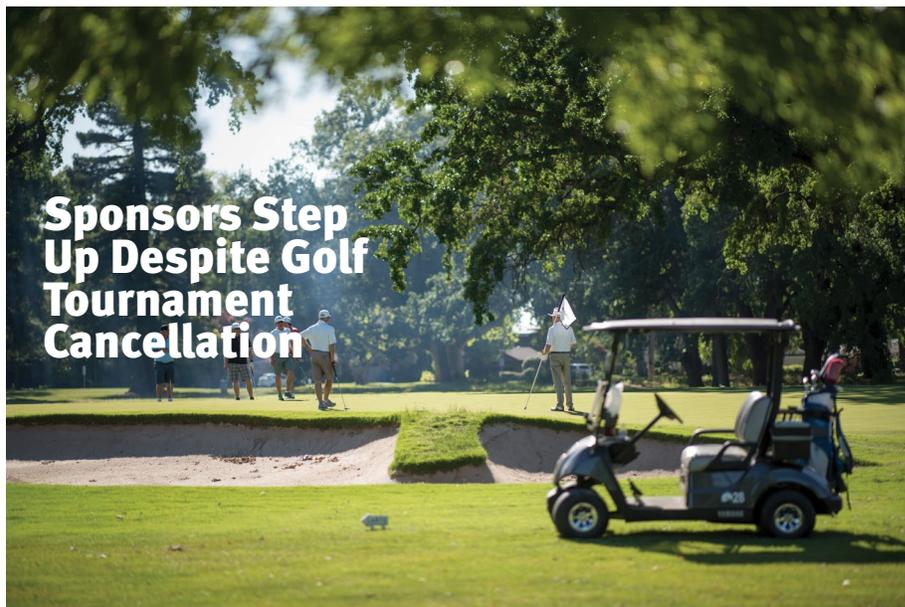
Plans to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Paul L. Byrne Memorial University Farm in 2020 were cancelled due to COVID-19 but will be rescheduled as soon as state and county guidelines permit large gatherings. ■

This Way to Sustainability Conference

Held just days after CSU, Chico suspended in-person instruction, the 2020 This Way to Sustainability Conference saw the highest attendance in four years despite the last-minute transition to fully online delivery. Held March 26–27 and hosted by the Center for Regenerative Agriculture and Resilient Systems, the conference had nearly 1,200 registrants and featured three College of Agriculture presenters, Cindy Daley, Garrett Liles, and Kyle Brasier.

With Daley leading the planning as conference director, the conference livestreamed interactive presentations in seven tracks including environmental, land planning, and natural systems; built environments, engineering, and waste management; health, wellness, diet, and nutrition; sustainable food systems and regenerative agriculture; entrepreneurship, marketing, and supply chain management; social justice and public policy; and arts, humanities, and creative expression. ■

The 2021 conference will take place March 25–26, also virtual.



Since 1997, **Superior Ag** has awarded more than \$500,000 in scholarships to agriculture students in the College of Agriculture at Chico State, while supporting countless events and activities such as field trips, student travel and professional development, FFA Field Days, and recruitment activities. These activities have been funded almost entirely by proceeds from the annual Superior Ag Golf Classic, but the COVID-19 pandemic forced the cancellation of the 2020 event. Not to be deterred from its mission to support students, the Superior Ag Golf Committee comprised of local agricultural leaders and golf enthusiasts reached out to their sponsorship network and raised nearly \$30,000, enough to fund the scholarships already committed to College of Agriculture students for 2020–2021. ■

WANT TO HELP?

To support Superior Ag scholarships and academic programs visit <https://app.mobilecause.com/vf/chicosuperiorag>.



Go Virtual Summer Institutes

More than 350 faculty from across the University, including 12 participants in the College of Agriculture, attended “Go Virtual Summer Institutes” during the month of July. Coordinated by the University’s Technology and Learning program, the institutes provided faculty with the resources, best practices, and dedicated time to convert existing classes into effective online courses. Institute goals included improving the virtual experience for both students and faculty and maximizing learning, engagement, and success.

Animal science professor Logan Smith said the institute provided him with tools and training that will be useful for both online and in person delivery.

“The workshop helped me prepare by training me in current educational research and best practices in online teaching, networking with other faculty to compare design ideas, and reprioritizing the class to emphasize student engagement and student learning over content,” Smith said.

With five days of institute sessions, embedded cohort meetings, and nine days of work time to design and digitize content and materials, each of the two institutes lasted a little over three weeks. ■



Tatevik Avetisyan

Joins Faculty in Ag Business



CURRICULUM VITAE

Earned bachelor's and master's degrees in economics with a focus on agribusiness and marketing, graduating summa cum laude



Agriculture - Environment - Life Sciences



Interned in a financial cooperative in Armenia, the American Farm School of Perrotis College in Greece, and the Cooperative Communicators Association in the United States



Received a second master's degree in agricultural, food, and resource economics and earned her PhD in community sustainability



Her teaching experience includes economics, agricultural finance, agribusiness strategic management, sustainability, and general science

Professor Tatevik Avetisyan grew up in the Republic of Armenia, more than 7,000 miles from her new home in Chico. Avetisyan's road to the College of Agriculture resembles many of her students' in one significant way: 4-H was a formative experience in her journey.

Avetisyan's local school in rural Armenia hosted a 4-H club that was jointly sponsored by the US Department of Agriculture and the Armenian Ministry of Agriculture. Her club focused on gardening, learning about dairy production from a local dairy operation, and exploring the art of carpet-making. Participating in 4-H deepened the love for agriculture that Avetisyan inherited from her father and grandfather, who ran a small diversified farm. When she was 15-years-old, Avetisyan and her 4-H club won a national competition where they presented their club activities, earning her an invitation to attend a science-oriented high school that fed into Armenian National Agrarian University. There she earned her bachelor's degree in economics with a focus on agribusiness and marketing, graduating summa cum laude. The program was jointly established by the Armenian State Agrarian University and Texas A&M University. She went on to earn her master's degree in economics in the same program before moving to East Lansing, Michigan, to pursue a second master's degree in agricultural, food, and resource economics and finally earning her PhD in community sustainability at Michigan State University (MSU).

A central part of Avetisyan's professional development included her work as a program coordinator at the Rural Co-op Support Foundation in Armenia, internships in a financial cooperative in Armenia, the American Farm School of Perrotis College in Greece and the Cooperative Communicators Association in the United States.

As an interdisciplinary scholar, Avetisyan draws from fields such as entrepreneurship, economics, supply chain risk management, network science, agribusiness management, and sustainability science to analyze complex issues in food and agriculture industry. Her research focuses on strengthening farms and food enterprises in local and regional food systems. Avetisyan's experience as a research assistant with a USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture-funded research project at MSU equipped her with practical skills to collaborate with a multi-disciplinary research team and industry stakeholders. Her PhD dissertation focused on agri-food enterprises in local and regional food systems in the United States. Specifically, she employed both quantitative and qualitative research methods to examine entrepreneurship models and organizational networks of food hubs in Michigan as well as supply chain risks of food hubs nationwide.

In 2015, Avetisyan was one of the four students who won the first place at the International Food and Agribusiness Management Association's Global Case Competition, the first win in MSU's history.

"This achievement ignited a fire in me to encourage my students pursue similar opportunities," Avetisyan said.

The teacher-scholar model and the interdisciplinary curriculum in the College of Agriculture made the Chico State position particularly attractive to her.

"Sustainability-conscious enterprises in the agri-food sector will take the lead in the next few decades as we face the challenge of providing food for the world's growing population while addressing the need to effectively manage natural resource use balanced with technological innovation," Avetisyan said. "My teaching primarily focuses on designing content requiring critical thinking skills to empower students to make evidence-based decisions in solving real-world problems. To achieve this outcome, I create learning environments where students gradually transition from foundational-level to higher-level thinking skills."

Avetisyan's teaching experience includes economics, agricultural finance, agribusiness strategic management, sustainability, and general science. In her first semester at Chico State, she taught "Advanced Agribusiness Management" and "Agricultural Markets and Pricing."

Moving to Chico in the midst of COVID-19 hasn't given Avetisyan the chance to see much of her new state, but she's looking forward to the opportunity. Her love of travel has taken her to five continents, and she's eager to explore California. She also appreciates music, cooking, hiking, and enjoying the outdoors. ■

EQUIPMENT DONATIONS ADVANCE FARM OPERATIONS



PBM Donates Sprayer

Local spray equipment manufacturer PBM donated a new sprayer for students to learn sprayer calibration and use. Because the sprayer is only used with water, faculty and farm staff don't have to worry about regular cleaning and exposing students to chemical residue. The sprayer has been used in agricultural mechanics and plant and soil science classes.

Did you know that you can support agriculture education and possibly receive a tax deduction by donating your farm equipment to the College of Agriculture? If it is in good working condition and meets our instructional needs, the University Farm will gladly accept your new or used equipment. Contact College of Agriculture Development Director Dustin Bush at 530-898-6605 or by email at dwbush@csuchico.edu.

PDI and Orchard-Rite Provide Shaker

The 2020 harvest season at the University Farm was nutty in a good way, thanks in large part to a new Orchard-Rite tree shaker on loan from the local distributor, Pacific Distributing, Inc. Orchard-Rite has a similar program at Fresno State where they allow the farm use of the machine for several years at no cost, and they approached Farm Administrator Dave Daley to develop a similar partnership. With an estimated \$30,000 in annual savings to the University Farm each year, Daley said this donation is a game-changer for the farm.

"These partnerships give our students early access to the equipment they will encounter in the industry, and the savings to the farm allow us to invest more of our production earnings back into our program," Daley said.





Superior Supporters

Since 1997, Superior Ag has awarded more than \$500,000 in scholarships

Superior Ag Merges with Advisory Council to Streamline and Strengthen Industry Ties



When a financial crisis in 1992 threatened to shutter the College of Agriculture at Chico State, a group of industry leaders banded together to rally support for the program, and they formed Superior Ag in the process. Their efforts worked, and when the crisis was over, Superior Ag evolved into a fundraising affiliate of the College of Agriculture, raising money for scholarships and other college needs, primarily through a popular golf tournament that generates nearly than \$50,000 annually for scholarships and agricultural programs at Chico State.

Now 25 years after its first golf tournament, Superior Ag is evolving once again. In March 2020, the Superior Ag Board of Directors voted to formally merge with the College of Agriculture's advisory council to create one unified group under the Superior Ag banner that would collectively provide fundraising, advocacy, and advisory support to the College of Agriculture. The two boards had been separate entities, but each has been invited to the other's meetings since the previous dean, Jennifer Ryder Fox, recognized their overlap and shared

interests in 2008. The merger of the boards under the umbrella of Superior Ag serves to formalize the organizational structure that has operated informally for more than a decade, and it strengthens the influence of Superior Ag on the strategic and curricular planning of the College of Agriculture.

Superior Ag board chairman **Tyler Bramble** (Animal Science, '94) said he is excited about the new structure, which was designed to solidify the bonds between the College of Agriculture and its most ardent supporters.

"We had these two groups of people who were incredibly committed to Chico State and to agriculture in general," Bramble said. "Consolidating us into one board and increasing our points of contact throughout the year should allow us to be more effective both in the fundraising and advocacy that Superior Ag has spearheaded, as well as the curricular and programmatic advising that the Ag Advisory Council provided."

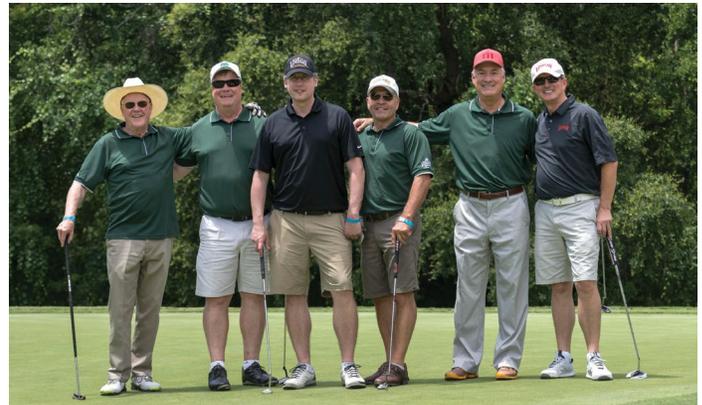
College of Agriculture **Dean John Unruh** said that the college values and relies upon the newly merged organization now more than ever.



“We recognize that the very existence of the College of Agriculture, as well as its growth and success over the past three decades, has been possible due to the work of Superior Ag,” he said. “I believe this structure will strengthen the networks among our alumni, industry partners, faculty, staff, and students to better move us all forward.”

Superior Ag’s board of directors meets quarterly to review program needs, advise the dean and faculty on industry issues, provide support in the areas of fundraising, advocacy, and student success, and allocate the organization’s budget to scholarships and academic programs. Since 1997, Superior Ag has awarded more than \$500,000 in scholarships to agriculture students in the College of Agriculture at Chico State, while providing nearly as much to countless academic programs such as field trips, student travel and professional development, FFA Field Days, and recruitment activities. ■

To be a part of Superior Ag’s mission to support students in the College of Agriculture, text [chicosuperiorag](tel:5308987177) to 71777 or visit app.mobilecause.com/vf/chicosuperiorag



Congratulations to the Class of 2020



THANK YOU TO

College of Agriculture Donors Fiscal Year 2019–20

From starting new scholarships and purchasing state-of-the-art equipment to sending students to competitions and conferences all over the nation, private giving means the difference between a good College of Agriculture at California State University, Chico and a great one. Thank you to the following donors who made contributions to the College of Agriculture between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020.

Support our programs by making a tax-deductible donation, we have included a convenient envelope or go to www.csuchico.edu/ag.

BUSINESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS

A & R Meats
Bj's Restaurants, Inc.
Bucke's Feed & Grain
Burroughs Family Farms, LLC
California Crop Improvement Association
Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation
CNT, Inc.
College Fund Nut Co.
Community Foundation for San Benito County
Coultas Farms
Country Grown and Cowboy Sewn
Crystal Amen Photography
Driscoll's Berries
Duarte Nursery, Inc.
Durham Pump, Inc.
Fanno Saw Works
Farm Credit West, FLCA
Farmers International, Inc.
FoodState, Inc.
Gaia Fund
Giustina Forest Foundation
Glenn-Colusa Cattlewomen Assoc.
Globetrotter Foundation
Golden State Farm Credit

Green America
Green Tree Nursery
Heritage Insurance Agency
Hogan Hay Sales
K-Coe Isom
Law Offices of Alan M. Laskin Loft
Lopez Club Lambs
Mickelson Club Lambs
Morning Star Packing Company
North Valley Ag Services
North Valley Community Foundation
Orland Livestock Commission Yard, Inc.
Pacific Coast Producers
PBM Supply & Manufacturing, Inc.
Pendleton Round Up
Plumas Bank
PMS Instrument Company
R & S Farms, Inc.
R. Gorrill Ranch Enterprises
Rabbit Hole Hay

Red Bluff Bull & Gelding Sale Committee
Red Bluff Future Farmers of America
Red Bluff Roundup
Rice Researchers, Inc.
Richard Hughes Dairy
Schmidt Family Foundation
Second Nature, Inc.
Shasta Farm Supply
Sierra Nevada Cheese Company
Snow Goose Farms
Sunbelt Rentals
Sustainable Markets Foundation
T & D Willey Farms, Inc.
Tehama County Farm Bureau
Tri Counties Bank
Whole Foods Market, LP
Wilbur Ellis Company
Willows Veterinary Clinic
Zenith Insurance Company
Zoetis Animal Health



OUR DONORS

INDIVIDUALS

Dr. and Mrs. Lee S. Altier
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Alves, III
Mr. David R. Anderson
Mr. Kurt K. Anderson
Mr. Olivio A. Arios
Mrs. Clifta K. Atlas
Ms. Ciara A. Babcock
Drs. Richard and Marian Baldy
Mr. and Mrs. Kevin Banwarth
Dr. and Mrs. LeRoy N. Barker
Mrs. Catherine Bartels
Ms. Jessica N. Bartlett
Ms. Caitlin A. Baumann
Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Beadle
Mr. William S. Berens
Mrs. Karen Ellen Biane
Dr. Tyler C. Bramble
Andy Broaddus
Mr. and Mrs. Richard O. Brown
Mr. Clarke W. Brown
Mr. and Mrs. Michael D. Brown
Mr. and Mrs. Steve Brown
Ms. Joyce C. Buckley
Mr. Lee C. Bucknell
Mr. and Mrs. George Buonaccorsi
Dwight Callaway
Mr. Pete Ceccon
Mr. and Mrs. Tyler R. Christensen
Mr. and Mrs. Bernie P. Church
Mr. and Mrs. Fernando Corona, Jr.
Dr. and Mrs. A. Charles Crabb
Irene Crichton
Ms. Cindy Crockett
Mr. and Mrs. James A. Currlin
Dr. Cynthia A. Daley
Mrs. LaVerne Daley
Dr. David A. Daley

Lanell Daley-Little
Dr. Kasey L. DeAtley
Ms. Sarah J. DeForest
Mr. Jason W. DeGraff
Ms. Geneva R. Desin
Mr. and Mrs. Robert B. DeValentine
Mr. and Mrs. Craig Dewart
Mr. Lance C. Dodd
Dr. and Mrs. Patrick Doyle
Mr. Patrick Roy and Mrs. Barbara Doyle-Roy
Mrs. Rachel M. Eccles
Mr. Thomas C. English
Mr. Raymond R. Ford
Mrs. Julia S. Frank
Mrs. Carolyn Freese
Mr. and Mrs. Hans J. Gabski
Russell Gaskin
Mr. and Mrs. Randy A. Gomes
Mr. and Mrs. David Gomes
Ms. Melinda L. Gonzales
Mr. and Mrs. George W. Green, Jr.
Stanley Gregory
Mr. John L. Growney
Mr. Thomas D. Hanson
Ms. Audra Harl
Ms. Arlyne Hazel
Mr. and Mrs. Travis D. Heffner
Mr. and Mrs. John Henning
Ms. Sheryn K. Hildebrand
Dr. and Mrs. Mahlon M. Hile
Mary Hill
Mr. and Mrs. William D. Hoobler
Mr. Peter Houtman
Mrs. Cheryl Howard
Ms. Christy L. Howe
Mr. Matthew A. Hurewitz
Ms. Jacqueline V. Ioimo
Ms. Lisa L. Jensen

Mr. Aleck J. Jonas
Mr. and Mrs. Dan G. Kemp
Mr. and Mrs. Allen R. Ketchum
Mrs. Trena L. Kimler-Richards
Mr. and Mrs. Mitch Kofford
Dr. and Mrs. Makoto Kowta
Mr. and Mrs. Rick J. Kreizenbeck
Mr. Mark Lea and Ms. Priscilla Lane
Dr. Timothy LaSalle
Mr. and Mrs. Ross D. Lemcke
Mrs. Gayle R. Lemenager
Ms. Kathryn E. Lewis
Ms. Constance Liddy
Mr. Richard M. Lorenz
Mr. Allen K. Lunde
Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Macdonald
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Macdonald
Mr. Martin T. Machado
Mr. and Mrs. Timothy Mangan
Mr. and Mrs. Allen J. Marcucci
Dr. Sadie L. Marjani
Mr. and Mrs. Bruce K. Martin
Mr. Rick E. Massa
Mrs. Vicky L. Matulich
Dr. Lloyd McCabe
Mr. and Mrs. Patrick J. McCartney
Mr. and Mrs. Mike McCoy
Mrs. Theresa B. McGowan
Mrs. Susan G. McKellar
Mrs. Rosemary N. Melendy
Mr. George A. Mendoza, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. John Metzger
Mr. Lawrence A. Michel

Mr. James Moller
Ms. Xania A. Moreno
Mr. Sean A. Murphy
Mr. Glenn Nader
Ms. Sylvia K. Nagle
Ms. Joanne Nissen
Mr. and Mrs. Gerald M. Norene
Ms. Laurie Norton
Mrs. Melissa P. O'Gwin-Hansen
Mr. and Mrs. Kevin D. Olsen
Ms. Mary E. Orcutt
Dr. Patrick O'Rourke
Mr. and Mrs. Darrel Parsley
Mr. and Mrs. Randall S. Patane
Dr. and Mrs. Westley R. Patton
Mr. John W. Pearson
Ms. Estrella B. Perez
Mr. Philip W. Clements and Ms. Ashley M. Person
Dr. Celina R. Phillips
Mr. Douglas Phillips
Mr. Joe Pozzi
Mr. and Mrs. Clinton Raimer
Mrs. Deborah N. Reardan
Mr. Timothy A. Reid
Mr. and Mrs. Tim W. Reimers
Mr. and Mrs. Harrie D. Riley
Mr. Joseph Roberts and Dr. Deborah Roberts
Ms. Kiena N. Sanders
Mr. and Mrs. Westley M. Schager
Mr. and Mrs. Mike Schager
Frederic Seavey
Mr. Charles R. Sellers
Mr. Roy O. Short

Mr. Phil M. Silliman
Mrs. Sue Mylin Silvera
Mr. and Mrs. Donald R. Simic
Dr. Logan B. Smith
Dr. Baohui Song
Wesley Sperry
Dr. Michael Spiess and Ms. Patricia Witt
Mr. and Mrs. Casey R. Stafford
Mr. Brandon J. Stegall
Ms. Katherine L. Stella
Ms. Carole Stone
Ms. Susan A. Strachan
Dr. Tamzen K. Stringham
Mr. Thomas A. Tennant
Mr. and Mrs. Lance D. Tennis
Mr. and Mrs. John M. Thomas
Mr. Ronald S. Timothy
Dr. Grazyne Tresoldi
Mr. Neil Tung
Dr. John A. Unruh
Ms. Marie A. Ussery
Ms. Ashley L. Van Buren
Mr. Kurt M. Velte
Mr. Dominic DiMare and Mrs. Rina V. Venturini
Mr. and Mrs. Bernard R. Vigallon
Mr. James C. Walkley
Lyle Weber
Kathy Weeks
Mr. Brian Wilkins
Ms. Yumi A. Yasuda



Alumni News

Where Are They Now

STAY CONNECTED

We'd Love to Hear from You



1970s

Bert Owens (Agricultural Business, '72)
Owner, Western Crop Insurance—Red Bluff
bert.owens@agbrokers.com

Dave Gomes (Agriculture, '78)
Dairyman, Gomes Holstein Dairy, Inc.—Willows
gomesholsteindairy@gmail.com

1980s

Brian Wilkins (Animal Science, '84)
Technical Sales Representative, Jefe Ruminant
Nutrition—Elk Grove
wilkinsbrians56@gmail.com

Sue (Mylin) Silvera (Agriculture, '87)
Administrative Assistant, Tehama County
Department of Education—Red Bluff
msilvera21@gmail.com

1990s

Kurt Urricelqui (Agricultural Business, '90)
Territory Manager, Zoetis Animal Health—Palo Cedro
urricelqui@frontiernet.net

2000s

Shane Strickler (Agricultural Business, '00)
Strickler Livestock, Boehringer Ingelheim—Orland
shanestrickler@aol.com

**Amanda (Taylor) Gilbert (Agricultural
Science and Education, '02)**
Agriculture Instructor, Shasta High School—Redding
artgilbert22@gmail.com

Sam Maddalena (Agricultural Business, '05)
Quality Assurance Manager, The J.M. Smucker
Company—Chico
sam.maddalena1@gmail.com

Wayne Deniz (Agricultural Business, '08)
General Manager, Fastenal Company—Paynes Creek
waynedeniz@hotmail.com

Travis Howard (Agricultural Business, '09)
Deputy Agricultural Commissioner, Sonoma County
Department of Agriculture—Santa Rosa
travis.Howard@sonoma-county.org

2010s

**Sarah Jane (Neuharth) Bunch (Crops,
Horticulture, and Land Resource
Management, '12)**
Channel Marketing Manager, Granular Ag—Seattle,
Washington
sarahbunch@granular.ag

Audra Harl (Animal Science, '12)
Agriculture Instructor, Shasta College—Redding
aharl@shastacollege.edu

Ashley Van Buren (Animal Science, '12)
Secretary, MWS Enterprises, Inc.—Palermo
ashleyvanburen@hotmail.com

Andrew White (Agricultural Business, '12)
Vineyard Market Manager, Scott Laboratories—
Petaluma
andyw@scottlab.com

**Meghan Stevenson (Agricultural Business,
'12)**
Director of Manufacturing Quality Assurance, SK
Food Group—Reno, Nevada
stevensonmeggie@yahoo.com

**Demetrio Martinez (Crops, Horticulture, and
Land Resource Management, '13)**
Production Manager, Resetar Bros. Farming Co.—
Watsonville
dm.resetarbros@att.net



Where Are You Now?

Drop us a line or send an email. It's a great way to build your professional network and catch up with old friends.

Please include:

Name | Graduation Year

Occupation | Company

City | Email

Tell us about the news you want to share, *including photos.*

THE HARVEST

Send to:

Sarah DeForest
 Director of External Relations
 College of Agriculture
 400 West First Street
 California State University, Chico
 Chico, CA 95929-0440
sdeforest@csuchico.edu

Michael Lynch (Crops, Horticulture, and Land Resource Management, '14)
 PCA/Research Associate, Butte County Rice Growers Association—Chico
mjlynch25@gmail.com

Ryan Scagliotti (Agricultural Business, '14)
 General Manager, Fiddymont Farms, Inc.—Lincoln
ryan@fiddymontfarms.com

Elisabeth Quick (Crops, Horticulture, and Land Resource Management, '15)
 Biologist, Sutter County—Yuba City
equick@co.sutter.ca.us

Nick Bellizzi (Crops, Horticulture, and Land Resource Management, '16)
 Head Grower, Gotham Greens—Baltimore, Maryland
nick.k.bellizzi@gmail.com

Hannah Garrett (Agricultural Science and Education, '16)
 Leadership Development Coordinator, California FFA Association—Galt
hgarrett@californiaffa.org

Judith Mendes (Agricultural Business, '16)
 Customer Service Manager, Wilbur-Ellis Company—Glenn
jmendes@wilburellis.com

Laura Boots-Haupt (Crops, Horticulture, and Land Resource Management '17)
 Nursery Quality Control Supervisor, The Wonderful Company—Wasco
laura.bootshaupt@wonderful.com

Benjamin Raynal (Crops, Horticulture, and Land Resource Management '17)
 Vegetation Management, Sierra Pacific Industries—Chico
braynal@spi-ind.com

Kira Asel (Agricultural Business, '18)
 Ag & Standards Inspector, Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner's Office—Tulare
kira.asel@gamil.com

Erin (Dettner) Christiansen (Agricultural Business, '18)
 Pesticide Inspector, Wyoming Department of Agriculture—Cheyenne, Wyoming
dettner67@gmail.com

Tyler Doman (Agricultural Business, '18)
 North Live Operations Management Supervisor, Foster Farms—Atwater
tyler.doman@fosterfarms.com

Josh Parreira (Crops, Horticulture, and Land Resource Management, '18)
 Field Manager, Hart Farms—Orland
jparreira530@gmail.com

Hunter Allen (Animal Science, '19)
 Territory Manager, Champion Animal Health—Glenn
hunter@chpah.us

Gus Campa (Crops, Horticulture, and Land Resource Management, '19)
 Assistant Manager, Campa Fresh—Escalon
gusc14@gmail.com

Grey Foster (Agricultural Business, '19)
 Credit Analyst, Golden State Farm Credit—Red Bluff
grey.foster@gsfarmcredit.com

2020s

Taylor Lundgren (Animal Science, '20)
 Property Appraiser, Butte County Assessor's Office—Oroville
taylorlundgren28@gmail.com



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHICO

400 W. FIRST STREET

CHICO, CA 95929-0440

Electronic Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

California State University, Chico

Support our programs and register for events at
www.csuchico.edu/ag



Follow us on Instagram
[@ChicoStateAgriculture](https://www.instagram.com/ChicoStateAgriculture)



Visit our Facebook page at
www.facebook.com/chicostateagriculture



CONTRIBUTORS TO THE HARVEST



The Harvest is partially funded by Superior Ag, whose sole mission is to bolster programs in the College of Agriculture at California State University, Chico.

Editor Sarah DeForest
Contributing Writers Sarah DeForest,
Taylor Lacey
Photography Jason Halley,
Jessica Bartlett
Design Gail Vanderhoof
Copy Editors Ashley Gebb,
Amanda Rhine
Printing Fruitridge

College of Agriculture
California State University, Chico
400 W. First Street
Chico, CA 95929-0440

T 530-898-3737
F 530-898-5845
E sdeforest@csuchico.edu
W www.csuchico.edu/ag