“Growing up on a dry-land cotton farm, I developed an appreciation for the fact that there was a better way to make a living.”

Jim Graham
Finding a Better Way
Back in 1992 when presidential candidate Bill Clinton was early into his campaign, it is said that one of his advisors, James Carville, coined the term “The economy, stupid” to remind everyone on the campaign staff about what their focus should be. In the same way, the arrival of the fall semester on the Texas Tech campus serves as a reminder to me that it’s all about our students (i.e., “The students, stupid”). They are everywhere this time of year! With a logarithmic increase in pedestrian traffic, driving on campus becomes a real challenge. Restaurants and stores all over Lubbock are filled with them. There’s a sense of new beginnings that makes everyone feel good, coupled with a bit of frustration that commute times are longer and everything is much busier than it was during the long, quiet summer. Regardless of the feelings that accompany their arrival, they are indeed back – and given that they really are what universities are all about, it’s good to have them back.

Our College has been fortunate to experience significant growth in student numbers over the past several years, with our Fall 2011 enrollment of 1,874 undergraduate and graduate students being the largest in history. As of press time, our preliminary enrollment for Fall 2012 is 1,856 students. The slight decrease from last year is a result of lower graduate student numbers associated with cuts in state and federal funds for research. Despite the fact that our Fall 2011 enrollment was far less than that of our in-state rival Texas A&M (7,099 students in Agriculture and Life Sciences), we are comparably sized to Colorado State (1,475) and New Mexico State (2,033), and not far from several regional large land grant universities like Kansas State (2,866), Nebraska (2,533), and Oklahoma State (2,514). Our enrollment growth in recent years can be attributed, in large measure, to the outstanding recruiting efforts of the staff of the Dr. Bill Bennett Student Success Center under the supervision of Associate Dean Cindy Akers and to aggressive departmental recruiting efforts through the state and region.

In addition to strong recruiting efforts, CASNR scholarship endowments give us a huge advantage in attracting top-quality students to our programs. We distributed approximately $1.3 million in scholarship funds last year, and almost 40 percent of CASNR students receive scholarship funding. Thanks to the generosity of our scholarship donors and the fine work of Jane Piercy and the college Development Office staff, the funds we are able to distribute far exceeds (from 1.5 to 3X) that of our regional land grant “competitors.”

Over the past year, I have had many opportunities to interact with our CASNR students, both undergraduate and graduate. I know that many people are worried about the future of agriculture and our country in general, and it’s easy to think that young people today are “just not what they used to be.” My message is – don’t worry. These young people are bright, articulate, and know the value of hard work. Indeed, if our students in CASNR are a representative sample of students around the U.S., agriculture and the country are going to be in good hands for the future.

Thanks for your continuing support of our work in CASNR. I hope you will enjoy this issue of Landmarks. It’s a great opportunity to learn more about our fine students, faculty, staff, and alumni.
Over the past few months, I have had the opportunity to visit with many alumni; whether at events, through phone calls or email, or just someone dropping by my office. I have very much enjoyed getting to know them, and look forward to meeting even more alumni along the way.

The visits have re-instilled in me something that I learned as an undergraduate in the college, and something that encouraged me to continue my career here. That is that CASNR has the best alumni. Each semester we gain a variety of fields. These alumni make us so proud by becoming outstanding leaders working to make strides that impact their communities, states, the nation, and the world.

We feature two such alumni in this issue. Their accomplishments are only a small taste of the legacy CASNR alumni, young and old, have created. I hope each of you find inspiration, and maybe even a little bit of yourselves in their stories.

You are creating your own legacy and making your alma mater proud. As alumni, your support and involvement has shaped the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources to what it is today and, along each step of the way, you are paving the path for generations to come. I hope you continue to connect with us and stay involved with the college. Feel free to visit the college any time and join us at events throughout the year.

Meet THE OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI RELATIONS

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Staff photos by Lessie Kitten (Agrcultural education), Savant Photographic Artistry.

From Left: Becky Bram, Coordinator of College Development; Jane Piercy, Director of Development and External Relations; Bryan White, Student Assistant; Zachary Pena, Senior Business Assistant; Tracee Murph, Coordinator of Alumni Relations

This summer we welcomed two new members to our team. Zachary Pena started as our new Senior Business Assistant in July. Zach comes to us from Texas Tech University System Institutional Advancement where he worked in Financial Services. He is the first line of contact for our office, and many of you will hear from him as he schedules appointments or you RSVP to events. We also hired a new Student Assistant in July. Bryce White is a sophomore Pre Vet major from Lubbock. He helps keep our office running behind the scenes, and is a vital source of support. You may see him at many of our events. Please don’t hesitate to talk to either of these guys if you need anything.

DEVELOPMENT and ALUMNI RELATIONS

DEVELOPMENT and ALUMNI RELATIONS

Tracee Murph, Coordinator of Alumni Relations

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Vision & Tradition

THE CAMPAIGN FOR TEXAS TECH

$1 BILLION CAPITAL CAMPAIGN SURPASSES $900 MILLION MARK

Vision and Tradition: The Campaign for Texas Tech has surpassed $900 million as funds are raised toward its $1 billion goal. Already surpassing gifts raised from previous campaigns, the Vision & Tradition capital campaign is easily the most successful and largest fundraising effort in the history of the Texas Tech University System.

“We are so close to reaching our $1 billion goal,” said Dr. Kelly D. Debnam, vice chancellor and chief operating officer of the Texas Tech Foundation, Inc. “We are confident we can celebrate its completion before our anticipated deadline.”

“Our alumni and friends have a longstanding history of generosity when it comes to supporting the universities of the Texas Tech University System,” said Kent Hance, chancellor of the Texas Tech University System. “This tradition has continued and helped make a tremendous impact during a time when many other institutions’ fundraising efforts have diminished due to a declined economy.”

The capital campaign, which includes Texas Tech University, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center and Angelo State University, is one of 14 billion-dollar campaigns being currently conducted at higher education institutions in the country. Publicly announced in September 2010, the Vision & Tradition capital campaign is scheduled to end in August 2013.

“The entire development team has done an outstanding job engaging our donors,” said Ed Whitacre, co-chairman of Vision and Tradition: The Campaign for Texas Tech. “The success of this campaign is due to the professional staff who work tirelessly to further the Texas Tech University System.”

Some of the areas that are being funded through this capital campaign are student scholarships and fellowships that will reward academic accomplishment and encourage diversity; faculty support through establishing endowments that attract world-class scholars who excel in teaching and research; and facility enhancements by building spaces where students and faculty can learn, discover and compete.

Facilities such as the Jones AT&T Stadium, Jerry S. Rawls College of Business Administration, United Commons at the new residential hall off Boston Avenue and the new clinical simulation center in Odessa are a few examples where the component institutions are already benefiting from the capital campaign.

“We are less than $100 million away from the most ambitious campaign in our history,” said Hance. “We hope our donors will continue to come together to make this dream a reality.”

UPCOMING EVENTS

Homecoming Breakfast
Saturday, October 12, 2012, 8:00 a.m.
Student Union Building Red Raider Ballroom

85th Annual Pig Roast and Outstanding Agriculturist Awards
Thursday, November 8, 2012, Lubbock Memorial Civic Center
Dean’s Reception, 5:30 p.m. – Mezzanine
Dinner and Awards, 6:30 p.m. – Banquet Hall

Distinguished and Young Alumni Awards
February 2013

50th + Class Reunion
May 2013

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

TEXAS TECH RECEIVES NATIONAL RESEARCH UNIVERSITY DESIGNATION

Texas Tech received official notice from the Start Auditor’s Office in May that it met the necessary criteria and is now eligible to receive a share of the state’s National Research University Fund (NRUF). The notification paves the way for additional research funding from NRUF, which could range from $8-10 million annually.

In March, President Guy Bailey unveiled a 10-year business plan for the University with the end goal of inclusion in the Association of American Universities. Inclusion to the 62-member research university group is only possible if Texas Tech can be identified as one of the most research-intensive institutions in the nation. The university has the potential to meet the association’s criteria.

Texas Tech is one of seven institutions initially designated by the state legislature in 2009 in an effort to boost the research capacity of the state’s public universities. Of the seven, only Tech and the University of Houston have met the criteria.

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GRADUATE STUDENT STUDIES AROUND THE WORLD

BY LAURA GUTSCHKE

TOMÁS RESENDIZ ('99 BS Agricultural and Applied Economics) earned more than a degree from the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR). He gained a passport to the world — literally.

The Petersburg, Texas, native currently is in Uganda in the Peace Corps Master's International program on scholarship from the United States Department of Agriculture. Upon completing the program, he will earn a master's degree from CASNR.

Resendiz also studied abroad in South Korea his senior year and Brazil at the start of his master's program. During his sophomore year, he was a CASNR Washington D.C. congressional intern, first unpaid and later paid as a liaison for the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

The fifth of six children and the first in his family to attend college, Resendiz has done more than focus on bettering just himself. He served as a CASNR community advisor in Stangel/Murdough Dormitory, organized a fund-raiser for Ronald McDonald House and worked at a day care as part of AmeriCorps. While in Brazil, he joined a fellow student in raising funds for a clinic serving poor and disabled children.

In seven short years, Resendiz has gained a plethora of world experiences. Following are excerpts of a Q-and-A with Resendiz via e-mail while in Uganda.
Q: Did you have global interests in high school?

I would love to be able to describe how I was a very active high school student with the highest interests in international affairs and global issues. However, nothing would be further from the truth. The truth is I was a below average kid until my senior year. I had no intention, motivation, encouragement and, especially, financial resources to afford such “dreams.”

Q: At Texas Tech you became involved in volunteer work. Why is community service important and rewarding to you?

Community service was a way for me to pay it forward. I was rewarded – and at times mentored – by Dr. Norman Hopper recently retired from the CASNR, who at all the time was dean of students. Without him I honestly believe I would have never made it through my first year, or even to Texas Tech at all. Given his generosity and a much easier sophomore year, I had time to do things to kind of show my gratitude, but not to anyone in particular because it was a personal fulfillment kind of thing, since most people didn’t know what I was doing.

Q: How was Dr. Hopper a positive influence?

He took a chance on a poor, not-so-bright high school student from a very small West Texas town. Ultimately, even to this day I am not sure of why he did it. Perhaps it was because he was also from that small town or because my father worked for his brother as a tenant farmer. Maybe he saw something in me that I didn’t. Whatever the case, that gesture of his, along with his constant advice, really made a great impact.

Q: What were some of your congressional intern duties?

I had to do what all interns do – forward mail, answer phones, get coffee, etc. Nevertheless, given that prior to that the only jobs I have involved heavy manual labor with long hours, that was such a cushy job for me. At times I could not believe how people could get paid so much money for doing such things. A few months in I was asked to be the Congressional Hispanic Caucus liaison for Rep. Henry Cuellar. This position and the guidance of (Rep. Cuellar’s) Chief of Staff Terry Strinon introduced me to the wonderful world of networking.

Q: What were some of those manual labor jobs?

My first job ever was hoeing cotton every summer. I also worked in factories. During my freshman year, I had to work as a forklift driver and did some part-time custom work, usually involving welding, woodworking and gardening. Most of those jobs required at least one arm.

Q: When you think about your time in D.C., what is the one word that comes to mind? Why?

“Opportunity” – the reason being that it dispensed with the idea in me that government is a place for the, um, smarter ones. Congressmen Cuellar’s office was one that rewarded hard work and determination with increase in responsibility, and it pushed me to limits and places I never knew I could reach.

Q: What prompted you to study in Korea your senior year?

I believe from my first classes at Texas Tech, when I learned about the wonderful world of “study abroad,” the idea grew in my head. As I took some animal science and economic classes, I learned of the rising Asian Tigers and was interested in globalization, specifically within the agricultural sector.

Q: How were your experiences in Korea?

Academically, Korea was much more intense. I took 27 credit hours — many business classes mixed with some fine arts credits. Korea University was one of the top three in the country. The business school where I studied was ranked No. 1 at the time of my attendance. Socially, Korea was undoubtedly the best part of my time there. The culture was so different and the people so welcoming that I fell in love with that country almost immediately. One of the things often discussed by other U.S. students was the enormous way we look at patriotism. Those people that say you cannot love another country other than your own have probably never been abroad. The world is full of wonder and beauty that should not be pinned against each other, but rather enjoyed for its uniqueness.

Q: You were accepted into law school but instead chose to pursue a Peace Corps Master’s Interna- tional degree. Why?

I asked myself this question almost every day. Just kidding. The answer is quite simple — this is the program that Dr. Hopper ran. It was also a program that had little to no new participants as far as I knew. I felt that since Dr. Hopper made the program, it must be a good one. It just needed someone to come in and optimize all the great possibilities that came with it.

Q: What attracted you to studying in Brazil and taking courses in Portuguese?

After my year in Korea, I felt compelled to go abroad again. Learning Portuguese was tedious and very rewarding. The best part of learning that language was that I was in Brazil while doing it. I found it a bit challenging, but my fluency in Spanish facilitated things for me.

Q: Describe the fund-raising project in Brazil. How did you do that?

Bailey Rose Eiland (another CASNR exchange student) was made aware of that clinic through her host family and wanted to visit it. Given that we shared the eagerness of doing something memorable before leaving, we went together. After one visit we both agreed that we would do a fund-raiser for those kids, and in a few short weeks we had collected enough money to buy 422 toys for those disabled children.

Q: How did you raise the money?

I raised money by calling home and sending e-mails to old acquaintances. Ultimately, I also put money of my own into this project.

Q: Describe your Peace Corps program.

The Peace Corps program I am in is Economic Development. I was sent to a small village inside Queen Elizabeth National Park to work with a small community based organization that deals with tourism.

Q: Did you choose Uganda? How long will you be there?

I did not pick Uganda or even the continent of Africa. Peace Corps assigns you where to go. The assignments are for 27 months.

Q: What are your day-to-day responsibilities in Uganda?

I work with my organization personnel and train them to become more efficient, professional and technologically literate. This is a full-time job, but they are picking things up with ease. My days consist of writing grant proposals, creating new business so as to increase income for my organization and designing projects that will help the community.

Q: Uganda has been in the news recently because of unrest in neighboring Congo (DRC) and a new Ebola outbreak. How do you cope with such risks?

It’s not something that crosses my mind every day. I really try not to live in fear of things I cannot control. There are plenty of things that are more dangerous than Ebola or a Congolese militia attack. I live about 22 kilometers from Bwera, which is a border city with the DRC. I have been to that city several times during my projects and have never run into any trouble. However, I also live within a national park, meaning that the lions that roam around are not encircled in cages, nor are the green mambas, cobras, pythons or crocodiles that have already taken the lives of four villagers. Don’t get me wrong — I definitely don’t live in constant fear of these things. I have been advised by the locals on how to avoid these dangers so that I now naturally and subconsciously avoid having any close calls.

Q: Despite the turmoil impacting Uganda, the country is blessed with beau- tiful national parks. Have you been able to enjoy the sights?

During the beginning of my project I was working with USAID-STAR (a program the United States Agency for International Development to help promote national parks in the Albertine Rift, along with community tourism. So, I was able to see for free many different, wonderful wildlife not only in Queen Elizabeth, but other parks as well. My newly built home (in Queen Elizabeth National Park) faces true north overlooking crater lakes and the bird sanctuary Lake Manyara. At a distance I see the Rwenzori Mountains. Every night I hear hippo wailing past my house, and I see elephants almost every day walking across the street. Warthogs are around like dogs in the streets.

Q: What are your long-term career goals?

I would like to make my way to the U.S. Department of State. My ultimate goal is to either make it to U.S. Senator of state or U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. After that, I would do as most politicians after service — become a traveling guest professor at different institutions around the world.

Q: How have your CASNR studies been a springboard for international experiences most people don’t have in a lifetime?

That is where everything began. Through the mentoring of my advisors and some professors I was able to push semester by semester. No matter how crazy my ideas of traveling and working were, they helped me find a way to tie it all to my studies to gain course credit and ultimately my degree. For many people Texas Tech’s “From Here, It’s Possible” is just a slogan. I guess I took it more as a challenge. So to whomever came up with that, all I have to say is, “Touché good sir, touché.”
James (Jim) C. Graham’s career has come full circle.

Before Graham (’63 BS Agricultural Science) joined Monsanto in 1966 as a research specialist, he worked on cotton-related projects at the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station (today the Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Center) in Lubbock as an undergraduate at Texas Tech University.

At Monsanto, Graham advanced from researcher to field developer to manager. He has been involved in the technical development and sales support of the herbicides Lasso and Roundup on the East Coast, directed researchers and other company personnel in the United States, Canada, Asia, South America and Western Europe, and ran the licensing program for fungicides and herbicides.

Graham officially retired in 1999, but he continues to research part-time at company headquarters in St. Louis, Missouri, where he and his wife Rachel reside today.

“It’s very rewarding that Monsanto allows retirees to continue to bring back their skills to the company on research projects,” Graham said.

One of those projects in the last six years has Graham once again working with a team at the AgriLife Research Center on a cotton-related project. He makes four or five trips to Lubbock each growing season to monitor fields involved in studies to improve water-use efficiency of cotton.

“The precious resource we have in not only the Ogallala Aquifer but the many other limited groundwater sources must be managed long-term so that farming – so critical to the area – can continue to be profitable,” Graham said.
Fostering Research Interest

Graham’s appreciation for water stewardship is innate. He was raised on a small cotton, grain sorghum and cattle farm near Ashnola, about 55 miles southeast of Amarillo.

“Growing up on a dry-land cotton farm, I developed an appreciation for the fact that there was a better way to make a living,” Graham said.

He initially enrolled at nearby Clarendon Junior College before following his older brother W.D. (Doyce) Graham to Texas Tech. Doyce earned MS and Ph.D. degrees from Purdue and spent his career at Clemson as Small Grains breeder. A younger brother M.C. (Mike) Graham is a Texas Tech graduate in business.

Graham’s most influential experience at the College of Agricultural and Natural Resources was working with the faculty at the AgriLife Research Center.

“Even though I was just a college student working in the field and doing small things in the lab, I was able to work with different academic researchers and see how teaching in the classroom related to practical research,” Graham said. “I developed an appreciation for the process of transferring technology from the lab to application on the farm. I saw how it really worked, and it drove me to want to go to graduate school.”

Graham earned his master’s and doctoral degrees in agronomy from the University of Wisconsin, where he was encouraged by Monsanto representative Ralph Althaus to become a researcher with the company. Before completing his Ph.D. studies in 1967, Graham began work as a Monsanto research specialist in St. Louis.

While at Wisconsin, Graham met another important person in the agronomy department – Rachel, who worked as an administrative assistant. The two married in September 1964 and eventually had two sons.

“She has been a wonderful partner who raised the family and traveled with me around the country and the world,” Graham said.

At Monsanto, Graham started a plant growth regulator program that focused on drought stress and yield in corn and soybeans. For six years, his work focused on improving water efficiency through chemicals. Although the project ended without leading to commercial application, the work rendered other benefits.

“I learned more about crops, plant physiology and what we can do with genetic tools to make better use of water,” Graham said.

Changing Roles

In 1975, Graham transferred to Wilmington, Delaware, to serve as a product development associate.

“I moved out of research to more of a field development role that involved showing farmers and extension agents how new products worked,” Graham said.

For three years he was responsible for technical development and sales support for Lasso and Roundup in 10 mid-Atlantic and New England states.

“There is an amazing amount of agricultural production in the East, especially when you go south of Philadelphia and into Virginia,” Graham said.

He then transitioned to management in 1979 when he moved to Indianapolis to oversee a seven-person product development team. Three years later he returned to Monsanto headquarters, first to work as director of ag product development and later as director of the plant protection research program. In that latter position, he managed 120 scientists researching and developing crop protection products.

As a manager, Graham liked to engage his employees by asking questions and seeking their input.

“I tried to recognize great people and make sure they had great opportunities,” Graham said. “My job was to make sure things are done right and manage the budget, but then step back and let them do what they needed to do.”

Graham took his management skills overseas in 1992. From Monsanto’s corporate headquarters for Western Europe in Brussels, Belgium, he served as director of ag technology. For five years he led a 70-person research, product development and registration group. One of his tasks was navigating the process of having agricultural products approved by each country’s regulatory agency.

“We think we see a lot of cultural differences from the west to the east in America, but in Western Europe there really are a lot of cultural differences,” said Graham, who enjoyed his five-year stint in Belgium.

Graham returned to St. Louis in 1997 to run the licensing program for fungicides and herbicides for a year. From 1998 to 1999 he worked on the global cotton team.

“When I retired in 1999, I never lost my Monsanto desk or computer,” Graham said. Retirement gave Graham the time to enjoy further his pastimes of reading and tending his ornamental landscaping at home. But, it also allowed him to continue studying at Monsanto ways to improve crop production. At the AgriLife Research Center, he works with Wayne Keeling and Glen Ritchie, who also is an assistant professor of crop physiology at CASNR.

“They’re doing the field experimentation and execution of the research,” Graham said. How appropriate that, in his retirement, Graham can be found once again working on occasion in a cotton field near Lubbock, where his inquisitive nature was first nurtured.
JOHN MONTANDON (’69 BS Agricultural Economics) authored his first book By His Own Blood, a recounting of his father's death after a botched blood transfusion tainted with HIV, and his personal search for answers and healing. For more information visit www.byhisownblood.com.

JIMMIE DRESSLER (’59 BS, ’71 MS Agricultural Communications) is now the Communications Coordinator for the International Brangus Breeders Association.

HOMER JONES (’48 BS Agricultural Education) celebrated 66 years of marriage to his Jo this June.

JOHN MONTANDON (’69 BS Agricultural Economics) authored his first book By His Own Blood, a recounting of his father's death after a botched blood transfusion tainted with HIV, and his personal search for answers and healing. For more information visit www.byhisownblood.com.

JEREMY McCracken (’82 MS Agricultural Economics) is currently serving as the President of FirstBank.

JOHN MONTANDON (’69 BS Agricultural Economics) authored his first book By His Own Blood, a recounting of his father's death after a botched blood transfusion tainted with HIV, and his personal search for answers and healing. For more information visit www.byhisownblood.com.
THE 2012 ANNUAL Texas 4-H Roundup was held in Lubbock and hosted by Texas Tech University this summer. This is the first time the event has been hosted by any other institution than Texas A&M University in College Station. This event is the pinnacle event for Texas 4-H, drawing more than 4,000 youth and adults each year.

The 4-H Roundup is designed to strengthen its participants by shaping their leadership and competition skills, and offering team building, networking and career building opportunities, and citizenship development. In addition, over $2,000,000 in scholarships are awarded to members each year. This year’s event was the largest success to date, with an increased participation by more than 900 individuals and a total attendance reaching over 4,000 people.

Two members of the Texas Tech Equestrian Team advanced to the National Interscholastic Equestrian League (ISEL) National Championships. The team competes in Zone 7, Region 2 of ISEL, where Haley Aydam was crowned Zone Champion in Individual Open Equitation Over Fences, and Tobie Montelbano received Reserve Champion in Individual Open Reining at the 2012 National Reining Horse Association (NRHA) Collegiate Reining Championship.

The team members worked for months studying information related to history of the meat science industry, microbiology, processing and marketing.

The Texas Tech Women’s Rodeo Team also made school history this spring, winning their first national championship at the 64th Annual National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association Reciprocal Meat Conference. The team members worked for months studying information related to history of the meat science industry, microbiology, processing and marketing.

The Ranch Horse Team finished second overall at the American Stock Horse Association National Collegiate Championships. During the two-day event, the team competed against 12 colleges and more than 100 individuals from across the country. Individual team members Jennifer Bouse, a math major from Angleton, won first overall in the limited non-pro division; True Burson, an animal science major from Idaho, took home first place in the trail and pleasure classes.

Researchers from Texas Tech’s Internatonal Center for Food Industry Excellence were awarded $540,000 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and an additional $150,000 matching funds from the Beef Checkoff Program. The group includes Drs. Gay Loneragan, Todd Beaches, Michael Balou, Chance Brooks and Mark Miller from the Department of Animal and Food Sciences. In collaboration with scientists from the USDA Agricultural Research Service, the team will explore important factors that contribute to Salmonella in cattle. The hope is to engage the beef industry to develop and implement practical solutions to reduce the likelihood of the pathogen in beef.

The Meatscience Quiz Bowl Team came in third place at the American Meat Science Association Reciprocal Meat Conference. The team members worked for months studying information related to history of the meat science industry, microbiology, processing and marketing.

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The Wool Judging Team successfully finished its season with a victory at the Houston Livestock Show Intercollegiate Wool Judging Contest. The group’s Red Team finished first with a 24 point lead over its nearest competitor and the Black Team came in third overall.

The Texas FFA announced its election of new leadership officers at the annual convention in Lubbock. Among the group of officers are four outstanding CASNR students. Sheldon Franks, a freshman pre-vet major from Follett, will serve as State Vice President for Area 1 – Follett Contest. Krypti Kelley, a freshman interdisciplinary agriculture major from Mission, will serve as State Vice President for Area X – Sharyland Chapter. Kelli Neuman, a freshman agricultural communications major from Winnie, will serve as State Vice President for Area II – East Chambers Chapter. Abby Prouse, a freshman agricultural communications major from Boupville, was selected as State Vice President for Area VIII – Boupville Chapter.

The Meat Judging Team took first place honors again this year at the Houston Livestock Show Intercollegiate Meat Judging Contest. The groups Black Team finished first with a total score of 4,053, winning the beef judging, lamb judging, pork judging, specifications, total placing and reason divisions. This is the eighth consecutive year the powerhouse team has one this competition.

A multi-disciplinary team of scientists from Texas Tech has been awarded a $460,000 grant to study Lubbock area soil microbial communities. The five-year project, funded by the USDA’s Agricultural and Food Research Initiative, is looking for key indicators of soil functioning for farmers when Conservation Reserve Reserve Program land is converted to cropland. The team consists of faculty members from the Departments of Plant and Soil Science, Geosciences, and Biological Sciences, as well as scientists from the Agricultural Research Service Wind Erosion and Water Conservation Unit in Lubbock and the Agricultural Research Service Central Great Plains Resources Management Research Unit in Akron, Colo.

Texas Tech’s newly formed Transdisciplinary Research Academy has selected nine CASNR faculty to be among its first members. The academy is designed to bring people with diverse interests and from different disciplines together to explore questions that have a global impact and intersect with the strategic research themes established by the University. Among the research areas selected from CASNR are: Food, Health, Cancer with Conrad Lyford, an associate professor in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics; and Erica Irlbeck, an assistant professor in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communications. Water Cycles & Resources Science with Richard Zartman, chairman of the Department of Plant and Soil Science; and Leahh Professor of Soil Physics and Food Safety & Public Health with Todd Beaches, an associate professor in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communications. Mindy Beaches, Director of the International Center for Food Industry Excellence, Mark Miller, San Antonio Livestock Exposition Distinguished Chair in Meat Science, Chance Brook, an associate professor of meat science, Gay Loneragan, an epidemiologist and professor in the Department of Animal and Food Sciences, and Kendra Nightingale, an associate professor specializing in food safety.

The department of Agricultural Education and Communications and the Texas Tech Chapter of ACT hosted the National Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow (ACT) annual Professional Development Conference. More than 100 agricultural communications students from across the nation participated. The program featured educational sessions, guest speakers, and tours of area agricultural businesses. Speakers included Wyman Meiners (’74 BS Wildlife Management), the official state photographer of Texas, and Jim Best Campbell (’97 BS Agricultural Communications, ’97 MS Agricultural Education), Senior Director of Marketing and Publications for the American Quarter Horse Association.
The Distinguished & Young Alumni Awards were established to recognize some of the most outstanding alumni of Texas Tech University’s College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. The purpose of these programs is to recognize and honor CASNR alumni who have made significant contributions to society, and whose accomplishments and careers have brought distinction to the college and to the professions associated with agriculture and natural resources. One alumnum from each of the college’s departments is selected to receive the awards.

Kirk Thomas for the department of Agricultural and Applied Economics. He graduated magna cum laude in 1981 with a Bachelor of Science in agricultural economics. He graduated from the college within the last 20 years of active service at the university level, and have shown great promise for continued contributions.

Outstanding faculty members of CASNR achieved accolades for their quality teaching and research during the University’s annual Faculty Honors Convocation. David Doerffert received the 2012 President’s Excellence in Teaching Award. David Rodowsky, an assistant professor in the Department of Natural Resources Management, received the Texas Tech Alumni Association New Faculty Award. Eric Houghton, a professor with the Department of Plant and Soil Science and Associate Director of the Fiber and Biopolymer Research Institute, was awarded the Texas Tech Parents Association Burari E. Rushing Jr. Faculty Distinguished Research Award.

Three members of the Department of Animal and Food Sciences were recognized at this year’s American Society of Animal Science (ASAS) annual conference. Dean Michael Galvan presented the prestigious ASAS Morrison Award. The award is given in recognition of research excellence of direct importance to livestock production. In conjunction, he became part of the newly created ASAS Foundation Living Histories project by becoming the first member highlighted as part of the project.

Mark Miller, professor of meat science and muscle biology and the San Antonio Livestock Exposition Distinguished Chair in Meat Science, was also honored with the American Society of Animal Science Meat Science Research Award. At the same conference, Robert Albin, a retired professor of beef cattle nutrition and management, was named a Fellow of American Society of Animal Science – Administrative Category.

Retired faculty member of the Department of Natural Resources Management, Carlston Britton, was selected for the Henry A. Wright Award for Lifetime Achievement in Fire Ecology in Grasslands and Shrublands. The nationally recognized range scientist accepted the award at the Southwest Fire Ecology Conference in Santa Fe.

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David Doerffert, agricultural communications professor and graduate studies coordinator for the Department of Agricultural Education and Communications, has been named a Fellow in the American Association for Agricultural Education. The award is given to members of the association who have made exceptional contributions to the profession. Honorees have no less than a decade and no more than 20 years of active service at the university level, and have shown great promise for continued contributions.

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Also during the Convocation, two Texas Tech Parents Association Faculty Awards were presented. Ryan Raysham, an assistant professor in the Department of Animal and Food Sciences and recipient of the John W. and Doris Jones Endowed Professorship, was given the Hemphill Wells New Professor’s Excellence in Teaching Award. Scott Bubnis, an associate professor in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communications, received the Spencer A. Wells Faculty Award for Creativity in Teaching.

Texas Tech’s Emubah Thompson Professor of Risk Management, Thomas Engster, was named Horn Professor by the Texas Tech University System Board of Regents. This is the highest honor the nationally recognized professor of agricultural and applied economics can receive on the University level.