

University of Florida

CAALS Connection

Volume 8, Fall 2007



**UF - National Champions
in more than just sports**

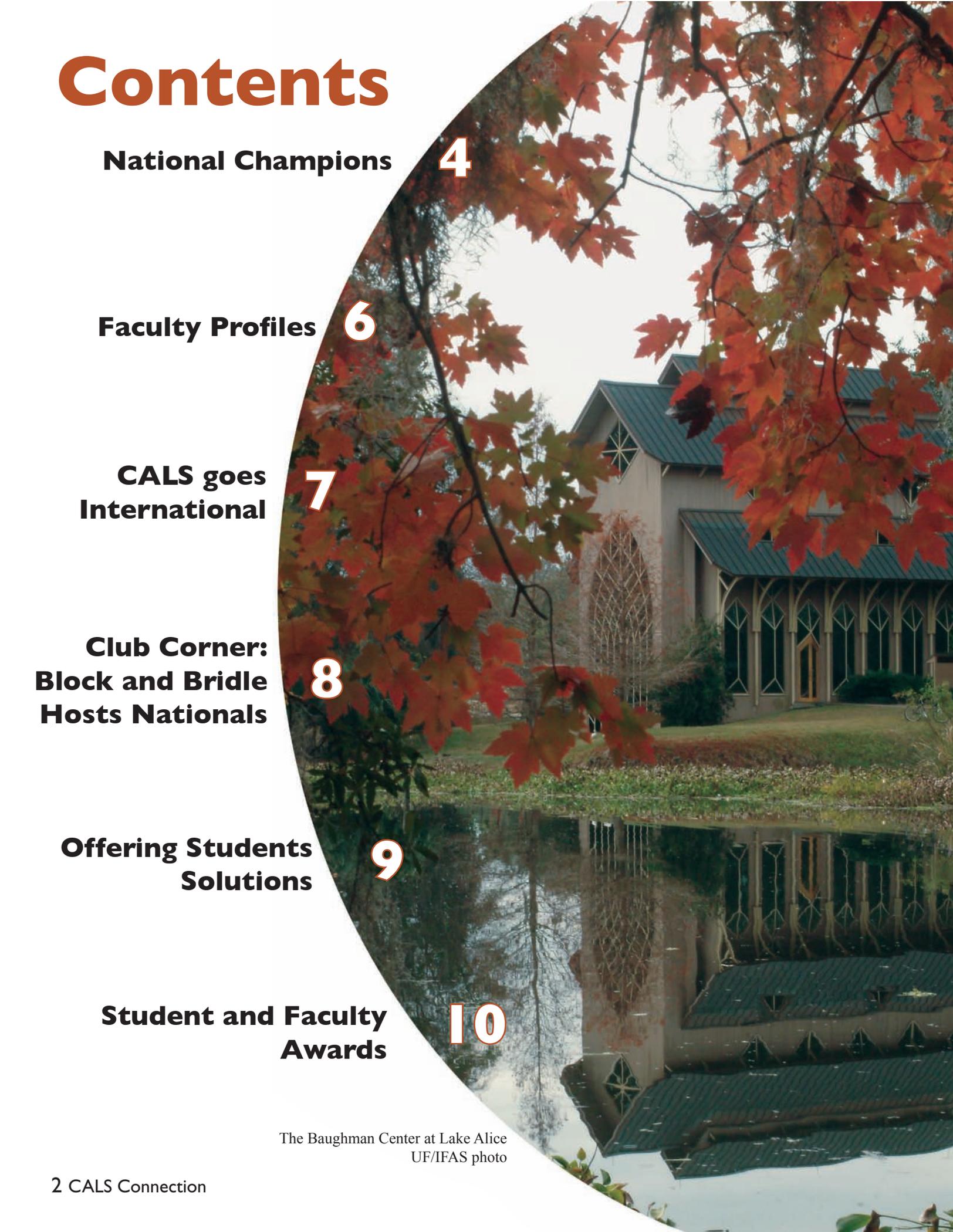
**Offering students
new solutions**

**UF and Egypt, an unusual
partnership**

**Block and Bridle hosts
national conference**

UF UNIVERSITY of
FLORIDA
College of Agricultural
and Life Sciences

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The Baughman Center at Lake Alice
UF/IFAS photo

Message from the Dean

As we began another new academic year we welcomed 426 new freshman and 448 new transfer students, making the total undergraduate enrollment at CALS nearly 4,000 (3,972). In addition, graduate student enrollment remains stable with more than 1,100 students in our master's and doctoral programs. CALS continues to play an important role in preparing people for jobs and career advancement in the broad areas of agriculture and the life sciences.

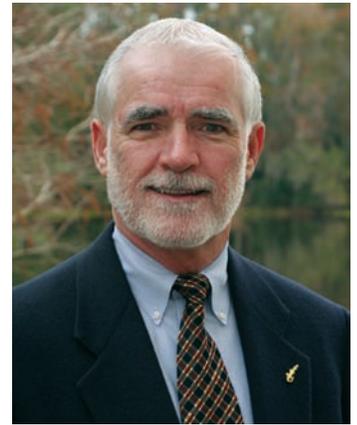
We also welcomed a new staff member in CALS Administration. Cathy Carr joined us during the summer as Director of Alumni and Career Services. With the departure of Christopher Vitelli, we reorganized several responsibilities within the office. Charlotte Emerson is now Director of Student Development and Recruitment. After discussions with a variety of colleagues in IFAS and the CALS Alumni and Friends leadership, it appeared that the combination of alumni and careers and the combination of student development (including the CALS Ambassadors) and recruitment made good sense.

In that regard, CALS Administration will be working with departments and the research and education centers to support their efforts in recruiting undergraduate and graduate students and their involvement in maintaining contact with their alumni, in coordination with the UF Director of Admissions, the CALS Alumni and Friends, and the UF Alumni Association. We hope to provide additional alumni gatherings throughout Florida and to strengthen ties with our alumni who live in other countries. Additionally, we are broadening our ties with selected community colleges to be sure that students in those institutions are aware of the various career opportunities that our programs address and that the students are well-prepared for transfer to UF and CALS.

Nationally, colleges of agriculture and the related sciences have begun an effort to ensure that curricula are designed for the future rather than just the present. CALS, over the next several years, will engage in a systematic and thorough curriculum enhancement effort to be sure we are offering the right programs, the right number and types of courses, and the excellent instruction we have become known for, while being more efficient in delivering effective programs for the right number of students. While we continue to recognize the importance of inputs (funding, quality of faculty, etc.) we also know that we are ultimately judged by our outputs – the new crop of members of the Gator Nation – measured through outcomes assessment.

There is much to be done. But it is well worth the effort. UF and CALS – a great place to be, and a great place to call “alma mater.”

R. Kirby Barrick
Dean



R. Kirby Barrick

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2006 National

UF is a champion on and off of the playing field. CALS is home to many teams and individuals who have won national recognition for their outstanding work. Here we highlight three stories out of the many winners that CALS has to offer.

Five-time Bowl Champions

by Michelle Diaz

Forget about the Tostitos Bowl, Quiz Bowl is where it's at.

The food and resource economics department is no stranger to winning national competitions, such as the North American Academic Quiz Bowl. The North American Academic Quiz bowl is held at the national meeting of the American Agricultural Economic Association.

One of those winners is Alicia Taylor. She is the veteran contestant on the UF team this year, competing for her third time in July.

"The Academic Quiz Bowl is in a double elimination-Jeopardy format," Taylor said. "Each school brings two teams of three to the competition."

In order to prepare for the Quiz Bowl, participants take a one credit course over the spring semester and practice going over questions from past competitions, said Dustin Bass, a contestant and a master's student in the food and resource economics department.

"A lot of preparation still takes places outside of school," Bass said. "Contestants are encouraged to work independently or in small groups."

Questions are divided into eight categories: microeconomics, resource/policy, macroeconomics, agricultural business/finance,



National FRE Quiz Bowl winners Dustin Bass, Kevin Johnson and David Ortega with their adviser Dr. James Sterns in 2005.

marketing, management, quantitative and potpourri (a mixture of the other seven categories).

"Our advisor does a wonderful job of preparing us for these national competitions," Taylor said. "We are all looking forward towards this year's competition."

Professor is two-time national champion

by Angelina C. Toomey

At the University of Florida, Gators sports teams aren't the only ones celebrating multiple national awards in the same year.

Gail Kauwell, a registered dietitian and professor in the food science and human nutrition department, has received national recognition from both the American Society for Nutrition and the American Dietetic Association in 2007.

Kauwell, who believes teaching is more than just a 50-minute lecture, said she felt a lot of extra responsibility upon learning she won the awards.

"It was very exciting, but at the same time, I feel a lot of extra pressure and responsibility to live up to the expectations that come with recognition like this," she said.

Kauwell is the second recipient of ASN's Excellence in Nutrition Education Award, which began in 2006, as a way to recognize outstanding contributions to teaching nutrition. She received \$2,500 and an engraved plaque, sponsored by Wadsworth-Thompson Corp. Kauwell received the Dietetics Education award from the American Dietetic Association on September 30, 2007.

Champions!

UF Students offered Golden Opportunities

by Allison Eckhardt



Charlie Nealis, right, and Dr. Lori Unruh Snyder, second from right, discuss weeds with students on the 2007 Crops Travel Course. Snyder was paired with Nealis as his mentor through a national program.

In 2006, four UF students were selected as Golden Opportunity Scholars with the Crop Science Society of America (CSSA). Charlie Nealis, Anna Flaig, Danielle Alderman and Casey Reynolds were among 15 students picked from throughout the United States.

The Golden Opportunity Scholars program was founded in 2005 as part of the CSSA's 50th anniversary. This program identifies students with great potential in the crop science field and pairs them with mentors who share similar interests. Students attend lectures, round table discussions and the CSSA annual meeting.

Charlie Nealis, a master's student in Agricultural Education, has been participating with CSSA for four years. The Golden Opportunity Scholars has provided a chance for him to meet professionals from throughout the world and learn about their research.

Nealis was paired with Dr. Lori Unruh Snyder, from the UF agronomy department, now of the Purdue agronomy department, as his mentor.

"The Golden Scholars program has given me a great opportunity to learn from my mentor. I was able to gain hands-on experience as the teaching assistant for the Crops Travel Course for Dr. Snyder," Nealis said. "Serving as a teaching assistant confirmed how much I enjoy working with students and also opened my eyes to experiences that are available to me other than teaching."

Dr. Snyder said that the goal of the program is to strengthen the future of crop science by encouraging and helping students.

"Helping Charlie explore his career options has been very rewarding," said Snyder. "I know he has a bright future ahead of him."

CALS students on the 2006 National Championship Football Team:

Darryon Robinson

Jemalle Cornelius

Moise Paul

Phil Trautwein

Tim Tebow

Vernon Shelton

FRE professor receives recognition for public service

by Katelyn S. Crow

One University of Florida professor has used his knowledge and research to aid those in need and has been nationally recognized for his contributions.

Carlton Davis, Ph.D., distinguished service professor in the food and resource economics department, was inducted into the George Washington Carver Public Service Hall of Fame at Tuskegee University in Tuskegee, Ala. on December 6, 2006.

The award recognizes individuals who exhibit outstanding public service and mirror the works of Dr. George Washington Carver. Historically, only those from 1890 land-grant universities were inducted into the Hall of Fame. It was not until the 1970s that individuals from 1862 land-grant universities were inducted.

“Currently, there are not very many inductees from 1862 land-grant universities and I am honored to represent UF,” Davis said.

Davis joined UF in 1970 as the second black professor. Since that time, Davis has

worked to recruit black students and faculty. He even helped draft the first affirmative action plan at UF.

“I have been a magnet for recruiting African-American students, going back as early as the 1970s,” Davis said. “I feel I am required to recognize diversity as a strength.”

Davis said that he feels it has been his contributions to minorities and research of rural poverty that got him recognized.

“I try to bring focus and attention to minority issues in the south, especially poverty,” Davis said. “Poverty is much more severe in the South.”

Originally from Jamaica, Davis has studied rural poverty across the Caribbean and throughout the southern United States.

Davis said that his passion for agricultural economics began his senior year of high school while living in Jamaica.

“My professor informed me that all the Jamaican economic literature was written by ex-patriots, no natives were involved,” Davis said. “It was at this point that I

decided to become an agricultural economist and give something back.”

Davis came to the United States to seek his postsecondary education because no agricultural economics programs were available in the Caribbean.

He received both his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in agricultural economics from the University of Nebraska. Davis later completed his doctoral degree in agricultural economics from Michigan State University.

While traveling the Caribbean collecting research information, Davis met Kenneth Tefertiller, former chair of the food and resource economics department. Davis said it was Tefertiller who informed him about UF.

“That’s how I got here,” Davis said. “I’ve been carrying the banner for UF both domestically and internationally ever since that time.”

Davis plans to retire December 31, 2007 after 37 years at UF.

A Former Faculty Member is Remembered

By Kelly Aue

An adviser, a faculty member, a cook, a husband and a father. These are just some of the roles that long-time animal sciences professor Dr. Don Rex Sloan will be remembered for.

In August 2006, Sloan passed away at the age of 62. He was a professor and undergraduate adviser in the department of animal sciences in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences.

“Don had a caring heart for the students,” said Joel Brendemuhl, assistant chair and undergraduate coordinator in the department of animal sciences.

Brendemuhl said that Sloan made himself available to his students at all times, even after his regular office hours. Sloan also was actively involved in helping students.

“He did a lot of fundraising for the Poultry Science Club,” Brendemuhl said. When an organization needed help, he would always lend his cooking skills, Brendemuhl said. His specialty was chicken.

Sloan was not only the expert in cooking chicken, but he was also a professor of poultry science. Sloan’s specialization was in poultry nutrition and he enjoyed talking with students about his field of study, said Sarah Kelley, an undergraduate in animal sciences.

“I met him as a freshman,” Sarah Kelley said. “I’m interested in

avian exotics, and he talked to me about poultry science.”

Kelley then became interested in poultry science and worked with Sloan while he was a faculty member of the Midwest Poultry Consortium.

“When I think about Dr. Sloan, I remember how he genuinely cared about the students,” Kelley said.

She said students could always bring their troubles to him. He listened to the students and would tell them a light-hearted story to lift their spirits. Sloan’s students valued his opinion.

“He really enjoyed it,” Betty Jo Sloan said, wife of Sloan. “He was called to be a teacher.”

He was also the chief commencement marshal for the University of Florida’s graduation ceremonies.”

“He took graduation seriously,” Mrs. Sloan said. “This was the chance for the parents to see what their kids have done and accomplished.”

Sloan was well-respected by his peers, industry leaders and students. Sloan had many accomplishments while he was at the University of Florida, and he was an integral part of the college.

Sloan performed many roles while at the University of Florida but will be remembered as someone who cared for his family, faculty and students.



Dr. Don Sloan, right, and Dr. Jimmy Cheek at Commencement in the spring of 2006.

CALS Faculty Impact the Agriculture Industry Globally

by Sara Shepherd

The University of Florida's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences faculty are helping college faculty in Egypt and India to better prepare their students for careers in their agricultural industries.

For three years, CALS faculty have been teaching workshops to Egyptian faculty both here in the US and abroad. The India endeavor is just beginning and still in the planning stages.

The Egypt project is the Institutional Linkage Component of the Egypt Agricultural Exports and Rural Income Project. It is being implemented by the Midwest Universities Consortium for International Activities.

The Egyptian endeavor is divided into three areas: building capacity, increasing agriculture exports and enhancing biotechnology.

"UF has been involved in the capacity-building endeavor," said Shannon Washburn, agricultural education and communication assistant professor. "That means we have been helping Egyptian university faculty build teaching competencies."

Mainly, professors from the agricultural education and communication department have been working one on one with Egyptian faculty through various workshops, said CALS dean Kirby Barrick.

"Within the capacity-building, areas of greatest need are being addressed," Barrick said. "They are agricultural business, animal sciences and horticulture."

"We have been helping the college of agriculture faculty in Egypt restructure courses and learn the basics of teaching and learning processes and syllabus development," Washburn said.

To help facilitate better instruction, Washburn said that the universities

involved have donated more than 1,000 overhead projectors and transparencies to Egyptian agricultural faculty.

"You have to understand the learning environment over there," Washburn said. "They may have lights, but not all of them have light bulbs and they lack teaching equipment."

Washburn also said that agricultural faculty in Egypt often have to overcome unin-



Dr. Washburn, pictured here in Egypt, believes the Extension Service has an obligation to help other countries.

terested and poor performing students, because students scoring high on placement exams are put in areas outside of agriculture, while the lower-scoring students are placed in agriculture, Washburn said.

The reason CALS faculty are heavily involved with Egyptian agriculture is because of Florida's similarities in climate, soil and agricultural industries, Washburn said.

In addition, Egyptian college faculty have taken the skills learned through the workshops, and have taught 150 high school agricultural teachers these same skills. The Egyptian faculty did this through a three day workshop where CALS faculty assisted heavily during the first workshop and gradually decreased to no assistance during the final workshop.

"The point of the workshops is to help Egyptian faculty be self-sustaining," Barrick said. "We don't want them to be dependent on us to improve their agricultural exports."

"I believe that we have an obligation as Extension agents as well as a moral obligation to help," Washburn said, "especially if that country wants to be helped."

In the India endeavor, nine projects have been proposed and CALS faculty will be involved in two of those projects.

"UF's Water Institute and soil and water science department will be helping India in those respective areas," Barrick said. "India's population is growing rapidly and is facing safe and abundant water problems."

The Water Institute faculty will be assisting India's agricultural faculty develop a program for safe and abundant water, and the soil and water sciences' faculty will help prepare university graduates for agriculture and natural resource sectors of India, Barrick said.

If students have problems, CALS has Solutions

by Christy Windham



Dr. Barrick talks to some of the student participants of the fall 2006 Solutions Seminar.

Making decisions, managing stress and taking classes are all problems that college students can face. Now, some of those problems can be resolved by attending the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences' new Solutions Seminars.

Solutions Seminars are day-long conferences once a semester to address issues students may be facing as well as provide leadership training to enhance the college experience.

"CALS Solutions Seminar was very beneficial for students to learn about career preparation, job searching, time management and healthy lifestyles," said seminar participant Brian Estevez, agricultural leadership graduate student.

During the summer of 2006, CALS students participated in an advisory board that helped pick seminar topics.

"The board attempted to choose conference topics that would benefit and relate to students from across all majors and departments within the college," said advisory board member and food and resource economics major Jason Beutke.

The advisory board helped to shape the format for the seminars and decided that the fall seminar would be focused around helping students find balance in their life, and the spring seminar would be centered about preparing students for job opportunities, as well as answer any questions about enrolling in graduate school.

During both the fall and spring seminars held at the UF Hilton, workshop presenters were brought in from across the state to share their business and life skills.

"The speakers were phenomenal," said sophomore Chanelle Strammer, a family, youth and community sciences major.

"I'm very thankful to the college for making this opportunity available."

While students may have been impressed with the speakers, the

seminars are intended to assist with basic student needs.

"Solutions Seminars are conferences that are intended to address everyday challenges that students face and equip them with the tools needed to confront those challenges," said former CALS student development director Chris Vitelli.

As conference participant Raul Obcemea noted, sometimes challenges can be as simple as expanding one's social network.

"The seminars helped to get me out of my comfort zone," said Obcemea a food and resource economics junior. "They really helped to build me as a person."

Conference participants were treated to a catered lunch and door prizes that included memberships to Gainesville Health and Fitness Center and registration to a John Maxwell leadership conference.

For students who did not attend, they will get another opportunity, as Solutions Seminars will continue next year.

"The first CALS Solutions Seminars proved to be a worthwhile experience for all who attended," said CALS Dean Kirby Barrick. "It looks like Solutions will be a permanent addition to our student development program in CALS."

The next Solutions Seminar is scheduled for October 6, 2007. Check the CALS website, www.cals.ufl.edu, for future events.



UF's Block and Bridle Club hosts national convention

by Sara Shepherd



Students from the UF chapter of Block and Bridle.

The University of Florida's Block and Bridle Club hosted more than 600 students from around the country at the 2006 National Block and Bridle Convention in Orlando in January 2007.

The participants, interested in animal science careers, met for three days of professional development and networking opportunities.

In order to make this convention a success, Tim Marshall, former UF Block and Bridle advisor, credited the excellent planning work done by UF's chapter members.

"The club had to plan the entire convention, beginning with the bid to host the convention, which was done three to five years ahead of time," he said. "We had to book the resort, organize transportation for the guest speakers and the tours, develop the Web site, everything."

For this conference, UF's Block and Bridle Club wanted to expose participants to the many facets of Florida's agricultural industries. Members did this by organizing a finger food reception where representatives from across the state set up booths to highlight their respective agricultural industry.

"The finger food reception was set up as a trade show with representatives from Florida's different agricultural industries," Marshall said. "It provided a unique opportunity for the participants to network with professionals from the animal sciences industry."

Ashley Crowe, last year's UF Block and Bridle president, said it was important to expose students to Florida agriculture because

most students think of main tourist attractions such as Disney World when they think of Florida.

The club also arranged for key professionals to speak at this year's convention. Some of them were Florida's Commissioner of Agriculture Charles Bronson; JoAnn Smith, the first woman president of the National Cattlemen's Association; and Trent Loos, a sixth-generation farmer from Nevada and agricultural spokesperson.

To enhance participants' career development, UF's Block and Bridle invited other guest workshop presenters who covered many topics including urban encroachment, equine industry employment, and Collegiate LifeKnowledge, a training program for building society-ready graduates.

"Having professionals from the livestock industry was a great networking opportunity because it is a field where networking is essential," said Jessica Murphy, UF Block and Bridle vice president.

The most exciting part of the convention was the agricultural tours, both

Murphy and Crowe said.

The club arranged for tours to be held from as far south as Fort Pierce to as far north as Ocala and covered many industries such as cattle, horses, citrus, eco-tourism and forage research.

"My tour went to the Adams Ranch in Fort Pierce and another farm in Okeechobee," Crowe said. "It was interesting to see the different management practices in the different parts of Florida."

"It provided a unique opportunity for the participants to network with professionals from the animal sciences industry."

— TIM MARSHALL

Student Awards

The student and faculty awards were presented at the 2007 Scholarship and Leadership Awards Banquet held April 13, 2007.



Larry J. Connor Medal of Excellence
Justin Silvestre

Justin Silvestre graduated in May 2007 with a degree in Food Science and Human Nutrition and a minor in Business Administration. He was a National Hispanic Merit Scholar and his honors thesis focused on the expression of inflammatory cytokines and chemokines during zinc deficiency. His thesis research was under the direction of Dr. Bobbi Langkamp-Henken. Justin was a 2006-2007 University Scholar and Anderson Scholar. Justin plans on continuing his education at the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine. In his spare time, he enjoys outdoor activities such as camping, hiking and canoeing. He also plays tennis and soccer recreationally.



J. Wayne Reitz Medal of Excellence
Outstanding Senior Award
Trevor Smith

Trevor Smith is from Plant City, Florida and graduated in May 2007 with a major in Food Science and human Nutrition; specialization in Nutritional Sciences. Trevor was actively involved in the Alpha Epsilon Delta prehealth honor society where he has served in a director position and was also heavily involved in the Chemistry Outreach Program. As a University Scholar, Trevor conducted research on guava fruit and its effects on colon cancer under the supervision of Dr. Susan S. Percival in the Food Science and Human Nutrition Department. Over the past year, Trevor has served as an Ambassador for the college where he has had the opportunity to share with other students the wonderful opportunities available through CALS. He will be attending the University of Florida College of Medicine in the fall of 2007.



Alumni and Friends Leadership Award
Tolulope Adebajo

Tolu Adebajo from Orlando, Florida, graduated in May 2007 with a major in Food Science and Human Nutrition; specializing in Nutritional Sciences. Tolu was selected as the Outstanding Senior in the Nutritional Sciences Department, as well as an Outstanding Graduating Student Leader. She served as the Student Government Cabinet Director of Health, Co-Chair of the Student Health Advisory Board, and a member of Florida Cicerones. Additionally, Tolu was a member of Florida Blue Key, Order of Omega and SAVANT Leadership Honorary. She was in the 2006 University of Florida Homecoming Court, and she was the 2006 Black Student Union Homecoming Queen. In the past she has held the role of vice president of her sorority, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., assistant director of the Student Government Agency, Students Taking Action Against Racism and Executive Assistant for Black History Month 2006. Tolu aspires to obtain a combined MD/MPH degree and research health disparities.



E.T. York, Jr. Medal of Excellence
Outstanding Junior Award
Robert Regenhardt

Robert Regenhardt is majoring in Food Science and Human Nutrition. He is a member of CALS Upper Division Honors program, Golden Key, and the UF premedical chapter of the American Medical Student Association, where he organized and directed the twelfth annual Health Career Convention. As a University Scholars student, Robert is conducting undergraduate research investigating possible mechanisms that may account for changes in lymphocyte subpopulations within the zinc-deficient colon. He volunteers many hours in the Emergency room and Radiology Department at North Florida Regional Medical Center. Over the past two years, he has served as a mentor to sixth-grade students working on science projects at Westwood Middle School. Robert gained admission to the Junior Honors Medical Program, an accelerated BS/MD track.

Faculty Awards



Graduate Teacher/Adviser of the Year
Dr. Timothy G. Taylor

Dr. Timothy G. Taylor is a professor in the Food and Resource Economics Department. He is also an adjunct professor in the Warrington College of Business Administration. He received a B.A. in Economics from the University of Cincinnati, and earned the Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from the

University of Florida. Dr. Taylor strives to treat his graduate students as if they were his own children and takes great pride in their accomplishments.



Undergraduate Teacher of the Year
Dr. James L. Gibson

As an assistant professor of Environmental Horticulture at the West Florida Research and Education Center Dr. Gibson places a high priority on teaching the 'why' and the 'how' to merge science with practical hands-on applications. He regularly connects students with professionals for work experience and internships. Dr. Gibson also sponsors undergraduates in his research program, allowing them to contribute to a variety of research projects, many of which are later presented at national meetings and published as popular press articles.

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Undergraduate Adviser of the Year
Jennifer E. Gove

Jennifer Gove is the Coordinator of Academic Programs for the Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, and has served in that role since 2003. As Coordinator of Academic Programs, Ms. Gove manages the department's advising program through coordination of over 400

students and nine advisers, and ensures that every student is assigned to an individual adviser. She keeps students up-to-date through undergraduate and graduate student listservs, handles course scheduling and registration, and assists with curriculum revisions. She also meets with prospective students and orients new students to the program.



Undergraduate Teacher of the Year
Dr. Sandra B. Wilson

Dr. Wilson co-teaches a state-wide web-based plant propagation course and is director of the Indian River Research and Education Center teaching gardens. She has developed new courses and has creatively used technology to enhance her teaching. Dr. Wilson developed a web-based virtual plant identification

interface to help students learn plant material and landscape principles in different seasons and geographic locations. Her digital materials on plant propagation and greenhouse education are used nationwide. Dr. Wilson has received over \$270,000 in grant funding for innovative course improvement and has published and presented her teaching scholarship widely.



Undergraduate Adviser of the Year
Dr. Peggy R. Borum

Dr. Peggy R. Borum is a professor in the Food Science and Human Nutrition Department and has a dual appointment in the Department of Pediatrics.

Dr. Borum teaches and advises undergraduate and graduate students and conducts research on carnitine metabolism. In 2000 she created the InvestiGators, a

unique student organization devoted to research, teaching and service. The InvestiGators allows undergraduates to experience the real world of translational research as a member of one of three teams. Team members work collaboratively to plan and conduct their research activities and report on outcomes. Forty to fifty students have been InvestiGators at any one time during the past year, and spend at least 15 to 20 hours each week on research activities.



Jack L. Fry Graduate Teaching Award
Nick Fuhrman

Nicholas E. Fuhrman completed the Ph.D in Agricultural Education and Communication in August 2007, working under the direction of Dr. Howard Ladewig. He received B.S. and M.S. degrees in Forestry from the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in 2002 and 2004, respectively.

Nick is also the recipient of the UF Graduate Teaching Award given by the Graduate School, and a national teaching award given by the North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture.

Nick contributed extensively to teaching in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences. He has accepted a faculty position at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

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