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Greetings!

Stephen F. Austin State University is currently involved in a campuswide initiative to improve university culture, offer transformative experiences for students and so much more. We, in the Arthur Temple College of Forestry and Agriculture are doing our part in helping make SFA’s 2015-23 strategic plan a success.

For example, sustained enrollment growth is fundamental to the strategic plan in order to help provide financial means to deliver quality academic programs and services. Enrollment growth also aids in meeting the state’s goal of achieving a higher percentage of the populace with college degrees and certificates. To address this challenge, our academic advisers and faculty members are making significant efforts toward student recruitment and retention. Advisers travel to high schools, junior colleges and community colleges to promote our programs, and they also manage on-campus academic support initiatives. Faculty members also visit primary and secondary education school groups to inspire students to pursue a career in natural resources management through hands-on demonstrations.

This hard work has been effective, and I am happy to report that enrollment is higher for all programs in the college this fall. I encourage our alumni and students to promote the programs in the college and university at every opportunity. Please contact us at any time if we can be of assistance or provide information as you support us in meeting the foundational goal of the SFA strategic plan.

I hope you enjoy reading about the many accomplishments our faculty and staff members and students have achieved. Join me in welcoming the two new faculty members and two new academic advisers to our college. We hope to see many of you next March 16-18 to cheer on the Sylvans as we host the 2017 Southern Forestry Conclave.

I also want to take this opportunity to recognize Dr. Dale Perritt for his 19 years of effective leadership in the Department of Agriculture. Dr. Perritt stepped down as chair this past August and will serve on the agriculture faculty in agricultural development for this academic year. Dr. Joey Bray will assume the administrative duties as interim department chair until a permanent replacement is found.

All the best, and Axe ‘em, Jacks!

-Hans Williams
Dr. Steve Bullard accepts new position as provost and vice president at SFA

Dr. Steve Bullard, dean of the ATCOFA since 2009, was appointed to the position of provost and vice president for academic affairs during an SFA Board of Regents meeting in April.

Bullard served as interim provost beginning in July 2015. He also holds the Henry M. Rockwall Chair in forestry. Prior to his employment at SFA, Bullard served as chair of the Department of Forestry at the University of Kentucky from 2004 to 2009, and as a faculty member and administrator at Mississippi State University from 1983 to 2004.

The ad-hoc dean search committee was named in June and is composed of eight faculty members representing the college's agriculture, environmental science and forestry divisions. The committee will be charged with developing a position announcement, advertising the position, reviewing applications, and scheduling and conducting interviews that will include input from faculty and staff members and students throughout the college. Dr. Tim Bisping, dean of the Rusche College of Business, is chairing the search committee.

Dr. Dale Perritt steps down as Department of Agriculture chair

After 19 years of service, Dr. Dale Perritt has stepped down from his administrative role as chair of the Department of Agriculture to undertake a teaching appointment for the 2016-17 academic year. In addition to his teaching duties, Perritt also will continue the management of the department's programs assessment.

“As an educator and leader, Dale has served the university and the Department of Agriculture with distinction for 35 years,” said Dr. Hans Williams, interim dean of the ATCOFA. “I look forward to working with him during this academic year as he continues his service as an educator and overseeing programs assessment.”

During his tenure as chair of the department, Perritt also served on the national board for Non-Land-Grant Agriculture and Renewable Resource Universities for approximately 10 years. He also served as the superintendent of the National FFA Agricultural Mechanics Career Development Event for three years. The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service named Perritt “Man of the Year” in 2014. In 2010, the SFA Alumni Association also named Perritt Distinguished Alumni Professor.

Dr. Joey Bray, assistant professor and director of poultry science, assumed the department’s administrative responsibilities as interim chair on Sept. 1.
Dr. Kenneth Farrish named 2016-17 Regents Professor

Dr. Kenneth Farrish, director of the division of environmental science and professor of forestry and environmental science, was officially named the 2016-17 SFA Regents Professor at the SFA Board of Regents meeting in April.

The title of SFA Regents Professor is the highest honor the university may bestow upon a member of the faculty, and it is reserved for faculty members who are exemplary role models to the university community. The title of Regents Professor is held for one year.

ATCOFA hosts forestry outreach day

SFA’s ATCOFA hosted a free, student-led forestry outreach and education day in April to engage the community and provide insight into the diverse fields of natural resource study.

“So much of our region’s economic and cultural history is founded in the forests and natural resources of the region,” said Sarah Fuller, outreach coordinator for the college. “We want to enable the community to explore those elements while also sharing the ways in which the field of forestry is both evolving to meet the modern needs of the public and conserving our natural ecosystems.”

View footage of the event online at: http://goo.gl/HXbXYL

Activity stations were set up on the Arthur Temple Forestry Building lawn, and college representatives taught participants about local water quality monitoring, the use of drones in modern forestry, where and how to camp in East Texas, and tree and wildlife identification techniques, among other lessons. Children’s activity tables also were featured.

Ray Cole, a member of the Nacogdoches Fire and Rescue Venom Response Team; Donna Work, biologist with the Texas A&M Forest Service; and Heath Bragg, Nacogdoches County Game Warden; also participated in the event. Additionally, SFA’s timbersports team, the Sylvans, provided demonstrations throughout the day.

Department of Agriculture hosts Breakfast on the Farm

SFA’s Department of Agriculture hosted a free Breakfast on the Farm event at the Walter C. Todd Agricultural Research Center in April.

In addition to the free pancake breakfast, students enrolled in Dr. Erin Brown’s beef cattle science course developed more than 15 hands-on learning activity stations that educated and engaged the community in aspects of a beef cattle operation.
Palomino mare achieves reserve world title

Her registered name is Missbehavenhollywood, but to those at the SFA Equine Center, the four-legged phenomenon is simply known as Holly.

SFA acquired the Colorado-raised mare from former owner Nancy Batzloff, who decided to step away from the horse business, but not before she found the perfect home for the 10-year-old palomino. Luckily, she was directed to SFA’s Walter C. Todd Agricultural Research Center and Equine Center supervisor and adjunct faculty member, Michaelle Blake Coker.

“I knew Holly would be well taken care of at SFA and by Michaelle. I also knew Holly would always have a job, because the students would be able to ride and keep her in shape,” Batzloff said.

Holly, who is valued at $25,000, was registered to SFA’s equine donation program in February. The Palomino Horse Breeders of America World Championships was scheduled for July, and Coker hoped to showcase Holly’s athletic abilities in that arena. So, she wasted no time getting to work.

It did not take long for the center’s supervisor to realize just how special the newest addition was to the barn. “Holly is one of the hardest-stopping, fastest-spinning horses I have ever had the privilege to ride, and she definitely knows the difference between the practice pen and the show arena,” Coker said.

The dynamic duo worked meticulously and qualified for the world show in Tunica, Mississippi.

Earning the right to exhibit at the World Championships was a lifetime achievement for both ladies. The team headed east to compete in two classes — open senior reining and open ranch riding. The day of the show, the two entered the arena proudly displaying their SFA purple pride.

“I was experiencing a whole new stress level when we competed,” Coker admitted. “Yet, Holly knew what to do, and she did it well. I was extremely proud of her runs.”

During the awards presentation, which was held on horseback in the arena in front of spectators, the announcer worked his way up the placings list. As Coker waited patiently, she began to sense victory.

Holly received reserve world champion honors in the open senior reining class and tied for top-10 honors in open ranch riding. The duo triumphed, securing a neck ribbon for Holly and distinguished ribbon for Coker, a plaque, a jacket and memories to last a lifetime.

Coker said the trip to Mississippi was quite an experience, but admitted the recognition at the national level with an SFA athlete was worth the 13-hour haul.

“This achievement brings our university to the forefront of the collegiate equine world. Being able to take on this project, work day in and day out, and then secure reserve world champion honors is validation that our equine program is great,” Coker said.

With this title, SFA now claims an honor many other university equine programs can’t — a reserve world champion that was owned by the university at the time of exhibition.

The article, written by Rachel Clark, first appeared in SFA’s Sawdust Magazine. Clark is the coordinator of student publications at SFA.

Photo by Hardy Meredith, university photographer at SFA.
Research sheds light on benefits of LEDs in poultry production

According to Dr. Joey Bray, assistant professor and director of poultry science at SFA, poultry appears to be well on its way to overtake pork’s status as the most widely consumed meat in the world.

“With this trend moving the way it is, we’ve got to figure out how we can get more birds to the market quicker, but we also don’t want to sacrifice the health and the care of the bird,” Bray said.

Consumption trends are not the only factors producers must adapt to. Traditionally, broiler and egg producers relied on the use of incandescent bulbs in their chicken-rearing facilities. The Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, however, called for the gradual phasing out of these bulbs due to their energy inefficiency. In response, producers began using compact fluorescent light bulbs in their chicken houses. Though CFLs initially seemed to provide an energy-efficient alternative, issues soon arose.

“They [CFLs] weren't and still aren't built for the environment of a chicken facility that contains dust, humidity and those kinds of things,” Bray said. “So that's when LED bulbs started gaining popularity.”

Bray said there are currently four-to-five companies that produce LED bulbs specifically for poultry production. While LEDs are known to be energy efficient, their savings and possible affect on poultry development had never been formally measured in a commercial facility. Bray saw this as a research opportunity.

“When we started this project, our first goal was to figure out if [the change in light source] is going to affect performance at all. That's the biggest concern for growers,” he said. “So we did that, and at the same time, I wanted to quantify the amount of energy producers could save.”

Thus, the four commercial poultry houses that comprise SFA's Broiler Research Center, located at SFA’s Walter C. Todd Agricultural Research Center, were fitted with data loggers to monitor the energy consumption of the lights in use. Two chicken houses utilized the traditional 100-watt incandescent and brooding light regime, while two were fitted only with LEDs. After growing five consecutive flocks in each of the houses, Bray said the use of LEDs resulted in an energy cost reduction of 91.07 percent during the five-flock period.

Not only were the energy savings promising, but the birds in the houses fitted with LED lights developed at the same rate as those under traditional lighting. Bray said the feed-conversion ratio, a measure of the pounds of feed required to produce one pound of growth in livestock, was the same under both treatments.

With this knowledge in tow, Bray entered the second phase of research in which he investigated the potential calming effects of LED lighting and lighting regimes on chickens.

“Other people who were using LEDs said that they felt like the lights had a calming effect on the birds, and we wanted to hone in on that,” Bray said. “One of the important things in the poultry industry, and it has been for several years, is animal welfare.”

For this portion of research, all four chicken houses at SFA’s Broiler Research Center were equipped with LED lights. Then, each facility was placed on a lighting regime of varying light intensity and duration.

To quantify the potential effects of these lighting regimens, Bray and his student assistants, along with Dr. Greg Archer, visiting researcher from Texas A&M University, regularly weighed birds, conducted welfare assessments and collected blood samples. Bray explained that the blood samples monitored heterophil-lymphocyte ratios, providing insight into immune response, as well as levels of corticosterone, a hormone released as a result of stress.

Their findings indicate that a gradual reduction in light intensity from 100 to 45 percent during a two-week period, rather than a drastic drop in light intensity following the standard seven-day brooding period, resulted in a slightly larger bird. Moreover, the lighting regime lowered heterophil-lymphocyte ratios and corticosterone levels.

“What we’re seeing right now is showing promise that producers can have better welfare and husbandry of the bird and feel confident that their birds are going to do better because they’re less stressed,” Bray said.

Now in the third phase of his research, Bray is investigating whether different hues of lighting can further promote performance and reduce stress.
Dr. Christopher Comer

Dr. Christopher Comer, professor of forest wildlife management, received the 2015 SFA Faculty Achievement Award for Research.

Comer joined the ATCOFA in 2005 and teaches multiple courses in wildlife and forest resource management, as well as field ecology, field techniques and management of diseases in wild animals. His research emphases include rare bats, black bears, wild turkeys, songbirds, predator ecology and white-tailed deer.

He is a member of the Texas Black Bear Alliance and served as chair from 2009-14. Additionally, he is a member of the Black Bear Conservation Coalition, The Wildlife Society, the American Society of Mammalogists, Southeastern Bat Diversity Network and the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society.

Comer’s past awards include the 2011 Teaching Excellence Award, 2012 Educator of the Year for the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society and the Distinguished Grant Award for a senior faculty member at SFA in 2014.

Since his arrival at SFA, Comer has procured more than $3.6 million in external funds for research from a diverse set of public and private partners, including Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of Defense and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service.

Dr. Sheryll Jerez

Dr. Sheryll Jerez, associate professor of environmental science, was recognized at the annual SFA Teaching Excellence Convocation in April.

Jerez mentors students involved in undergraduate research and also was the recipient of the 2014 Faculty Mentor of the Year award. Jerez teaches introduction to environmental science, environmental measurements, environmental assessment and management, and air-quality assessment. Additionally, she serves as a research adviser to graduate students in environmental science who are specializing in either land and water resources or occupational and environmental health. Her research interests include air-quality assessment, modeling and control. Through her work, she investigates the effectiveness of new technologies and best management practices to improve air quality. Her current research includes assessing air quality in Texas’ Eagleford Shale, a region heavily influenced by hydrolic fracking, as well as tree species that improve air quality surrounding large-scale agricultural facilities.

Jerez joined the ATCOFA in November 2007. She received her bachelor’s degree in agricultural engineering from the University of the Philippines, a Master of Science in agricultural engineering from Kansas State University and doctoral degree in agricultural engineering from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
Dr. Brian Oswald

Dr. Brian Oswald was named as a 2016 recipient of the University of Idaho’s Alumni Hall of Fame Award.

Oswald earned a doctoral degree from the university’s College of Natural Resources in 1992. Following graduation, he served as assistant professor of forestry at Alabama A&M University in Huntsville, Alabama. In 1995, Oswald joined the faculty of the ATCOFA, where he currently holds the Joe C. Denman Distinguished Professorship in fire ecology, silviculture and range management.

His research on fire ecology in England and the Netherlands has gained him international recognition as an expert lecturer on fire ecology and resulted in books and courses in the Netherlands. He has authored more than 70 articles, papers and book chapters. Oswald’s contributions to silviculture and fire management of Southern forests in the United States has led to a better understanding of forest responses to fire and management activities. He has been recognized many times for his achievements in teaching and research. In 2004, the University of Idaho’s College of Natural Resources presented him the Mid-Career Alumni Achievement Award, and in 2002, the Society of American Foresters presented him the Carl A. Schenck Award for outstanding forestry education.

Dr. Jared Barnes

Greenhouse Product News, a leading business publication for horticulture professionals, recently named Dr. Jared Barnes, assistant professor of horticulture, as an honoree in its “40 Under 40 Class of 2016.”

“The 40 individuals in this year’s class represent all facets of horticulture, but they all have one thing in common,” said GPN Editorial Director Tim Hodson. “They are the pioneers for the future of our industry.”

Class members were nominated by their horticulture and floriculture industry peers based on personal and professional accomplishments. This award recognizes Barnes as one of 40 trailblazers under the age of 40 who exemplifies superior leadership, creativity, innovative thinking, and accomplishments inside and outside of the horticulture field.

Barnes joined the ATCOFA in fall 2014. Since then, he has led multiple initiatives to cultivate student and community engagement in horticulture. Perhaps one of his most well-known projects is the creation and expansion of Sprout at SFA, a student-based campus garden that holds a public market each Friday behind the Agriculture Building.

Learn more about Sprout at SFA by visiting https://goo.gl/JZyXaA
Kara Goodson joined the ATCOFA as an academic adviser in summer 2016. In her position, Goodson will provide support and encouragement to forestry and environmental science students through advising and assisting in other support programs that aid in student success. “I am excited about helping the college grow and provide our students with as much support as I can while they are here,” she said. Goodson graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in mass communication in 2012 and is pursuing her Master of Public Administration at SFA. Prior to joining the ATCOFA, Goodson served as an admissions counselor and recruiter for SFA’s Office of Admissions.

SFA honored eight ATCOFA faculty and staff members for their years of service to the university. Greg Grant, SFA Gardens research associate; Dr. Daniel Scognamillo, associate professor of wildlife; Dr. Michael Maurer, associate professor of agriculture; and Dr. Ping Wang, National Center for Phamaceutical Crops research scientist, were recognized for 10 years of service to the university. Jason Grogan, forestry research associate; Dr. Kenneth Farrish, director of the division of environmental science and Regents Professor of forestry and environmental science; and Dr. Brian Oswald, Denman Professor of fire ecology, were recognized for 20 years of service. Additionally, Barbara Stump, research associate for development for SFA Gardens, was recognized for her years of service upon her retirement. Stump joined SFA in 1997 to pursue a Master of Science in agriculture. Her thesis, “The Design and Construction of the Ruby Mize Azalea Garden,” led to the successful completion of the Ruby Mize Azalea Garden.

ATCOFA welcomes new staff members

Kara Goodson

This fall, the ATCOFA welcomed Brandy Bishop as the newest academic adviser. In addition to helping students graduate in a timely manner, Bishop’s primary duties include fostering student participation in organizations, providing students with resources and support, and developing programs and activities for forestry students’ residential learning community. “I hope to continue the open environment that the students feel with their adviser,” Bishop said. “I want to encourage them to be creative thinkers and help them achieve their career goals.” Bishop graduated with a Bachelor of Science in agriculture development production and received a Master of Education in secondary education with an emphasis in psychology. Both of her degrees are from SFA. Prior to joining the ATCOFA, she served as the academic adviser in SFA’s James I. Perkins College of Education.
Dr. Stephanie Leann Jones

Dr. Stephanie Leann Jones has joined the ATCOFA as assistant professor of animal science. Jones will teach courses in equine management and production, basic, intermediate and advanced horsemanship, as well as animal reproductive physiology. “I believe an educator’s responsibility is to provide students with the necessary fundamental knowledge in a way that enhances retention in order for them to succeed,” she said. “As a teacher, I strive to become a resource for my students and to facilitate the synthesis of ideas into concepts and their practical application.”

Prior to joining the college, Jones served as an instructor of animal science at Arkansas State University. While there, she and a fellow colleague were awarded the 2015 Provost’s Scholar Award Faculty Seed Grant and the 2016 USDA Sheep Production and Marketing Grant. With these funds, Jones conducted three research studies on the palatability and efficacy of Camelina meal on the control of internal parasites in sheep. Jones earned a Bachelor of Science in animal and pre-veterinary science from the University of Tennessee at Martin, a Master of Science and a doctoral degree in reproduction physiology from Kansas State University. She said her Master of Science and doctoral research focused on improving fertility in dairy cows, as well as reproductive challenges in beef cattle.

“I am hoping to make a positive impact on the students in the college and to be a contributing colleague to the faculty and staff members within the department,” she added.

Dr. Rebecca Kidd

Dr. Rebecca Kidd is an assistant professor of forest management at SFA, where she teaches forest ecology and forest resource management. Additionally, Kidd said she anticipates developing a graduate course in restoration ecology. Kidd’s research interests focus on the effects of forest disturbances on stand dynamics, forest health and water quality, as well as developing effective management strategies to restore degraded ecosystems. She received a Bachelor of Science in biology from Campbell University, a Master of Science in forest resources from the University of Arkansas at Monticello and a doctoral degree in forestry from Virginia Tech. Prior to joining the ATCOFA, Kidd worked as a postdoctoral associate in the Department of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation at Virginia Tech.

During her postdoctoral work, she investigated the effects of mixed severity wildfires on long- and short-term changes in stand structure and composition. She also examined growth tradeoffs in hardwoods as a consequence of allocation to key survival traits and strategies in fire-prone environments. Kidd said she has a number of goals for her current position, including the development of a vibrant research program that engages both graduate and undergraduate students in regionally relevant forest-management research. “I believe students obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for success in natural resource fields through hands-on, project-based learning opportunities that require students to apply core-subject knowledge to real-world situations,” she said.

Kidd is a registered forester in the state of Arkansas and an active member in the Society of American Foresters, Association for Fire Ecology, Ecological Society of America and Xi Sigma Pi Forestry Honors Society. Outside of her research and teaching pursuits, Kidd said she enjoys playing golf, watching college basketball, gardening, cooking, hiking, running, fishing and spending time with her husband, John, and their two cats, Marlin and Rossie.
Horticulture students featured in national publication

Nursery Management, a leading trade publication serving wholesale nursery growers, interviewed horticulture students from across the U.S. to learn more about the next generation of horticulturalists and the paths that led them to pursue the field of study. Hunter Walker, SFA horticulture major and Pineywoods Native Plant Center employee, is featured on the cover of the January issue. In addition to the many photos of SFA horticulture students working in campus gardens, SFA students also shared the stories behind their passion and appreciation for the field.

Read the article at www.nurserymag.com/article/finding-a-home/.

Edwards receives ‘Best Undergraduate Research Poster’

Cassey Edwards, an SFA senior forest wildlife management major, received the award for Best Undergraduate Research Poster at the 2016 Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society Conference held in San Antonio. Her research, directed by Dr. Chris Comer, was titled “Habitat and Landscape Factors Influencing Acoustic Detections of Various Bat Species in East Texas.”

Tiller receives Outstanding Thesis Award


Tiller explained in his thesis that understory fuels can overwhelmingly affect fire behavior and the development of crown fires. A combination of changes in land-use practices, deviation from historical fire regimes and a number of other factors have transformed many forest understories into dense thickets of woody, invasive species that suppress native grass, forb and tree regeneration. This change in understory composition serves as a major concern for forest and fire managers due to potential changes in fire behavior, decreased diversity and compromised ecological integrity. To provide natural resource managers with a better understanding of these potential changes, Tiller developed an estimation of current understory fuel loads with increased invasive species abundance specific to pine and hardwood ecosystems. Additionally, he analyzed the chemical properties of key invasive species to identify the potential seasonal variation in fuel flammability to predict fire behavior in forest understories.

Tiller presented his research at a number of professional conferences, including the 2015 and 2016 International Fire Ecology and Management Congresses and the 2015 Big Thicket and West Gulf Coastal Plain Science Conference. In 2014, the Association of Fire Ecology awarded Tiller the Edward Komarek Graduate Student Excellence Award. Tiller received a Master of Science in environmental science in spring 2014.

Tiller currently serves as a wildland/urban interface specialist with the Texas A&M Forest Service in Nacogdoches and is pursuing his doctoral degree in forestry at SFA. His doctoral research is an extension of his Master of Science research and will compare the seasonal and ecoregion-specific flammability parameters of yaupon, Chinese privet, Chinese tallow and three native species occurring in the piney woods, blackland prairie and post oak savannah ecoregions of Texas.
Students enrolled in the management of outdoor recreation areas course at SFA developed a comprehensive recreation management plan for Crater of Diamonds State Park, Arkansas’ most visited state park.

“We wanted to look for something that was a little bit different in terms of geography,” said Dr. Shelby Gull Laird, SFA assistant professor of forestry. “Our students do a lot of great projects and work around East Texas, but we wanted to widen that scope a little, and allow them to deal with a different state government and give them more exposure.”

Crater of Diamonds State Park was founded in 1972, and it is the only diamond-producing site in the world where the public can search for precious gems and keep what they find. In addition to the diamond mine, the park also contains hiking trails, campsites and additional opportunities for outdoor recreation.

“The project site gave us a unique experience because it is not like a lot of parks around East Texas,” said Ashley Johnson, a senior pursuing a Bachelor of Science in forestry with an emphasis in recreation management. “We had to do a lot of outside research and look at things from a different perspective.”

Students camped at the park, located in Murfreesboro, Arkansas, last October to convene with park administration and discuss park management concerns. Additionally, students explored the park and collected data to complete their comprehensive recreation management plans.

Following data collection, students completed a full assessment of the park’s recreational resources, detailing the resources’ quality, as well as noting areas in need of improvement.

“The primary issue was sediment runoff from the diamond mine area that collected in the surrounding forest,” Johnson said.

James Howell, Crater of Diamonds State Park superintendent, said protecting the forest ecosystems surrounding the park’s 37.5-acre plowed diamond search field while also maintaining the field and fostering new diamond discoveries is a delicate balance.

“The students did an excellent job of addressing an array of park management issues,” he added. “These plans have provided the park with a solid framework for administrators to incorporate and build upon for the future of Crater of Diamonds State Park.”

Howell said this is the first time Crater of Diamonds State Park has partnered with a university in this capacity, and he believes the results will be beneficial to their park and others in the Arkansas state park system.

Students presented their management plans to Crater of Diamonds State Park leadership.
As the morning sun began to peek through the towering walls of vegetation lining Costa Rica’s Tortuguero Canals, the air of Tortuguero National Park sprang to life with the reverberating calls of mantled howler monkeys. Deep, guttural and powerful enough to be heard up to three miles away, the calls are a key form of the species’ communication. This particular morning, the daybreak interchange between members of the tree-dwelling group filled the ears of six SFA students, eliciting exclamations of awe and dozens of photographs.

Costa Rica’s National Institute of Biodiversity reports that although the country accounts for only 0.03 percent of the Earth’s surface, it is ranked as one of the most biodiverse countries in the world. The country’s ecotourism-based economy is founded upon this immense biodiversity, as well as the nation’s efforts to sustain it. Costa Rica has signed 45 international environmental treaties, and in 2007, the government announced a goal to attain carbon neutrality by 2021.

Despite Costa Rica’s great advances, it, like every other country, faces many challenges as it works to balance the needs of its public with the mission of conservation. Though the country is considered to be the most progressive and developed country in Central America, it still struggles to reduce poverty rates among its citizens.

“This class really opened up a lot of perspectives for me, and not just from the point of view of being in a different country,” said Sabrina O’Neal, a senior forest wildlife management major at SFA. “I was able to gain a completely different perspective from the other students in the class.”

O’Neal explained the two-week SFA international studies course, Leadership Development and Community Engagement, comprised students from a variety of majors, each bringing unique insights to course discussions focused on proposing multifaceted solutions to the challenge of balancing economic development and natural resource conservation.

Dr. Daniel Scognamillo, SFA associate professor of wildlife ecology, and Dr. Gary Kronrad, Bone Hill Foundation Distinguished Professor of resource economics at SFA, designed the course with that diversity of ideas in mind.

“There are no easy answers to the problems we are facing, and in order to make progress, we must utilize a variety of ideas from people of different expertise,” Scognamillo said.

As a trained wildlife biologist who spent years studying jaguars in South America, Scognamillo’s first passion is wildlife. Since 2012, both Scognamillo and Kronrad have facilitated the creation of conservation and economic development projects in Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Costa Rica. Scognamillo said as his career progressed his single-minded focus began to evolve, and he realized that the natural resource in question is only one piece of an expansive, complex puzzle.

To incorporate these varied aspects into the course, students visited multiple economic, municipal and social development programs throughout the country. Additionally, students toured conservation areas and met with leaders of Costa Rica’s National System of Conservation Areas to discuss current projects as well as challenges to natural resource management.

“They’re facing a lot of the same problems that we are in the U.S.,” said Ashley Johnson, a senior forest recreation management major. “It’s just on a different scale.”

Johnson said the course enabled her to compare and critically assess the conservation and social development efforts taking place in Costa Rica and the U.S., providing her more insight into the complexity of the issues.

Scognamillo said this awareness is precisely why he and Kronrad believe study abroad opportunities are so important to SFA students.

“We are trying to foster the combination of personal and intellectual development and show them how they can use this growth for positive social change,” Scognamillo said.

View footage from the trip and hear more student perspectives at http://goo.gl/gnM1nK.
Animal welfare and community service in Belize

This summer, Breia Easley, an SFA senior biology major with a pre-veterinary focus, spent two weeks traveling and working in and around the Cayo District of Belize with Paws Veterinary Clinic. Her experience, organized through the Center for Engaged Learning Abroad Program and SFA’s Office of International Programs, incorporated lecture and hands-on veterinary experience.

What were your responsibilities throughout the program?
My duties as a student included attending lectures in the morning and either working at Paws Veterinary Clinic or traveling to local farms where we performed different types of injections or procedures. I and other students assisted with surgeries, including spaying and neutering dogs, cats, horses and pigs, as well as suturing the epidermis, or external skin layer, when necessary. We also performed physical wellness exams on multiple species of animals, including cattle, goat, sheep, pig, dogs, cats and horses, and we administered routine intramuscular and subcutaneous injections. One day was reserved for a free spay and neuter clinic held in San Antonio, Belize, where we managed a check-in station, a station for physicals and routine injections, a surgery station and a recovery station. I also was given the opportunity to milk a herd of Holstein cattle and later palpate them to determine if they were open or bred.

How has this experience benefited your undergraduate career?
During my trip to Belize with the large animal veterinary course, I was not only given multiple opportunities to learn and gain experience in animal health and wellness, but I also was immersed in the incredibly diverse and unique culture of the country. The experience was personally beneficial, as well as rewarding in the sense that we were able to give back so much to the community. Being abroad was eye-opening, encouraging and a total boost of confidence for me — not to mention, I was able to meet some awesome people! This trip helped me secure my decision in pursuing a career in large animal medicine.

What was your favorite part of the program?
My favorite part of the experience was the opportunity to improve the communities of the people and local animals through the practice of animal welfare. I was able to assist with multiple spay and neuters of local street and domestic dogs, which aids in the overall reduction in number of strays on the streets. It also helps prevent the spread of disease throughout the animal community, which can sometimes be transmitted to the human species.

In addition to the lecture and hands-on veterinary experience, I explored the country a little by visiting multiple waterfalls that were each breathtakingly beautiful, as well as the Mayan ruins Xunantunich and Cahal Pech. We also canoed in Barton Creek Cave, which contained ancient Mayan artifacts. After completing physical exams and observing a dental exam on one of the horses at the Mountain Equestrian Trail, we went horseback riding through the jungle! My favorite extracurricular activity was, hands down, the Green Iguana Conservation Project, where we were able to learn about, observe, feed and play with the iguanas housed there.

How did you learn about this opportunity?
I came across the opportunity while researching different study abroad programs online. I then followed up with Inez Maxit, study abroad coordinator at SFA, who helped secure my decision to venture to Belize by gathering feedback from other schools and counselors about their experience with the program.

Learn more about study abroad opportunities by visiting SFA’s Office of International Programs at www.sfasu.edu/oip/.

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Two SFA horticulture students received honors at the 2016 National Collegiate Landscape Competition held in March in Starkville, Mississippi.

Rene Bhattacharya, SFA senior horticulture major, won the grand prize for the “Get Social” competition that challenged students and schools to build camaraderie and increase awareness of the competition through social media. Bhattacharya used Instagram, Facebook and Twitter to post photographs and videos of the competition’s events using the hashtag #nalpnclc.

“It was a joy to record all the fun I had meeting friends, new and old, from across the nation at different events,” she said.

According to the competition’s sponsors, NALP, Stihl, Permaloc and Corona, Bhattacharya’s work was chosen because of her ability to capture the essence and variety of the competition, as well as for highlighting SFA and the 61 additional schools involved. The grand prize consisted of $1,000 from Stihl for the SFA horticulture program, as well as $500 worth of landscaping supplies for Bhattacharya.

SFA senior horticulture major Chisolm Tessem placed 19th out of 56 competitors in the Skid Steer Loader contest as a first-time participant in the competition. The event consisted of an exam covering machine safety, mechanics and proper operation, as well as a full physical safety check demonstration of the machine. Lastly, competitors completed a timed obstacle course which required them to pick up and transport a pallet with an attached bucket of water. Tessem said the course tested maneuvering in tight spaces, going over bumps, driving backward and proper positioning of the front loader.

The National Collegiate Landscape Competition also featured a career fair attended by more than 60 horticulture-based companies.

“I was very impressed with our students’ participation in the event and how they represented SFA,” said Dr. Jared Barnes, assistant professor of horticulture and Horticulture Club faculty adviser. “They gave their best in the competitions, made lots of new friends and colleagues, and took full advantage of the career fair.”

The SFA Sylvans will host the 60th annual Southern Forestry Conclave March 16-18, 2017. Due to the amount of space and logistics required for physical competitions, as well as the sheer number of participants, the event will be held at the Durango’s Canyon event venue located in Mount Enterprise.

“The Sylvans’ student leaders are driving the planning process and will be handling every aspect of hosting the 2017 conclave,” said Dr. Jeremy Stovall, associate professor of silviculture and Sylvans adviser. “We have a great group of about a dozen students who have been actively involved thus far.”

The conclave consists of 14 physical and eight technical/academic-based events.

To learn more about the 2017 conclave, as well as available sponsorships, visit www.sfasu.edu/conclave.
Internships

Tara Nathanson

SFA sophomore urban forestry major Tara Nathanson completed a two-month internship with Tree Shepherds, a tree-care company based in Lake Dallas and owned by SFA alumnus Scott Geer. Nathanson was responsible for completing a number of tasks to ensure proper tree health, including fertilization and performing root flares on distressed trees. She also served as a groundman for a crew, assisting workers with pruning and tree removal. As groundman, Nathanson utilized a roping system to lower large branches and tree segments safely to the ground, preventing property damage and ensuring worker safety. In addition to her direct field responsibilities, she also participated in consultations, assessments and tree surveys with Geer. Nathanson said this was one of her favorite aspects of the internship.

“At every consultation, it was like we were really doctors to the customer’s trees, trying to figure out what was causing them to be in distress and coming up with a solution to heal the tree,” she said. “Most customers are very attached to their trees, and it was fulfilling to help them keep the tree that they love alive and in good shape.”

Nathanson met Geer at the International Society of Arboriculture Urban Forestry Convention held in Waco. Following correspondence and a subsequent interview, she was offered a summer internship with the company.

“This experience has helped make my interests in trees and the urban environment more concrete,” Nathanson said. “I learned so much from this hands-on experience, and it makes me eager to continue to learn more as a student in the forestry program.”

Cody Harris

SFA senior animal science major Cody Harris completed a summer internship with Poteet Cattle Company, a commercial cow and calf operation located near Athens, Texas. Harris’ duties on the 1,700-acre property varied, but focused primarily on the care of the company’s Brangus and Angus cattle herds.

“Through participating in this internship, I have been able to tie together what I learned in the classroom and put it into practice in a real-world setting,” Harris said. “As a student, you gain a better perspective on the industry, and you realize that not everything goes according to the textbook.”

According to the company’s website, the property was purchased in 2006, and since that time, the owners have worked to ensure proper land stewardship alongside their cattle. Harris, who has worked at SFA’s Beef Cattle Research Center since 2014, learned about the internship through Chris Koffskey, SFA beef farm supervisor.

“An internship helps enforce ideas and concepts learned in class,” Harris said. “If by chance being in the cattle industry is something you are interested in, this ranch is a great place to gain experience.”

Layne Lindeman

Layne Lindeman, SFA senior agriculture business major, completed a summer internship with Raulston and Sons Cattle Company located in Clarksville, Texas. Lindeman’s duties on the 1,500-acre ranch encompassed the diverse and challenging responsibilities essential to ranch operation.

Before beginning his internship, Lindeman admits that he saw cattle ranching as an easy task that simply required putting cattle in the pasture to roam free. Following his internship, however, he no longer holds this perception.

“I have learned that there is a lot of behind-the-scenes work that has to be done, and farmers and ranchers never get enough credit,” he said.

Lindeman said this experience benefited him in a number of ways, including providing deeper insight into the financial workings of an operational ranch. While the knowledge gained during the internship was extremely meaningful, Lindeman concedes that his favorite aspect of the internship was simply time spent outdoors.

“I got to see wildlife every day,” he said. “I love being outside, so this internship fit me quite well.”
Courtney Branton examined feed efficiency and its relationship with carcass traits, temperament and average daily gain on steers from the renowned King Ranch, located in Kingsville.

“In the beef cattle industry, feed cost accounts for two-thirds of total production costs,” Branton said. “To reduce this cost, selecting cattle that are more feed efficient has become the goal for many beef cattle producers.”

Branton, who is pursuing a Master of Science in agriculture, utilized data collected during two trials at the Texas A&M University Beef Cattle Research Center in College Station.

The steers’ weight and dry matter intake was measured during both the growing and finishing phases. Residual feed intake, which is the difference between an animal’s actual feed intake and its expected feed requirements, was calculated, as were multiple measurements to determine fat and muscle content. Temperament traits also were measured at the start and end of each feeding period.

“Feed-efficient cattle are very important for beef cattle producers. This research could help the beef cattle industry in reducing input cost,” Branton said.

Erika Wooten

Master of Science in agriculture student Erika Wooten is examining the efficacy of glucosamine and chondroitin sulfate supplements in horses.

“The purpose of this study is to determine if the commercially available supplements are meeting the label guarantees and to analyze any correlation between price point and efficacy of use,” Wooten said.

To do so, 12 horses at SFA’s Walter C. Todd Agricultural Research Center will receive supplements according to recommended product dosage over a 14-day period. The horses also will receive a daily assessment.

“Prior to each feeding period, the soundness of each horse will be documented with a standard lameness evaluation at the walk and the trot in addition to flexion tests of each leg,” Wooten said.

A licensed veterinarian will extract synovial fluid at days zero and 14. Wooten explained that synovial fluid is a fluid found in synovial joint cavities that reduces friction during movement. This fluid will then be analyzed to determine how much of each supplement is present.
Master of Science in environmental science student Elena Thomas is working in the Centennial State Forest near Flagstaff, Arizona, to determine the effects of different ecological restoration treatments on forest soils in a Ponderosa pine forest.

“In my project, I am analyzing soil biological responses in the form of soil respiration and soil chemical properties, such as pH, accumulated carbon and electrical conductivity,” Thomas said.

Additionally, Thomas is continuing a vegetation study initiated in 2003 that seeks to determine the long-term effects that forest restoration treatments, such as prescribed burning and timber thinning, have on vegetation.

“For a long time I have been interested in reclamation and restoration and wanted to work with a project that dealt with soils, and this project dealt with both,” she said.

While in the field this summer, Thomas said she had an exclusive technician to assist with special assignments.

“My dog, Penny, was my helper and companion out West,” she said. “She watched out for any danger and kept the area squirrel free.”
Like much of East Texas, the air at the SFA Real Estate Foundation’s forested land in Cherokee County harbors the rich scent of pine. Walking through the rows of trees, one might regard the tract as just another pine plantation dotting the region’s landscape. But to do so would be missing the forest for the trees.

Since 2001, 3,449 acres of ATCOFA-managed forestland in Cherokee, Houston and Shelby counties has sequestered 293,000 metric tons of atmospheric carbon dioxide. “That is equivalent to 36.5 million gallons of gasoline or 271,743 metric tons of lignite coal,” said Jason Grogan, ATCOFA research associate.

In 2000, STMicroelectronics, a global electronics and semiconductor manufacturer focused on reducing its carbon footprint, purchased 1,425 acres of unforested land in East Texas. In 2005, the company donated this property to the SFA Real Estate Foundation. In 2010, STMicroelectronics donated an additional 2,024 acres. Grogan has served as the property manager for these now-forested tracts since 2005.

“STMicroelectronics is a very green company that has been at the forefront of environmental awareness for more than 20 years,” said Dr. Kenneth Farrish, director of SFA’s Division of Environmental Science. “Its annual corporate responsibility report shows its dedication to reducing solid waste, water usage, electricity usage and so on.”

Farrish said the partnership with ST began after an SFA environmental science alumnus working for the company contacted him to discuss the manufacturer’s desire to offset the company’s carbon dioxide emissions by planting trees. To help ensure economic and environmental feasibility, Farrish recruited the expertise of Dr. Gary Kronrad, Bone Hill Foundation Distinguished Professor of forest resource economics at SFA.

Farrish laughed as he recalled conversations with befuddled real estate agents during the initial search for non-forested land. “I told the realtors I needed some really marginal farmland. They asked what I wanted to do with it, and I told them I wanted to plant trees. Their response was, ‘Well, I can get you some forested land,’” Farrish said.

After he convinced realtors that planting non-forested areas was a key aspect of the long-term strategy, the plan truly began to take shape.

“Theoretically, it (the forested land) will forever be sequestering carbon and providing scholarships,” he said. “It’s one of the biggest things I feel like I’ve done in my career.”

Grogan explained that even after timber is harvested, the carbon continues to be sequestered. The amount sequestered depends on the fate of the wood.

“The wood is going to go into a product of some sort, and the U.S. Department of Energy estimates how much of that carbon it believes will still be sequestered in two forms after 100 years,” Grogan said.

Farrish is pleased with the impact the partnership has had on the environment and the reputation of SFA. “I’m proud of the progress we’ve made so far, and I’m excited to see what the future holds,” he said.

The partnership between industry and natural resource management benefits the environment and SFA students.

Partnership between industry and natural resource management benefits environment and SFA students
Grogan added that oriented strand board, a common product made from pulpwood in East Texas, has roughly the same sequestration rating as saw timber. It is estimated that approximately 60 percent of the carbon will still be sequestered or in use after 100 years.

“We’ve tried to put the bulk of what we’ve harvested into oriented strand board, and we’ve been successful with that, except last year we did have a tract where the material went for fuel wood,” he said.

The timber from that particular harvest was pelletized and sent to Europe as biomass for use in its renewable energy sector. Grogan said although the carbon was not ultimately sequestered for an extended period of time, the use of a renewable resource for power generation still offsets fossil-fuel emissions.

The revenue generated through the management of the forested tracts has provided numerous scholarships for SFA students. In 2010, SFA renamed the endowed scholarship fund to honor retired STMicroelectronics executive Robert L. Banks, a native of Rusk, Texas, who advocated afforestation efforts within the company.

The forests support numerous research and academic efforts in the ATCOFA. Graduate students engage in ongoing soil and above-ground carbon sequestration monitoring, researching the effects of varied thinning regimes on tree growth and development, and compare the growth and survival rates of Texas’ four native pine species. The sites also are used for undergraduate coursework.

Both Grogan and Farrish express excitement when contemplating the future of the forested land.

“There are lots of opportunities on the properties as the trees grow,” Grogan said. “There will be more ecological diversity and more opportunities for research and educational use.”

In 2010, SFA renamed the endowed scholarship fund to honor retired STMicroelectronics executive Robert L. Banks, a native of Rusk, Texas, pictured, who advocated afforestation efforts within the company.
**Dr. Neal Wilkins**

Since graduating with a Bachelor of Science in forestry from SFA in 1984, Dr. Neal Wilkins has worked throughout the U.S. and New Zealand managing and conserving wildlife and native habitats. Now, as president and CEO of the East Foundation, located in San Antonio, he continues that mission, managing some of South Texas’ largest remaining native rangeland habitats.

“In summary, I am responsible for leading the foundation’s mission of supporting wildlife conservation and other public benefits of ranching and private land stewardship,” Wilkins said. “The East Foundation owns and operates about 218,000 acres of South Texas ranchland as a working laboratory for its research, education and outreach programs.”

Wilkins said he spent much of the past four years in this position developing the foundation’s team of more than 50 staff members, which includes a range of expertise from science and accounting to ranching and construction.

Prior to joining the Foundation, Wilkins served as professor of wildlife science and director of the Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources and the Texas Water Resources Institute. Wilkins also served as program leader for extension in Texas A&M University’s Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences and directed the wildlife and fisheries programs for Port Blakely Tree Farms, a 150,000-acre private timber company based in the Pacific Northwest and New Zealand. Prior to these positions, he also held jobs with the U.S. Forest Service in Florida and with the University of Tennessee.

“I am fortunate that all of my experience thus far has involved real management and conservation issues on private lands,” he said. “That is where the real action is now and will be in the future.

Wilkins received a Master of Science in wildlife science from Texas A&M University and a doctoral degree in wildlife ecology from the University of Florida.

“Like many, I was initially inspired by a simple discovery that people actually make a serious career from studying and managing wildlife,” Wilkins said.

He credits a number of key mentors, including Dr. Monty Whiting, professor emeritus at SFA, with developing his strong science-based philosophy for wildlife management and conservation.

**Sarah Stratton**

Sarah Stratton graduated in 2013 with a Bachelor of Science in forestry with an emphasis in forest wildlife management. She currently works at the California Department of Parks and Recreation as an environmental services intern at the Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area in Pismo Beach, California.

Stratton monitors the breeding and nesting of California least terns and Western snowy plovers. Additionally, she tracks potential avian and mammalian predators and participates in the rescue of stranded or injured avian species and marine mammals.

Stratton said she discovered her passion for avian ecology and non-game wildlife management through her undergraduate vertebrate natural history course.

“I really enjoy the opportunity to act as a steward on behalf of the park where we manage to sustain multiple uses of the dunes, including pedestrian beach access, a prominent off-road culture and protection of the wildlife,” Stratton said. “Being able to meet and educate people on how compatible these uses can be has been a real privilege.”
Heather Barrar
Heather Barrar earned a Bachelor of Science in forestry in 1997 and later received a master’s degree in environmental policy and planning from Virginia Commonwealth University. She is a principal planner for Chesterfield County, Virginia, serving as the natural and historic resource expert for the department. In her position, she also manages bicycle and pedestrian issues, creating a link between recreation and transportation.

“Specifically, I serve on the Comprehensive Planning and Research Team,” Barrar said. “We are the team that listens to the community and translates their words and values into the vision for growth and development of the county.”

Barrar, who focused on forest recreation management during her time at the ATCOFA, said her childhood travels to many state and national parks forged a deep connection with the land.

“I joke that being a forester is the best training to become a long-range planner,” she said. “After college, I worked as a forester for the Virginia Department of Forestry, and watching pine plantations turn into subdivisions led me to pursue a master’s degree and find a role that could influence local environmental policy.”

Prior to joining the planning department of Chesterfield County, Barrar said the county’s comprehensive plan did not include forestry or agriculture despite the fact that traditional forestry still makes up a majority of the county’s land base and economy.

“I am proud that I have been able to raise the profile of natural resources in our community,” she said.

After guiding the county’s first pedestrian trail plan into adoption by elected officials, Barrar was named Planning Department Employee of the Year.

“The Bikeways and Trails Plan not only provides a framework to develop a network for people to bike and walk for recreation and transportation purposes, it also serves as the foundation for a green infrastructure approach to connecting natural resources,” she said.

Mary-Leigh Winkler
Mary-Leigh Winkler graduated with a Bachelor of Science in environmental science in May 2016 and now serves as an environmental scientist for Weaver Consultants Group in Fort Worth.

Winkler said her current position focuses on air quality compliance monitoring and reporting for 15 municipal solid waste landfills. Additionally, she completes monthly analyses on gas well and flare data, as well as surface emission monitoring and a number of other operations and maintenance reports related to air quality compliance.

“Many people don’t realize where their trash goes once the garbage trucks take it away,” she said. “There is a large amount of work and thought that goes into making sure trash is safely and properly disposed of.”

Winkler said through her position she verifies landfill gas emissions are minimal and within each facility’s operating permit limits, thus ensuring safe, breathable air for the community and environment.

“I am grateful for SFA’s environmental science program,” she said. “It definitely gave me a solid basis of knowledge for going into the work force.”
Jenny Wegley

Jenny Wegley, a 2005 graduate of SFA’s Department of Agriculture’s horticulture program, now serves as the director of horticulture at the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Society. Wegley said her passion for the natural world began at a young age.

“I had my first garden at the ripe-old-age of three, my first succulent trials at the age of 15 and built my first koi pond at 16,” she said. “There is really nothing else that I can see myself doing.”

Since those initial forays into horticulture, Wegley’s undertakings have grown substantially. As director of horticulture, she manages the 66-acre Dallas Arboretum, as well as its trial gardens, annual design, annual budget, new construction and 48 employees.

“Dallas Arboretum prides itself on being a garden that you can see impressive amounts of seasonal color every day of the year,” she said. “We change out our color display beds five times per year.”

The annual design of the arboretum includes more than 300,000 annuals, 500,000 spring bulbs and more than 90,000 pumpkins for the fall display.

This colossal undertaking and attention to detail is no doubt one reason why Architectural Digest recently named the Dallas Arboretum to its list of “15 Breathtaking Botanical Gardens to Visit.” Additionally, in 2013, Greenhouse Product News, a leading business publication for horticulture professionals, named Wegley as one of its prestigious “Top 40 Under 40” professionals.

Aesthetics, though important, are just one facet of the arboretum’s significance. Through the more than 66 acres of trial gardens, Wegley collects data on plants that hold the potential to be more heat and/or drought tolerant.

“This allows me to connect with breeders and breeding companies from all over the world,” she said.

Though Wegley now directs one of the nation’s most well-known arboretums, she began her career working at a small, independently-owned organic and native-plant nursery while in college.

“I was able to work on my growing skills and also talk to gardeners about their gardens and how to make them better and more enjoyable,” Wegley said. “I believe retail gives you access to tools you will not find in many avenues of the industry.”

Nate Casebeer

Nate Casebeer, a 2015 graduate of the ATCOFA’s Bachelor of Science in forestry program, now serves as a forestry and geographic information system specialist with the Wildfire Division of the City of Austin Fire Department.

“I mitigate the risk of wildfire and improve the health of public forests surrounding the city by planning, creating and implementing fuel-load reduction projects, as well as by creating public awareness about the risks and prevention methods of wildfire,” Casebeer said.

Casebeer said his lifelong love of Texas’ public lands and the desire to protect them guided his career path.

“The best part of my job is spending my days in the parks and greenbelts in Austin,” he said. “I also enjoy making GIS maps, just like the ones I made while in the ATCOFA.”
In celebration of SFA hosting the 2017 Southern Forestry Conclave, we present a compilation of photos from past conclave events. Axe ‘em!

If you have images you would like to share, email Sarah Fuller, outreach coordinator, at fullersa@sfasu.edu.
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