Dear Alumni and Friends:

As we plan each Spring issue of the newsletter we try to think of a theme for the center pages that tells something about the College you may not know and also something that will help us showcase our students which in turn leads to attracting new students.

For those of you who know my past history you would say the choice is compatible and makes sense. In the early years of my career I coached university livestock judging teams. And from about age ten to my early twenties I showed steers and heifers in county, state, and national shows. Over the years I have evaluated premier livestock nationally and internationally as a judge and consultant.

What is the common thread? If you have already looked ahead to our feature, you know it is “competition.” Competing successfully has been a part of my life and it is a big component in the College of Agricultural Sciences. Our faculty members come from major research institutions across the U.S. and compete with the best. The very significant grants and contracts they bring in are an excellent measure of their success. Our students rate among the best and are eager, as you will see from the feature to train, practice, and compete.

The Agbassador Team traveled to Huntsville, Texas, January 3-6 to participate in the annual National Agbassador Conference at Sam Houston State University. They are pictured with the Sam Houston mascot Bearkat.

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Continued on next page...
You ask, “why compete?” In the feature we also address the value of competition by asking students and faculty. Bottom line: The benefits are many and well worth the effort.

Shifting gears, I would like to use this opportunity to bring you up-to-date on what’s happening in the College and at Southern Illinois University.

Every semester our student enrollment continues to edge up, however, we can’t rest on our laurels. We are working hard to keep up the intensity of our efforts and we ask you to keep sending us prospective students. And, important to note with all the economic uncertainty, our students are finding satisfying jobs to start their careers. This is not true in most other fields. Our alumni and industry supporters are a huge help and we thank you for the jobs you provide our interns and graduates.

We are establishing priorities in faculty hiring and we have been successful in filling several key positions. You will note in this issue (pg. 3) two new researchers in priority areas tell about their work. Some other positions are on hold while the university and state sort out the budget deficits. We continue to give priority to our students and to the needs of our industry clientele.

We have been doing everything we can to improve our farms and facilities. The new Greenhouse project is gaining some momentum and we continue to work toward the goal. A new building for the College is still on the back burner and we use every opportunity to let people know our pressing need.

And of course we are very excited about our upcoming 5th Annual Agriculture Industry Day. We have been successful in getting industry support of which we are most appreciative. Faculty and students are again busy preparing interesting programs and demonstrations. We are looking forward to keynote presentations from alum David Delaney who is President PCS Sales PotashCorp, student Todd Marlo, head football coach Dale Lennon, and our new Secretary of Agriculture The Honorable Tom Vilsack.

The only thing missing – you. We invite you and a car or vanload or even a busload to join us for what has become a ‘must not miss’ event. I look forward to seeing you and thank you for your continued guidance and support.

Sincerely,

Gary L. Minish, Dean
Research on Soybean Breeding and Energy and Environmental Policy

The objective of Dr. Kantartzi’s soybean breeding program is to develop high yielding, high quality, hazard tolerant, general and special purpose soybean varieties adapted to Southern Illinois. With her research team they also aim to increase genetic diversity and generate new information on soybean genetics and breeding methodology.

Soybean improvement draws from several scientific fields. SIUC projects combine plant pathology to identify disease resistance, elements of chemistry and food science to improve seed composition, quantitative genetics and plant physiology to understand genetic interaction with the environment, agronomy to improve yields and DNA technology to improve the efficiency of breeding procedures. Dr. Kantartzi’s project involves identification of genes that control agronomic traits and implementation of procedures used to select improved offsprings resulting to enhanced germplasm competitiveness.

This research will have a direct impact on soybean producers since they will be able to grow the released cultivars. Producers also can use the variety trial results to help select the most productive varieties for the next growing season. The development of special purpose varieties has provided and will provide value-added opportunities for soybean farmers now and in the future.

The dynamics of water and the role of humans in the water cycle are not well understood. Typically, environmental and socio-economic analyses are performed separately, making it hard to understand the link between human and natural systems. The lack of integrated analysis is due to the difficulty in combining methods, tools, and data from a variety of disciplines.

Dr. Secchi and an interdisciplinary team of researchers at the University of Iowa received funding from the National Science Foundation Cyber-Enabled Discovery and Innovation Program to develop a prototype cyberinfrastructure-based intelligent digital watershed. The Intelligent Digital Watershed will facilitate novel insights into human/environment interactions through multi-disciplinary research focused on watershed-related processes at multiple spatio-temporal scales.

Dr. Secchi is focusing on the analysis of farmers’ decisions, specifically choices related to biofuel energy production. She is working on developing models of farmers’ behavior in the watershed to determine the likelihood that they will harvest corn stover for cellulosic ethanol production, or start planting dedicated feedstocks such as switchgrass. She is also looking into the effects that the closer link between energy and agricultural markets is having on farmers’ input choices, particularly fertilizer application rates.
As student editor I wanted to feature our course, club, and team activities in the College of Agricultural Sciences. When I put my notes together the theme was apparent. Our students are very competitive and the results are impressive. The question: How do they do it?

Dawn Null, M.S., R.D. said, “Dietetics students are encouraged to maintain a high GPA; obtain paid and/or volunteer experience in all areas of dietetics; and to get involved in extracurricular activities such as SNAC, the Student Nutrition Academic Council. Faculty also offer students the opportunity to help with research projects to gain hands-on experience and, hopefully, an excellent letter of reference.” Litney Koch, senior Human Nutrition and Dietetics major, told me “HDN 400 Senior Seminar taught by Dr. Sara Long helps guide us through the application process. Applications are due in February and we find out in April. It is a very stressful time.”

Collegiate FFA competes at two state conferences a year and winners move on to the national Post Secondary Agricultural Student (PAS) Conference competition. Five SIUC students were eligible to compete in Hershey, PA in March. Benjamin Sauerhage, Senior Agricultural Production/Systems major, placed 1st in Employment Interview Crop Production; and Beth Raymond, Senior Forestry, placed 2nd in Employment Interview Forestry and Natural Resources.

For 18 consecutive years Forestry Team placed 1st at the Midwest Conclave.
- Teams in Equitation, Horticulture, Collegiate FFA, and Quadrathalon rank high in regional and national competition.
- 75% of SIUC undergraduate Dietetics students applying for post graduation internship are successful.
- At the national level two students were elected president of their professional organization.
- Student won a regional undergraduate research competition.
- Overall 50% of SIUC Animal Science Pre-Vet students are accepted to Veterinary School.
- Agriculture senior was starting forward and Team Captain on Saluki Men’s Basketball Team.
- 48% of all students in the College have a 3.0 GPA or above.
- Alpha Zeta Honorary had largest pledge class in nation.

Olivia Hilliard, a dietetic intern, is completing her foodservice management rotation at Heartland Regional Medical Center. Over the past five years 88% of RD exam takers graduating from the combined M.S./Dietetics Internship at SIUC have passed on their first try.

Blake Welge, Plant and Soil Science major from Highland, IL. was installed as the National PAS President beating out 22 other candidates. “My motivation came from PAS members, my Ag advisor from my community college, the state director, executive director, and of course my family is behind me 110%.”
Results and How We Did It

I asked Forestry Club President Wade Bloemer how they keep their impressive 18-year Conclave winning streak alive. He said, “We work hard and the team has an extreme dedication to winning. We practice four to five days a week leading up to the competition at Camp Ondesonk in Ozark, IL.”

The Horticulture Club participates in events at the Illinois Landscape Rangeland Day in Joliet, IL. Students compete in plant identification, landscape design, cost estimation, and paver installation. SIUC had five students place in the top three in their events. Also members compete with NET Student Career Days in Atlanta, GA. Seven of 12 SIUC students finished in the top half of the field and three finished in the top quarter.

Also our students compete for limited seats in professional school. This spring Todd Marlo, senior in Animal Science from Marion, learned he gained early acceptance to Veterinary Medicine at the University of Illinois. Todd said, “Out of 900 individuals that applied only 120 got accepted. Being involved in undergraduate research at SIUC is what gave me an edge to be accepted. My research project “Evidence for Locally Produced Prolactin in the Equine Ovary,” looked at whether we could get horses to come into heat earlier since they are seasonal breeders. I won first place for Undergraduate Research at the Midwest Animal Science meetings in Des Moines, Iowa.”

Our SIUC Quadrathalon team also competed at the Midwest Animal Science meetings in Des Moines. The team placed 8th out of 14 teams in the regional edging out Illinois State University, South Dakota State University, and University of Wisconsin-Madison. The competition had a laboratory practicum, an oral competition, a written exam, and a quiz bowl. Amanda Lawson, Todd Marlo, Lydia Penrod, and Kevin Thole were an all-senior Animal Science team advised by Dr. Rebecca Atkinson.

Sigma Alpha Sorority members set a goal to raise $3,000 for the 2009 Relay for Life and the Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity set their goal for $2,000. Sigma Alpha Treasurer Christy Ford said, “We feel it is our responsibility as citizens to do our best to stop cancer. Relay for Life holds a special place in everyone’s heart for one reason or another.”

The Equestrian Team members compete in either the Huntseat or the Western category division against schools including Northern Illinois University, Iowa State, Kansas State, Missouri State, Drake, and the University of Kansas. Our SIUC team ranks 2nd in our region in the Huntseat standing and 3rd in Western. In October they hosted the Intercollegiate Horse Show at Jill O’Donoghue’s farm. Eleven other universities competed.

Tony Boyle, senior in Agricultural Systems Technology, practices three to four hours daily in the off-season and four to five hours in-season. He was named by the press as “Player of the Game” multiple times and “Most Improved” and “Hardest Working” by the team. Tony was elected Captain for the 2008-09 season.
Students Receive Awards at All Ag-Banquet

Todd Marlo, Animal Science and Pre-Vet major from Marion, Illinois, is the 2009 Outstanding Senior. He has been an undergraduate research assistant for two years, is president of the Pre-Vet Club and an Agbassador. Marlo has been accepted for veterinary school at the University of Illinois for fall 2009. He is Censor for the Alpha Zeta Honorary Farternity.

Amanda Lawson, Animal Science major with a minor in Agribusiness Economics from Sorento, Illinois is the 2009 Outstanding Senior Runner-Up. Lawson is the President of Ag Council, Vice President of Block and Bridle, member of Collegiate FFA, Alpha Zeta, Sigma Alpha, and an Agbassador. In the fall she will pursue a M.S. degree at the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville in Genetics and Animal Breeding.

The Equestrian Team was named the 2009 Outstanding Club. The team has 47 members and a 95% attendance rate. This past fall the Equestrian Team sponsored the first IHSA show in Carbondale in almost a decade. Funding for the event was from numerous bake sales and competitive funding from the University Student Government. The team also actively participates in all college events.

The Collegiate FFA is the 2009 Outstanding Club runner-up. The club is very active in the college, in the community, and in FFA district, sectional, and state meetings and events. They hosted a Root Beer Floats/Game Night at the COAS Living Learning Community in Steagall Hall. The club coordinated a Thanksgiving Dinner in the COAS and a thank you dinner at the Greenhand Workshop.

Kristen Woods, Agribusiness Economics major from Newton, Illinois, was named the Outstanding Junior. She is a Presidential Scholar, Secretary of Agribusiness Club, member of the Collegiate FFA, and an Agbassador.

Mary Kathryn Huebener, Agribusiness Economics and Accounting major from Brighton, Illinois, received the runner-up for the Outstanding Junior Award. Huebener is chair of fundraising for Sigma Alpha.

Jamie Douglas of Cottage Hills, Illinois, received the Chris Rokosh Award for Outstanding Graduate Student. She has been the Graduate Assistant for ANS 122 Animal Science Laboratory. Douglas received her B.S. in Animal Science and Zoology and plans to attain her Ph. D/D.V.M. after completion of her M.S. in the Department of Animal Science, Food and Nutrition.
G. David Delaney B.S. ’83 Receives 2009 Service Award

G. David Delaney is President of PCS Sales for the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Inc. with responsibility for sales, marketing, transportation, and distribution as well as for public and government relations. PotashCorp is the world’s largest fertilizer enterprise, producing three primary plant nutrients.

Delaney joined PotashCorp as Vice President for Industrial sales in 1997 and was promoted to Vice President for PCS Sales in 2000 following the acquisition of Arcadian Corporation where he was President of Agricultural Sales.

Delaney received his B.S. degree in Plant, Soil and Agricultural Systems from Southern Illinois University Carbondale and completed the Executive Management Program at the University of Pittsburgh and the Sales Management Program at Vanderbilt University.

He is a strong supporter of our College and Southern Illinois University. Delaney serves on our College Leadership Board and in 2007 established a $100,000 Endowed Scholarship in honor of his father, George Delaney.

G. David Delaney is the recipient of our 2009 Service to Agriculture Award. His portrait will hang in our new Hall of Fame. Delaney has accepted our invitation to be a keynote speaker at the 2009 Agriculture Industry Day program.

Greg Webb B.S. ’79 is 2009 Outstanding Alumnus

Greg Webb is Vice President for Archer Daniels Midland (ADM), the largest agriculture food processor in the world serving a vital link between our farm producers and consumers. Webb is responsible for public relations with business and producer organizations that deal with agribusiness issues.

Webb joined ADM in 1986, working mostly with oilseed processing of soybean and canola throughout the United States. In 2002 he was named ADM’s North American Trade Representative for Grain and Oilseed. And, in 2007 he was named Vice President for State Government Relations.

He serves as a member of the board for the American Council of Agriculture, the North American Grain Association, and the Illinois Biotechnology Industry Organization (IBIO). He is also Chairman Elect of the National Oilseed Processors Association and serves on National FFA Foundation Sponsors’ Board and the International Food Information Council.

Webb received his B.S. degree in Agribusiness Economics from Southern Illinois University Carbondale in 1979. He is a member of Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity and the College Leadership Board.

Webb and his wife, Colleen, and their three sons reside in Decatur, Illinois. He was a keynote speaker at the 2007 Agriculture Industry Day program and his portrait will hang in our new Hall of Fame.

Dr. Karen Jones is the recipient of the 2009 Outstanding Advisor Award. Her students primarily in Science and Pre-Veterinary Medicine have become successful veterinarians, graduate students, and scientists. She encourages students to get involved in undergraduate research and a number have won awards. Weekly she mentors students at a local Italian restaurant. Dr. Jones is Associate Professor and Interim Chair of the Department of Animal Science, Food and Nutrition.

Faculty Receive Awards

Dr. Rebecca Atkinson is the recipient of the 2009 Donald M. Elkins Award for Excellence in Education. She teaches Livestock Production Laboratories, Feeds and Feeding, Forages, and Beef Production and she is advisor to the Block and Bridle Club. Dr. Atkinson is a mentor and advisor to many students and believes in an open door policy. She is from Wyoming and joined the SIUC faculty in 2006. Dr. Atkinson is in charge of the Beef Cattle Center and Bull Test Station.
5th Annual Agriculture Industry Day

Friday, April 17, 2009 • 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. • University Farms
Southern Illinois University Carbondale

Morning Program
• FFA Judging Contests
• Exhibits and Refreshments
• Welcome, Dr. Gary Minish
• Saluki Football Update
  Mr. Dale Lennon, Head Coach
• “What It's Like to be a Student at SIUC”
  Mr. Todd Marlo, Outstanding Senior
• “What Made SIUC the Right Choice”
  Mr. David Delaney, President PCS Sales, PotashCorp
• “The Importance of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources in the U.S. Recovery”
  Invited Speaker: The Honorable Tom Vilsack, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture

Saluki Barbecue
Compliments of Illinois Beef and Pork Producers

Afternoon Exhibitions and Workshops
• Advanced Horsemanship
• Spring Landscape and Lawn Care
• Lumberjacking
• Good Nutrition: Choice or Chance
• Viticulture Canopy Management


For additional information, please contact the College of Agricultural Sciences at 618.453.2469 or visit http://coas.siu.edu