Still Learning

Applied Faculty Research Enhances Undergraduate Education
Now having spent 25 years in the College of Agriculture, students are at the forefront of what I think about every day. As our enrollment continues to grow at a double-digit pace to a high of nearly 900 this fall, we are serving more students than ever before.

Now, in my second (and last!) year as interim dean of the college, my job is to gather the resources to give these students a top-quality education. Our students need hands-on facilities like the University Farm. They need bright and innovative faculty who can share their passion and knowledge about agriculture. They need internships, research projects, conferences, and competitions. They need scholarships to reduce their financial burdens. In order to provide all of these resources, we need donors to invest in our students.

That’s why I’m so excited for California State University, Chico’s new annual leadership giving society, the Tower Society. With a gift of $1,500 or more, you can have a significant impact on our students’ lives. As an alumnus, I am proud to be one of the first members of the Tower Society, and I hope that you will join me. The easiest way to do so is by making a gift online at www.csuchico.edu/AGgiving.

As you read through this issue of The Harvest, you’ll see a lot of emphasis on our faculty. That’s because faculty are the number-one factor that graduating seniors credit for their success at Chico State.

I’m very proud of all of our faculty and staff. I’m especially grateful for two faculty who have stepped into leadership roles in the past few months. Dr. Mike Spiess, who has been our program coordinator for the past three years, agreed to serve as interim associate dean while I continue in the interim dean role. Dr. Patrick Doyle was elected by the faculty to replace Dr. Spiess as program coordinator, which is our college’s version of a department chair.

2015 has been a great year in the College of Agriculture. We are excited to see what 2016 brings.

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WHAT’S GROWING ON

Ag Business Student Elected to National Office

Senior Luke Benton was elected president of the Student Section of the Agriculture and Applied Economics Association (AAEA) at the organization’s annual meeting in San Francisco July 24–26, 2015. AAEA is a non profit national association that serves the professional interests of members working in agricultural and applied economics. Benton will lead the undergraduate student section of the organization for the next year, serving with other collegians from across the nation. The leadership team’s main task will be to assist in planning the 2016 AAEA conference in Boston, Massachusetts.

Six other California State University, Chico students accompanied Benton to the annual meeting and competed as a team in the Academic Quiz Bowl competition. Benton, Angelina Dutra, Adam Paul, Trever Peterson, Mary Quade Herigstad-Franz, Jacob Richard Hanson, and Blake Shannon represented CSU, Chico in a Jeopardy-style tournament testing their basic knowledge of agricultural economics.

Chico State Sells Reserve Champion Yorkshire

A gilt that was purchased at the Chico State Swine Education Day in January earned high honors for Kaitlyn Johnson at the California State Fair in July. The Browns Valley 4-H member’s reserve champion Yorkshire gilt is from the first litter of pigs born at the University Farm out of a bred sow that the Swine Unit purchased from Jim Grimm in Maynard, Iowa, last fall. The 2016 Swine Education Day will take place January 23 at the University Farm.

Animal Science Students Compete in New Mexico

Students from CSU, Chico placed in two collegiate competitions at the Western Section American Society of Animal Science annual meeting in Ruidoso, New Mexico, June 22–23, 2015. The team of Lauren Huffaker, Ashton Hubbard, Donnielle Reynolds, and Angela Faryan tied for first place in the oral presentation component of the Academic Quadrathon, and the team placed fourth overall in the competition. Additionally, Kaylee Bohn and Grace Woodmansee presented research posters in the undergraduate research competition, in which Woodmansee placed third.

Star Students and Club of the Year Recognized at Dean’s Luncheon

The 2015 College of Agriculture Star Students and Club of the Year awards were announced at the biannual Dean’s Luncheon on May 6, 2015. Interim Dean Dave Daley made the presentations. The 2015 Star Students are listed on the next page, and each student is profiled on the College of Agriculture website at www.csuchico.edu/ag/about/star-students.

This year, Collegiate Future Farmers of America (CFFA) was chosen as the College of Agriculture’s club of the year, earning a $500 award from Superior Ag. The group has demonstrated its goal of providing agriculture education students with professional development opportunities to help them gain an edge in today’s job market. Lia Van Egmond, president of CFFA, was excited about the club’s award. “CFFA has really transformed this year into a club focused on what we felt our mission was in the college, on our campus, and in our community,” she said. “This award, to us, means we have made a difference. We have left an impact on our college, university, and community, and we are on the right track.”

University Farm Hosts 47th Annual FFA Field Day

CSU, Chico’s College of Agriculture and the Butte College Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources hosted the 47th annual Future Farmers of America Field Day on March 14 at the CSU, Chico University Farm, Butte College campus, and CSU, Chico main campus. The annual field day provided 1,771 high school students from California, Oregon, and Washington the opportunity to put their knowledge, communication skills, technical competence, and leadership skills to the test in 23 different contest areas, including agriculture mechanics, agriculture sales, meat judging, and veterinary science judging. One-hundred and fifty-five schools participated in the Field Day, about half of the agriculture programs in California.
Interim Dean Elected California Cattlemen’s Association First Vice President

CSU, Chico College of Agriculture Interim Dean Dave Daley was elected first vice president of the California Cattlemen’s Association (CCA). Daley earned his bachelor’s degree in animal science at CSU, Chico, and went on to complete his graduate work at Colorado State University. He has served on the College of Agriculture faculty for 25 years, spending the past five years as associate dean and University Farm administrator before moving on to the interim dean position in 2014. Daley advises the CSU, Chico Young Cattlemen’s Association and manages the University Farm beef unit. He has conducted an active applied research program, receiving the first Agricultural Research Initiative (ARI) grant in 1997, and he has served as the primary investigator on more than $5 million in grants. His research has focused on technology in the cattle industry with an emphasis on the utilization of alternative feedstuffs, and he has conducted national studies in genetic improvement and electronic identification. Together with his family, Daley ranches in Oroville.

College of Ag Cohosts Successful Western Regional Grazing Conference

The College of Agriculture cohosted the Western Regional Grazing Conference, titled “Grazing for Change,” with the Jefferson Center for Holistic Management February 27–28, 2015, at the University Farm Pavilion. The two-day conference was followed with an optional ranch tour on March 1, a unique opportunity for participants to walk alongside leading holistic management practitioners and rangeland scientists as they apply ecological monitoring tools to assess rangeland conditions.

The conference focused on the use of livestock to improve the water holding capacity of soil while growing more grass and improving profits. Speakers included world-renowned rangeland ecologist Allan Savory of the Savory Institute, Christine Jones of the Amazing Carbon Project in Australia, and Jason Rowntree, a rangeland extension specialist with Michigan State University. The conference featured a number of experienced farmers and ranchers such as Gabe Brown from Bismarck, North Dakota, and Tony Malmberg of Grasslands LLC.

Rangeland Management Team Enters First Competition

On Feb. 2, 2015, students from CSU, Chico’s College of Agriculture joined Professor Kasey DeAtley at the National Society for Range Management in Sacramento, where they competed in the Rangeland Cup Competition and participated in the University tradeshow booth competition.

The 2015 Rangeland Cup team consisted of Kaylee Bohn, Kevin Kunkel, Kate Moore, and Grace Woodmansee. The team tied for second place in the competition of 12 teams. The Rangeland Cup Competition poses questions that team members must work collectively to respond to, presenting on biodiversity as it pertains to ascetics, economics, morality, and services to society. Members of the team presented a case study that incorporated work previously done at the CSU, Chico range.

CSU, Chico placed third against other universities in a tradeshow booth competition. The booth was used to showcase the Vina Plains and its ecological qualities. Because there were conference attendees from all over the country, the team presented pictures of Northern California with descriptions of the region’s biodiversity. In addition to the aforementioned members of the Rangeland Cup team, Kurt Anderson, Gabriella DeSimone, and Ethan Ulmanis participated in the tradeshow booth.

Take a Look at Our Star Students

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

Dillon Johnson
MAJOR: Agricultural Business
HOMETOWN: Forest Ranch

Courtney Wright
MAJOR: Agricultural Science and Education
HOMETOWN: Galt

Devin Wilson
MAJOR: Crops, Horticulture, and Land Resource Management
HOMETOWN: Chico

Grace Woodmansee
MAJOR: Animal Science
HOMETOWN: Chico
Standout Students

Two Agriculture Students Receive Prestigious Lt. Robert Merton Rawlins Merit Award

Jillian Casacca and Patricia Garcia grew up in very different communities. Casacca is the fifth generation of her family to be raised in rural Humboldt County, where timber and livestock dominate both the landscape and the economy. Garcia, a first-generation American, grew up in urban Orange County, drawn to animal science by a fascination of birds. Both students impressed their faculty in the College of Agriculture enough to be nominated for the prestigious Lt. Robert Merton Rawlins Merit Award.

The Rawlins merit scholarships are named in honor of Lt. Robert Merton Rawlins, who died piloting a B-29 over Tokyo Bay during World War II. Wishing to leave a legacy in the name of her son, Fern Rawlins established in 1981 the Lt. Robert Merton Rawlins Merit Award endowment. Each year, faculty nominate the recipients based on academic achievement, extracurricular activities, and professional accomplishments.

Casacca grew up with a deep love for agriculture. Her first beef heifer was a gift from her dad around the age of 9 or 10. When she entered high school she bought two more registered heifers and expanded her herd further in her senior year.

“I always knew I wanted to be involved in agriculture and run my own cattle operation. I hope to be able to continue growing and expanding my herd while also working in a career that allows me to support other producers,” Casacca said.

Casacca worked for American Ag Credit over the summer and feels like she found her calling.

“I enjoyed working with numbers and also being able to meet producers face-to-face. I like the Farm Credit system, and any job that impact producers, I would really love to do.”

Casacca was nominated for the Rawlins award by agricultural business professor Baohui Song, who said, “Jillian has been the top student in every class she has taken with me, earning close to 100 percent across the board. Her academic track record, talents, passion for agriculture, and friendly and responsible personality make her a superior candidate for this prestigious scholarship.”

Casacca continues to advance her knowledge about beef cattle production. She served as the California Beef Ambassador in 2014 and was elected president of the Chico State Young Cattlemen’s Association for the 2015-2016 academic year.

Growing up in Buena Park, California, Patricia Garcia didn’t have the same exposure to agriculture that Casacca had, but she always loved animals.

“Birds were the only animal that my dad would allow in the house,” Garcia said. “I grew up with parakeets, cockatiels, finches, and doves. As I got older I realized that birds are an important indicator species that people don’t pay much attention, so that got me really interested.”

Garcia joined the FFA when she entered high school. Recognizing Garcia’s interest in veterinary science, her agriculture advisor encouraged her to get involved. She joined the specialty animal judging team, raised chickens for the fair, and eventually decided to apply at CSU, Chico as an animal science major.

Since arriving at Chico State, Garcia has pushed herself to excel both inside and outside of the classroom. In addition to a major in animal science, Garcia is pursuing minors in biochemistry and biology to help her prepare to apply for veterinary school. She also works in the College of Agriculture as a laboratory assistant, helping organize lab materials, prepare chemical solutions, and assist faculty and staff in Plumas Hall and at the University Farm. Her long term goal is to graduate from veterinary school with a focus on avian science and eventually work in avian research and conservation.

Garcia’s advisor Celina Phillips nominated her for the Rawlins Award.

“Patricia is hardworking and intelligent. Academically, she is one of the top students in our college, yet it is her ‘can do’ attitude and servant heart that truly sets her apart from her peers,” Phillips said.

Since the Rawlins award program’s inception, more than $1.4 million in scholarships has been awarded to more than 900 CSU, Chico students.
For the first time, a College of Agriculture professor holds the top faculty leadership role in the University. Plant science professor Elizabeth “Betsy” Boyd was elected chair of the Academic Senate in May. The Academic Senate is a representative body that enables faculty, staff, and students, through shared governance, to participate and provide recommendations on the University’s direction.

What makes Boyd’s term as Academic Senate Chair even more unique is that, at 37 years old, she became one of the youngest senate chairs in campus history. Boyd was first elected to represent the College of Agriculture on the Academic Senate in 2010 and became Chair of its Educational Policies and Procedures Committee (EPPC) three years later. In that role, she navigated some challenging issues, including the development of a comprehensive Executive Memorandum on Academic Program Discontinuation.

“That was a difficult time for the faculty, students, and administrators who were affected, and tensions were high. I had some amazingly helpful mentors, and my goal was to remain impartial and allow all voices to be heard.”

Boyd’s skill in navigating tough issues made her a clear successor when former chair Paula Selvester’s term ended in May 2015.

“I believe strongly in the model of shared governance. It is an integral component to fulfilling the ultimate mission of the University, which is to serve our students and community,” Boyd said. “I’d like to see staff and students have more of a role in the process, too. We have some tough issues ahead of us this year, but I’m really excited about the opportunity to help the stakeholders in our campus community have a voice, to let them know their voice is heard, and that it is essential to our campus.”

Boyd is trained as an entomologist and weed scientist. She also is a farmer and a licensed pest control advisor. She teaches economic entomology, weed science, plant protection materials, and integrated pest management.
The 20th Annual Tri Counties Bank/Superior Ag Golf Classic took place at Butte Creek Country Club on June 8, 2015, raising more than $50,000 for scholarships and academic programs in the College of Agriculture. The Interwest Insurance team of Brian Peterson, Shawn Blofsky, Ciaran Hoban, Matt Bauer, Nick Hanna, and Cain Medina won the tournament with a score of 50 in the shotgun scramble format. One hundred ninety-two players and 30 volunteers participated in the 20th anniversary golf tournament.

The Superior Ag Golf Classic has evolved since its first year in 1996 when the tournament took place at Plumas Lake Golf & Country Club in Marysville. The fundraiser was the brainchild of then-development director John Gibbens and Mike Sandrock, who co-chaired the first event along with tournament chairman Tom Martin and co-chair Jud Carter.

Since 1996, the tournament has raised nearly $700,000 for the College of Agriculture. More than half of the proceeds have gone to scholarships to nearly 300 students, with the other half supporting academic programs in the College of Agriculture such as field days, internships, and professional development for students and faculty.

The 2016 Superior Ag Golf Classic is set for June 13 at Butte Creek Country Club. Contact 530-898-5844 for more information.
Winners of the 20th Annual Tri Counties Bank/Superior Ag Golf Classic

20th Annual Tri Counties Bank/Superior Ag Golf Classic Sponsors

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Chico State Report Details Ag’s Economic Contribution to Northeastern California

Reprinted from California Cattleman Magazine

Nearly one in five jobs in northeastern California and 17 percent of all economic activity in the region are connected to agriculture, according to a report released by the Agribusiness Institute at California State University, Chico. “The Contribution of Agriculture to Northeastern California’s Economy in 2013” studied agriculture’s importance to the economy in the region made up of Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, and Yuba counties.

While other researchers have published studies showing agriculture’s impact on the statewide economy, CSU, Chico agricultural business professor Eric Houk saw a need for a more targeted report specific to the region that the University serves.

“In a state as large and diverse as California, statewide analysis is not very useful when examining agriculture within certain regions of the state,” he said. “Even though people knew agriculture was important in northeastern California, and we are surrounded by agricultural production, we didn’t have anything that succinctly quantified its value.”

Houk’s report combines demographic, economic, and agricultural production data from public sources and then uses a computer package called Impact Analysis for Planning (IMPLAN) to capture the relationship between various sectors of the economy. In addition to identifying the direct impacts of agriculture production and processing, which make up more than 40,000 jobs in northeastern California, the IMPLAN tool allowed him to estimate the “multiplier effect” of agriculture throughout the economy. The research details the “indirect” and “induced” impacts of agriculture on the economy.

“Indirect impacts occur in other sectors of the economy because of their inter-industry connections,” Houk explained. “For example, truck transportation would not be included as a direct component of ‘agriculture,’ but this sector will be indirectly impacted by the amount of agricultural production that occurs in the region.”

Induced impacts, he said, measure the effect of personal expenditures by households that receive income from agriculture. “Induced impacts will capture the regional benefits of spending income that was generated from the agricultural sector on a variety of other economic sectors like home improvements, medical services, retail establishments, etc.”

The result of these calculations is that 16.3 percent of all jobs, 17 percent of labor income, and 16.9 percent of economic value created in the region can be tied to agriculture. Statewide, 7.6 percent of jobs, 7 percent of labor income, and 6.8 percent of economic value come from agriculture’s direct, indirect, and induced effects, meaning that the economy in northeastern California depends more upon agriculture than the state does overall.

This gap in agriculture’s economic impact between northeastern California and the rest of the state was one of the factors Houk had in mind when he set out to write the report.

“I want people to understand how the economy in some regions of California is much more dependent on agriculture,” Houk said. “The multiplier effect of agriculture is greater in smaller regions like northeastern California.”

The report also explored the economic effects of agriculture production and processing in each of the 14 counties that make up the region. In Butte County, for example, Houk found that 27 percent of all jobs and 27 percent of economic activity are tied to agriculture.

While the report provides a wealth of information about agriculture’s economic impact in northeastern California, Houk said he hopes it will also be useful for land use planning and making future decisions about the region’s agricultural future.

“Even though agriculture is a significant piece of the region’s economy, we should be thinking about what other uses of land in the region might also be important,” he said. “We need to balance the agricultural economy with other economic uses of land in the region.”
upon agriculture than others,” he said. “This report helps document the magnitude of these differences and clearly shows that northeastern California is much more dependent on agriculture than the state as a whole.”

Even within the northeastern California region, the diversity of terrain, weather, and land use makes it difficult for researchers to summarize their findings, so Houk further subdivided the area into six valley-dominant counties (Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Tehama, Sutter, and Yuba) and seven mountain-dominant counties (Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, and Trinity).

The valley-dominant counties led the region in both population and agricultural production. Sixty-three percent of the region’s residents live in the valley-dominant counties, which also produced 82 percent of the region’s total value of agricultural production. Colusa County is the largest agriculture-producing county in the region with more than $900 million in agricultural value, outpacing Butte County, which led the region in 2012.

The differences in land use between the valley and mountain sub-regions is evident in average farm size, which was twice as large in the mountain-dominant counties at 658 acres compared to the 333-acre average farm size in the valley-dominant counties. Houk attributes that difference to the dominance of livestock production in the mountain counties.

As a whole, the region produces more than 100 different commodities with three crops—rice, walnuts, and almonds—making up more than half of the region’s total value of production. That diversity, Houk said, serves the region well.

“We have a variety of commodities that have over $100 million worth of production, ranging from rice, orchards, and milk in the valley to alfalfa, timber, and cattle in the mountains,” he added. “The diversity of agriculture in the region can help make the agricultural industry more resilient to future changes in the long run.”

In fact, the diversity and the size of its agricultural economy provided the region with a buffer during the recession in 2008 and 2009. While unemployment is significantly higher in northeastern California than the rest of the state and the nation, the inflation-adjusted per capita personal income remained steady and even increased in the valley-dominant counties during the same period when the state experienced its biggest decline in per capita income.

As he shares his findings with others, Houk said the differences in their reactions is one reason this research is so important.

“Some people have heard various statewide statistics that diminished agriculture’s role in the economy, and these people are often surprised to hear how large of a role agriculture plays in the region,” he explained. “Others see agricultural production all around them and they may be surprised to hear that the overall contribution of agriculture, including multiplier effects, is around 17 percent of the economy in this region. The vast range of expectations that people have regarding agriculture’s role is one of the things that made me interested in pursuing this study.”

“The Contribution of Agriculture to Northeastern California’s Economy in 2013” is second in a three-year grant provided by the Agricultural Research Institute to quantify the significance of agricultural production, processing, and related industries to the overall economy of northeastern California. Houk worked with student research assistant Dillon Johnson and the Center for Economic Development at CSU, Chico to produce the report.

The full report is available online at www.csuchico.edu/ag.

**Key Findings**

- The unemployment rate in northeastern California was 12.8 percent in 2013. This is 3.9 percent higher than the state and 5.5 percent higher than the United States.
- Inflation-adjusted per capita personal income increased at a much faster rate between 2003 and 2013 in northeastern California than the state as a whole (16 percent versus 9 percent).
- The total value of agricultural production was nearly $4.5 billion in 2013, more than double that of 2003.
- Colusa County had the highest value of production in 2013 ($920 million).
- The highest valued commodities in northeastern California were rice ($903.8 million), walnuts ($855.9 million), and almonds ($713.1 million).
- The highest valued commodities in the mountain-dominant counties were strawberry plants ($150.9 million), timber ($128.4 million), and alfalfa ($125.1 million).
- Farm production expenses increased approximately 50 percent between 2003 and 2013.
- Net farm income increased approximately 200 percent from 2003 to 2013, while total government payments decreased by over 60 percent.
- Agriculture was responsible for creating 60,157 jobs in northeastern California in 2013 (16.3 percent of all jobs and 20 percent of all private sector jobs). This includes 40,054 jobs directly in agriculture and an additional 20,103 jobs created through multiplier (indirect and induced) effects.
- Agriculture is responsible for creating $2.9 billion in labor income in northeastern California in 2013 (17 percent of all labor income).
- Agriculture is responsible for creating $4.8 billion in total value added to the northeastern California economy in 2013 (16.9 percent of the total value added or approximately 17 cents of every dollar created by the northeastern California economy is associated with agriculture).
When Professor Cindy Daley joined the faculty of the College of Agriculture in 1998, research was viewed by some to be outside the mission of a teaching-focused institution. Fresh out of a PhD program at UC Davis, Daley disagreed. “We expect our students to get their hands dirty and learn by experience. Research does the same thing for faculty. It’s the difference between reading something in a book and having lived it yourself,” she said.

The problem in the California State University system was that research was encouraged but not necessarily supported. “I always wondered why faculty within the CSU were evaluated for research and professional development as a part of the retention, tenure, and promotion process when they didn’t have any resources to do the job,” Daley said. “In those days, if you wanted to do research, you had to get creative.”

In the late 1990s, an effort was underway to build the capacity of the state’s non-land grant universities to conduct applied agricultural research. Professor Daley helped the late Dean Tom Dickinson write a successful bid that was blended with similar documents from California State University, Fresno, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, and California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo to create the consortium that would become the Agriculture Research Institute (ARI). In 1999, the state legislature approved and Governor Gray Davis signed a $5 million-per-year authorization to fund agricultural research and extension within the CSU system.

During the first round of ARI funding in 2000, Daley received a grant to conduct a project in collaboration with a local rice farmer. She combined ARI funding with matching funds from the California Air Resources Board to determine the feasibility of diverting two large agricultural waste streams, rice straw and dairy manure, to produce compost. The project delivered rice growers feasibility and profitability data to help guide composting operations, provided students with research and employment opportunities for the duration of the project, and left the College of Agriculture with its own composting facility, enhancing operations and sustainability at the University Farm for more than a decade. Since 2000, Daley has developed a diverse research portfolio including work to support the nutritional benefits of grassfed beef and dairy, sustainable feeding strategies, and the development of first...
organic dairy at a West Coast university. Her grants continue to enhance her teaching program and provide valuable resources for undergraduate research.

College of Agriculture Interim Dean Dave Daley, who has himself conducted research amounting to more than $5 million in grants, sees the equipment and facilities funded by ARI as one of the many side benefits of an active research program.

“ARI and its corresponding matching funds bring more than $1 million per year to the Chico State campus. Some of that funding is used to purchase equipment that will remain and be used widely by students and faculty when the research is done,” Dave Daley said.

As an example, he points to the state-of-the-art electronic feeding system that the College of Agriculture purchased in 2013 as part of a research project to compare growth performance across cattle breeds. The GrowSafe system monitors feed intake on an individual animal basis, which has opened up new research and teaching opportunities that were previously unthinkable.

Animal science professor Kasey DeAtley co-leads the growth performance research with ARI funding and matching contributions from Alturas Ranches and Green Valley Enterprises. For her, the ability to conduct applied research as a principal investigator completes a long circle that began as an undergraduate in the early 2000s.

“I had no idea what research was when I came to Chico State,” DeAtley recalled.

As a student employee of the University Farm’s dairy and beef units, she began working alongside faculty on the research they were conducting.

“My goal was to gain experience as a livestock manager. What I learned was that having an understanding of research makes you a better manager. I went from collecting the usual records that livestock producers keep to collecting records on everything.”

She eventually enrolled in AGRI 490 (agricultural experimental research) where she was able to conduct her own research project evaluating serum sources for in vitro fertilization of beef embryos. When she graduated in 2005, Dave Daley needed a full-time research assistant, so DeAtley stayed in Chico for two more years. During that time, her former faculty convinced her to apply for graduate school. She entered New Mexico State University (NMSU) in 2007 to pursue a master’s degree in animal science with a focus on animal breeding and genetics. She found that her undergraduate research experience gave her an advantage over many other students in graduate school.

“I already understood how research is conducted and data is analyzed, so I was ready to hit the ground running,” DeAtley said.

Over the next five years at NMSU, DeAtley would finish both a master’s and a PhD, contribute to eight published research trials, and rack up several awards including the Frank Baker Memorial Scholarship from the Beef Improvement Federation, the A.L. Neumann Award for Outstanding Animal Science Research Paper in the Department of Animal and Range Sciences, and the Distinguished Graduate Student Award from the NMSU chapter of Gamma Sigma Delta. In 2013 she made her way back to Chico State and joined the faculty in the College of Agriculture.

In just two years at Chico State, DeAtley has secured more than $700,000 in research grants and earned the Debut Award from the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (RESP) in 2015. She has also mentored several students as they develop their research portfolios.

“I owe so much of my educational and career success to the opportunities my own faculty gave me to collaborate on their research. I feel like I have an obligation to continue that tradition with my students,” DeAtley said.

DeAtley’s mentorship has helped senior animal science major Grace Woodmansee find her passion in range science. Woodmansee got to know DeAtley while helping her collect and analyze data on a feed digestibility study using cannulated heifers at the University Farm in 2014.

“I had been exposed to the concept of research in class, but it had always seemed a little intimidating. Working one-on-one with
I think our research helps students transform from consuming information to creating information. They begin to realize that information is not all 'out there' as the Internet age might make us believe. There are still a lot of things we just don’t know, and students can be involved in the discovery,” he said.

Rosecrance’s research portfolio in recent years has been heavily focused on supporting growers in California’s emerging olive oil industry. He has received more than $200,000 from ARI, the UC Cooperative Extension, and California Olive Ranch to study production and cultural practices in high-density olive orchards, particularly the use of water-deficit irrigation.

“My favorite part of research is the collaboration,” Rosecrance said. “I get to work with students, growers, and UC researchers to conduct the research, then I get to give talks and share the information with other growers. I really feel like we’re providing a valuable service to the industry.”

The theme of collaboration also rings true with agricultural business professor Jake Brimlow.

“I have used bull consignment auction data from an ARI project as a central part of my ABUS 415 (agricultural price analysis) course, teaching students to conduct the data analysis we did in the project. My local food research has become the basis for a food systems unit that I teach in ABUS 101 (introduction to agricultural business). I use the solar project in ABUS 465 (agricultural finance) to illustrate net present value and investment analysis,” he said.

Of all of the faculty in the College of Agriculture, Brimlow may have gained the most from his research. He and his local food systems collaborator, Noelle Ferdon, are engaged to be married in the spring.
Professor Mitch Johns retired from CSU, Chico in May after 17 years teaching soil science. The son of a United States Air Force serviceman, Johns was born at West Point. His family settled in Altoona, Pennsylvania, and Johns earned his bachelor’s degree in agronomy from Penn State. From there, he moved to Bozeman, Montana, to pursue his master’s degree in soil science at Montana State University. He worked abroad for several years in Libya and Saudi Arabia before returning to Montana State University to continue his graduate studies. Johns joined the CSU, Chico College of Agriculture in 1998 from Louisiana State University, where he worked as a research chemist for USDA’s Agriculture Research Service.

When the opportunity arose at CSU, Chico, Johns said he was eager to try his hand at teaching. “I always had a desire to work in academia,” Johns said. “When I got the job in Chico, I don’t think I was aware of the demands that teaching would entail. I’ve learned to enjoy and love teaching, but I feel like it’s something that requires constant growth. If you think you’ve mastered teaching, you’re fooling yourself.”

In addition to a full teaching load and research portfolio, Johns has been active in the California Faculty Association where he has served as faculty rights chair for CSU, Chico since 2011. “It’s been quite an experience in the art of diplomacy, but I think it’s necessary to build amicable, friendly working relationships with other faculty and administrators.”

Interim Dean Dave Daley said Johns’ contributions to the College of Agriculture have helped to grow the plant science program from a low of 20 students in the early 2000s to more than 130 crops, horticulture, and land resource management majors today. “Professor Johns is one of the kindest people you will ever meet, and we will miss his thoughtful, respectful presence among our faculty and in the classroom.”
New Faculty Join College of Agriculture: Four Tenure-Track Faculty Bring New Energy and Expertise

Dr. Kishore Joseph

Kishore Joseph joined the agricultural business faculty in January of 2015, having earned his PhD in agricultural and applied economics from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, where his work focused on commodity futures markets. He holds a Master of Science degree in agribusiness economics and a Master of Business Administration with an elective in finance from Southern Illinois University. Joseph is originally from India, where he earned a master's degree in agribusiness management with a specialization in marketing from Archarya N.G. Ranga Agricultural University and a Bachelor of Science degree in agriculture from Kerala Agricultural University.

Joseph’s research and professional interests include agricultural marketing, agribusiness management, commodity price analysis, futures markets, and risk management. He approaches teaching with a broad array of private industry experience. He managed sales for a multinational seed company in India and has completed internships with brokerage and trading firms in the United States.

Dr. Jude Bayham

Jude Bayham is the College of Agriculture’s newest professor in agricultural business. He’s a locally grown product, having grown up in Chico and earned his bachelor’s degree in economics from Chico State. He went on to earn a master’s degree from the University of Idaho and a PhD in economics from Washington State University. Professor Bayham’s research has focused on topics related to agricultural supports and the biofuels industry, as well as the economics of wildfires.

Bayham is excited to be in the classroom engaging students in the study of economics and risk management. “I really want to learn what the students are interested in and help them get more involved in regional issues affecting agriculture and natural resource management,” he said.

In joining the Chico State faculty, Bayham follows in his father’s footsteps. His dad, Frank, will retire in 2016 after 30 years teaching in the Department of Anthropology.

Dr. Garrett Liles

Garrett Liles is a Chico native who started his academic career at Chico State through an interdisciplinary major in soil ecology under the guidance of soil science Professor Mitchell Johns. These experiences were the springboard for a master’s degree in soil and watershed sciences from University of Washington, followed by a PhD from UC Davis studying soil organic matter and the effects of disturbance and management on the terrestrial carbon cycle.

Liles is joining the faculty this fall as an assistant professor of soil and plant sciences. “This is my dream job, and I’m excited for the opportunity to teach students about soils and the natural world while serving the North State community,” he said.

His research interest is to develop niche meat processing techniques to serve the needs of domestic ethnic and international markets, and he looks forward to building a nationally and internationally recognized meat science program at Chico State.

Dr. Michael Chao

Michael Chao joined the College of Agriculture faculty in animal science from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where he completed his PhD in animal science, specializing in meat science and muscle biology. Michael also holds bachelor’s and master’s degrees in animal science, both from UC Davis. Michael’s first experience with Chico State was the 2008 Beef Day at the University Farm, which he attended as an employee of the UC Davis feedlot. One of the visiting speakers, Dr. Chris Calkins, would later become his PhD advisor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Despite many opportunities available in meat science, including one with the U.S. Meat Export Federation, where Michael has worked as an international marketing intern in the organization’s Denver headquarters and Taiwan office, he finds his greatest joy in working with students. “I really enjoy seeing students do well in their education and achieve the goals they set for themselves,” he said.

His research interest is to develop niche meat processing techniques to serve the needs of domestic ethnic and international markets, and he looks forward to building a nationally and internationally recognized meat science program at Chico State.
For Jeanette Lowe, the College of Agriculture at California State University, Chico is more than just her alma mater. It’s her home. The 2015 Distinguished Alumna has been involved with the college almost all her life and from many different points of view. She completed both her undergraduate degree in agriculture business and her teaching credential at CSU, Chico. She mentored student teachers, encouraged high schoolers to attend Chico State, lectured in classes, and established her Superior Region Future Farmers of America office at the University Farm. The College of Agriculture helped mold the philosophy she now shares with students: “Dream big, follow your passion, work hard, and love what you do.”

The Orland native was born into agriculture and began working for her grandfather as soon as she could run slips back and forth at the sale yard where he worked as an auctioneer. At the age of nine, Lowe first caught the eyes of Chico State professors Ron Hutchings and Wes Patton, who started recruiting her when she took part in her first livestock judging contests as a 4-H member in CSU, Chico’s 4-H Field Day. Along with judging livestock, she showed cattle and sheep as a 4-H and FFA member, and has been an integral part of her parent’s cattle operation, continuing with her own cattle, hay, and grain operation in Lincoln to this day.

After graduating from Orland High School, Lowe moved to the Central Coast where she spent two years at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. After realizing her heart was in Northern California, Lowe transferred to Chico State in her junior year to study agricultural business. She found no trouble getting into the groove of things upon transferring to CSU, Chico. Reflecting on her time in the College of Agriculture, she appreciates the skills she gained as a student.

“The communication skills and business courses have helped me in anything and everything I do,” she said. “I was always pushed to give reasons, make speeches, and work in groups, and those skills are priceless.”

After graduating with an agriculture business degree, Lowe went to work in marketing for Sun World, a company based in the Coachella Valley, but when they offered her a position in Southern California, the bonds of Northern California were still too strong to break.
"I could have seen myself growing in agriculture business, but I wasn’t ready to move," Lowe said. "I needed to stay local."

She returned to school at Chico State to earn her teaching credential and went to work at Hamilton High School, where she taught agriculture for 13 years. During her time at Hamilton High School, Lowe mentored 17 different student teachers and served as school counselor. Lowe took the opportunity as counselor to point students in the direction of CSU, Chico.

Lowe's bonds with the University never truly faded, and she guest-lectured regularly for agriculture education professor Dennis Hampton. When Superior Region FFA Supervisor Brad Dodson replaced Hampton at Chico State in 2000, Lowe stepped in to take Dodson's place as the regional consultant for the state Department of Education. Luckily for both the University and Lowe, the University Farm became a satellite office for her position with the FFA. Lowe said, "The working relationship between the faculty and FFA has always made me feel like I am a part of the faculty and staff."

Lowe continues to be impressed by the College of Agriculture today. "I love it. The advancements made with the farm—the cleanliness, beautification, modernization, and implementation of sustainability—are all such great developments."

Lowe has been with the college in times of growth and in times of need. "The vision of both Interim Dean Dave Daley and the faculty to keep up with the growing college using the same numbers of staff is incredible. Not only that, but the college is attracting phenomenal students and allowing great diversity from out of state. It’s wonderful to see," she said.

Lowe credits much of her career success to her time at CSU, Chico, and her involvement within the College of Agriculture. "Everyone has always treated me as if I’m part of the team," she said. "I’m blessed and thankful. It’s been an amazing ride."

Lowe was selected by the College of Agriculture faculty as the 2015 Distinguished Alumna for her excellence in the field of agriculture education, mentorship of students, and contributions to the College of Agriculture. "It’s the highest honor I can imagine," she said. "I take more pride and happiness from watching others succeed and would rather be someone behind the scenes than the one recognized. But to be recognized by family means more than I could ever say."

Lowe received her 2015 Distinguished Alumni award along with seven other University alumni during a ceremony at the Bell Memorial Union on April 10, 2015.

“Dream big, follow your passion, work hard, and love what you do.”

Lowe’s bonds with the University never truly faded, and she guest-lectured regularly for agriculture education professor Dennis Hampton. When Superior Region FFA Supervisor Brad Dodson replaced Hampton at Chico State in 2000, Lowe stepped in to take Dodson's place as the regional consultant for the state Department of Education. Luckily for both the University and Lowe, the University Farm became a satellite office for her position with the FFA. Lowe said, "The working relationship between the faculty and FFA has always made me feel like I am a part of the faculty and staff."
Where Are They Now?

**1970s**

Bob Coultas (Agronomy, ’72)
Partner, Coultas Farms – Oxnard
rscoultas@msn.com

Bill Coultas (Agronomy, ’74)
Partner, Coultas Farms – Oxnard
coultasfarms@aol.com

Larry Reilley (Agriculture, ’75)
Owner, Austin Realty – Oak View
larry@ardins.com

Walter Rutledge (Agronomy, ’76)
Nunes Vegetables – Ventura

**1980s**

Doug Weigand
(Animal Science, ’80; MBA, ’90)
Vice President/Ag Relationship Manager, Rabobank, N.A. – Red Bluff
douglas.weigand@rabobank.com

Bryan McMurry (Agriculture Business, ’83)
Business Development Manager,
Cargill Feed & Nutrition – Stockton
bryan.mcmurry@cargill.com

Louie Andreini (Agriculture, ’89)
Owner, Rentals Etc. – Red Bluff
louieandreini@gmail.com

**1990s**

Richard Egan (Agriculture Business, ’90)
Chief Administrative Officer,
County of Lassen – Susanville
regan@co.lassen.ca.us

Shelley Macdonald
(Agriculture Business, ’91)
Assistant Vice President, Golden State Farm Credit – Red Bluff
shelley.macdonald@gsfarmcredit.com

Holly Foster (Animal Science, ’98)
Video Operations Manager, Western Video Market
Owner/Operator, Foster Ranch – Oroville
holly@RobertFosterRanch.com

**2000s**

John Avila
(Agriculture Business, ’02)
Chief Financial Officer/Co-Owner,
R&J Avila, Inc. – Hilmar

Nicole Carmona-Landon
(Agriculture Business, ’03)
Self-Employed, Buzz’s Bees – Durham
nicole@buzzsbees.com

Megan Huber (Agriculture Business, ’04)
Loan Officer, Farm Credit West – Woodland
megan.huber@farmcreditwest.com

Sophia Meyer (Agriculture Business, ’04)
Assistant District Attorney,
County of Modoc – Alturas
sophiameyerlaw@gmail.com

Andrea (Derobertis) Perkins
(Agriculture Business, ’04)
Director of Regulatory Services, North American Meat Institute – Oakland
andreaperkins1981@yahoo.com

Tracy Schohr (Agriculture Business, ’04)
Junior Specialist, UC Davis
Farmer Outreach Specialist, K-COE ISOM
Partner, Schohr Ranch – Gridley
tracy@schohr.com

Brittney (Keema) Strong,
(Animal Science, ’04)
Adjunct Ag Instructor, Yuba College
Registered Vet Technician, Loomis Basin Equine Medical Center – Colfax
stronglivestock4@gmail.com

Shannon (Allard) Douglass (Agriculture, ’05)
Consultant and Owner, CalAgJobs – Orland
shannon@calagjobs.com

Joe Green (Agriculture Business, ’05)
Farm Credit West – Woodland
joseph.calvin.green@gmail.com

Stacee Henderson (Animal Science, ’05)
Ranger/Outreach & Volunteer Coordinator – US Army Corps of Engineers

Jonathan Howard (Agriculture Business, ’05)
Credit Administrator, Zions Bancorporation – Clearfield, Utah
jonathan.howard@zionsbank.com

Jessica Harris (Agriculture Business, ’06)
Sr. Manager, Customer Marketing, Earthbound Farm/Whitewave Foods – San Juan Bautista
jessica@whitewave.com

Katie (Reid) Harris (BS in Agriculture, ’06; MS in Agriculture Education ’14)
Ag Teacher – Indian Valley Academy High School, Quincy
katiereid7@gmail.com

Darby (Holmes) Heffner
(Animal Science, ’06)
Dairy Manager, California State University, Chico
University Farm – Chico
dheffner@csuchico.edu

Shaleen (Swanson) Hogan
(Agriculture Business, ’06)
Farm Loan Manager, US Department of Agriculture – Red Bluff
Independent Wellness Advocate, DoTerra Int.
shaleen.hogan@ca.usda.gov

Gina (Turri) Taylor (Agribusiness, ’93) (pictured with members of the Willows FFA) is the customer service manager at the Willows branch of Wilbur-Ellis. Taylor was instrumental in securing a $5,000 grant from her company to fund a greenhouse project for the Willows FFA. Taylor resides in Willows with her husband, Michael “Craig” Taylor (Agriculture, ’92).
gtaylor@wilburellis.com
Stacey (Stirtz) Moyles  
(Agriculture Science, ’06)  
stacey.moyles@gmail.com

Kayla (Gilardi) Ottoboni  
(Agriculture Business, ’07)  
Senior Tech Sales Representative, Bayer HealthCare Animal Health – Chico  
ottoboni.kayla@gmail.com

Jessica Cardin (Animal Science, ’08)  
Doctoral Candidate, Texas A&M University – Bryan, Texas  
jcardin@hlkn.tamu.edu

Melissa (Green) Chesini  
(Agriculture Science, ’08)  
Meat Scientist Project Manager, Superior Farms – Dixon  
melissa.chesini@superiorfarms.com

Justin Dunn (Agriculture Business, ’08)  
General Manager, Fastenal – Stockton  
judunn@fastenal.com

Monica Galli  
(Agriculture Business/ Plant Science, ’08)  
Senior Regulatory Specialist, Biotechnology Compliance, USDA Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service – Riverdale, Maryland  
mongalli@gmail.com

Emily (Brown) Hetts  
(Agriculture Business, ’08)  
Ripening Services Manager, Del Monte Fresh Produce – Forest Park, Georgia  
ebrown@freshdelflume.com

Christy Howe  
(Agriscience & Education, ’08)  
Inventory Coordinator, Altman Plants – Temecula  
chowe002@gmail.com

Grace Berryhill (Animal Science, ’09)  
PhD Student (Animal Biology), University of California, Davis  
egberryhill@gmail.com

Natalie (Schallberger) Collins  
(Agriculture Business, ’09)  
Program Director, San Joaquin Farm Bureau Federation  
natalies@sjfb.org

Jennifer Donnelly-Garrett  
(Animal Science, ’09)  
Self-employed – Lodi  
jgarrett39@yahoo.com

Juan Gomez, Jr. (Plant Science, ’09)  
Manager, Evergreen Nursery – San Diego  
jgomez20@mail.csuchico.edu

Sarah Hubbart (Ag Communications/ Political Science, ’09)  
Director, Michael Torrey Associates – Washington, DC  
sarahhubbart@gmail.com

Jillian (Keohoe) Herkert  
(Agriculture Business, ’10)  
Outside Sales Rep, Scott Laboratories – Yuba City  
jillianh@scottlab.com

Stephanie (Coryell) Laux (Agriculture Business and Animal Science, ’10)  
Research Biologist, Research for Hire – Springville  
slaux2@gmail.com

Janell Rice (Agriculture Business, ’10)  
Instructor/Academic Advisor, Oregon State University – Corvallis, Oregon  
janell.rice@oregonstate.edu

Taylor Hagata (Animal Science, ’11)  
Cow Boss/Partner, Hagata Ranch – Susanville  
taylorhagata@gmail.com

Joaquin “Ryan” Amaral  
(Agriculture Business, ’12)  
Collegiate Education Specialist, The National FFA Organization – Indianapolis, Indiana  
ramaral@ffa.org

Michael Martin (Crops, Horticulture, and Land Resource Management, ’12)  
Seed Production Agronomist/Farmer, Syngenta Seeds Inc. – Glenn  
michael.martin@syngenta.com

Breanna Benton (Agriculture Business, ’13)  
Sales Representative, Gallo Sales Company – Pacifica  
breanna_benton91@hotmail.com

TJ Binsley (Crops, ’13)  
Pest Control Advisor, Crop Production Services – Santa Paula  
taylor.binsley@cpsagr.com

Katie Hall (Agriculture Business, ’13)  
Owner, Shire Ranch – Bangor  
shireranchshoppe@gmail.com

Zach Rehder (Animal Science, ’13)  
Sales, Stanislaus Farm Supply – Modesto  
zach.rehder@stanislausfarmsupply.com

Brenae Royal (Crops, Horticulture and Land Resource Management, ’13)  
Ranch Lead, Monte Rosso Vineyard/E. & J. Gallo Winery – Sonoma  
brenae.royal@ejgallo.com

Lauren Swift (Animal Science, ’13)  
Ventura County Coalition of Labor, Ag, and Business – Ventura  
laurenswift2@gmail.com

Amie (French) Osborn  
(Agriculture Business, ’14)  
Graduate Student/Research Assistant, Purdue University – West Lafayette, Indiana  
osbornan@purdue.edu

Ashley Pipkin  
(Agriculture Science and Education, ’14)  
Social Media & Tradeshows Manager, Tanimura & Antle – Gilroy  
aveshypipkin@taproduce.com

Where Are You Now?

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Send to:  
Sarah DeForest  
Director of Advancement  
College of Agriculture  
California State University, Chico  
Chico, CA 95929-0440  
sdeforest@csuchico.edu

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UPCOMING events

January
- 23 Swine Day
- 25 Spring classes begin
- 29 Ag Social at the Red Bluff Bull and Gelding Sale

February
- 3 Alumni Breakfast at the Colusa Farm Show
- 12 Invitational Parliamentary Procedure Contest
- 13 Sheep and Goat Day
- 17 Career and Internship Fair
- 27 Beef Symposium

March
- 12 FFA Field Day
- 16–20 Spring Break

May
- 20 College of Agriculture Commencement

June
- 13 Superior Ag Golf Tournament

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Editor
Sarah DeForest

Contributing Writers
Sarah DeForest
Riley Quinn

Cover Photography
Jason Halley

Designer
Sara Bogovich

Copy Editors
Ashley Gebb
Zach Phillips

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