Bell Family Honored at College of Agriculture's Fall Festival

More than 350 alumni, students, parents and community members crowded the University Farm pavilion on Saturday, Oct. 8 to celebrate the CSU, Chico College of Agriculture’s annual Fall Festival and honor the Bell family for their dedication to the college and its students.

The college recognized the Bell family as the Hall of Honor inductee during the evening program, along with recognizing other scholarship donors. Accepting the award on behalf of the family were sisters Claudine and Helen Bell. “The Bell family has demonstrated that combining vision and generosity can have a positive impact on both our students and the agriculture industry for generations to come,” says Charles Crabb, dean of agriculture at Chico State.

The festivities began with farm tours and other activities. Guests were treated to a wine and cheese tasting, featuring wines generously donated by Clo Saron, Grey Fox Vineyards, Odyssey Winery and Vineyard, Quillili Vineyard, Renaissance Vineyard and Winery, and The R.H. Phillips Winery and cheese donated by Anderson Creek Dairy, Land O’ Lakes, Dairy Farmers of America, Pedrozo Dairy, and Sierra Nevada Cheese Co. A new addition to this year’s program was beer tasting with beer donated by Sierra Nevada Brewery, Tuscan Brewery, and Butte Creek Brewing Co. Guests also enjoyed a tri-tip dinner prepared by the Butte County Cattlemen.

The evening also included a raffle hosted by Alpha Zeta, a professional honors fraternity for agriculture majors. Raffle prizes included an overnight stay at Crockrell High Desert Lodging, tickets for the Shasta Dinner Train, wine gift baskets, and plenty of other great items.

Since its inception in 1991, the Fall Festival has become a much anticipated event that brings together the College of Agriculture with the community while honoring those individuals that continue to inspire the excellence of the college and its students. The event is sponsored by CSU, Chico College of Agriculture and Superior Ag, an industry-based support group whose main goal is to provide scholarships to help deserving CSU, Chico students fulfill their career goals.

College of Agriculture Golf Tourney Celebrates 10th Year

by Desiree Gonzalez, External Relations Coordinator

The agriculture community again showed its support at the 10th Annual CSU, Chico Superior Ag-Wittmeier Ford Golf Classic at Butte Creek Country Club on Monday, July 18, 2005. Since its inception in 1995, the tournament has raised close to $380,000 for scholarships and other student-related programs.

Wittmeier Ford again donated $7,500 this year to the tournament, serving as the main sponsor for the fourth year in a row. Tri Counties Bank, Bell Carter Olives, Farm Credit, Durham Pump, Farm Credit, Matson & Isom, Interwest Insurance, Silgan Containers and Zenith Insurance were the other major sponsors. More than 90 other sponsors and in-kind donors gave cash or goods to the tournament.

Production agribusiness, irrigation specialists, bankers, food processors, co-op managers and commodity organization managers sponsored and played in the tournament, which is the college’s major fund-raising event. This year, two teams tied with an overall winning score of 51. A Tri Counties Bank team consisting of Ray Block, Greg Foutz, Mark Lavy, John Lavy, Bruce Whitegiver and Bill Minkler tied with Matson and Isom teammates Craig Duncan, John Lee, Bryce Gibbs, Dennis Fife, Bill Jenkins and Royal Hawley. Thirty-one teams participated this year.

Golfers enjoyed two barbecue stations on the course featuring sausage from the University Farm Mears Lab and bread donated by Great Harvest. Culligan donated water, and Pepsi donated soft drinks to help keep players refreshed throughout the day.

Players and volunteers were also treated to a tri-tip dinner, with beef donated by Harris Ranch and prepared by Butte County Cattlemen. The evening program included Chico State President Paul Zingg (who also played on one of Bell Carter’s teams) as guest speaker and a drawing with more than 25 prizes, including overnight stays at hotels, rounds of golf, Kings tickets, bottles of wine, and dinners at local restaurants. Jack Mariani of Mariani Nut and Company and Bill Minkler tied with Matson and Isom teammates Craig Duncan, John Lee, Bryce Gibbs, Dennis Fife, Bill Jenkins and Royal Hawley. Thirty-one teams participated this year.

“It’s so wonderful to see the outpouring of support from sponsors, volunteers, and the number of people that come from campus to this event,” said tournament coordinator Desiree Gonzalez. “This tournament really shows our students how much we all care about their success.”

New Faculty Call Chico Home

The College of Agriculture has opened its doors to several new faculty and is excited to add these individuals to the Chico State family. Dr. Celina Johnson has filled the Animal Science position, Dr. Tim Tripp has filled the Plant Science position, and Dr. Todd Lone will be stepping in the Agriculture Business position. “We are very fortunate to have been able to hire three very talented new faculty to add to our outstanding team of faculty and staff,” states Dr. Charles Crabb, dean of agriculture. “Each one of the new faculty has significant teaching and industry experience which will translate into significant value for our students.”
College of Agriculture Focuses on Environmental Sustainability

In a world where individuals are becoming ever more conscious of the environment, it is no surprise that the CSU, Chico College of Agriculture is creating a heightened awareness of environmental sustainability among its students.

Through classes, research, and various programs at the Agriculture Teaching and Research Center, agriculture students and professors alike are getting a hands on approach to developing a more sustainable environment and a more responsible society.

“Our graduates must be prepared for the land,” said Dr. Michael Spiess, just released Version 2 of the California Career Development Event Tabulations Program. This program is used to tabulate 32 different contests at 4 CSU’s, UCD, Modesto JC, and Butte College. Spiess also redesigned the CalAgEd web site last summer which is used by California Agriculture Education organizations:

- Alpha Zeta was Students:
- Melissa Green is currently serving as the 2005-2006 California Beef Ambassador.
- Karin Aschanden, Meghan Barker, Colleen Bartlett, Grace Berryhill, Stacy Bushgen, Brad Cardosa, Bryanna Fissori, Casey Jeanne Robinson Galliani, Jessica Graves, Melissa Green, Christy Lee Howe, Sean Jackson, Kyle Jones, Jennifer Keithly, Annie Maddalena, Tiffany McIntosh, Hallie Rivers Muller, Kristen Pedro, Katherine Dee Robertson, Rachel Lee Scidmore, Karling Skoglund, Christopher Souza, Sara Taylor, Daniel Thomsen, and Sheena Zweigle all received their American FFA Degree.


A professor of plant science at Chico State, Rosecrance firmly believes that experience is true knowledge.

This concept is something that Rosecrance not only conveys to his students, but a tenant after which he models his own life. After teaching a variety of plant science courses at Chico State, Rosecrance packed his bags and his family last year and headed to South Africa in order to teach and conduct research in the area of plant science.

“I was ready to expand my studies and South Africa allowed me to do that,” said Rosecrance.

Rosecrance’s opportunity to travel to South Africa became a reality when he was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship for the 2004-2005 school year. The program, sponsored by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs sends over 800 professionals, just like Rosecrance overseas every year, according to the organization’s Web site.

Rosecrance’s fellowship allowed him to teach at the University of Stellenbosch, 50 miles east of Cape Town.

“Taking the World Food and Fiber Course opened my eyes to the responsibility I hold as a member of the agriculture community,” states former student Joe Green. “I now realize the impact that I can have in creating a more sustainable future for agriculture.”

A pivotal component in teaching students about environmental sustainable practices is the Agriculture Teaching and Research Center (ATRC).

“We pride ourselves in utilizing the Agricultural Teaching and Research Center, as well as the classroom, to demonstrate and teach sustainable production practices while underlining the importance of economic return,” says Daley.

The ATRC allows students to see environmental sustainable practices in use and enables them to then further apply that to their future farming endeavors. With the sustainability of the environment as a main objective for the ATRC, there are countless numbers of projects currently in place to enhance environmental sustainability, including the feeding of byproducts to livestock, using water-monitoring devices to keep irrigation applications to a minimum, and raising grass fed beef.

“By providing students with an opportunity to get hands on experience with a variety of production technologies, students are able to see first hand how selecting the appropriate production technology can have a positive impact on the environment” states dean of agriculture, Charles Crabb.

In addition to the use of the ATRC and courses, the research of individual professors within the College of Agriculture further paves the way for a more environmentally sound society. Within recent years professors have researched such topics as Riparian Management for Water Quality, Feasibility of Recycled Waste Water for Swine Waste Management, and Byproduct Feeding of Cattle.

“All agriculture research is conducted in a way to identify and improve environmental sustainability,” said professor Patrick Doyle.

The college’s focus on environmental sustainability is an effort that has been further supported by the university as a whole. With a recent allocation of $12,000 from the Provost’s office to support environmental projects within the College of Agriculture, it is clear that Chico State sees the college as a prime tool to implement the campus-wide goal of promoting a responsible environment.

A university formerly plagued by the issues of Apartheid, Rosescance taught courses in English, while the majority of the student population spoke Afrikaans, a language similar to Dutch and common to the white people of South Africa.

Over the desk of his peaceful office, Rosescance explained that he not only had to deal with the cultural differences between the United States and South Africa, but said that working with students who were once at war with each other was a challenge as well.

While Rosescance taught at the university, his wife volunteered in local townships, the poorest areas of the nation. Their two children attended elementary school at a school that Rosescance said reminded him of the school from Harry Potter. His children wore uniforms every day and bonded with the other children over their common love for soccer.

Rosescance’s work in South Africa also included research in such topics as fruit production and viticulture. His research into the wine industry and wine production provided a wealth of information to convey to his students currently enrolled in the “Introduction to Wine” course that he teaches at Chico State.

“Anytime our faculty takes an opportunity to spend time in different regions, they are able to bring back unique experiences that find their way into lectures,” said Charles Crabb, dean of agriculture at Chico State. “Couple the characteristics of a dedicated teacher such as Dr. Rosescance with the depth of understanding that comes from experiencing other production systems and learning opportunities for the student are enhanced.”

The students who come in contact with Rosescance agree and his courses are always packed with agriculture and non-agriculture majors, according to Crabb.

“I think he’s phenomenal,” enthused agriculture education major Austin Large. “His enthusiasm makes his students want to learn even more and he genuinely cares about our success.”
From the Dean's Desk

Some you already know this will be my last year as Dean of the College of Agriculture. It is with mixed emotions that I made the decision to step down as the dean. However, I think it is the right time for both the program and me to make this change.

For those of you who are old enough to remember, Disneyland used to sell ticket books when you went into the park. There were different classes of tickets from A to E. The A ticket rides were like the bus that ran up and down Main Street and of course the E ticket rides were the really fun rides like the Matterhorn Bobsled. For me the opportunity to serve the College of Agriculture at Chico State has been an E ticket ride. In this job I have had a great opportunity to expand my administrative skills, been able to work with what I consider one of the best faculty and staff teams in any College of Agriculture, enjoyed solid support from the campus administration and most of all had the pleasure of interacting with a great group of students.

As I recognized before I accepted this position, the College of Agriculture benefits from a strong connection with the local community and with the California agriculture industry. People in the community and our industry genuinely care about what is happening in the College of Agriculture and are appreciative of the programs we host that provide value to the North State. Although my experience is somewhat limited, I am not aware of an agriculture program that is so well connected to the community and local agriculture industry.

In the past six years the faculty, staff, and students of the College of Agriculture have accomplished things that I consider extraordinary. In spite of declining state support for our programs, the faculty and staff are teaching more students today than they have ever taught. In spite of being the smallest college in the University, the faculty and staff of the College of Agriculture are near the top in securing external support for student centered applied research. In spite of being the smallest agriculture program in the state we are attracting some of the best students from high school and community college agriculture programs. The faculty in the College of Agriculture has been recognized for their excellence for most of the prestigious campus and system awards. Whether it is a judging team, college discussion meet, election to FFA state or national office, or competing for high profile internships, our students have been very successful in competing with students from much larger programs.

I said earlier that I am leaving at the right time for the program. I am confident with the strong group of faculty and staff the College of Agriculture is in a position to be able to attract a strong pool of candidates for the position of dean. With the integration of the University Farm in the University Master Plan approved this last summer, this is the right time to bring on new leadership in the deans office that will be critical to helping to secure the private funds to make some of the plans a reality. Finally, having the opportunity to bring in a fresh perspective is always important to the continuing success of an academic program like ours.

As I said to the faculty and staff when I announced my plans to step down—"I do not know what the next phase of my life will be about, but I am looking forward to the adventure." In the next six to seven months I am looking forward to continuing to serve the College of Agriculture. I will look forward to interacting with many of you during that time. I am proud I have had the opportunity to serve this college, community and industry.

A. Charles Crabb, Dean, College of Agriculture

Stepping Down

THE HARVEST

Helping Students Find Home

by Jennifer Stockton
Agriculture Communication Student

After finding their home at CSU, Chico two alumnae found a way to help current agriculture students find their home.

DeForest was the College of Agriculture’s director of outreach and retention since January 2000. She was the main recruiter for the college and directed programs to attract and retain first-rate agriculture students.

Mostly, she wanted students to know that they had someone to come to if they had a question, DeForest said. However, those students had to find someone else to answer their questions. The spring 2005 semester was her last with the College of Agriculture, because DeForest took the next step in her life. “I think she really made a great connection with the faculty, staff and students alike,” said Susie Funk, the outreach and retention assistant.

Shannon Allard is the woman who stepped into DeForest’s shoes to help students find a place within the College of Agriculture. Allard is also an alumna; she graduated last May, with a bachelor’s in agriculture and the livestock judging team. She was most involved in SRA and served as club vice president.

DeForest was a Chico State alumna from the class of 2000. She came to Chico from her hometown Lakeview, Ore. She decided on Chico State after coming to Opportunity Day for the College of Agriculture, an event she would be in charge of once she got her job with the college, and fell in love. There were other reasons she picked Chico State. “I wanted to go somewhere everyone from my high school wasn’t going,” DeForest said.

At first DeForest was majoring in animal science to become a veterinarian. However, after taking physics and biology in the same semester she decided to change directions. She stayed with animal science, but also took communication classes. DeForest graduated with a bachelor’s in agriculture and background in communication.

After she graduated she got a job at the California Beef Council as director of public relations in Pleasanton, Calif. After two and a half years, she decided she wanted to get out of the Bay Area and applied for the director of outreach and retention position with the college.

“Sarah brought to the College of Agriculture a great attitude, a solid understanding of our programs, the people skills necessary to work with students, parents, high school and community college instructors and the faculty and staff of the college and finally excellent organization skills necessary to coordinate a complex and demanding job,” said Dean Charles Crabb in an e-mail interview.

Sarah DeForest, Susie Funk and Shannon Allard after this year’s awards banquet

Now it’s up to Allard to slip on DeForest’s shoes and continue to make Chico State our programs and has made Chico State College of Agriculture the first choice for incoming class ever during fall 2004 with 141 new students. The outreach and retention office can also boast that all six of the 2004-2005 California State FFA Officers now call Chico State their home.

In the past six years the faculty, staff, and students of the College of Agriculture have accomplished things that I consider extraordinary. In spite of declining state support for our programs, the faculty and staff are teaching more students today than they have ever taught. In spite of being the smallest college in the University, the faculty and staff of the College of Agriculture are near the top in securing external support for student centered applied research. In spite of being the smallest agriculture program in the state we are attracting some of the best students from high school and community college agriculture programs. The faculty in the College of Agriculture has been recognized for their excellence for most of the prestigious campus and system awards. Whether it is a judging team, college discussion meet, election to FFA state or national office, or competing for high profile internships, our students have been very successful in competing with students from much larger programs.

Using all of those skills, DeForest was able to aid in bringing in the college's largest incoming class ever during fall 2004 with 141 new students. The outreach and retention office can also boast that all six of the 2004-2005 California State FFA Officers now call Chico State their home.

Allard is also an alumna; she graduated last May, with a bachelor's in agriculture with an option in animal science. She started working with DeForest during her last semester as a student in order to get a feel for her new job.

She chose to come to Chico State from the Sacramento area where she attended East Nicholas High School. “I chose Chico based on the excellent ag program, friendliness of people and the location,” Allard said.

While at Chico State she took advantage of many opportunities to get involved with the college. Allard was involved with most of the clubs within the college at one point or another during her academic career including YCA, Ag Ambassadors and the livestock judging team. She was most involved in SRA and served as club president her senior year.

When asked what aspect of the job she was most excited about, her answer was similar to DeForest’s. “Helping students find their home at the College of Agriculture,” Allard says.

The director of outreach and retention is also in charge of the college’s Agriculture Ambassadors. The purpose of this organization is to recruit potential students to the college. They organize events such as the aforementioned Call Night and Opportunity Day.

This is one of many ways that DeForest interacted with current students. Rita Boyes is one of the students that DeForest worked with on various Agriculture Ambassador projects. “Sarah has been an inspiration to me,” Boyes says. “There is so much of her I admire and strive to be.”

At the last Agriculture Ambassador meeting of the spring semester Plumas Hall 205 had the highest attendance of the semester for the 7 a.m. meetings. The students wanted to say their goodbyes to DeForest, as well as meet with the new outreach and retention coordinator.

On the verge of tears, DeForest thanked the graduating seniors and the entire group for their dedication and contribution throughout the year. Then she introduced the group to Allard.

DeForest is moving to Adin in northern California. She has a position as the human resource consultant for Modoc County's Alliance for Workforce Development.

Even though she enjoyed her job at the College of Agriculture it is too far of a commute from her new house, DeForest said.

Crabb said, “[Sarah’s] leadership has helped us continue to improve the visibility of our programs and has made Chico State College of Agriculture the first choice for many students.”

Now it’s up to Allard to slip on DeForest’s shoes and continue to make Chico State the first choice for agriculture students.
When alumnus Jaimee Wood gets ready for work in the morning she doesn’t worry about answering to her one or two employers. Rather, she contemplates how her duties will affect the over 2,500 farmers and ranchers that she serves as the Executive Director of the Butte County Farm Bureau. “I enjoy just about everything about my job,” says Wood, “Especially the people.”

While the people make the journey more exciting for Wood, her job is one in which she wears many hats. Wood maintains the Farm Bureau office in Oroville, CA which includes the task of bookkeeping for the member-based organization. She also is responsible for coordinating several major events throughout the year including the Family Summer BBQ and Annual Dinner. But perhaps the most important aspect of Wood’s job is the work she does on issues affecting farmers, specifically those in our local community. “If there’s an issue important to agriculture, more than likely Farm Bureau is working to protect agriculture’s interests,” Wood says.

The education Wood received while in the College of Agriculture has definitely been an asset to her career. “I now really appreciate the Ag Business classes I had…The concepts and information I learned has been a huge help to me running the business and bookkeeping side of BCFB,” says Wood. In addition to the courses she took, Wood was actively involved in Sigma Alpha and the Young Cattlemen’s Association until her time of graduation in 1999 when she completed her degree in Agriculture.

When Wood isn’t busily working at protecting the rights of our farmers and ranchers she enjoys gardening, camping, attending baseball games, and spending time with her husband of five years, Matthew. Matthew is a local real estate broker and fellow Chico State Alumni.