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Keep In Touch
Please update your alumni information online.
www.atcofa.sfasu.edu/alumni
from the Dean

The Arthur Temple College of Forestry and Agriculture is blessed with amazing people who are truly making a positive difference in teaching, research and outreach. Our undergraduate and graduate students, alumni, and faculty and staff members are spotlighted in this newsletter, showing some of the key activities and achievements in academic year 2012-13.

We live in a world of great change, with increasing demands on our resources, new challenges from invasives, population growth, and market changes, with new opportunities to solve problems that are critical to our society. It’s been said that, “In times of change, learners will inherit the earth, while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists” (Eric Hoffer). The Arthur Temple College of Forestry and Agriculture is filled with learners, as highlighted in this newsletter.

The greatest strength of the College will always be talented and mission-oriented people working together effectively. I would like to thank the talented people who made this newsletter a reality – Jeff Williams, Jon Gauntt, Katelin Kombos, and Andreya Taylor.

Finally, I welcome alumni and friends to visit ATCOFA any time your schedule allows. Within the College we welcome the chance to discuss current events and plans, and at all levels we continue to seek your advice on developing leaders, creating knowledge, and making sure the College continues to be a dynamic force addressing major challenges effectively. You can contact me in person, of course, by phone (936) 468-3304 or email (bullardsh@sfasu.edu). Let’s work together in choosing pathways of excellence for the Arthur Temple College.

Axe’em, Jacks  

Steve Bullard
Feature Story
The Arthur Temple College of Forestry and Agriculture is revising its undergraduate curriculum for the Bachelor of Science in forestry degree program. Curriculum revision is needed to maintain and to enhance the rigor and relevance of ATCOFA’s academic programs, as well as to continue to build strong relationships with alumni, employers, and other stakeholders. See article on page 22.

2013 Conclave Win
The 2013 Southern Forestry Conclave at Auburn, Ala., included 14 competing schools. Eighteen ATCOFA students attended and had an outstanding performance, taking 1st overall, 2nd in technical events and 1st in physical events. This was the Sylvans first overall win since 2008. Georgia placed 2nd with only 30 points behind SFA, and Arkansas came in 3rd with 53 points behind. The following list includes the rankings for SFA students in both technical and physical events.

**Technical Events:**
- Wildlife: 1st Place, Chelsea Lopez and Brant Day
- Dendrology: 1st Place, Scott Wahlberg
- DBH Estimation: 1st Place, Grant Korbel
- Pole Classification: 2nd Place, Caleb Murray
- Timber Estimation: 4th Place, David Robinson
- Compass and Pacing: 10th Place, Courtney Williams
- Wood Technology: 13th Place, Allen Akin
- Photogrammetry: 14th Place, Mike Hartford

**Physical Events:**
- Women’s Crosscut: 1st Place, Chelsea Lopez and Courtney Williams (*ATCOFA has won this event 13 years in a row*)
- Pole Climbing: 1st Place, Mike Hartford (*3.75 seconds*)
- Jack & Jill Crosscut: 2nd Place, Chelsea Lopez and Caleb Murray
- Chain Throw: 2nd Place, Brian Blades and Conor McInnerney
- Archery: 3rd Place, Brian Blades
- Axe Throw: 3rd Place, Courtney Williams
- Women’s Bow Saw: 3rd Place, Chelsea Lopez
- Men’s Bow Saw: 3rd Place, Brock Vinson
- Log Chopping: 4th Place, Ryan Assenheimer
- Log Rolling: 4th Place, David Robinson and Ethan Straley
- Knife Throw: 5th Place, Brian Blades
- Log Birling: 5th Place (*tie*), Caleb Murray
- Pole Felling: 6th Place, Brock Vinson
- Men’s Crosscut: 8th Place, Caleb Murray and Brock Vinson

Six Curriculum Focus Areas
1. Managing Forest Resources
2. Applying Reasoning and Critical Thinking
3. Managing Self
4. Communicating and Collaborating
5. Leading and Managing People
6. Engaging in Transformative Learning and Leadership

The Arthur Temple College of Forestry and Agriculture is revising its undergraduate curriculum for the Bachelor of Science in forestry degree program. Curriculum revision is needed to maintain and to enhance the rigor and relevance of ATCOFA’s academic programs, as well as to continue to build strong relationships with alumni, employers, and other stakeholders. See article on page 22.
SFA Gardens

SFA Gardens is a nationally known gardening resource right at the fingertips of SFA students, faculty, and staff members. The gardens have increased their holdings to approximately 128 acres of bottomland property along La Nana Creek that includes the Mast Arboretum, the Jim and Beth Kingham Children’s Garden, the Pineywoods Native Plant Center, the Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden, the Gayla Mize Garden, the Sustainable Community Education Garden, and a collaboration with SFA’s Outdoor Pursuits program called the SFA Recreation Trails and Gardens.

Plant collections at the Mast Arboretum continue to expand, with a pump house and water well now installed to run the highly efficient drip irrigation system across the eight-acre Gayla Mize Garden. Thousands of adults continue to enjoy the monthly Les and Theresa Reeves Lecture series, as well as numerous garden seminars.

The gardens’ educational programs continue to enjoy success under the guidance of conservation education director Elyce Rodewald, who was named 2013 Nacogdoches County Agriculture Educator of the Year. In 2012-13, more than 6,000 school children attended hands-on field trips that related to their classroom science lessons. Other educational activities included construction of 26 school gardens for all third grade NISD classrooms and incorporation of the gardens into the third grade curriculum. Nacogdoches Naturally completed its fourth year of offering outdoor educational and recreational experiences for youth and families. Family Outdoor Adventure programs were held over the course of the year, and the twelfth year of summer camps were offered with a total of 26 children receiving scholarships to attend.

The long awaited construction of the Ina Brundrett Conservation Education Center began in the spring of 2013. This resource will benefit many of the 15,000 children attending educational opportunities by providing an educational center for field trips normally canceled by inclement weather.

Go online: www.sfagardens.sfasu.edu

Argentina: Forest Conservation, Economic Development, and Leadership

During the last four years more than 50 SFA students from 15 different majors have participated in the study abroad program titled “Forest Conservation and Economic Development in South America.” This course, led by Drs. Daniel Scognamillo and Gary Kronrad, takes students on a 14-day trip to different locations in Argentina and Brazil. They experience first-hand a real world problem that requires a multi-faceted solution, one which must deal with social, economic, cultural, and political constraints.

The course encourages the development of the skills and the competence necessary to be a conservation leader, including: commitment, integrity, responsibility, cooperation, planning, and the importance of communicating effectively with others. Students identify challenges and limitations to developing a comprehensive solution to the conflict between economic development and conservation of natural resources in less developed countries.

As a result of their participation in the course and their motivation and desire to pursue solutions to these issues, five students have enrolled in ATCOFA’s graduate program and are currently researching topics related to conservation of natural resources, economic development, and monetizing ecosystem services.
Endocides: Controlling Giant Salvinia

The National Center for Pharmaceutical Crops (NCPC) is a pioneer research institution in pharmaceutical crop research. Its primary mission is to discover novel anti-cancer agents from native and invasive plants in the United States that can be grown and harvested for the production of medicine. NCPC scientists, who recently discovered the cancer-treating potential in giant salvinia (Salvinia molesta), have screened more than 1,200 species of plants and isolated more than 1,150 pure compounds, including 146 new structures. More recently, Dr. Shiyou Li, ATCOFA research professor and director of the center, and his co-workers have discovered the “endogenous autotoxicity” phenomenon in plants and developed the “endocides” concept and approach to control giant salvinia, one of the most widespread environmentally and economically destructive invasive plant species in the world.

Go online: www.forestry.sfasu.edu/ncpc/

PWCC - Piney Woods Conservation Center

The Piney Woods Conservation Center (PWCC) celebrated the completion of a new Field Station pavilion/outdoor classroom during the summer of 2012. The new pavilion was made possible under the leadership of Ricky Gay ('95) with the assistance of donations from Field Station alumni and “Friends of the PWCC.” Now more than 25 years old, maintenance and improvement of the PWCC is an ongoing project.

When you make a donation to SFA, you are helping provide educational opportunities for future Lumberjacks.

Every gift truly makes a difference!

Contributions may be sent to:
April Smith, Office of Development
Stephen F. Austin State University
P.O. Box 6092, SFA Station
Nacogdoches, TX 75962-6092
(936) 468-2278

Go online: www.forestry.sfasu.edu/PWCC
Congratulations to Mr. SFA
SFA’s Alumni Association awarded Craig Wright (‘13) BS in horticulture, the title of Mr. SFA. Mr. SFA is one of the most prestigious awards a student can receive at SFA. It acknowledges students in their senior year for participation and leadership in academic and extracurricular activities.

Southern Power Endows SFA Forestry Scholarship
Southern Power, one of the largest wholesale energy providers in the southeast, recently endowed a scholarship to be awarded to a deserving undergraduate student studying forestry at SFA. The news was announced by Oscar Harper, president of Southern Power, at a ceremony commemorating the opening of the company’s newest biomass plant. The Nacogdoches Generating Facility in Sacul is the largest wood biomass-fueled electric generating power plant in the United States. The 100-megawatt plant will be fueled by non-merchantable wood biomass materials, including forest residue from the surrounding areas, pre-commercial thinnings, wood processing residues, and clean municipal wood waste. The plant is expected to provide enough energy for 60,000 homes.

2012 Lone Star Emmy Highlights ATCOFA Wildlife Research
Originally shown on PBS, the Texas Parks and Wildlife television show, “The Real Bears of East Texas,” focused on black bear research directed by Dr. Christopher Comer, professor of wildlife, and conducted by Dan Kaminski (MSF ‘11). The show concentrates on sampling techniques used in remote areas of eastern Texas that are most suitable for black bear habitat. The Emmy award winning video can be found at: www.youtube/pmXcHmfdmE0.

Taylor Wilson -
Taylor Wilson (BSF ‘10) is studying forestry as part of the graduate program at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in Israel. Wilson was awarded the Rotary International Ambassadorial scholarship and anticipates making an impact in the international forest management community. He strongly believes in the Rotarian motto “Service above Self.” According to Wilson, proper forest management plays an important role in international resource conflicts — “If you could solve these problems, you could in turn promote peace.”

Stefni Deaton -
Stefni Deaton (BSF ’13) won the ‘Outstanding Graduate Student Poster Award’ at the 17th Biennial Southern Silvicultural Research Conference with her poster titled “Control of Chinese Tallow Tree (Triadica sebifera) in Patch Clearcuts with Forest Herbicides.” Deaton competed against graduate students from forestry programs across the south and is the first SFA student to win an award at this conference since they began awarding them in 2001.
Dr. Brian Oswald

Dr. Brian Oswald, professor of fire ecology, silviculture, and range management, received the Joe C. Denman Distinguished Professorship. Oswald also is the 2012-13 Regents Professor. In June of 2012, he traveled to Apeldoorn, Netherlands to give an invited lecture on fire ecology and fire management to The National Core Group on Wildfire Management, the Ministry of Security and Justice and the VNOG. Oswald earned a bachelor’s degree in forestry from Michigan State University, a master’s degree in fire ecology from Northern Arizona University and a doctoral degree in forestry, wildlife and range sciences from the University of Idaho. He has been with ATCOFA for 18 years and teaches forest ecology, introduction to fire management, regional silviculture, fire use in land management, range management, research methods, forest and range ecological concepts, and fire ecology.

Dr. Yanli Zhang

Dr. Yanli Zhang, assistant professor of spatial science, led a group of doctoral students studying educational leadership to China in 2012. The group visited elementary and intermediate schools associated with Beijing Normal University, Beijing Forestry University, and the Xi’an University of Science and Technology. In addition to meeting with university administrators and school teachers, the group toured the British School of Beijing and visited with students at the Meixian County Middle School in Shaanxi Province. Zhang holds a bachelor’s degree from Beijing Forestry University and a doctorate in forestry from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. He joined the SFA faculty in January of 2009. He teaches advanced geospatial analysis, GIS programming, and spatial database development and is the primary investigator for ongoing USDA research on the impact of forest change on water resources in East Texas.

Dr. Dale Perritt

Dr. Dale Perritt, chair of the Department of Agriculture since 1997, is currently serving on the national board for Non-Land-Grant Agriculture and Renewable Resources Universities. Perritt also serves on the board of directors for the Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association of Texas and as a faculty member athletic representative for SFA to the Southland Conference and the NCAA. He is the faculty advisor for Collegiate FFA and Alpha Gamma Rho, and teaches courses in agricultural development and agricultural systems management. Perritt has received numerous awards including the SFA Alumni Association Distinguished Alumni Professor Award, the Teaching Excellence Award for the College of Education, the Outstanding Faculty Award for the Department of Agriculture, and was named the Nacogdoches County Agriculture Educator of the Year in 2010.
Dr. Kenneith Farrish, director of the division of environmental science, Arnold Distinguished Professor, interim chair of the department of geology, and coordinator of the Waters of East Texas (WET) Center teaches forest soils, environmental soil science, remediation and reclamation of disturbed land, and a senior seminar in environmental science. He is the faculty advisor for the SFA chapter of the National Association of Environmental Professionals (NAEP) and has taught at SFA for 17 years. His focused research interests include remediation of contaminated land, constructed wetlands, and forest soils. Farrish continues the development of the BS and MS degree programs in environmental science with a challenging interdisciplinary science-based curriculum utilizing both basic science and applied science courses. The environmental science programs have a strong reputation with employers for producing graduates that have the skills necessary to address the complex environmental problems facing industry and society. The employment success of graduates is excellent with the majority of graduates working in the private sector with environmental consulting firms and industry or taking positions with federal and state environmental regulatory agencies. The MS degree is a collaborative program with the University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler, which brings the human health side of environmental science into the degree program.

Dr. Pat Stephens Williams

Dr. Pat Stephens Williams, associate professor of human dimensions in natural resources, was selected as the newest Society of American Foresters Fellow. The Society of American Foresters honors members with the title of Fellow who have provided outstanding contributions to the Society and to the forestry profession. To be selected as a Fellow, Stephens Williams demonstrated, over a significant number of years, a strong continuing commitment to the advancement of the forestry profession through direct SAF volunteer activities, sustained leadership, and the application of forestry education, public policy, and technology transfer.

Dr. Michael Maurer

Dr. Michael Maurer, associate professor of horticulture, is in his second year of study of field grown Lilium hybrids for specialty cut flower production. He will present his latest research at the American Society for Horticulture Science (ASHS) Southern Region Conference in February. Maurer hopes his research will lead to a publication. Maurer presented at the 2012 ASHS conference with graduate student Adam Summerville who won first place in the graduate student poster competition for their research titled “WholeTree substrate amended with spent mushroom compost or peat moss in the pot-in-pot production of Rosa hybrid.”
Dr. Dan Unger

Dr. Daniel Unger, associate professor of remote sensing and GIS at the Arthur Temple College of Forestry and Agriculture, was recently awarded a contract to write a book for Waveland Press, Inc. entitled “Quantitative Assessment of Natural Resources: Deriving Real-World Measurements Using Simple and Cost Effective Methodologies.” The book is expected to be completed by September 1, 2014. In this book, Unger will focus on practical methodologies of quantifying natural resources with easy to follow examples. He also is working on converting his Introduction to Spatial Science (GIS 224) lecture notes and lab exercises into an additional book to be published by SFA Press in late fall 2014.

Unger recently published an article in GIScience & Remote Sensing entitled “Validating the Geometric Accuracy of High Spatial Resolution Multispectral Satellite Data” that focuses on geometric accuracy of digital imagery and the transfer of geometric registration errors to on-screen digitized GIS map layers. The Southern Journal of Applied Forestry is soon to publish another article authored by Unger, titled “Accuracy Assessment of Perimeter and Area Calculations Using Consumer-Grade GPS Units in Southern Forests,” which evaluates the cost benefit analysis of purchasing a GPS receiver.

Unger presented his current research findings at the Society of American Foresters national convention in Spokane, Wash., the Texas SAF annual meeting, and at the 42nd Annual SAF/University of Florida School of Forest Resources and Conservation spring symposium as an invited guest speaker. In addition to research, Unger said he continues to enjoy the service side of academe and has been involved with 53 academic committees and service projects. He also has served on 97 graduate committees to date as both chair and member. He is looking forward to serving on the milestone 100th graduate student committee in the very near future.

Emily Payne

Emily Payne, instructor of agriculture, advises all students with a major in agriculture, and also visits with seniors to ensure they are ready for graduation. So that students are successful, Payne takes the time to get to know her students and assess their needs individually. Payne teaches courses in AutoCAD and Drafting as well as two online courses, Agricultural Development and Agricultural Leadership. She also has taught a section of SFA 101 for 14 years. Payne is the sponsor for AgriAmbassadors, a recruiting organization for the department, and Sigma Alpha Agricultural Sorority.
Dr. Steven Bullard

Dr. Steven Bullard will be awarded the W.D. Hagenstein Communicator of the Year Award during the 2013 National SAF Convention in Charleston, S. C. The award “recognizes an SAF member who leads innovative and exemplary communications initiatives and programs that increase the general public’s understanding of forestry and natural resources at the local, regional, or national level.”

Bullard’s nomination for this award is due to his active role within the National Association of University Forest Resources Programs (NAUFRP) where he drafted the article “A ‘Driving Force’ in Developing the Nation’s Forests: the McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Research Program,” published in the April/May issue of the Journal of Forestry. Bullard also developed a video called “The Driving Force: of Sustainable Forestry” through a collaborative effort of SFA academic resources.

The video has been viewed by local and national audiences as well as presented during the plenary session of the 2012 SAF National Convention in Spokane, Wash. Additionally in August 2012, Bullard drafted a resolution celebrating the 50th anniversary of the McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Act, which was passed by the U.S. Senate in September 2012.

Dr. Gary Kronrad

Dr. Gary Kronrad is the Bone Hill Foundation Distinguished Professor of Resource Economics and has taught at SFA for 24 years. His research focuses on economic development and wildlife habitat conservation. Kronrad teaches economics, management, policy, consulting, personal investment, and conservation leadership. Most who know him describe him as “a super nice guy who is a terror to his students.” They say he enjoys the anxiety and distress that his students accept as a necessary evil in attending his classes. The forestry degree capstone class, Forest Resource Management, is recognized as the most time consuming of all classes taught in the ATCOFA. Kronrad is said to be a malevolent professor who instills great fear and dread in his students, whom he loves, respects, admires, and brags about whenever he gets the opportunity.

Dr. Dean Coble

Dr. Dean Coble, professor of forestry, is the first recipient of the newly endowed Jim Towns Mentoring Professorship. The professorship recognizes professors who instill, foster, and promote a mentoring culture at SFA; it is the only SFA professorship for which faculty members in all six academic colleges are eligible.

Coble teaches classes in forest biometrics, timber management, and applied regression in natural resources. He said he was “proud, honored, shocked, and humbled” to be chosen as the inaugural recipient of the Towns professorship. “I have a personal approach to mentoring in that I focus on individual relationships with students to help them develop professionally,” he said.

The funding for the professorship was largely raised by Dr. Jim Towns who had a distinguished 46-year career at SFA. “Students are drawn to Dr. Coble and desire to emulate him both professionally and personally. He provides an excellent example of how mentoring relationships between students and faculty members can benefit both parties tremendously. He is most deserving of this recognition,” Towns said.
Dr. Erin Brown
Dr. Erin Brown, associate professor of animal science, was named one of twenty-five top Texas women professors by Online Schools Texas. The organization honors professors who have “demonstrated unswerving dedication to their fields and to their students.” Brown teaches animal science, beef production, swine production, feeds and formulation, advanced nutrition, and artificial insemination courses in the Department of Agriculture.

Dr. James Kroll
Dr. James Kroll, Henry M. Rockwell Chair in forest wildlife and director of The Institute for the White-Tailed Deer Management and Research, has retired. Kroll has served in many capacities in the more than 40 years he has been with ATCOFA. It was the interactions with students that he enjoyed the most. “It is so meaningful to have former students tell me I made a difference,” Kroll said. However, one of the most rewarding experiences, he said, was the time he spent as the director of the Forest Resources Institute during the Space Shuttle Columbia recovery. Kroll said he is retiring from his university responsibilities, but will still be actively involved in developing online education and is continuing his television work. “I’ll be hanging around this place to be of help when I can.”

Mr. Frank Shockley
Frank Shockley, instructor of forestry and professional and student services coordinator, has retired after 15 years of service with ATCOFA. He earned a BSF in forest management from SFA in 1970 and a master’s degree in business management in 1981. He worked as a professional forester for 27 years before joining the forestry faculty in 1998. He has always enjoyed working with students. “It has been so rewarding to see the students go on and do well,” Shockley said. “That’s what it’s all about.” After retirement, he plans to spend time volunteering at the Texas Forestry Museum, the Wesley Center, the library, and with the Boy Scouts.

Mr. Ben Koerth
Ben Koerth, research associate for the Institute for White Tailed Deer Management and Research, has retired after 22 years of service. Koerth says he has “enjoyed the field work and research the most, but will miss working with students and watching them progress through their education.” He says one of the most rewarding things he has accomplished while at SFA was developing new technologies for inventorying wildlife. In retirement, he will continue working with Dr. Kroll conducting white-tailed deer research. Koerth has co-authored more than 20 peer reviewed articles, as well as more than 60 magazine articles.
Dr. Warren Conway

Dr. Warren Conway, professor of wildlife, received SFA’s 2013 Teaching Excellence Award. Recipients of the teaching excellence award are chosen based on knowledge of subject matter, quality of lectures and assignments, enthusiasm for teaching, interest in and availability to students, commitment to continuous improvement, and contribution to the quality of teaching. Conway teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in wildlife management, vertebrate natural history, non-game wildlife ecology, and wetland wildlife management.

Dr. John Michael Mehaffey

Dr. John Michael Mehaffey joined the faculty of the Department of Agriculture in the fall of 2012. His main teaching responsibilities are introductory animal science and reproductive physiology, as well as the development and coaching of a competitive Livestock Judging Program.

Mehaffey received a Bachelor of Science degree in poultry science from Texas A&M University, a Master of Science degree in poultry processing from the University of Arkansas, and a Doctor of Philosophy degree specializing in meat science from Texas Tech University. His goal is to teach students the techniques and knowledge necessary to have a healthy and genetically sound herd of their own.

Mehaffey worked for Pilgrim’s/JBS in Greeley, Colo., as a food technologist before coming to SFA. While in the industry, he worked as the research and development manager for Colorado Premium Foods. The experience Mehaffey carries from the meat industry will aid in building a successful undergraduate program for students at SFA with career opportunities in both the food and cattle industries throughout the world.

Dr. Stacie Appleton

This past fall, the Department of Agriculture welcomed Dr. Stacie Appleton to the faculty. She is teaching equine-related courses at both undergraduate and graduate levels, and serves as faculty director of the SFA Equine Center—directing the development and growth of the equine program.

Appleton received both her bachelor and master of science degrees from SFA. She earned her PhD in animal nutrition from Texas A&M University. Appleton’s personal and professional experience with horses and equine research give her a cutting-edge perspective to help maximize the potential of any horse operation regardless of size, discipline or scope of the program, as well as maximizing the feed dollar.

Appleton will remain actively engaged in the horse industry as a competitor, breeder, researcher and trainer. Her years of experience coupled with her strong connection to SFA, provide her the opportunity to make a significant contribution to SFA’s animal science-equine program.
Hannah Berlund

Hannah Berlund is a new academic advisor for the College of Forestry and Agriculture. Berlund graduated from Buffalo State College with a bachelor’s degree in English and a master’s in higher education and student affairs administration. She was working as a tutor when she realized her passion for working with students and helping them succeed in their goals. She plans to bring this passion to her new position. “My job is to help students in every aspect – their career, personal issues, not just their course schedule,” Berlund said.

Mark Ethridge

Mark Ethridge is the SFA Broiler Research Center supervisor. Ethridge graduated from SFA with a Bachelor of Science in agriculture with a major in poultry science in December 2012. Ethridge said when he first came to SFA he was an animal science major, but as he learned more about poultry science his interest grew and his major changed. After his graduation, Dr. Joey Bray, director of poultry science, offered him the position.

Chris Koffskey

Chris Koffskey is the SFA Beef Center supervisor at the Walter C. Todd Agricultural Research Center. He oversees seven student workers, coordinates with faculty on student labs, manages day-to-day livestock operations and is the co-advisor for the SFA Show Team. Koffskey said his hope is to educate students on the proper methods of modern agricultural production.

John Sperry

John Sperry, new academic advisor for the College of Forestry and Agriculture, also will have responsibility in recruiting new students to the college. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology from ETBU and his teacher certification from LeTourneau University. Sperry has worked with students in various capacities for more than 10 years, as a coach, a high school teacher, a college advisor and an admissions counselor. In his new role, Sperry said he wants to work with Hannah to make sure students are well informed. “I’m also excited to recruit students and expand the college,” Sperry said.

Jon Gauntt

Jon Gauntt serves as assistant systems administrator for the Arthur Temple College of Forestry and Agriculture. He is responsible for the websites, is the backup server administrator, and is responsible for troubleshooting, repairing, and maintaining the computers for the entire College of Forestry and Agriculture. Gauntt also has a hand in the photo and video productions around the college.

Cynthia Baize

Cynthia Baize began as secretary for the Department of Agriculture in May. She is responsible for clearing advising holds, supervising student assistants, typing documents, handling mail, and answering the phones. Baize has worked at SFA for 15 years. She joins ATCOFA from Accounts Receivable, and said she is excited to gain more knowledge about the academic areas of the university.
American Fire Ecology Certification

ATCOFA is one of seven American universities to have an Association for Fire Ecology (AFE) Certified Education Program. To meet growing needs in the profession of fire ecology, AFE has developed a process for recognizing academic programs that prepare future fire professionals. SFA students in the AFE program are required to take courses in wildland fire, fire management, fire ecology, range management, climate and weather, as well as relevant agriculture courses. ATCOFA has a Student Association for Fire Ecology (SAFE) chapter with Dr. Brian Oswald as the advisor. Students are able to obtain Red Card certification each fall and to participate on prescribed burns under an agreement with the National Forests and Grasslands in Texas (USFS) and other state and Federal Agencies. ATCOFA students with an emphasis in this program have a high employment rate and are sought after by agencies that recognize the value of the AFE Certification Program.

Brandi Baker

Brandi Baker is the Equine Barn manager at the Walter C. Todd Agricultural Research Center. She also is a senior majoring in Animal Science with an equine emphasis. Baker is passionate about her field and loves teaching others how to ride and care for horses.

Ricky Luna

Ricky Luna is the support services coordinator, or as most students know him, the equipment room manager. Luna is in charge of checking out field equipment to students as needed. Luna worked for SFA’s physical plant for five years before joining the College of Forestry and Agriculture.

The Driving Force

The McIntire-Stennis Cooperative Forestry Research Program was signed into law in 1962 to fund a national agenda for forestry research and graduate education. The McIntire-Stennis program has supported thousands of research projects and contributed to the education of more than 2,000 doctoral students and 8,000 Master of Science students. The new vision for the future of the program reflects current issues in forestry and natural resources such as a new science of integration, ecosystem services, climate change, energy independence, and the creation of new jobs, technologies, and products.

The McIntire-Stennis Fiftieth Anniversary brochure and a short version of the video are now available on the NAUFRP main website: www.naufrp.org/index.asp.

The McIntire-Stennis Fiftieth Anniversary long video is available on the “McStennis 50th Anniversary” page on the NAUFRP website: www.naufrp.org/mcstennis.asp.
Field Station 2012:  

By: Carter Hudspeth (BSF ’13)

Field Station opened with a recollection of past Field Stations by Dr. Whiting who described how difficult students had it in the old days.

Weeks 1 and 2

The first two weeks of field station were Field Silviculture and Timber Cruising with Dr. Stovall and Dr. Coble. We did three timber cruises. The first cruise was over 230 acres, and it took nine hours for all of the crews to finish. The second tract we cruised was called Bald Eagle Tract, appropriately named as there was a bald eagle flying around. The third tract we cruised had previously been burned and was extremely easy to cruise in the two hours given to us. These weeks also included a line-strip inventory, dendrology quizzes, regeneration surveys, a tour with the Campbell Group in Jasper, and our first final exam.
Week 3

Week three was Field Wildlife Techniques with Dr. Conway and Dr. Comer. Throughout the week we set up herp arrays, mist nets, scent stations, Havahart traps, minnow traps, Sherman traps, and cup pitfall traps. With these, we captured a number of wildlife species including a Seminole bat, an evening bat, southern short-tailed shrews, leopard frogs, fish, crayfish, raccoons, salamanders, deer mice, pygmy mice, various songbirds and insects. We also conducted a spotlight survey of white-tailed deer to estimate the deer per acre and used a CD player to call for Eastern Screech Owls. We were able to get photos and videos of three owls.

Week 4

During the fourth week, we practiced our GIS skills. It was Land Measurement week, and Dr. Williams taught us how to use surveying equipment to determine how to build ponds and construct dams. We spent the rest of the week with Dr. Hung and Dr. Unger using technology like eTrex GPS units, staff compasses, Trimble GPS units, and laser rangefinders to find points on U.S. Forest Service land, determine the boundary of a loblolly pine stand, calculate acreage, and create maps and histograms, as well as find the area of the PWCC Island.

Week 5

Week five was Non-Timber Resource Management week with Dr. Oswald and Dr. Stephens Williams. We met with the Texas A&M Forest Service and discussed wildland urban interface issues, visited the Luminant Mining Company to see how they restored their lands after mining, studied RCW management and habitat, learned about different recreational activities at Martin Dies Jr. State Park, visited the Old Aldridge Sawmill ghost town, and worked together and encouraged each other through the low and high ropes courses.

Week 6

During the sixth week we studied Harvesting and Processing with Dr. McBroom and Dr. Kulhavy. We explored a harvesting operation, a biomass plant, a paper mill, a utility pole and treatment plant, an OSB plant, and a saw mill. Through these guided tours, we got to see how Aspen Power uses state-of-the-art technology to convert urban waste, mill waste, and logging waste into electricity. We also saw how a modern paper mill uses pine chips, hardwood chips, pine pulpwood, and bark fuel to manufacture products like Starbucks cups, food service packaging materials, and office products.
Two Student Organizations Receive the 2013 Presidential Volunteer Service Award

The student chapters of the Society of American Foresters (SAF) and the National Association for Interpretation (NAI) both received the 2013 Presidential Volunteer Service Award (PVSA). The award was presented to each of the organizations in appreciation of their commitment to making a difference through volunteer service. Both the SAF and the NAI each volunteered more than 1,000 hours earning them the Gold Level 2013 PVSA. Amy Brennan, president of the SFA chapter of the NAI earned the Silver Level 2013 PVSA for volunteering more than 800 hours of service.

In the Presidential citation to the organizations, President Barack Obama says “As a PVSA award recipient, it is your duty to not only continue to live a life of service and encourage others to follow in your footsteps, but also extend your service-minded values outside of your volunteer work as honorable and respectable citizens. Thank you for your devotion to service and for doing all you can to shape a better tomorrow for our great Nation.”

The student chapter of SAF is a professional organization created to encourage involvement with professional foresters on business and social levels and to allow for greater professional participation in leadership roles. The student chapter of the NAI connects members with professionals in the field and helps to sharpen environmental, cultural and historical interpretation skills, as well as communication and leadership skills.

Agriculture Student Organizations Win Awards

The Horticulture Club Judging Team placed second overall in the J. Benton Storey Horticulture Judging Contest at the American Society for Horticultural Science 2013 Southern Regional Conference. The contest is a two-hour test of student skills in identifying and judging woody ornamentals, greenhouse and floral crops, fruits and nuts, and vegetables. With six university horticulture judging teams competing, SFA’s team placed first in judging woody ornamentals, third in judging vegetable crops, and third in judging greenhouse floral and foliage. In individual awards, Felicia English placed first in judging greenhouse floral and foliage plants and vegetables, Eric Golstan placed first in judging fruit and nut crops, and Ken Moyer placed second in judging individual woody ornamentals.

The SFA Agriculture Show Team won the first place Herdsman Award at the 2013 Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. As a service project, the Agriculture Show Team also donated pull tabs from soda cans to the Houston Ronald McDonald House while they were there showing cattle. The SFA Show Team encourages interest in showing livestock and connects organization members with the livestock industry. The Show Team supports the animal science program, holds an invitational livestock judging contest held on the SFA campus each spring, and hosts instructional livestock showmanship clinics in the fall for local 4-H and FFA clubs.
Amy Brennan

Amy Brennan of Sour Lake, Texas, is a senior in forest recreation management and active member in student organizations. Brennan is the president of the SFA chapter of the National Association of Interpretation and recently participated in an internship sponsored by the Student Conservation Association for the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial in southwest Indiana last summer.

While interning at the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial, she worked at the information/welcome desk, as well as a historical interpreter at the park’s Living Historical Farm, where she informed visitors about President Lincoln’s story as a farm boy in Indiana. She also performed spinning and cooking demonstrations while taking care of the memorial’s livestock. During her internship, the park celebrated its 50th anniversary with various events which she helped orchestrate.

Although she enjoyed all aspects of her internship, Brennan said her favorite experiences involved interacting with and teaching people from all over the nation and the world. “I feel like I had a rare opportunity to educate and inspire others, and it just reiterated to me that I am on the career path I am destined to be on.”

Audrianna Rogers

Audrianna Rogers, a recent poultry science graduate, spent 14 weeks last summer interning with Cobb-Vantress, a global poultry research company. Rogers said she got the internship with the help of Dr. Joey Bray, SFA’s director of poultry science. He encouraged her to attend the International Poultry Expo, where she interviewed for internships and made valuable contacts.

Rogers learned about Cobb-Vantress at the Expo. “I have always been interested in science so I accepted an internship with them for the summer under their senior geneticist, Manoucher Katanbaf,” Rogers said. “I learned a ton and found my passion for poultry genetics research.” Rogers interned at their location in Monticello, Ky., where she worked with geneticists to determine if there is a correlation between the height and texture of excreta and the feed conversion ratio (ratio of the amount of feed to the amount of meat a bird can build).

Rogers is now a graduate student earning her master’s in population genetics at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville.

Kim Dean

Kim Dean of Broaddus, Texas, is a junior in wildlife management, who participated in an internship at the Ellen Trout Zoo in Lufkin last summer. As a zookeeper intern, Dean was responsible for assisting in the daily care of assigned animals, including diet preparation and feeding. She also assisted in the cleaning and renovations of exhibits, as well as interacting with the public.

Dean’s favorite experience during the internship was her ability to interact with the wildlife, such as “snuggling with a two-day old lion cub, hand feeding white-faced saki monkeys, and playing with lemurs.” Dean also stated the internship provided her with the privilege of working alongside some incredibly talented and knowledgeable people gaining experience that cannot be taught in the classroom. “You can learn the biology of an animal from a book or a lecture, but you cannot learn individual behavior without observation and analysis of those observations.”

Dean recommends fellow students consider internships while working on their degree — not only to gain valuable work experience but also for personal networking to build relationships that could provide employment opportunities in the future.
Nutifafa Adotey, an international graduate student from Sakumono, Ghana, recently conducted a greenhouse study on how wood ash from biomass power plants has the potential to reduce soil acidity, improve nutrient availability, and increase yields of agricultural crops in eastern Texas. Adotey gathered wood ash from local biomass power plants since these plants normally pay to send the wood ash to a landfill. He found that generally there were no differences between the expensive limestone used to enhance soil properties and the wood ash in changing the soil pH. He studied the effects on growth of common Bermuda grass and compared the ash to the industry standard limestone. He also determined that it is cheaper for the biomass power plants and good for the farmers if they can use the ash. Adotey will be attending LSU’s School of Plant, Environmental, and Soil Sciences, working on his PhD studying soil science, primarily rice production.

April Varn Welch of Augusta, Ga., is currently pursuing a Master of Science in resource interpretation. Welch’s research focuses on determining management strategies used by Park Rangers fulfilling the mission of Tennessee State Parks by exploring the relationship between the perception affecting management strategies and the external factors influencing park personnel perceptions and management choices. “I firmly believe that in order to affect positive change within an organization, it doesn’t come from the top, but from the bottom, the grass roots; that you must be inspired and grow yourself first in order to inspire and grow others,” Welch said. “By studying the field personnel within Tennessee State Parks, I hope to determine whether Park Rangers understand the benefits of interpretation as a resource management tool, and to determine their own level of confidence and knowledge as interpreters.” After graduation, Welch hopes to possibly continue her education by pursuing a doctoral degree, teaching on the college level, and writing a book.
Forestry

Simon Chavez

Simon Chavez of Fort Worth is pursuing a Master of Science in forestry. Chavez’s thesis focuses on the East Texas occupancy of the eastern wild turkey. Chavez has spent the last two springs surveying the population and is now working on analyzing his data. As a graduate student, he works as a teaching assistant for surveying and GIS courses. Along with his teaching assistantship, he also is an active member of the Society of American Foresters and The Wildlife Society.

Chavez gave an oral presentation and displayed a poster of his research at the annual meeting of the Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society. He was recently awarded the Rumsey Research and Development Fund Outstanding Graduate Student Award during the annual 2013 Forestry and Environmental Science Awards Convocation. After graduation, Chavez hopes to get a job working with wildlife in the mountainous region of the western United States.

Environmental Science

Damika Thomas

Damika Thomas, an international student from the Island of Grenada, is currently seeking a Master of Science in environmental science. Her research topic focuses on estimating the dispersion of pollutants from a poultry farm using AERMOD, an air quality modeling software program. “The main objective of this study is to model the concentration of the pollutant distribution path and the surrounding area(s) of impact at the SFA poultry facility for ammonia (NH₃), particulate matter (PM₂.₅ and PM₁₀), and odor with the use of AERMOD, a steady-state dispersion model designed to identify the short-range dispersion of air pollutants emitted into ambient air from a stationary source(s),” Thomas said. After graduating, Thomas plans to find a career with an environmental firm where she can apply the knowledge she obtained from her research, as well as acquire real-life experience working within a wide variety of industries.
Revising the Bachelor of Science in Forestry Curriculum

An important goal in providing forestry undergraduate education is to produce graduates who are professionals and capable of dealing effectively with complex economic, ecological, and social issues involving today’s forest resources.

To help assure the Bachelor of Science in forestry (BSF) program produces society-ready, society-engaged forestry and natural resource professionals prepared for tomorrow’s challenges and opportunities, a project of reviewing and revising the BSF curriculum was initiated in May of 2012. A curriculum revision committee was formed that was composed of ATCOFA’s BSF faculty. Additionally, a research sub-committee was appointed to develop an in-depth research design for studying the needs associated with a BSF curriculum revision. The sub-committee met twice a week during the 2012-13 academic year, and as a result of these meetings, a two-phased research study was developed and implemented from November 2012 to February 2013.

The first phase of the research involved surveying more than 3,000 individuals associated with the ATCOFA BSF program, as well as forestry and natural resource programs. A detailed survey was provided to participating individuals in either a paper format or an electronic version. The second phase of the research was conducted through focus group discussions led by a non-forestry/natural resource professional. Fifteen focus groups were held across Texas that were made up of a diverse combination of forestry and natural resource professionals, including federal and state agency members, ATCOFA alumni, landowners, and forestry and natural resource businesses.
Successful curriculum revision would not have been possible without critical input provided by the forestry and natural resources professional community. Everyone’s participation is greatly appreciated. Continue to check the ATCOFA website for further updates on the research findings.

For additional information or to provide comments or suggestions, please contact Dr. Theresa Coble at tcoble@sfasu.edu or Dr. Pat Stephens Williams at stephensp@sfasu.edu.

Visit ATCOFA’s College News section to download the 2013 Forestry Curriculum Revision handouts:
1. Qualitative Competencies Summary,
2. Quantitative Competencies Summary, and
3. Combined Ranking Competencies.
Ladies of Forestry: 1972
Can You Help Identify the Ladies of Forestry?

1. 
2. Ann Holland - 1976
3. Gwendolyn McGee (Carpenter) - 1973
4. 
5. Cathy Wakefield
6. 
7. Sarah Lee - 1974
8. Sylvia Simmons (Frizzell) - 1974
9. 
10. Janice Younger - 1973
11. Audrey Strange
12. Margaret Beare (Thayer) - 1974
13. Janet Smith (Remmers) - 1975
15. 
16. Patricia Mackeen
17. 
18. Catherine Stein - 1972
19. 
20. Barbara George
21. Malinda Givens
22. Peggy MaGee - 1990
23. Merlinda Monroe (Schory) - 1973

Please contact:
Monty Whiting, Professor Emeritus, at mwhiting@sfasu.edu

Congratulations Alumni

Frances Main -
Frances Main (BSF ’86) was recognized at the Society of American Forester’s National Convention in Spokane, Wash., with the Presidential Field Forester Award. She is currently a resource forester for the Missouri Department of Conservation, where she has worked since 1990.

A. Gordon Holley -
A. Gordon Holley (BSF ’89, MSF ’92, Ph.D. ’98) was awarded the prestigious Carl Alwin Schenck Award at the Society of American Forester’s National Convention. Holly is an associate professor and the associate director of the School of Forestry at Louisiana Tech University.

Wesley Moorehead -
Wesley Moorehead (BSF ’00) is the new East Texas Operations Department Head of the Texas A&M Forest Service. He is responsible for 12-million forested acres spanning over three regions and 18 districts. Moorehead will oversee all of the agency’s forestry and firefighting efforts in the region. “I really love East Texas. I was born and bred in the programs here,” Moorehead said, referring to his 11-year forestry career. “I’m really excited to put my mark on it, to take some of the things I’ve seen throughout my career and make them better.”
Alumni Careers

April Rose
April Rose graduated in 2005 with a Bachelor of Science in urban forestry and is now the executive director of TreeFolks, a nonprofit urban forestry organization. She oversees educational programs, speaks to groups, donors, policy makers, and manages and develops staff. Through this, she is able to see immediate results from her work when children and families are inspired to take action, new trees are planted or better cared for in parks, and policy makers are getting information about the value of trees in their community and making changes because of it. Rose established a Tree City USA program with preservation ordinances and great public events. Because of this, she suggests that urban forestry students take public policy classes.

Ashley Harris
Ashley Harris graduated in 2007 with an agriculture business degree. She also received a Master in Professional Accountancy in 2010 and is a CPA. Harris was hired by AgriLand Farm Credit after graduation and works in their Nacogdoches office. Harris was a loan officer for two years and is now a Credit Analyst where she analyzes loans greater than one million dollars for default risk. She analyzes loan requests for borrowers involved in cattle, nursery, poultry, or timber industries. She also completes internal audit work for the association’s accounting department. AgriLand Farm Credit is a customer-owned credit cooperative established by farmers and ranchers to be a reliable source of credit for agricultural producers. AgriLand, FCS, is part of the nationwide Farm Credit System established in 1916.

Kevin Jackson
Kevin Jackson graduated in 2011 with a Bachelor of Science in spatial science. He is now an Airborne Systems Operator at GeoDigital International. Jackson operates LiDAR equipment from a helicopter. With the help of a pilot, he collects information about the landscape for clients. He then sends that information to the research and development department for analysis. Jackson notes travel as one of the perks of his job. While it is winter in North America, he works in the Southern Hemisphere, specifically Australia. He credits his success to hard work, dedication, and the ATCOFA faculty. Jackson recommends that students looking for a similar career take advantage of internship opportunities and study abroad trips. “In my line of work, travel is a necessity, and these experiences while you’re young will greatly improve your ability to adapt to your surroundings no matter what is thrown in front of you,” Jackson said.

Mia Brown
Mia Brown graduated in 2010 with a Bachelor of Science in wildlife management and is now a Park Ranger Interpretive/Resource Specialist at Caddo Lake State Park. She has many duties including creating and delivering programs, leading nature hikes, and educating visitors about the park. Brown enjoys the fact that her job allows her to make an impact. “When visitors leave a program, they are walking away with some sort of new knowledge about the environment around them, which hopefully will foster an appreciation for that environment and resource,” Brown said. She credits her success to the education she received at ATCOFA saying, “the forestry degree allows you to experience so much in so many different natural resource areas that you have a great base from which to build your career.” Her initial interest in forest wildlife management came from many visits to state parks with her mother, as well as summers spent building trails with the Student Conservation Association.
Charity Vaughn

Charity Vaughn graduated in 2009 with a Bachelor of Science in environmental science and a minor in forestry. She is now working as an Environment, Health, and Safety Representative at Anadarko Petroleum. She has always liked being outdoors and enjoys working in the field helping ensure compliance with state and federal laws. She conducts environmental training, interfaces with environmental consultants to plan remediation activities, and provides support to field operations on environmental issues. Technology plays a large role in Vaughn’s day-to-day work. She uses programs like ArcGIS to analyze data and make maps of remediation projects and uses computer systems designed to show when pressure drops in wells and storage tanks as safety mechanisms. “We rely heavily on technology to process data for our remediation projects, and especially to have immediate access to data coming in from the laboratories,” Vaughn said. Vaughn encourages students to work hard and take advantage of the opportunities available. “Working for a number of graduate students throughout college on a wide variety of research projects helped to build my resume and broaden my experiences, which led to getting hired by Anadarko,” Vaughn said.

Marshal White

Marshal White graduated in 2013 with a Bachelor of Science in environmental science. He is moving to Swaziland, a small country in southern Africa, to work at African Christian College as an educator on sustainable and effective agricultural methods for Swaziland’s soil and climate. African Christian College (ACC) is a small school where much of the food served in the cafeteria is raised right on campus. Students take ownership for their education by working in the gardens to produce enough food to feed the faculty and staff members, students and their families. The campus also has macadamia tree groves as a part of ACC’s Tree of Life Project. The macadamia nuts are sold to HEB and Central Market stores to help cover the operational costs of the college. Project SEED, short for Sustainable Economic Effective Demonstration, is ACC’s maize seed growing development program. ACC grows an open-pollinated variety of maize that is suited for the Swaziland soil and climate. “It’s the lifestyle I want to live for a while – a hands-on, intentional, relational lifestyle,” White said. “Students from all over the African continent are there with many different views. It’s a beautiful thing, and I want to be a part of it.”

Distinguished Alumnus

Dr. Roel Lopez (BSF ’93) was awarded Educator of the Year at the 49th Annual Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society meeting held in Houston. Dr. Lopez, professor of wildlife and fisheries sciences at Texas A&M University, is the director of the Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources and interim director of the Texas Water Resources Institute. He says his academic training at SFA was critical in shaping his philosophy and work ethic. His interests include habitat management, population ecology, and military land management. He now inspires his students to become responsible and dedicated wildlife professionals. His efforts have earned him nine teaching awards. Dr. Lopez also spends much of his time working with natural resource professionals and the general public, as well as providing distance learning to those serving in the armed forces.
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