

# Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness

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## May Birthdays

- Jim Smartt 5/10
- Lucas Parsch 5/30

The *AEAB Newsletter* is a monthly publication of the University of Arkansas's Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness. Contributions from faculty, staff, students and alumni are most welcomed and should be submitted to Melinda Dunlap (AGRI 217) by the end of the month preceding the month of publication.  
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## Notes from the Department Head

Congratulations graduates! Commencement is just around the corner. For some students, these next few days will seem like a lifetime. But once that final final exam is over and the last project or paper is turned in, your life will be a little disoriented. You will be living outside that structure you have become so accustomed to these past years. Some of you will be entering the world of work and will be amazed when you don't have an automatic spring break. Others will be continuing in school, here or somewhere else. And others are still trying to figure out what comes next.

Each one of you had a different college experience. But all of you have spent a significant part of your life walking this campus and these halls. You are not the same person that arrived here right out of high school, junior college, or even undergraduate school entering our MS program. You have made friends, worried over exams, attended a few parties and learned a lot. You will all have your name in Senior Walk. We trust you will always remember your time on this campus and in our department in a positive way.

You and our faculty have invested time and energy in your education. We have done our best to convey knowledge, skills, and an ability to analyze problems using an economics framework. Now we welcome you to the university, college and departmental alumni family. And like your doting grandparents or crazy uncle, we want to stay connected. We want to know your successes and adventures in life once you leave our halls. Stay connected. Let us know how you are doing. And keep us honest. We need to know if we prepared you for your next step in life.

Please don't forget our departmental celebration 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. (following the Bumpers College Commencement) May 9 at the Fayetteville Town Center. We ask that you respond to the e-mail invitation so we will know how many people to expect. Each graduate will receive a small token from the Department to carry with you in your next adventures.

Steve Halbrook

## Bumpers College Honors and Awards Banquet

On April 16th several Agricultural Business majors were honored at the Bumpers College Honors and Awards Banquet.

**Ashley Jones**, the daughter of James and Jan Jones of Lincoln, is an Agricultural Business major with a minor in Global Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences. She is president of the Agricultural Business Club and participated in a summer service project to develop a garden for St. Matthew's School in Pomona, Belize, for two years. She will begin graduate studies in agricultural economics this fall at Kansas State University.

The Spitze Public Policy Legislative Internship recipient is **Fendley Ragland**, the son of Gerald and Yvonne Ragland of Harrison and a graduate of Harrison High School. His major is Agricultural Business with a concentration in marketing and management and a minor in finance. Ragland participates in a number of leadership activities including the Bumpers College Ambassadors.

The Greg Weidemann DBCAFLS Alumni Society Scholarship recipient is **Amanda Simpson**, the daughter of James and Linda Simpson of Cave Springs. She is a junior Agricultural Business major with a minor in Global Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences. She is president of Collegiate Farm Bureau, a Bumpers College Ambassador and a delegate to the Dean's Student Advisory Board among other activities. She was the 2008 Arkansas 4-H Governor's Award winner after serving as Arkansas 4-H President from 2006-2007. She participated in a summer service program in 2008 to create a garden for St. Matthew's School in Pomona, Belize. She will be an Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service intern in Tulsa County in the summer of 2009.

**Ashley Jones** also received the Outstanding Senior award and **Corey Fortin** received the Outstanding Graduate Student award.

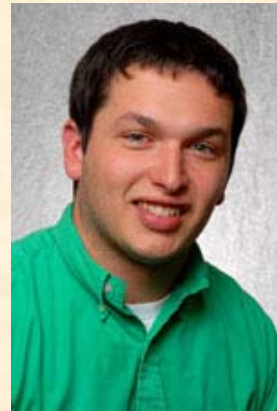
**Olivera Jankovska** was recognized for being one of the Peer Mentors.

**Fendley Ragland, Lisa Ogier, Amanda Simpson, Nathan Waldrip,** and **Jacob Wooley** were recognized for being part of the College Ambassadors

Congratulations to all of these students!



**Ashley Jones**



**Fendley Ragland**



**Amanda Simpson**



**Corey Fortin**

### Agribusiness Club Awards Banquet

The Agribusiness Club Awards banquet was held April 23 at AQ Chicken House. There were several awards given during the banquet. Here is a list of the award winners:

- Kayla Boling**-Scholarship Recipient
- Ryan Wegerer**-Scholarship Recipient
- Ashley Jones**-Best Club Seller
- Lanier Nalley**-Luck of the Draw
- Kayla Boling**-Outstanding Freshman
- Ross Wiginton**-Outstanding Sophomore
- Ryan Wegerer**-Outstanding Junior
- Brooke Jackson**-Outstanding Senior

**Olivera Jankovska**-Outstanding Graduating Senior

**Olivera Jankovska**-Wall Street Journal Award

The club advisors for 08-09 school year were: **Dr. Bruce Dixon** and **Dr. Lanier Nalley**. The club advisors for 09-10 school year are: **Dr. Lanier Nalley** and **Dr. Mike Thomsen**.

The club officers for 08-09 school year were: **Ashley Jones** -President; **Amanda Simpson**-Vice President; **Olivera Jankovska**-Secretary; and **Clay Lance**-Treasurer.

The club officers for 09-10 school year are: **Josh Cagle**-President; **Ryan Wegerer**-Vice President; **Kayla Boling**-Secretary; and **Bailey Bodenhamer**-Treasurer.



Award winners (from left to right): Ryan Wegerer-Outstanding Junior, Brooke Jackson-Outstanding Senior, Olivera Jankovska-Outstanding Graduating Senior and Wall Street Journal award, Kayla Boling-Outstanding Freshman, Ross Wiginton-Outstanding Sophomore



## Congratulations

**Ashley Jones**, an Agricultural Business major, was one of 18 students nation-wide selected to attend the 2009 USDA Agricultural Outlook Forum in Crystal City, Va. Her selection was based in part on her essay. Congratulations Ashley!!!!

**Cesar Coto**, a doctoral candidate in poultry science and master's candidate in agribusiness, was a member of a team that developed a plan that won first place and \$20,000 in the Wal-Mart Better Living Business Plan Challenge.

The plan creates a low-cost, environmentally friendly fertilizer from by-products of farms and municipalities. The team also includes three MS candidates in business administration: Brandon Barr, Joshua McCullough and Keith Solsvig. Carol Reeves, holder of the Cecil and Gwendolyn Cupp Applied Professorship in Entrepreneurship, was the faculty sponsor.



**Cesar Coto**, is standing second from the left with other team members.



## Welcome

We would like to welcome **Dr. Lu Qian** to the department. Dr. Qian is a visiting professor on a fellowship by the Chinese government for a year. He is the Deputy Dean and Professor with the College of Economics and Management at Northwestern A&F University in Yangling, Shaanxi P.R. China. Dr. Qian will be working with Dr. Wailes.

## TRAVEL

- **Terry Griffin** will travel to Vicksburg, MS for the SERA35; Delta States Farm Management Group May 27-29, 2009.

## Publication

Dr. Rudy Nayga was co-author on a recent study to be published in the next publication of *Journal of Happiness Studies* and it is getting a lot of attention from the media including the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, UPI, and others. The major German media also picked up the story. Here is an article from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation:

“A study published in a recent issue of the *Journal of Happiness Studies* suggests that although fast food and soft drink consumption may increase a child's risk of overweight and obesity, it is also linked to their overall happiness level, United Press International reports. To examine the link between fast food consumption and happiness, researchers at the National Taiwan University and the University of Arkansas analyzed data from the National Health Interview Survey in Taiwan on fast food consumption and happiness levels recorded for 2,366 children between age 2 and age 12. According to the findings, fast food and soft drink consumption were positively associated with a child's increased risk of overweight, but were also conversely associated with their degree of unhappiness. For example, of the 25 percent of children identified by the study as overweight or obese, only 19 percent reported that they sometimes or often felt unhappy, sad or depressed. Based on the findings, the researchers suggest that childhood obesity prevention programs may be more effective if they also incorporate components aimed at maintaining children's happiness ([UPI](#), 4/15/09; Chang et al., *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 3/21/09 [subscription required]).”

## Reminders

5-9-Commencement

6-15-Application deadline for students who plan to graduate end of Summer '09

8-24-Fall classes begin

## GRADUATE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



**Fernando Diaz de Vivar**

**Where are you from? Town, state, country, ag connection? Give some details about that area.**

I am from Asunción, the capitol city of Paraguay. Paraguay is located in the middle of South America and between Bolivia, Brazil and Argentina.

**Family-parents, siblings, spouse, children?**

My father's name is Victor and my mom's name is Teresa. I have two younger brothers, Javier and Camilo, and a little sister Camila.

**Some background information-where BS obtained, when, etc.**

I got my bachelor's degree in Economics from the Catholic University "Nuestra senora de la Asuncion" in the year 2005.

**How/Why did you choose UA for a Master's degree?**

I was looking for a school to study agricultural economics when I got a scholarship from the International Institute of Education. They provided me information from schools with master programs in agricultural economics in the U.S. After consulting with some friends and getting information about a list of universities, I decided to come to UA for a master's degree.

**Are you thesis/nonthesis? Year in program?**

non-thesis

**What do you wish to do with your degree?**

I'm sure that with my degree I'm going to have a lot of chances to get a job in many agricultural firms back in my country. Anyway, I think I can also develop my own business company providing consulting services to those agricultural firms.

**Describe your time at UA/dept.**

I spend most of my time at the library or at the computer labs working on my assignments and papers. Even though most of the time is working on stuff related to school I still have time to make friends at the UA.

**What areas of your MS program interest you the most?**

Agribusiness Strategy and Policy. I read a lot about those two areas and think they are pretty useful for my working plans back in my home country.

**What outside activities have you been involved in?**

I went to very interesting congresses during the time I have been here. I attended two International Livestock Congresses: one in Alberta, Canada and the other in Denver, Colorado. Also I went to the 2008 AAEA Annual Meeting in Orlando, FL. Those congresses were incredible experiences.

**How do you spend your free time? Hobbies, travel, other interests?**

I spend my free time with my friends. I have a lot of friends. My hobbies are tennis, soccer and playing the guitar. I like to travel. I did some trips but I would like to have more time to travel around. I would like to visit some other places before going back to Paraguay.

**What do you miss from "back home"?**

I miss a lot of the home made food. I try to cook something, but I cannot make it taste as my mom's food.

**What do you like best about the program, being a grad student?**

I like the friendly environment of the department. Faculty and staff are very helpful and the program is very complete, it covers all the necessary areas of study.

**What do you like best about UA/Fayetteville?**

UA is a great university, and Arkansas is a beautiful state with pretty landscapes. Fayetteville must be proud of being the home of the main campus of the UA.

**Any work experience? Previous jobs?**

I worked five years for "Frigorifico Guaraní," a beef processor company in Paraguay. I was a sales agent for the International Department.

### New President



**Edison Froelich** will become the new president of the Graduate Student Association on July 1, 2009.

Thanks to Brandon McFadden for coordinating so many activities/events of the past school term.