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Auburn equine scientist recognized for outstanding teaching

From Madeline McCurry-Schmidt, ASAS Communications

Dr. Betsy Wagner, an associate professor at Auburn University, has received the 2013 Outstanding Young Animal Scientist in Education Award from the Southern Section of the American Society of Animal Science. Wagner’s research and teaching has helped Auburn University build a strong equine science program.

Wagner grew up on a farm and was active in 4-H and FFA programs early on. Wagner thought a career in equine nutrition would be a good way to work with horses. As an undergraduate at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, Wagner took a year off to be an FFA state officer. During that year, Wagner gave talks for students of all ages.

“There was one FFA advisor that said ‘you’re really good at this, you should go into teaching,’” Wagner said.

As a graduate student at Texas A&M University, Wagner combined her passion for horses and teaching. Wagner knew of the university’s reputation for helping students land in teaching positions, so she became an Aggie and earned a PhD for her research into trace mineral nutrition.

Wagner still studies equine nutrition, but her main focus is her students at Auburn University. As an associate professor in the Department of Animal Sciences, she teaches equine science classes and organizes student events. Wagner also reaches out to the community. Wagner writes a regular column for Alabama Cattleman magazine and serves as an advisor for the Alabama Farmers Federation.

• Dr. Wayne Greene named President of American Society of Animal Science Southern Section

• Dr. Russell Muntifering elected to serve a 3 year term to the National Board of Directors for American Society of Animal Science
Darrell L. Rankins, Jr. was raised in east-central Illinois and received his B.S. degree from the University of Illinois in 1985. He earned his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from New Mexico State University in 1987 and 1989, respectively. Rankins joined the Animal Science faculty at Auburn University in 1989 as an assistant professor and was subsequently promoted to associate professor and professor.

Over the years he has taught several courses: Feeds & Feeding, Sheep Production, Stocker Cattle Production, Nutritional Toxicology and portions of courses at the School of Veterinary Medicine. His extension program focuses on beef cattle nutrition and management. However, over the years he has also conducted programs for small ruminant and dairy producers as well. Rankins has developed a comprehensive extension program on by-product feeds that is complemented by his applied research efforts in this same area. He has led numerous extension programs such as Beef + and the Triennial Stocker Conference. He has also been a key member of several team programs such as the Alabama Master Cattlemen, the Alabama Grazing Schools, and the Alabama Grazing Conference. Rankins has delivered extension programs in all 67 Alabama counties on numerous occasions and topics. He has also been invited to present numerous programs across the southeast to producers, industry personnel, veterinarians, and many others. Over the years, he has been invited to Albania, China and Mexico to present similar programs to key individuals in these countries. Rankins has also been an active advisor for several producer groups around the state of Alabama over the years. He has received the College of Agriculture Faculty of the Year Award, Director’s Award for Extension Excellence and Superior Service Award. As an extension specialist, Rankins takes the description, “a source of unbiased information,” very seriously. He is extremely diligent about providing livestock producers and others with practical and unbiased recommendations. In addition, he keeps himself current and abreast of relevant information that may or may not affect his clientele in the state of Alabama. He currently resides on a diversified livestock operation in Cusseta, AL with his wife Linda. They are the parents of one daughter and three sons.

Join us for Dr. Rankins’ Retirement Celebration on Sunday, April 14, 2013 from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Stanley Wilson Beef Teaching Unit 500 Shug Jordan Pkwy. Auburn, AL 36849

Please R.S.V.P. by April 8th to Ms. Candace Vann 334-844-1521
Auburn Academic Quadrathlon Team Places Third at Regional Competition
By Dr. Lisa Kriese-Anderson

It starts every Fall. Emails and presentations at various student club meetings asking students to form teams to compete in the Academic Quadrathlon. In October 2012, the team of Ryan Clark, Sarah Dickinson, Katie Hill and Kaitlyn McCombs placed first among eight Auburn teams. This qualified them to compete in the American Society of Animal Science Southern Section Academic Quadrathlon in February 2013. The team spent their Christmas break and first three weeks of Spring semester preparing.

The first event of the regional Academic Quadrathlon was hosted by the University of Florida Animal Science Department. It was the hands-on practicum. First stop for the Auburn team was the beef unit. They had 15 minutes to back up a 20 foot gooseneck trailer, separate out two cow-calf pairs and load them into the trailer. Then work another cow through the chute getting a weight, giving her a vaccination and determining her age. Finally, they had to look at three market steers and determine current weights and market prices. Repeat this type of process at the equine, swine, dairy, nutrition, breed identification, reproduction, meats, and equipment id stations. After lunch, the team took an hour long written exam and then drove to Orlando.

Auburn placed third overall in the regional competition against Arkansas, Berry College, Florida, Georgia, Middle Tennessee State, Mississippi State, Oklahoma State, Tennessee, Texas A&M and Tuskegee. In fact, they placed third in the hands-on practicum, written exam and quiz bowl portions of the competition.

Placing third is a great accomplishment. It is an absolutely unbelievable result when you know some additional facts about these four amazing Auburn students. Fall 2012 was the first semester any of the four students had attended Auburn. At the end, they did what all great teams do; they depended on one another and forged life-long friendships.
Thirty students participated in Spring Break ’13 Study/Travel course. This year’s trip covered cattle and horse production enterprises across Arkansas, the Southern Plains and Fort Worth, TX. Highlights of the trip included an award winning stocker operation in Arkansas, 18,000 and 85,000 head capacity beef feedyards, 5,800 cow dairy, a beef harvest facility harvesting 5,000 head daily, Historic Fort Worth Stockyards, Texas Christian University Ranch Management Program, Superior Livestock Auction, and Crown Ranch – NCHA champion cutting horses presented by Mr. Chad Bushaw. We toured multiple museums related to agriculture. The students were introduced to, and received numerous lectures from research scientist, allied industry personnel and industry leaders throughout the week long tour. At our farthest point of travel (Amarillo, TX), students left the Department of Animal Sciences Brand on the 10 Cadillac’s at the Cadillac Ranch. Student responses to the trip were “this opportunity put us up close and personal with the animal agriculture industry allowing us to see first-hand things only talked about in the classroom” and “this trip will be remembered for a lifetime”. Thanks are given to our sponsors, Merck Animal Health and Elanco Animal Health, for partial support of the Spring Break ’13 Study/Travel course.
Meet Our Alumni

COBIE RUTHERFORD

WHO? B.S., Animal Science /Pre-vet in 2006, M.S., Animal Science /Animal Breeding & Genetics in 2010

WHAT career did you choose?

I work for the Alabama Cattlemen’s Association as the Director of Industry Relations and Youth Programs.

WHY this career?

I always knew that I wanted a career in the beef cattle industry. I grew up on a beef cattle farm in Lawrence County and participated in youth livestock programs through 4-H and FFA.

HOW did AU impact your career choice?

My love of agriculture and beef cattle led me to pursue a B.S. in Animal Sciences at Auburn. After completion of my B.S. in 2006, I had a tough decision to make – attend grad school in Animal Science or attend vet school at Oklahoma State University....THANKFULLY I chose Auburn. Obtaining my Masters at Auburn under Dr. Kriese-Anderson, not only provided me with a world class education, but the network within the state and Southeast beef industry turned out to be invaluable. Upon completing my Master’s coursework I soon realized that my true life passion was working with those farm families that make the beef industry so unique. Dr. Kriese-Anderson, Dr. Greene and the entire faculty in the Animal Science department helped me fill my toolbox with all the tools I need to have a successful career.

ERIN BEASLEY


WHAT career did you choose?

I am the Director of Consumer Marketing for the Alabama Cattlemen’s Association. I work in the areas of consumer education, retail/foodservice marketing and general beef promotions for the Beef Checkoff program in Alabama.

WHY this career?

My work allows me to wear a lot of hats throughout the year, so there is never a dull moment. It fits my personality well because I get to interact with people on an everyday basis and use my knowledge of beef to help drive demand in the state.

HOW did AU impact your career choice?

War Eagle! I consider myself so fortunate to have the job that I get to do every day and my journey through the Department of Animal Sciences played a key role in getting me to this point. Aside from the books, some of the skills that I began to develop in college and graduate school have become the ones that I use the most like public speaking, writing, and time management. The Department of Animal Sciences gives its students the chance to not only have the knowledge they need to be successful, but also develops skillsets through clubs, activities and mentors in the department. I owe a huge thanks to the Meat Science team at Auburn because I gained valuable hands-on experience, knowledge and industry contacts that play a huge role in my career.
In January, a group of our members traveled to Montgomery to assist the Alabama Cattlewomen's Association with the State Junior and Senior High Beef Cook-off. We assisted in transporting dishes to the judges while Staci DeGeer and Kim Fisher put on a cooking demonstration for the contestants, parents and teachers.

Tuesday, March 19 was National Ag Day. The Collegiate Cattlemen and Cattlewomen were on campus ‘agvocating’ with brisket samples and brochures with the facts about animal agriculture and great beef recipes. About 20 students participated in the event. They were planning on being on the green space for 6 hours, but ran out of brochures and brisket samples in 3 hours. They used their time wisely and had several great discussions with non-agriculturists. They also ran an advertisement in the OA News and sported “Animal Advocate” shirts. Plans are already in the works for next year. They would like to say a special thank you to the Alabama Cattlemen’s Association that sponsored the brisket and NCBA brochures and First South Farm Credit that sponsored the Ag Facts brochures.

For more info:
Meetings every 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month at 6:00pm in Upchurch Hall 203

**Recent Events**

- **Little I, showmanship competition** was held on Saturday, March 9th at Beef Teaching Unit (pictured left, below)
- **Miracle Rodeo**, an interactive session with children from Children’s Miracle Network, was held on Wednesday March 6th at Garrett Coliseum in Montgomery, AL (pictured right, below)
Horsemans Club

President—Emily Faust, Vice President—Katy Benko, Secretary—Rachel Thomas, Historian—Amber Hardy, Advisors—Dr. Betsy Wagner, Dr. Cindy McCall

- Meetings every 2nd and 4th Tuesday in 203 Upchurch

- Our St. Jude trail ride will take place Sunday, April 14; contact Sarah Hunter, seh0035@auburn.edu
Pro-Vet Medical Association

President—Brittany Mack, Vice President—Romi Garcia, Secretary—Camille Ogletree, Treasurer—Melissa Ford, Service Chair—Trisha Beadlescomb, Advisors—Dr. Terry Brandebourg, Dr. Cathy McVay, and Dr. Julie Gard

PVMA Spring 2013 Event Schedule

March
7th: What to Expect and How to Get In with Dr. Hendrix.
   A panel of students enrolled in Auburn’s vet school will also be coming to this meeting to share some of their stories/advice.
   Chill fundraiser night!
8th-10th: APVMA Symposium
28th: Veterinary Oncology with Dr. Annette Smith
   Relay for Life will also be discussed. THIS IS THE LAST DAY TO SIGN UP FOR THE RELAY TEAM AND GET A POINT! ($10)
   This is also the last day we will count up points for Gold Member Status!
   Executive Board and Chairman applications are due!

April
5th: Relay For Life
11th: VMCAS Presentation and officer elections
20th: Vet School Open House
The Auburn equestrian team has had a successful start to its spring season, having won five-straight meets in February. The Tigers are now 10-2 (4-2 SEC) on the year and have won seven-consecutive competitions dating back to the fall portion of the season. Auburn opened spring competition on the road at Fresno State where it picked up wins over Fresno State (8-7) and No. 6 Kansas State (7-5). The Tigers then defeated No. 5 South Carolina, 10-9, at home before traveling to Bishop, Ga., where they defeated top-ranked Georgia, 12-8, and Delaware State, 15-4. Auburn returns home to host the inaugural SEC Equestrian Championship, March 29-30, at the Auburn University Horse Center.

Photographs by Danielle Long
Upcoming Events Schedule

**March 29-30, 2013**
SEC Equestrian Championship at the Auburn University Horse Center
Please click here for more info: http://www.auburntigers.com/sports/w-equest/aub-w-equest-body.html

**April 13, 2013**
B.E.E.F. U
Stanley Wilson Beef Teaching Unit on Auburn University Campus
Please click here for more info: http://www.ag.auburn.edu/ansc/news/2013springUprograms.php

**April 20, 2013**
DAIRY Goat U
A A Farms in Millbrook, AL
Please click here for more info: http://www.ag.auburn.edu/ansc/news/2013springUprograms.php

**May 4, 2013**
DAIRY U
Stanley Wilson Beef Teaching Unit on Auburn University Campus
Please click here for more info: http://www.ag.auburn.edu/ansc/news/2013springUprograms.php

**June 16-19, 2013**
AMSA Reciprocal Meat Conference hosted by Auburn University
Please click here for more info: http://www.meatscience.org/Page.aspx?Request=Calendar&EventID=90

**July 8-12, 2013**
The Alabama State 4-H Horse Show
Montgomery, AL
Please click here for more info: http://www.aces.edu/fourh/programs/docs/anisci/2013_state_4-h_horse_show.pdf

**August 16-17, 2013**
2013 Beef Cattle Conference
To be held at Ham Wilson Livestock Arena on Auburn University Campus
For registration and info, contact: Dr. Don Mulvaney mulvadr@auburn.edu or 334-844-1514