

THE Stateley Oak

**From PPE to
virtual service:
Perseverance
during COVID-19**

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THE Stately Oak

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Resilience moves us forward



— **Bill Richardson**
LSU Vice President for Agriculture
and Dean, LSU College of Agriculture

If there is one thing I know about Louisiana's agricultural community, it is that we are resilient. This year alone we have had to contend with a pandemic, economic hardships and storms. As many of our daily routines paused earlier this year, the business of agriculture never stopped, and neither did the work of the LSU AgCenter and LSU College of Agriculture.

We sought innovative ways to continue our research, to deliver relevant programs and to educate students in a virtual space. Our faculty and staff hauled laptops home and set up shop on dining room tables and in home offices so that our important mission could continue.

In these pages you can learn more about how we and our alumni faced the challenges COVID-19 presented and worked smarter to overcome them. Read about alumni who solved problems to

make frontline workers safer or pivoted production to make hand sanitizer. Our 4-H agents created daily activities to keep youngsters' minds and bodies active during stay-at-home orders. 4-H'ers sewed masks to keep each other protected. Our research faculty took to video to continue the century-old tradition of field days, while our teaching faculty logged into Zoom to safely finish the semester.

In this issue we also remember our friend Don Welge, a visionary who died earlier this year. We also honor the memory of Ray Schneider, a trailblazing plant pathologist, with a scholarship in his name.

Our work might look different today, but our objectives are still the same — innovating, educating and improving lives.

I hope this issue finds you safe and healthy, and if we can help you in any way, please be in touch.

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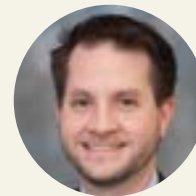
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Cocktails and Cuisine



Ray Schneider memorial scholarship



Broussard family endowment



College department updates

cover story

From manufacturing PPE and hand sanitizer to creating virtual lessons for young minds, the LSU AgCenter and LSU College of Agriculture quickly transformed its resources and services to meet the changing needs of residents all across the state. **See Pages 20-27.**

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Tiger genetics

BROUSSARD FAMILY

creates endowment for LSU internship

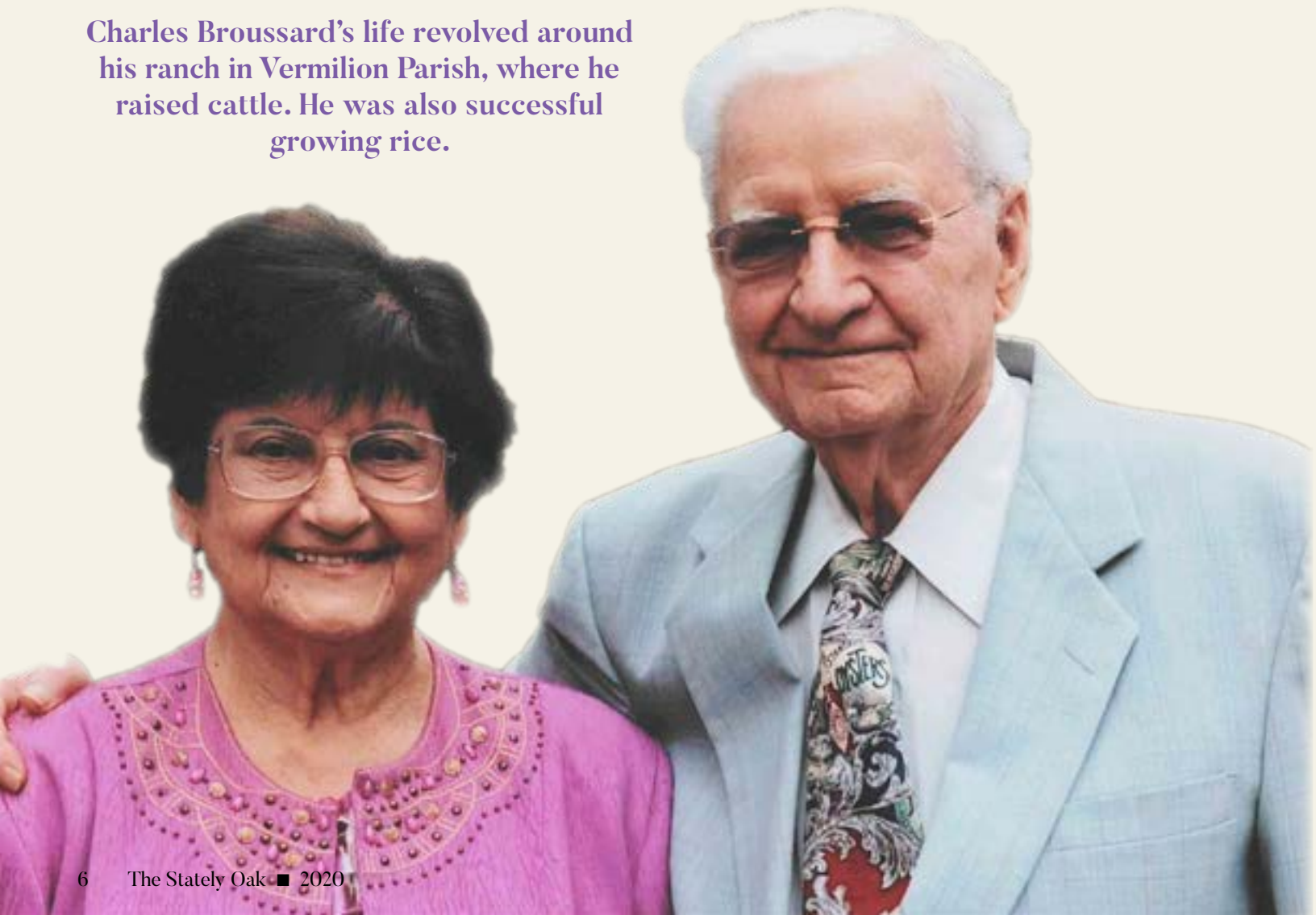
By Johnny Morgan

The children of Charles E. and Rose Ashy Broussard, of Vermilion Parish, have created an endowment to support an internship. The internship has been supported widely through contributions and funding by many friends and business associates of the Broussard family, for which the family is grateful.

The endowment sponsors, Yvonne Simon and her brothers, Richard, Alan and Hal Broussard, each have their personal memories of great moments in their father's life.

Charles E. Broussard attended both LSU and Southwestern Louisiana Institute (now University of Louisiana at Lafayette). After college, Broussard spent some time in various successful business ventures before turning to his true passion for the remainder of his adult life — owning and operating Flying J Ranch. ➤

Charles Broussard's life revolved around his ranch in Vermilion Parish, where he raised cattle. He was also successful growing rice.



Broussard's life revolved around the ranch in Vermilion Parish, where he raised registered Charolais, Brahman and Charbray cattle as well as some crossbred cattle. Broussard was also successful growing rice, which eventually was transferred to his daughter, Yvonne Simon, and her husband, Conrad Simon.

Yvonne Simon is now general manager of the Flying J Ranch.

Richard, Alan and Hal Broussard left the ranch for other occupations. Alan, now retired, embarked on a successful worldwide career in the energy industry, ascending to become a drilling superintendent for a major oil and gas company. Richard Broussard and Hal Broussard both have successful legal careers in the Lafayette area.

The three brothers also serve as officers and on the board of directors of the ranch corporation.

Richard Broussard, the oldest of the children, said their father was a ninth-generation cattleman, descending from Acadian hero Joseph "Beausoleil" Broussard. Charles Broussard continued his family heritage when he acquired Flying J Ranch from his father, at first partnering with his brother William and eventually acquiring total ownership.

The ranch was originally mostly marshland that was acquired in the late 1920s by Charles Broussard's father and over time was converted to productive farmland and rich pastures for cattle grazing through a drainage and levee network the founding Broussard established in the ranch's early years.

This heritage was the catalyst for Charles Broussard to not only become the rancher and cattleman for which he was well recognized in Vermilion Parish, but also to assume leadership positions in agricultural-related organizations from the mid-1950s through the turn of the century.

The siblings recalled their father was president of a number of organizations, including the Vermilion Parish Cattlemen's Association, the Louisiana Cattlemen's Association, the Louisiana Beef Industry Council and a number of others. Charles Broussard was also the president and founder of the National Rice Growers Association.

The endowment will provide an internship for students in agriculture, who will work at one of the LSU AgCenter research stations.

The siblings best summed up their father's lifetime of work by reflecting on Charles Broussard's often-used words: "If you can find something in life to do that you enjoy doing, then you'll never work a day in your life."

In addition to his primary occupational interest, the siblings also are proud of their father's role in conservation.

Alan Broussard noted his father was president of the Gulf Coast Intracoastal Seaway Association, and Yvonne Simon added their father was also interested in conservation efforts, especially coastal preservation.

Charles Broussard was a central figure in the push for recognition of the need for coastal zone management, which includes the area where Flying J Ranch is situated in south Vermilion Parish.

Consistent with these outside interests focused on conservation and public service though leadership in organizations, Richard Broussard emphasized his father had a strong interest in politics, hunting and fishing and was an avid supporter of the sports programs at ULL and at LSU.

Against this backdrop of appreciation Charles Broussard's children have for their father and his heritage, one can easily understand the family interest in establishing this endowment.

"Our father worked on projects at the research station in Crowley until the hurricanes in 2005 and was also involved in the LSU feedlot trials in Alexandria during the 1960s and '70s," said Alan Broussard.

The endowment will provide an internship for students in agriculture, who will work at one of these LSU AgCenter research stations, Hal Broussard said.

Yvonne Simon added the endowment expresses a preference that students from the Vermilion Parish area will have priority in receiving an internship, but the internship will be available to any student working at the H. Rouse Caffey Rice Research Station, Iberia Research Station or the Dean Lee Research and Extension Center.

"Most kids still going to college in agriculture come from agriculture families, and helping them grow in knowledge of agriculture — either in production, research or promotion — will be great for the industry," she said.

The siblings sponsored this endowment not only for their father, but also for their mother, Rose Ashy Broussard. All of the siblings emphasized that Rose Broussard fully supported all of their father's efforts and had many of her own that paralleled his work. She independently supported a broad range of causes, including the founding of St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital.

Rose Broussard was very active in the Cowbelles organization for women who supported the cattle industry.

"Mom started the Ag in the Classroom program in Vermilion Parish and made sure that there was a proclamation signed every June for Beef Month," Yvonne Simon said.

"Mom also promoted a Beef for Father's Day program," she added. "And during the month of March for six or seven years, Mom would travel with Dad all over the state with the Louisiana Cattlemen's queen promoting the beef industry."

"The endowment is designed to make the AgCenter research facilities a way for young people to get involved and to enhance their interest in agricultural-related things that were important to Daddy," Hal Broussard said.

The siblings agreed during their lifetime, at least once a week, if not more often than that, somebody in the Vermilion Parish area would approach father for help on some matter related to agriculture. And their father always was willing to provide his assistance.

They view the endowment as a way for their father and mother to provide assistance to those wishing to engage in agriculture that will continue in perpetuity. ■

Tracy Evans named to philanthropic post for LSU AgCenter, College of Agriculture

By Olivia McClure

Tracy Evans has been named senior director of development for the LSU AgCenter, the College of Agriculture and the School of Veterinary Medicine.

She replaces Lindsey Fussell, who is now senior director of development for the E.J. Ourso College of Business.

Evans will oversee philanthropic planning and staff for the three units, which are part of a new fundraising “cohort” established by the LSU Foundation.

“There is a natural connection between the teams and so much opportunity for collaboration,” Evans said.

Evans spent the past decade working in development roles for the Paul M. Hebert Law Center and LSU School of Veterinary Medicine, raising more than \$32 million in gifts. She previously was director of career services and coordinator of the Center of Continuing Professional Development at the law school.

“I have worked for LSU for 27 years, so I feel like I’ve pretty much grown up at LSU,” Evans said.

Evans holds a bachelor’s degree in interpersonal and public communications from the University of Southwestern Louisiana (now the University of Louisiana at Lafayette) and a master’s degree in public administration from LSU.

“I have a deep appreciation for what the AgCenter and College of Agriculture do for our great state of Louisiana, and I look forward to meeting the wonderful faculty, staff, students, alumni, friends and donors that make LSU agriculture a true gem for the university,” she said. “I will work hard with our dynamic development team to move the mission and vision of all three units forward through philanthropy.”

The development cohort also includes development directors Katherine D’Aquila, Clayton Forbes and Andy Schade.



Tracy Evans spent the past decade working in development roles for the Paul M. Hebert Law Center and LSU School of Veterinary Medicine, raising more than \$32 million in gifts.

Cohorts

In April of 2020, the LSU Foundation completely restructured its fundraising model, creating cohorts that would allow colleges to have a larger fundraising team. Through this restructuring, the LSU College of Agriculture, LSU AgCenter and LSU School of Veterinary Medicine development teams were merged into one cohort.

Capital Campaign Update:

In 2019, LSU publicly launched a \$1.5 billion Capital Campaign that will run through 2025. The LSU AgCenter and LSU College of Agriculture have a joint fundraising goal of \$26 million. Thanks to donor generosity, nearly \$14 million has been raised. In the past year, we have increased total number of donors by 20% and total giving by 4%.



Gay family continues support for sugarcane research

PHOTO BY ANDREW SCHADE

The Gay family and the Edward J. Gay Planting & Manufacturing Co., LLC. are endowing a second professorship and creating an internship to aid research in sugarcane variety development with the LSU AgCenter. Pictured in front of a sugarcane breeding greenhouse at the AgCenter Sugar Research Station in St. Gabriel from left to right are John Gay, LSU AgCenter sugarcane breeder Collins Kimbeng, AgCenter sugarcane breeder Michael Pontif, Price Gay Jr., the Rev. Winston Rice and Barbara Gay Rice.

By Craig Gautreaux

Sugarcane and the Gay family are intertwined with the landscape of south Louisiana. Since the 1850s, the family has farmed the area, with sugarcane being the dominant crop. In order to keep this industry viable, the Gay family is endowing a second professorship and creating an internship for work in sugarcane variety development.

The Andrew Price Gay Jr. and John Fleming Gay Professorship in Sugarcane Variety Development was established by family members Nancy Gay See, Andrew P. Gay Jr., Barbara Gay Rice and John Fleming Gay, along with the Edward J. Gay Planting & Manufacturing Co. LLC. The recipient of the endowed professorship will be a faculty member working in sugarcane research with a preference for efforts involving sugarcane breeding and variety development.

"We've spent our life raising sugarcane, so we know the importance of new varieties," Andrew Price Gay Jr. said. "You need a new source because these varieties play out."

The combine harvester allowed researchers to look at higher-yielding

varieties that the soldier harvester was incapable of harvesting. These varieties have revolutionized the sugar industry for the past 20 years, Gay said.

"We've seen them come. We've seen them go," he said. "Our family wants to do everything we can to continue good research and provide the tools they need."

The Esmond Phelps Gay Internship Award in Sugarcane Variety Development was created to encourage young people to get involved in sugarcane research. The internship is named for Esmond Phelps Gay, the president of the Edward J. Gay Planting & Manufacturing Co. LLC.

"I didn't expect it, and I am truly honored," Phelps Gay said. "We felt that they could use some help to assist at the Sugar Research Station."

The internship is open to any high school or college student working in the sugarcane variety development program at the LSU AgCenter Sugar Research Station in St. Gabriel. The internship will provide an opportunity to see how sugarcane varieties are developed and will involve working during four summers.

DUGAS & LEBLANC

endows gift to help LSU AgCenter sugar research

By Tobie Blanchard

Sugarcane fields dot the landscape of Assumption Parish. For 140 years, the company formed by the Dugas and LeBlanc families has been farming some of those fields and processing the sugar retrieved from them.

Chris Mattingly, chief executive officer of the families' Lula-Westfield Sugar Factories, said the families' success and longevity in the industry is fueled by variety development research conducted at the LSU AgCenter Sugar Research Station.

"We couldn't be in business or nearly where we are without this research," Mattingly said.

The families have created the Dugas & LeBlanc Sugar Research Station Support Fund to help the station hire student workers, graduate assistants or other workers who can assist with the labor needed in developing and testing new sugarcane varieties.

Mattingly said the economy of Assumption Parish relies heavily on the sugarcane industry because the rural parish doesn't have the petrochemical industry like neighboring river parishes.

He also said sugarcane is unique because it doesn't have big agriscience companies conducting research and variety development like for other commodities, such as corn, cotton and soybeans.

"We rely heavily on the research from the station. We need this research, and it's on our shoulders to support it," he said.

Farmers in Assumption Parish and in other sugarcane-growing areas are producing more sugar on fewer acres than when Mattingly joined the family business in the late 1970s. He said this is a direct result of better varieties.

Mattingly serves as chair of the American Sugar Cane League variety development committee. He said through that work he sees the tremendous effort

that goes into developing sugarcane varieties and the significant amount of labor it requires.

He said he hopes this gift can help ease the budget constraints at the station and be a benefit to the research there.

AgCenter sugarcane specialist Kenneth Gravois said the gift will further strengthen variety development at the Sugar Research Station.

"Sugarcane variety development is the core mission of the LSU AgCenter's Sugar Research Station. The Dugas and LeBlanc families have long recognized this contribution and how it affects their farming and raw sugar factory operations," he said.

The Dugas & LeBlanc board of directors includes chairman Charles "Chip" Savoie Jr., Jamelia Dugas, Scott J. LeBlanc, Wilfred Daigle, Lonnie LeBlanc Jr., Georges E. LeBlanc III, Charles LeBlanc Jr., Jon A. "Tony" Savoie Jr., Robert Savoie and Chris D. Mattingly.

Cocktails and Cuisine raises money for scholarships



The LSU College of Agriculture held its sixth annual scholarship benefit, *Cocktails and Cuisine*, at the Baton Rouge Gallery on Oct. 11, 2019. More than 100 people attended the fundraiser, including Erin and Sandra Slayter, Roy and Daniel Baker, and Connie and Melvin LeBlanc. Guests enjoyed musical entertainment from Continuum Music as well as a silent auction. The event raised approximately \$10,000.

Thank you to the event sponsors:

- Zen-Noh Grain
- Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry
- Dave and Liz Means
- Lamb Weston
- Louisiana Land Bank
- Louisiana Agricultural Consultants Association
- Rogers and Tess Leonard
- Kenneth and Judy Koonce

Grain elevator, processing professionals endow LSU College of Agriculture scholarship

By Tobie Blanchard

The Gulf South Chapter of the Grain Elevator and Processing Society (GEAPS) is endowing a scholarship in the LSU College of Agriculture.

The GEAPS Gulf South Chapter has supported a scholarship in the college for four years. Roy Baker, chapter president and operations manager at Zen-Noh Grain Corporation, said the chapter recently had a surplus and decided the money would be best served helping students.

"Endowing a scholarship is a way to invest the money and help students that might impact our industry in the future," Baker said.

Benjamin Holden, a senior studying agricultural business, is a recipient of a GEAPS scholarship this year.

"I used the scholarship money to purchase my textbooks, which was a big help," Holden said, adding that he

is looking into opportunities working for GEAPS in Houston.

Six companies operate export grain elevators south of Baton Rouge. Representatives from those companies are members of GEAPS, which has more than 2,800 members in over 20 countries.

The Gulf South Chapter is the first to have an endowed scholarship at a university, Baker said. The chapter also was named the GEAPS 2018 Outstanding Chapter.

GEAPS meetings include professional development, discussions of industry issues, such as high water or trade wars, and networking. LSU College of Agriculture students are often invited to attend meetings to learn more about the grain elevator industry and job opportunities.

"We like to get students involved so they understand what the industry is about and learn how it works," Baker said.

The Gulf South Chapter of the Grain Elevator and Processing Society endowed a scholarship in the LSU College of Agriculture. Pictured are: Bill Richardson, vice president for agriculture and dean of the College of Agriculture, and GEAPS members Lee Harris, Roy Baker and Philip Kelly.

PHOTO BY TOBIE BLANCHARD



RAY SCHNEIDER

memorial scholarship

By Tobie Blanchard

It is hard to overstate Ray Schneider's dedication to the development and welfare of his graduate students.

Schneider, who died in October of 2019, was a distinguished plant pathologist with the LSU AgCenter and a professor committed to seeing his students thrive.

Schneider's wife of 49 years, Rhea, and their children, Jason Schneider and Julie Cummings, are honoring his memory by endowing the Ray Schneider Memorial Scholarship, which is aimed at helping graduate students at LSU studying plant pathology and crop physiology.

"As a family we thought that supporting the ongoing efforts of graduate students would be in line with my dad's support of his students," said Jason Schneider.

As a child, Jason remembers his parents hosting graduate students at their home. Many of the students were international students. Schneider said his dad went out of his way to make them all feel welcomed.

"It really left an impression on me how dedicated he was to their success," he said.

It is a sentiment a former student echoes. Nicole Ward Gauthier, an extension plant pathologist with the University of Kentucky, said students who weren't studying directly with Schneider often gravitated to his lab.

"No one was excluded," she said. "Every student had his concern and care."

Gauthier said Schneider was eager to offer his students experiences beyond his lab. She described a trip she took in 2009 with Schneider and other students that started in Oregon and went down the West Coast.

She said Schneider called the trip The Golden Opportunity Tour. Gauthier said it was a life-changing experience for her. ➤





“Ray was one-of-a-kind as a person and a scientist. With his inquisitive and innovative nature, he was able to make contributions with real impact to both the soybean industry and the discipline of plant pathology.”

— Jeff Hoy, Department of Plant Pathology & Crop Physiology

An archived photo of Ray Schneider from 2005 when he discovered Asian soybean rust in Louisiana — its first discovery in the U.S.

Ray Schneider with students during the “Golden Opportunity” trip.



“We met with scientists, visited national parks and broadened our horizons,” she said. “I credit my career to that trip. I met people I am still working with today.”

Gauthier said Schneider was the most curious person she had ever met. He instilled his love of knowledge in his students and helped them see the big picture to solve plant problems.

The care and compassion he showed to his students were just part of his professional life. Schneider also was a very accomplished plant pathologist.

In a tribute after this death, his colleagues in the department said his mission-oriented research projects led to significant advances in the control of plant diseases.

Schneider was the first to find Asian soybean rust in North America, and he became a leader of the coordinated national research and extension effort that followed.

Schneider was well recognized for his professional achievements, receiving numerous awards and honors.

Schneider’s aspirations didn’t initially point to plant pathology. Schneider was on his way to a job interview with Johnson & Johnson when a conversation on a plane changed his trajectory. He was seated next to a plant pathologist who later became his thesis advisor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Schneider, who received his undergraduate degree in biology and chemistry from the University of Alabama, earned a master’s

and doctorate from the University of Illinois. He held a Ford Foundation Research Fellowship at the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture in Ibadan, Nigeria, and a postdoctorate at the University of California, Davis. He was on the faculty at the University of California, Berkeley from 1976 to 1984, and then with LSU AgCenter from 1984 to 2016.

Schneider traveled the world with his career and was an accomplished sailor, often taking students and colleagues out on Lake Pontchartrain.

His daughter Julie said she was inspired by a father who had a selfless curiosity to understand and show appreciation for every person who crossed his path.

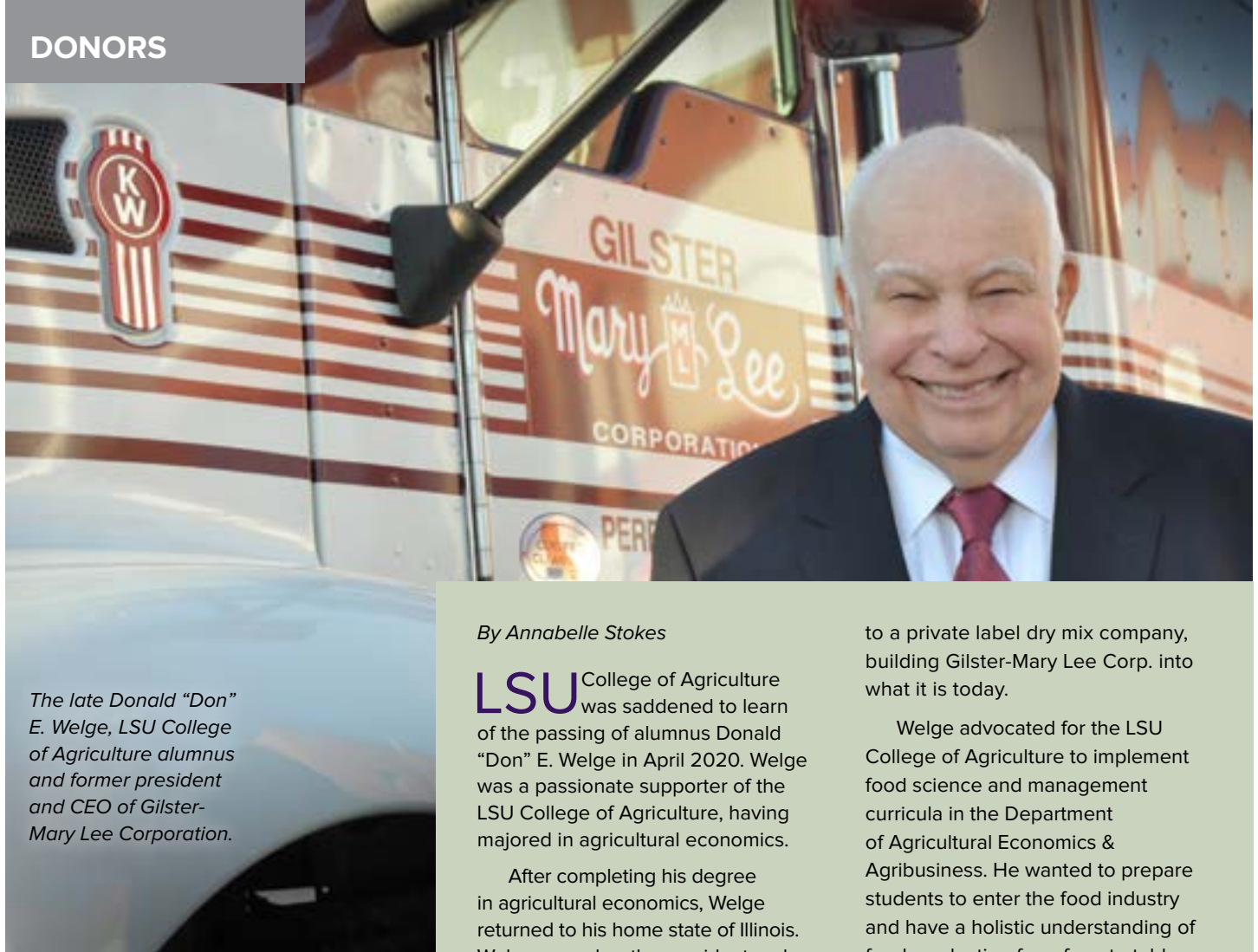
“He was inspired by life’s provisions of unanswered questions, which is why he was a brilliant scientist,” she said. “He was guided by empathy and love, which made him an extraordinary father.”

Jason recounted a story of when he was traveling through Chile and met up with one of his dad’s colleagues in Santiago, who treated Jason as a member of his family.

“He formed relationships across the globe,” he said. “That really reflects his personality and warmth.”

The family hopes this scholarship will support the important work graduate students conduct in the Department of Plant Pathology & Crop Physiology.

“And maybe years from now students will see his name and that will prompt them to read and learn more about his contribution to the field,” Schneider said. ■



The late Donald "Don" E. Welge, LSU College of Agriculture alumnus and former president and CEO of Gilster-Mary Lee Corporation.

By Annabelle Stokes

LSU College of Agriculture was saddened to learn of the passing of alumnus Donald "Don" E. Welge in April 2020. Welge was a passionate supporter of the LSU College of Agriculture, having majored in agricultural economics.

After completing his degree in agricultural economics, Welge returned to his home state of Illinois. Welge served as the president and CEO of Gilster-Mary Lee Corp. and had been with the company since 1957.

He joined the organization, then known as the Gilster Milling Co., immediately after earning a bachelor's degree and helped build the organization into a \$900 million private label manufacturing company specializing in producing dry food mixes.

Welge is credited with being a visionary for his company. As the sale of pre-baked goods rose in the 1950s, Welge had the vision to shift the focus of Gilster Milling Co. The flour milling company moved

to a private label dry mix company, building Gilster-Mary Lee Corp. into what it is today.

Welge advocated for the LSU College of Agriculture to implement food science and management curricula in the Department of Agricultural Economics & Agribusiness. He wanted to prepare students to enter the food industry and have a holistic understanding of food production from farm to table.

Don Welge's son, Tom Welge, remembers his father as a simple man with a lot of passion. "My dad was a very ordinary and everyday guy, but he had a lot of love for this company and love of LSU," said Tom Welge. "He only had a few interests. However, the things he was interested in he was very dedicated to."

When Don Welge was looking for a college to attend in the 1950s, he fell in love with Baton Rouge during a campus visit. Tom Welge said that despite living in Illinois, his father frequently attended LSU home football games.

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SUPPORTER
SPOTLIGHT

Through continued support of The Mosaic Company, the jewel that is the LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens at Burden shines even brighter. The Mosaic Boardwalk at Black Swamp guides visitors through a hardwood swamp and plays a key role in wetlands education. Mosaic is also supporting a new welcome center at Burden Museum and Gardens.

Nutrien funds AgCenter educational initiatives

By Johnny Morgan

The LSU AgCenter has been awarded a total of \$50,000 a year for three years from Nutrien, a Canadian fertilizer company with operations in Geismar.

The donation will help fund educational initiatives for students in Iberville and Ascension parishes.

"We are a community-minded company that aims to help students in these two parishes because parts of our plant actually sit in both parishes," said Gidget Stein, Nutrien human resources director.

In the past, Nutrien has been a supporter of various AgCenter initiatives, and this donation just consolidates those efforts, she said.

"We normally get asked for donations for the events as they come up," Stein said. "By providing this blanket donation, we can cover their events on a year-by-year basis."

Over the three-year period, Nutrien has pledged to donate \$60,000 toward the AgCenter 4-H AgAdventure Day educational stations, school and community gardens, and summer camp scholarships for Iberville and Ascension parish youth, Stein said.

"We are also pledging a \$30,000 portion to support the LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens for the annual Corn Maze," she said.



PHOTO BY JOHNNY MORGAN

Representatives with Nutrien present a check to the LSU AgCenter. Pictured are Nutrien employees Nicklaus Heltz, reliability engineer; Nick Frey, production manager; Gidget Stein, senior human resource adviser; Stephen Rayburn, inspection coordinator; Josh Higginbotham, engineering manager; Caleb Hymel, safety specialist; Cecil Chapman, safety manager; and LSU AgCenter development team members Katherine D'Aquila and Tracy Evans.

Katherine D'Aquila, AgCenter director of development, said Nutrien has been a title sponsor of the Corn Maze for a number of years.

"Our relationship goes back to their support of the LSU AgCenter Botanic Gardens at Burden Welcome Center," she said. "They have been a supporter of a number of AgCenter initiatives, including the livestock show."

In addition to funding AgCenter projects, Nutrien is also donating a total of \$60,000 to fund a scholarship to support an LSU College of Engineering student majoring or intending to major in chemical or mechanical engineering.

The preference is for a student from Iberville or Ascension parishes who demonstrates financial need, D'Aquila said.

Salassi heads AgCenter animal, plant programs

By Tobie Blanchard

Michael Salassi has been named as LSU AgCenter associate vice president and program leader of animal and plant sciences.

For the past four years, Salassi has served as head of the Department of Agricultural Economics & Agribusiness, where he is the A. Wilbert's Sons Endowed Professor of Agricultural and Natural Resources. Prior to that time, he was on the faculty for 21 years with a teaching, research and extension appointment.

He replaced Rogers Leonard, who retired in February.

Salassi received his bachelor's and master's degrees from LSU and a doctorate from Mississippi State University. He worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service in Washington, D.C., for



nine years before returning to LSU as an associate professor in 1994. He became a full professor in 2002.

Salassi also served as the assistant director of the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station, the AgCenter research division. His main research and extension focus during his career has been commodity production economics, farm management and commodity farm policy.

This associate vice president leads the AgCenter extension and research efforts related to animals, plants and natural resources.

"Of the many things I've done in my 25 years with the LSU AgCenter, I have really enjoyed working with industry and stakeholders, conducting research and extension activities important to their economic viability, and I welcome the opportunity to do so on a larger scale," Salassi said.

Salassi will work closely with the AgCenter's two other associate vice presidents and program leaders in nutrition and youth development.

Make Your Mark

BEQUESTS: A gift made through your will using assets in your estate.

BENEFICIARY GIFTS: Designate LSU AgCenter or LSU College of Agriculture as the beneficiary of a qualified retirement plan or other accounts.

CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITIES: A gift that provides you and others with a lifetime fixed income stream.

TRUSTS: Funded with assets that can provide funds for LSU AgCenter and LSU College of Agriculture and other beneficiaries.



CHAIRS & PRO

LSU AgCenter

Chairs & Professorships	Type	Recipient
Pennington Chair for Wildlife Research	Chair	Lane Foil
F. Avalon Daggett Professorship in Rice Research No. 1	Professorship	Herry Utomo
F. Avalon Daggett Professorship in Rice Research No. 2	Professorship	Eric Webster
F. Avalon Daggett Professorship in Rice Research No. 3	Professorship	Donald Groth
Mosaic Company Professorship	Professorship	Dustin Harrell
American Cyanamid Professorship for Excellence in Plant Biotechnology, Molecular Biology and Crop Pest Management	Professorship	James Oard
American Cyanamid Professorship for Excellence in Plant Genetics, Breeding and Variety Development	Professorship	Vacant
John B. Baker Professorship for Excellence in Weed Science	Professorship	Donnie Miller
Jack Hamilton Regents Chair in Cotton Production	Chair	Vacant
G & H Seed Company Endowed Professorship	Professorship	Vacant
A. Wilbert's Sons Professorship in Agriculture and Natural Resources No. 1	Professorship	Michael Salassi
A. Wilbert's Sons Professorship in Agriculture and Natural Resources No. 2	Professorship	Michael Salassi
Luella Dugas Chambers Distinguished Professorship	Professorship	Vacant
L. D. Newsom Professorship in Integrated Pest Management	Professorship	Fangneng Huang
Roy A. & Karen Pickren Endowed Professorship in Extension Water Resources	Professorship	Brian LeBlanc
Tom and Martha Burch and Delta and Pine Land Company Endowed Professorship in Cotton Production or Genetics	Professorship	Daniel Fromme
Jack E. and Henrietta Jones Professorship	Professorship	Brenda Tubaña
Floyd S. Edmiston Sr. Professorship in Agriculture and Natural Resources Management	Professorship	Jeff Hoy
ASSCT-Denver T. Loupe Sugar Heritage Professorship	Professorship	Kenneth Gravois
Doyle Chambers Distinguished Professorship	Professorship	Vacant
R. Chabreck Professorship in Coastal Wildlife Research Management	Professorship	Vacant
Meraux Foundation Supreme Champion Livestock Professorship	Professorship	Toby Lepley
Chalkley Family Endowed Chair in Agriculture	Chair	William B. Richardson
Warner L. Bruner Professorship in Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness	Professorship	Kurt Guidry
Donald E. Welge Endowed Professorship	Professorship	Rex Caffey
J. Nelson Fairbanks Endowed Professorship in Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness	Professorship	Matt Fannin
Gilbert J. Durbin Endowed Professorship	Professorship	Krishna Paudel
Mr. & Mrs. Herman E. McFatter Endowed Professorship in Animal Science	Professorship	Vacant
Doyle Chambers Professorship in Animal Science	Professorship	Richard Cooper
Gerald A. Simmons Professorship in Animal Sciences	Professorship	Vacant
H. Rouse Caffey Endowed Professorship	Professorship	Adam Famoso
Paul K. Adams Professorship in Urban Entomology	Professorship	Claudia Husseneder
A. George & Mildred G. Caldwell Endowed Professorship in Agronomy and Soils	Professorship	Jim Wang
Walker T. Nolin Professorship	Professorship	Steve Harrison

FESSORSHIPS

LSU AgCenter (cont.)

Chairs & Professorships	Type	Recipient
Lucien and Peggy Laborde Endowed Professorship	Professorship	Don La Bonte
Crosby Land & Resources Company Professorship in Forest Sector Business Development No. 1	Professorship	Richard Vlosky
Weaver Brothers Endowed Professorship for Excellence in Forestry	Professorship	Sabrina Taylor
Roy O. Martin Sr. Professorship in Composites and Engineered Woodproducts	Professorship	Qinglin Wu
Bryant A. Bateman Professorship in Forestry, Wildlife, and Fisheries	Professorship	Allen Rutherford
Crosby Land & Resources Company Professorship in Forest Sector Business Development No. 2	Professorship	Richard Vlosky
Horace J. Davis Endowed Professorship in Food Science & Technology	Professorship	Witoon Prinyawiwatkul
Grace Drews Lehmann Professorship in Human Ecology	Professorship	Ioan Negulescu
F. A. Eugene, Marcel and James Graugnard Professorship in Sugarcane Research at the Sugar Research Station	Professorship	Vacant
Andrew P. Gay Professorship	Professorship	Collins Kimbeng
Sterling C. Bain Professorship in Sugarcane Production	Professorship	Vacant
Benjamin L. Legendre Sr. Sugar Heritage ASSCT Professorship	Professorship	Vacant
Andrew Price Gay Jr. and John Fleming Gay Professorship in Sugarcane Variety Development	Professorship	Vacant

LSU College of Agriculture

Chairs & Professorships	Type	Recipient
G.D. Cain Chair	Chair	Qinglin Wu
J.C. Floyd Professorship in Agriculture	Professorship	Michael Burnett
George William Barineau Jr. Professorship	Professorship	Michael Kaller
Martin D. Woodin Professorship in Agriculture Economics	Professorship	Rex Caffey
Ola Cook Holmes Professorship in SPESS	Professorship	Jeff Kuehny
Meryl Newsom Annison Professorship in Animal Sciences	Professorship	Phil Elzer
Mary Sandefur Tobin Professorship in School of Nutrition and Food Sciences	Professorship	Vacant
Ann Armstrong Peltier	Professorship	Georgianna Tuuri
Dr. William H. Alexander Professorship in Agriculture Economics	Professorship	James Fannin
Ralph & Leila Boulware Professorship in Animal Sciences	Professorship	Vacant
Dr. D.L. Evans Professorship in Animal Sciences	Professorship	Cathleen Williams
Daniel Ivy Dupree Professorship in Animal Sciences	Professorship	Kenneth Bondioli
Austin C. Thompson – Entomology	Professorship	Tom Reagan
F.O. Bateman Professorship in Renewable Natural Resources	Professorship	William Kelso
Doris L. & Jules A. Carville Jr. Professorship in Textiles, Apparel Design and Merchandising	Professorship	Chuanlan Liu
Dr. Alma Beth Clark Professorship in Textiles, Apparel Design and Merchandising	Professorship	Vacant
Adrienne Gravois Brazan – School of Nutrition and Food Sciences	Professorship	Vacant

LSU alumni help create PPE manufacturing network

By Tobie Blanchard

She works in fashion. He works in medicine. The couple's collective skills married together helped create a supply chain to get Ochsner employees the protective gear they need during the COVID-19 pandemic.

LSU alumni — and husband and wife — Bonnie and Stephen Fletcher own a women's apparel boutique, Shake Your Bon Bon, in New Orleans, which Bonnie oversees while Stephen works in the Neuroscience Medical 3D Lab at Ochsner Health New Orleans.

Early in the coronavirus outbreak in New Orleans, Stephen Fletcher, who has an LSU degree in biochemistry, saw the growing demand for personal protective equipment. He and Bonnie worked to gather a team of companies from their respective backgrounds, pairing makers with evolving clinical needs.

"I want to emphasize how proximity to innovation and the ability to think creatively is what allowed us to act decisively and rapidly in our COVID-19 response," Stephen Fletcher said.

Recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention were that hospital

workers at least wear a scarf if face masks weren't available, but he knew they could do better.

To adequately protect hospital employees, Ochsner needed face shields. After designing and prototyping with Scale Workspace, both parties realized they would need another manufacturer to meet their immediate needs. The Fletchers reached out to GoodWood NOLA, a design and fabrication company that had previously helped build racks and shelving for the Fletchers' Magazine Street store. GoodWood NOLA was able to shift their manufacturing to the shields.

Michael Dalle Molle, owner of GoodWood NOLA, said that within three days his company had produced 50 face shields that Ochsner doctors and clinicians were testing. The face shield design was tweaked and improved as manufacturing continued. A collaborative effort between Scale Workspace and GoodWood NOLA helped fill the demand for shields.

Soft goods such as gowns and face masks then became the priority.

"I drew on my experience helping my wife run her apparel


➤ *Continued on Page 27*



PHOTO PROVIDED BY
CECILE HARDY TANGUIS
*One of NOLA Couture's
home sewers left this
note in a handmade
protective gown.*







Alumnus brews hand sanitizer in time of need

By Jordyn Warren

LSU College of Agriculture and Ogden Honors alumnus Jacob Landry is perhaps best known as the founder of Urban South, the largest craft brewery in New Orleans. But after winning a bid to produce hand sanitizer for the State of Louisiana Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, he's also known as an entrepreneurial pioneer, showing how companies can retool during a global pandemic.

Landry was able to partner with other Louisiana manufacturers to secure the raw materials necessary to produce 120,000 bottles of the hard-to-get sanitizer for local hospitals, grocery stores, nursing homes and other small businesses.

He credits his time at the Ogden Honors College for preparing him to think critically and solve real-world problems. A double major in poultry science in the College of Agriculture and political communication in theanship School of Mass Communication, he made sure to maximize every opportunity to embed himself into the Honors College community. He was a recipient of the Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship and the prestigious Harry S. Truman Scholarship. He also had the opportunity to study abroad in Aix-en-Provence in southern France for a year, a trip that both influenced his worldview and ignited a spark that would eventually lead him to found Urban South.

When bars and restaurants shut down in New Orleans, Landry anticipated the brewery's beer production and output dropping drastically. This was going to be

catastrophic for his employees, so his first goal was to make sure he could keep paying his team.

When he discovered the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) was looking for businesses to produce hand sanitizer, he saw it as a great opportunity to meet a community need while also keeping his team employed. Even though the brewery hadn't produced anything other than beer, he knew the company was adept at putting liquid into containers and that they could figure it out.

"Navigating this challenge in general has taken a whole lot of grit and hustle," Landry said. "It certainly reminds me of my intro to the Honors College. I graduated (high school) with 32 kids from a rural public school and was in no way prepared for the rigor of an honors freshman seminar. It was the first time I'd ever been seriously challenged academically. As an entrepreneur, the challenges have been constant, but this particular one was sudden and unanticipated, so I had to rely on the same sink or swim gut instincts to pivot and keep moving forward."

Although producing hand sanitizer has helped keep Urban South afloat, Landry is approaching this endeavor as a short-term effort to help people in his community get access to a scarce essential item like hand sanitizer. In line with Honors College values, Landry continually demonstrates community, excellence and leadership through his business. It is certain that Landry will lead Urban South in being fearless, producing world-class beer and becoming strong community partners.



Spreading the word to combat COVID-19

By Annabelle Stokes

Face masks, along with social distancing, are among the best defenses against contracting and spreading COVID-19.

Hospitals and medical centers across Louisiana were overwhelmed when the first wave of the COVID-19 outbreak hit the state. Our Lady of Lake Regional Medical Center, located in Baton Rouge, was among the hospitals that needed assistance. They were in desperate need of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Donna Sapp is an instructor for the Department of Textile, Apparel Design & Merchandising. Sapp teaches courses in apparel structure and fit and is

► *Continued on Page 27*



Donna Sapp, instructor for the LSU Department of Textile, Apparel Design & Merchandising, sews the pleats into a piece of fabric to form a face mask.

Giving back to the Baton Rouge community

By Annabelle Stokes

June of 2020 marked one year since Grace Chetta launched her clothing brand, Gretta Garments. Chetta graduated in 2016 with a degree in Textiles, Apparel Design & Merchandising.

Owning a clothing brand had been a lifelong dream of Chetta's. After years of collecting vintage fabric and gaining experience within the apparel industry, she launched her small business.

Chetta shared that her first year of owning her business has exceeded her expectations.

"The Baton Rouge community has been wonderful to my business," says Chetta. "I've done better than I could have ever imagined in my first year."

When the COVID-19 outbreak hit Louisiana, there was a shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE). One of the supplies that the Baton Rouge community needed was cotton face masks.

"Hospitals in the area were asking for donations to help fill the shortage of masks. I heard about the call for masks from several of my colleagues," said Chetta.

Along with the shortage of PPE, there was a shortage of raw materials to create face masks.

However, Chetta was well-equipped to help supply face masks. Her collection of vintage fabric for Gretta Garments meant she already had an ample supply of 100% cotton fabric, which she used to sew her masks.

Another material that was essential for making masks was in short supply — elastic. Elastic is used to secure the mask around the wearer's ears.

Chetta used her prior experience with dance to think of an innovative solution to this issue.

"I used an old trick I learned from dance. I took the elastic we used for our tights and cut it for the face masks," says Grace. "The elastic used in dance tights is a lot easier to come by."

During the pandemic outbreak, Chetta donated many of her masks to Baton Rouge General and Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center.

Chetta continues to make and sell masks for the Baton Rouge community. She adopted the one-for-one business model for Gretta Garments. For every mask that Chetta sells through Gretta Garments, she donates a mask to a hospital in the Baton Rouge area.

Chetta plans to continue her education at LSU and will be entering the Master of Business Administration program this fall.

PHOTO PROVIDED
BY GRACE CHETTA

Face masks sewn
from vintage fabric.







4-H engages youths online

By Randy LaBauve

COVID-19 safety measures have dramatically altered traditional ways of delivering educational information to children. LSU AgCenter Louisiana 4-H Youth Development has adapted its methods of service to fit into 4-H members' current schoolhouses: their homes.

"This is a challenging time, but we are definitely witnessing lots of creativity and innovation in program delivery," said AgCenter 4-H coordinator Lanette Hebert.

4-H agents quickly pivoted to offer online content to engage youth and also help parents struggling to keep youngsters active during the lockdown. 4-H Virtual Daily Recess offered daily activities on the AgCenter's website and social media platforms that youngsters could do at home.

Daily posts include children's math, science and health projects, including how to make a dip net for a pond, how to build a toothpick bridge and how to do a clean teeth experiment.

4-H also created a virtual summer camp and 4-H University, which included contests run online.

4-H agents in St. James and East Feliciana parishes pooled their resources to create a Virtual Challenge Week, offering prizes to winners of contests ranging from talent videos to pictures of their puppies.

"They've had fun with that, and it keeps them regularly engaged with us," said Dawn Culbreath, AgCenter 4-H agent in St. James Parish. "The kids have told us they look forward to the social media posts first thing in the morning to see if they won."

Meetings between agents and their 4-H'ers are taking place on Zoom and Microsoft Teams.

"4-H has conditioned me to have better time management, so I'm still



A.B. Perk, left, creates a recipe on Facebook Live, while Audrey Reinhardt wears a face mask she made for medical workers.

getting things done," said Gabby Gay, Cameron Parish junior leader president.

At a time when technology rules the day, there's a spotlight on traditional 4-H skills, such as sewing and cooking. 4-H cooking clubs are circulating recipes on social media, while East Baton Rouge Parish 4-H'er A.B. Perk is taking it to a different level.

"I'm creating one easy recipe a day for 30 days on Facebook — some on Facebook Live," said Perk, who also grows many of her own ingredients. "I want to help other young people learn new dishes and have some fun in the kitchen."

"During this time, I'm using past 4-H lessons like healthy recipes from the 4-H Food and Fitness Board that I filed away," said Gay, who plans to study nutrition in college. "I just made sweet potato brownies."

4-H'ers across the state are continuing efforts to keep themselves and others healthy.

"We have historically helped out in a time of crisis, but it's harder now because we can't get out and serve food and things like that," said AgCenter 4-H coordinator Esther Boe. "Agents are posting directions on how to make protective masks for hospital personnel, and youth across the state are making them."

"I saw a post about sewing and donating masks," said Victoria Dupuis, AgCenter 4-H agent in Lafayette Parish. "I decided to make a video with tips I had gathered from various sources to make the process easier for beginners."

"We're donating fabric for masks, and on our junior leaders Instagram we're encouraging 4-H'ers to still be active and talk to people," Gay said.

The statewide youth organization also gives members an outlet to continue healthy outdoor activities they were doing before the coronavirus crisis began.

4-H'ers Jennifer and Heather Kyzar are sisters who compete in the 4-H shooting sports program in East Baton Rouge Parish. The homeschooled youth are continuing to regularly practice their archery skills.

And they have some advice for those now forced to homeschool.

"Besides doing schoolwork in your PJs, you get to work at your own pace," said Jennifer Kyzar. "You can move ahead if the material is easy or work longer on the same skill if you need to."

"Even though it's hard being stuck at home, you can still stay in touch with your friends through texts and handwritten letters," said Heather Kyzar. "And you can use this time to bond with your family."

4-H is the largest youth organization in Louisiana, and it continues to thrive because of strong support from volunteers and parents.

"Our 4-H agents are stepping up with ways to keep in contact — using more technology, posting educational lessons — and that's very comforting to the youth and their families," Boe said.

"Change has always been scary, but we decided as a junior leader club, we need to push ahead," Gay said. "We're still moving on in our lives — staying positive and staying together."

Continued from Page 20

design and retail company and asked our supply chain if they would be open to having local fabricators and seamstresses manufacture the goods we could not attain through our traditional sources due to COVID-19,” Stephen Fletcher said.

Bonnie Fletcher, whose degree is in the College of Agriculture apparel design program, said she spent long days returning to her design roots, testing patterns, sewing and sourcing fabrics. The couple called in Cecile Hardy Tanguis, owner of NOLA Couture, an apparel company with manufacturing capabilities.

Hardy Tanguis and her team ordered a massive amount of material and started cutting out masks and gowns. They also activated an army of home sewers who would come to the factory, pick up the material and sew gowns and masks at home.

The Fletchers said with support from innovationOchsner and Ochsner Academics, they were able to quickly validate designs and materials through the validation chain of infectious disease, supply chain and frontline providers to scale production quickly to help fill the need with high-quality apparel and shields.

This homegrown supply chain network has been working on these materials for months. Dalle Molle said GoodWood NOLA had helped produce 75,000 face shields — all manufactured in New Orleans with American parts.

“This is such a cool example of a community effort to do something so very important,” Dalle Molle said.

“Literally overnight we got this started, and now 75,000 frontline workers are able to say they have the protection they need.”

He also said this work has allowed his business to stay open during the stay-at-home orders, and it even created additional jobs to fill Ochsner’s order.

Hardy Tanguis said the same. Even though her stores were temporarily closed, her employees were all still working, and she hired additional people to sew the gowns and masks.

“Everyone on my staff wanted to fight the good fight and be a part of this,” Hardy Tanguis said. “We were working 18-hour days for several weeks because the need was so dire.”



PHOTO PROVIDED BY CECILE HARDY TANGUIS

Christina Larson, left, and Loraine McNeese, employees of NOLA Couture, make personal protective equipment.

The Fletchers said the continually expanding manufacturing network has produced more than 30,000 gowns and expects to make about 10,000 a day, eventually making 250,000 gowns in the next month. As the needs evolve throughout COVID-19, the teams have expanded and adapted the supply chain network to meet those demands by finding specialty manufacturers locally and domestically, Stephen Fletcher said.

“We are now looking at prototypes for bouffant scrub caps, booties to cover shoes and coveralls as the needs evolve,” Bonnie Fletcher said.

Reflecting over the past six weeks, Bonnie Fletcher said she never thought her world of fashion and Stephen’s world of medicine would ever connect like this.

“We are used to working together for our business, being the ‘dream team’ as I like to call us, but it’s a whole different kind of dream to see that our teamwork has truly made a difference,” she said.

The couple said they are finally at a place where they feel like the overwhelming need is being met.

“We see a light at the end of the tunnel,” Stephen Fletcher said. “This was truly an inspiring and unbelievably selfless effort. We are just one of many people who put their community first and never looked back.” ■

Sapp and her husband sewed and donated around 75 masks to the Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center during the initial pandemic outbreak.

Continued from Page 23

experienced at sewing. Sapp answered a request from Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center to donate face masks.

To help gather support for other health care facilities, Sapp broadcasted an email to students and other faculty within her department. Several students responded to the call for masks and worked independently to sew face masks for hospitals and other health care facilities within their communities.

Mykeil Chambers is a student majoring in apparel design. Chambers used the remnants of fabric from a previous school project to create masks during the pandemic outbreak.

“There was a post on Instagram encouraging people to use their leftover fabric to make mask donations to hospitals and health clinics,” said Chambers. “That’s what made me spread the word to others.”

Chambers was aware that the elderly are a high-risk group for contracting COVID-19, and this inspired her to donate face masks to a local nursing home.

Face masks can be designed using several different patterns. Our Lady of the Lake requested that these be made using a pleated face mask design. These masks were reusable and made of cotton and fitted with elastic. They contained an additional layer with a pocket for filter inserts.

Sapp and her husband sewed and donated around 75 masks to the Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center during the initial pandemic outbreak.

These masks were used to protect hospital support staff and patients as they entered the hospital. ■

CHAMPION FOR TIGERS

LSU student researching tiger genetics

By Tobie Blanchard

Ask any LSU football fan what makes up a Tiger and answers might include passion, determination and hard work. But one LSU student is conducting research on what truly makes up a tiger.

Alessandra Bresnan, a graduate student in the College of Agriculture School of Renewable Natural Resources, is studying conservation genetics of captive and wild tigers with the hopes of bringing awareness to their plight.

Bresnan's research is funded by LSU through its role with the Tigers United University Consortium, which also includes Auburn University, Clemson University and the University of Missouri, all of which have tiger mascots. The universities have joined forces and are committed to saving wild tigers worldwide.

When LSU faced Clemson in the college football national championship, both universities raised money for tigers. LSU focused on the Tiger Conservation Fund.

"Since the start of the last century, the world has lost 97% of its tigers," Bresnan said.

More tigers live in captivity than in the wild, with fewer than 3,900 tigers in the wild. While the exact number of

captive tigers in the U.S. is unknown, it is estimated at 5,000 to 10,000. Bresnan said only a small population of the captive tigers is managed through species survival plans in accredited zoos.

"The species survival plans aim to preserve tigers' natural genetic variability and subspecies groupings," she said.

Inbreeding of tigers in captivity and cross breeding tigers with lions and other species have caused a host of genetic and health issues in captive populations, Bresnan said. Many inbred tigers are born with deformities, vision problems and other health concerns.

Bresnan is just starting her research, but she plans to conduct a genetic analysis of U.S. tigers, including generic tigers or tigers of unknown or hybridized subspecies as well as purebred species found in accredited zoos.

In her study, she also will collect and examine samples from museum specimens.

"These have been collected from the wild over the past century to serve as a proxy for wild tigers, allowing us to identify genetic changes in wild tigers of the past to the captive tigers of today," Bresnan said.

By incorporating genetic information, Bresnan said she can investigate two important aspects of captive tigers in the U.S. "Relatedness and assessment of adaptation to captivity in tigers managed in zoos and highlighting the detrimental impacts of commercialized breeding of unmanaged tigers," Bresnan said.

Bresnan has already done preliminary work with the tigers housed at the Baton Rouge Zoo, looking at which samples taken from the tigers, including blood, fur, cheek swab and scat, yielded the most DNA material.

The doctoral student works in the lab of Sabrina Taylor, the Weaver Brothers Distinguished Professor in the School of Renewable Natural Resources. Taylor's research interest includes population-level genetic variation in threatened species and species of management concern and historical genetic variation using museum DNA.

Bresnan said the matchup against the tigers on the football field was a great time to show the need for research such as hers at universities in the consortium.

Money raised through LSU's Tiger Conservation Fund advances science for the preservation of wild tigers in tiger range countries; creates a fellowship program for undergraduate, graduate and veterinary students interested in conducting research on tiger management and conservation; and prepares LSU students for careers in wildlife management, conservation and ecosystem health.



Students receive year-end awards

By Tobie Blanchard

Elizabeth Sicard was named the Gerald and Norma Dill Outstanding Senior in the LSU College of Agriculture. Sicard is receiving a degree in natural resource ecology and management with minors in geology and oceanography. During winter 2019-20, she was selected for a prestigious undergraduate research experience at the McMurdo Station, a U.S. research station in Antarctica. During summer 2018-19, she was selected for an Experiential Professional Learning Opportunities in Research and Education (EXPLORE) internship. Sicard also was a member of Tiger Band and Bengal



Elizabeth Sicard

Brass and served with the Green Force and Christ the King Service Team for BREC, the Baton Rouge agency for parks and recreation facilities. Michael Kaller, associate professor in the School of



Brooke Comeaux

Renewable Natural Resources, said, "Elizabeth remains a humble and good-natured person, beloved by her peers and more likely to be seen smiling and laughing than any other student in the program."

Brooke Comeaux, junior studying animal sciences and agriculture and extension education, received the K.C. Toups Memorial Les Voyageurs Award. Les Voyageurs are student ambassadors for the college. Comeaux has been a Les Voyageur for two years and participated in service activities and a study abroad program in Nicaragua as part of her work with the organization.

2020-2021 Agriculture Student Association Officers

The Agriculture Student Association (ASA) serves the College of Agriculture by collaborating with the dean's staff to put on several social and professional events for agricultural students each semester. They help host events throughout the semester, including Agriculture Welcome Week, Career Prep Week, Homecoming Week and Ag Week as well as the Alumni Speaker Series and Senior Send-off. They serve as the governing body of all agricultural student organizations and help these organizations with the funding and promotion of their events, trips and projects. Advisers include Amanda Martin and Ashley Grant.



Colt Hardee
President
Kaplan



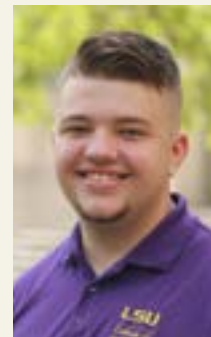
Sarah Tarver
Vice President
New Roads



Sara Toal
Treasurer
Tioga



Katie Mestayer
Secretary
Zachary



Zachary Mayfield
Public Relations
Slidell

"With this unusual semester ahead of us, our team has been tasked with developing several contingency plans to be prepared for both a physical and virtual setting. Regardless of the circumstances, our team would like to still be able to enhance our students' college experience by providing them with enjoyable, innovative events and opportunities to help them become well-equipped for the workforce."

Colt Hardee, ASA president

Tours: During summer and spring of 2020, there were 153 individual visits and 16 group visits to campus, which included meetings with recruitment staff, tours from current students and meetings with faculty members.

2020-2021 Les Voyageurs Officers



Caroline Bonin
Animal Sciences



Ashlyn Brewer
Animal Sciences



Grant Caillouet
*Nutrition and
Food Sciences*



Brooke Comeaux
*Animal Sciences/
Agriculture
and Extension
Education*



**Josephine
Engelman**
*Environmental
Management
Systems*



Tristan Foret
*Agriculture
and Extension
Education*



**Brooklyn
Hampton**
*Plant and Soil
Systems*



Avery Hebert
*Agricultural
Business*



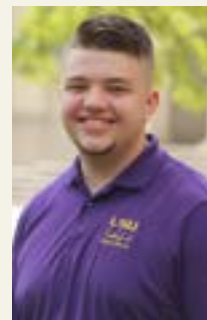
Cailey Hoff
*Natural Resource
Ecology and
Management*



Natalie Lafont
*Natural Resource
Ecology and
Management*



Michael Marchand
*Nutrition and
Food Sciences*



Zachary Mayfield
*Agriculture
and Extension
Education*



Alexis Nguyen
Animal Sciences



Taylor Perrodin
*Agricultural
Business*



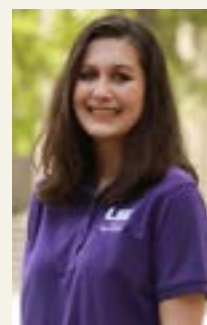
Ty Price
*Natural Resource
Ecology and
Management*



Brian Sonnier
*Nutrition and
Food Sciences*



Lexi Young
Animal Sciences



**Anna
Zaunbrecher**
Animal Sciences

Advisers: Henry Hebert, Lindsey Kelly, Amanda Martin

Students, faculty overcome challenges of online learning

By Tobie Blanchard
and Annabelle Stokes

As LSU closed its physical campus in mid-March and classes shifted online, LSU College of Agriculture students and faculty moved to a virtual learning space.

Switching to an online classroom model has forced many faculty to reconsider how they present their materials.

Bob Mirabello, instructor in the School of Plant, Environmental & Soil Sciences, teaches two lab classes and said moving to online has created some challenges.

"It has forced us to be creative in an effort to give students a lab experience as close to reality as possible," he said. "I may produce a detailed video on how to graft trees, and the students will understand the process and technique but never gain the life experience of holding the knife in their hand, making a cut and, hopefully, not cutting themselves."

"I'm having to take additional time to modify my lecture materials," said Don Ator, instructor in the Department of Agricultural Economics & Agribusiness. "Everything has to be rethought."

After the outbreak of COVID-19, Ator switched his classes to live video lectures.

During previous semesters, Ator focused his classrooms around traditional face-to-face teaching. Class attendance is even built into his objectives each semester.

He said he always felt that requiring students to attend class in-person allows him to prompt his students and increase their engagement throughout his lectures.

"Students were having a harder time engaging in the materials online," he said. "To me, it seemed like it was a lot easier for them to ask questions and



Bob Mirabello



Kayla Benton

engage in the lecture in-person. I have to come up with materials that provide more narrative and more reading to do on their own time."

Even though the live video lectures were used to replicate in-person class time, Ator still found it challenging to check students' learning milestones.

Colt Hardee, a junior in agricultural business, said the transition has made him more resilient.

"I don't have much luck or tolerance of technology to start, but now is not the time for excuses and to give up. It's time for us to remain strong, rise to the occasion and overcome this obstacle thrown in our path," said Hardee, who

has been participating in online classes from his home in Kaplan. He said he is using this time to help his family with their crawfish farm.

Kayla Benton, a senior majoring in animal science, moved back home to Houston, Texas, shortly after campus closed.

Benton's schedule drastically changed once her classes were moved online. Despite having an abundance of free time, she found it surprisingly difficult to find a new routine.

"Without the constant pressure of needing to go somewhere, my routine was out of whack for a long time until I disciplined myself into a new routine," Benton shared.

Another obstacle Benton faced was finding the motivation to stay focused. Benton felt like she was bombarded with distractions once she moved back home.

For Benton, she prefers the student-focused environment that LSU's campus provides.

Ator has modified his classrooms for online instruction for the fall semester to engage with students from a distance.

While the circumstances were not ideal, Ator feels that he can take a pragmatic approach teaching at a distance.

"While I miss the classroom, I think that online learning will be a part of how we teach from now on," said Ator.

Mirabello said a positive outcome of the experience has been rethinking his courses and their content.

Some tools used in the online format, such as video presentations and online testing, have been used very successfully and may allow time for more interactive activities in the classroom," he said. "The opportunity to reshape my courses will create a more interactive and positive learning environment."

LSU COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

The LSU College of Agriculture comprises 10 departments and schools that house many prestigious faculty and talented students. While 2020 presented many unexpected challenges, our faculty and students continued to achieve excellence. Many attended conferences and events remotely and continued to function as teams from a distance.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS & AGRIBUSINESS

- In December 2019, graduate student Whitney McKinzie became the first agribusiness university medalist in the department's modern history.
- Brianna Cobb, an undergraduate student, received the A. Wilbert's Sons research internship.
- Professor Matt Fannin completed his service as president of the Southern Regional Science Association (SRSA).
- Naveen Adusumilli was promoted to the rank of associate professor with tenure.

Undergraduate enrollment up by

13%



- Professor Krishna Paudel completed his service as president of SAEA for 2019-20.



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL & EXTENSION EDUCATION & EVALUATION

- LSU AEEE faculty recently received grant funding to launch a professional development program for agriculture teachers in Louisiana.
- Associate professor **Kristin Stair**, who served as primary investigator for the grant along with assistant professor Richie Roberts and associate professor Joey Blackburn, received \$267,020 through the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative's Professional Development for Agricultural Literacy Program from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture.
- This program will select and train a group of agriculture teacher ambassadors to integrate biotechnology and environmental and coastal science into the Louisiana agritechnology curriculum.
- This two-year program is expected to provide teachers with professional development support and help high school students in Louisiana earn the agritechnology credential available through the course.



DEPARTMENT OF EXPERIMENTAL STATISTICS

- Associate professor Bin Li was awarded a grant from International Faculty Outreach to provide a weeklong lecture series at the Indian Institutes of Technology on Machine Learning Applications in Agriculture.
- Professor and graduate advisor Brian Marx published a textbook with Springer Publishing titled *Regression: Models, Methods and Applications*.



URE DEPARTMENT UPDATES

SCHOOL OF ANIMAL SCIENCES

- The School of Animal Sciences had a group of students who participated in the American Society of Animal Science Southern Regional Academic Quadrathlon in February.
- Nicholas Uzee was announced as the 2020 recipient of The Genevieve Christen Distinguished Undergraduate Student Award.
- Zongliang “Carl” Jiang, assistant professor, submitted seven research grants equivalent to approximately \$1.17 million in federal and state funds.
- Ken Bondioli, professor, was the primary investigator for two grants funding oocyte vitrification and was a co-primary investigator with Carl Jiang for grant for research in epigenetics and embryo development.
- Diana Coulon, instructor and attending veterinary with AgCenter Biotechnology Laboratory, collaborated with Michael Keenan and Jack Losso, professors in the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences, on several federal and private industry grants submissions.
- Diana Coulon also assisted with alligator research projects at the LSU AgCenter aquaculture research facility.
- Xing Fu, assistant professor, secured funding for two grants (LA BOR RCS, NIH R15 grant).
- Richard Cooper, professor, received the LIFT grant funded on DNA vaccines.
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DEPARTMENT OF ENTOMOLOGY

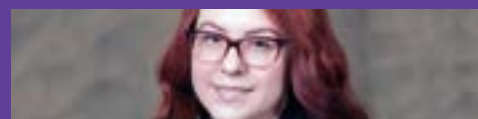
- Daniel Swale and Rodrigo Diaz were promoted to associate professor effective July 1.
- Assistant professor Daniel Swale received two prestigious USDA-NIFA grants this past fall:
 1. Novel ways to plug the bug: Unraveling the role of hemipteran Kir channels in feeding and plant pathogen transmission.
 2. Physiological and toxicological relevance of potassium ion channels and reactive oxygen species to honey bee health.



SCHOOL OF NUTRITION & FOOD SCIENCES

- Sharman Charles, director of the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), led and coordinated the program's 50th anniversary activities for Louisiana.
- Joan King, professor and undergraduate coordinator, was faculty sponsor and coach of the LSU International Food Technologist Students Association (IFTSA) Food Science College Bowl team that placed third in the IFTSA national competition.
- Marlene Janes, professor in food safety; Achyut Adhikari, associate professor and extension food safety specialist; and Wennie Xu, assistant professor and consumer food safety specialist; received the USDA-NIFA National Excellence in Multistate Research Award.
- Professor Kay Aryana represented the LSU College of Agriculture in teaching at Mendel University's International Summer School in Brno, Czech Republic.
- Professor Witoon Prinyawiwatkul was awarded the IFT Certificate of Appreciation for outstanding leadership and dedication as a member of the Host Section Activities Workgroup and co-chair of the Sessions Committee for the 2019 Annual Meeting and Food Expo in New Orleans, Louisiana.
- Professor Subramaniam Sathivel was honored as the keynote speaker for the first RMUTT Food Innovation and Smart Farm International Conference at the Rajamangala University of Technology Thanyaburi in Pathum Thani, Thailand.

- Erin McKinley, assistant professor and director of the Didactic Program in Dietetics, was elected president of the Baton Rouge Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and served as a board member for the group.



LSU COLLEGE OF AGRICULT

SCHOOL OF PLANT, ENVIRONMENTAL & SOIL SCIENCES

- Lisa Fultz was promoted to associate professor. Her area of expertise is soil microbiology, and she works in the area of sustainability and enhancement of soils. Along with co-investigators she received a Taylor Foundation Grant to develop innovative production practices that help conserve our land and improve productivity on farms.
- Professor David Picha received the Distinguished Service Award for 2020 from the Association for International Agriculture and Rural Development (AIARD).
- Eric Webster, F. Avalon Daggett Professor and assistant regional director for the LSU AgCenter, serves as the 2020 President of the Southern Weed Science Society (SWSS).
- Sam Rustom, doctoral student, won first place in the Ph.D. Oral Presentation Contest, and Connor Webster, doctoral student, placed second in the Ph.D. Oral Presentation Contest with the SWSS.

DEPARTMENT OF PLANT PATHOLOGY & CROP PHYSIOLOGY

- Two faculty members, Edward McGawley and Charles Overstreet, retired. Fortunately, the department was allowed to refill a combined position, and Tristan Watson accepted this position and started as an assistant professor in spring 2020.
- Faculty and students published a number of refereed manuscripts and extension articles; gave many presentations locally, regionally, nationally and internationally; and competed for grants to support their research and outreach.
- Professor Chris Clark received the National Sweet Potato Research Impact Award.
- Professor Boyd Padgett was the invited American Phytopathological Society (APS) plenary speaker and was awarded the LSU AgCenter Extension Award.
- Professor Jeff Hoy received the LSU AgCenter's Tipton Team Research Award for Sugarcane Varietal Development.
- Raj Singh, associate professor and director of the LSU AgCenter Plant Diagnostic Clinic, received the APS Extension Recognition — A Day in the Life.
- Graduate student Myra Purvis received the Soybean Disease Workers second place in student oral presentation.
- Graduate student Ateet Maharjan, was awarded the LACA Scholarship and Cal Agri Products Student Support Award.
- Teddy Garcia-Aroca, graduate student, received the Ray and Dorothy Young Assistantship.
- Yenjit Raruang, graduate student, received the C. W. Edgerton Award.
- Waana Kaluwasha, graduate student, received the Southern Region SARE grant and Weston J. Martin Fellowship Award.
-

FOREST DEPARTMENT UPDATES

SCHOOL OF RENEWABLE NATURAL RESOURCES

- Richard Vlosky, professor, was awarded the Forest Products Society's Gottschalk Award for lifetime contributions to the society.
- Sabrina Taylor, associate professor, was elected as a fellow to the American Ornithological Society.
- Sabrina Taylor received the Sedberry Graduate Teacher Award.
- Sabrina Taylor was recognized for the Louisiana Agriculture magazine Article of the Year.
- The Tiger Chapter of Ducks Unlimited was named the National Champion Chapter for the second year in a row.
- Tom Dean, professor, was an invited speaker at the Chinese Academy of Forestry in Beijing and the International Union of Forest Researchers in Brazil.
- Sun Joseph Chang, professor, was the keynote speaker at the sixth International Faustmann Symposium.
- Professor Terrence Tiersch co-authored a national summary of animal genetic resources for the USDA National Genetic Resources Advisory Council titled Strengthening Strategic Genetic Resources for Livestock, Poultry and Aquatic Species in the United States. This report provided recommendations to the U.S. secretary of agriculture.

- Kevin Ringelman, assistant professor, was awarded the Tiger Athletic Foundation Undergraduate Teaching Award.



- Philip Stouffer, professor, was named the editor-in-chief for leading ornithological journal The Condor: Ornithological Applications.
- Philip Stouffer received the Peter R. Stettenheim Service Award from the American Ornithological Society.



DEPARTMENT OF TEXTILES, APPAREL DESIGN & MERCHANDISING

- Casey Stannard was promoted to associate professor with tenure in August and completed the LSU Online Teaching training during the summer of 2019.
- Casey Stannard developed a new course for the department to be taught entirely online on the social psychology of apparel and textiles (TAM 1100 Fashion and Society).
- Donna Sapp, undergraduate coordinator and instructor, was a recipient of a Tiger Athletic Foundation Undergraduate Teaching Award for the College of Agriculture in the spring semester.

- Sibeí Xia was hired as a new assistant professor in the Department of Textiles, Apparel Design & Merchandising in the fall of 2019.



LSU COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE STAKEHOLDER

By Annabelle Stokes

The LSU College of Agriculture Stakeholder Summit plays an essential role in keeping stakeholders informed on the college's current outlook and climate. This year the stakeholder summit held vital importance as the LSU College of Agriculture intended to unveil its newest strategic plan.

LSU has been in the process of developing an updated universitywide strategic plan since early 2016. The previous LSU strategic plans centered around the growth of the university.

This new initiative was designed to focus on the advancement of leadership roles held by LSU's faculty, staff and students, both in the state and across the nation. The university hopes to, in turn, advance the institution and graduate leaders. The LSU Strategic Plan 2025 was approved and launched during the summer of 2017.

The LSU Strategic Plan 2025 served as the guide for the LSU College of Agriculture to move forward with developing a collegewide strategic plan to align with the university's vision. The LSU College of Agriculture planned to revisit its strategic plan to better focus on its mission, vision and values. One of the ways the strategic plan is being reshaped is by incorporating the feedback of stakeholders.

During the fall of 2019, the college administered a survey to its alumni, students, faculty, staff and agriculture industry leaders. The survey asked stakeholders for their input and ideas on how to best work toward developing clear and strategic initiatives to guide the college through the next five years.

The LSU College of Agriculture originally planned to host an in-person Stakeholder Summit event to engage with their stakeholders. Because of COVID-19,

the LSU College of Agriculture moved their summit to a virtual setting.

"Although we would have much rather hosted our stakeholder groups on the beautiful LSU campus, the virtual stakeholder conference created the space we needed to engage in meaningful discussions on the future," said Amanda L. Martin, assistant dean for recruitment and student development. "We are grateful to have such outstanding and engaged alumni and stakeholders to help guide the college."

On July 17, the college hosted its virtual event. The event allowed time for stakeholders to meet with department heads, directors and deans about the results of the stakeholder survey. To best accommodate the attendees, the virtual Stakeholder Summit was hosted in two afternoon sessions. Over 150 people attended the Stakeholder Summit.

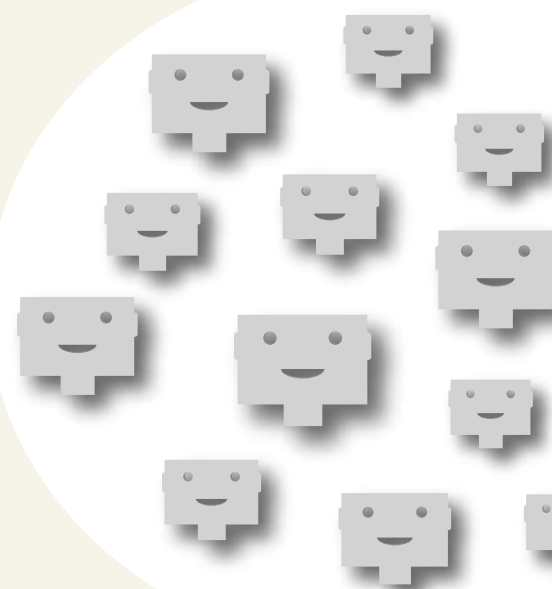
Each session began with a welcome from Bill Richardson, LSU vice president for agriculture and dean of the College of Agriculture, and Stacia Haynie, LSU executive vice president and provost. Philip Elzer, executive associate dean for the LSU College of Agriculture and department head for the School of Animal Sciences, was then introduced and gave an overview of topics to be discussed in the breakout rooms. Following the welcome, attendees entered virtual breakout rooms with department heads and directors to lead a roundtable-style discussion.

Department heads and directors focused the conversation in each breakout room session around answering five questions. Stakeholders were asked to relate the strengths of their respective departments, how their department could improve, and to provide insight into what areas departments or schools should focus on to be innovative in updating and planning future degree

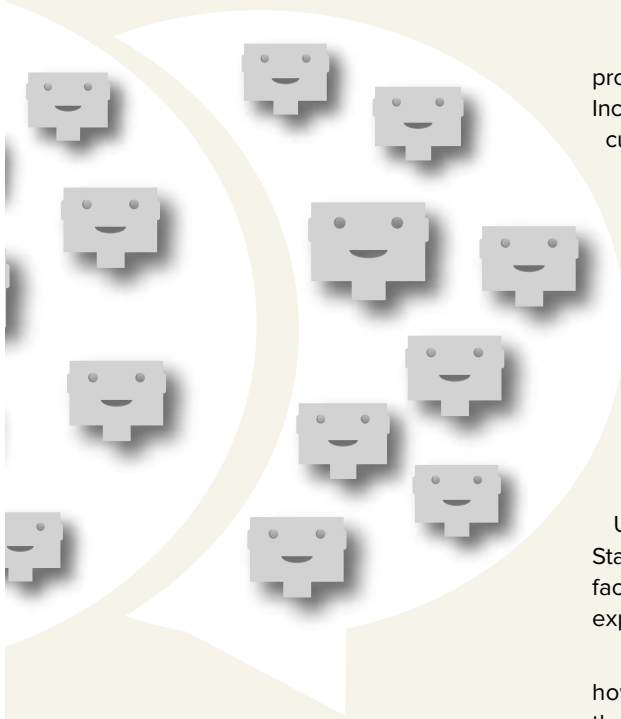
programs. Attendees were also asked if the department or school graduates were workforce ready and to provide examples. They ended each session with a discussion of what their respective departments or schools could do for them. Seven of the departments and schools housed within the LSU College of Agriculture participated in the breakout room sessions.

Department head Michael Salassi led the breakout session for the Department of Agricultural Economics & Agribusiness. He reported that the agricultural business program experienced significant growth between fall 2016 and fall 2019. During that time, there was a 70% growth in incoming first-year students for the agricultural business major. The program continues to grow, seeing an increased diversity in students' backgrounds.

Salassi also led conversations regarding COVID-19 and course migration to an online platform. Many courses in his



SUMMIT MOVES TO VIRTUAL PLATFORM



department were taught entirely online during fall 2020, and he anticipates that this will lead to the agribusiness program moving part of their degree program online. The department plans to build on this transition over the next years to come.

The Department of Agricultural Economics & Agribusiness stakeholders also lead the discussion on adding additional curriculum related to food industry management. Currently, the department offers an agribusiness concentration in food industry management.

The Department of Agricultural & Extension Education & Evaluation breakout session was led by Michael Burnett, department head. During this session, stakeholders expressed interest in the department, exploring a five-year degree program model that would allow students to obtain both their bachelor's and master's degrees. Stakeholders also drove the conversation toward exposing students to urban agriculture, such as food

production in urban areas and hydroponics. Incorporating technologies that are currently being used in classrooms were also a conversation topic.

Philip Elzer led the breakout session for the School of Animal Sciences. Elzer referenced an 8.9% increase in student admissions, with 449 students admitted for fall 2020. Reproduction and muscle biology have successfully received program funding through grants and have larger pending grants with the National Institutes of Health and the United States Department of Agriculture. Stakeholders expressed the desire to add faculty with food safety and traceability expertise.

Some stakeholders were critical of how the school was going to condense their concentrations down to three. Elzer mentioned that many of their previous concentrations were in meat science and judging. Students can now do both, so they are not limited to one course of curriculum. Students can still take electives in different concentrations and are not limited when gaining exposure in different areas.

Department head Michael Stout led the breakout session for the Department of Entomology. This session started their conversation by discussing how college recruiters have had a strong presence statewide in Louisiana, and, in turn, this has increased the involvement of alumni. The Department of Entomology is working on reorganizing its curriculum and creating an entomology undergraduate degree program. The department is currently raising awareness and trying to attract potential students. When asked if the LSU AgCenter and Department of Entomology were responsive enough to Louisiana's research needs, the stakeholders felt that they stayed on top of issues as

they arose and were actively working on improvements and solutions for the department.

Interim director Allen Rutherford led the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences breakout session. One stakeholder expressed how, despite the negative impacts of COVID-19, he sees a lot of potential in the forced pivot to a virtual space — claiming that in higher education they often see second-rate remote access to degree programs. The school should use this as a strength to help further reach people who might not be able to relocate or have restrictions that cause them not to be physically onsite. Additionally, this could potentially help with dietetic internships.

Another stakeholder expressed how the School of Nutrition & Food Sciences was much smaller when she was an LSU student. The school has evolved and requested support in developing a student dietetic association.

Stakeholders expressed concern over how to best equip students in the area of food safety, as there have been a lot of industry recalls over the last few years. While LSU does have a laboratory course on food safety, they expressed interest in growing this course at the graduate level.

Don La Bonte led discussion for the School of Plant, Environmental & Soil Sciences. Several courses have been added as core science courses, which has boosted the enrollment in their classes. The school is focusing on adding and redesigning several of their concentrations. The school's new medicinal plants program has gained momentum. The school would like to continue to boost momentum in enrollment in the program. The school has also started a new introduction to crop production course.

➤ *Continued on Page 38*

LSU alumnus José Arce named president-elect of American Veterinary Medical Association

By Sandra Sarr

Dr. José Arce, a veterinarian, is the first Puerto Rican and the first LSU graduate to be named president-elect of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA). Arce will serve his term as president-elect during 2020-2021.

"I bring a different perspective and background to the AVMA presidency. I believe I can make a difference," said Arce, who graduated from both LSU College of Agriculture and the School Veterinary Medicine.



José Arce

Although Arce has held many leadership roles within the AVMA, his route to the top post of a 95,000-member national association whose mission it is to "protect, promote, and advance the needs of all veterinarians and those they serve" was not a direct one. His record of career achievement and his affable nature have afforded him an easy humility that eludes many.

"I got into the LSU SVM on my second try," said Arce, who earned his bachelor's degree in animal science.

As an undergraduate, he worked at the Life Sciences building feeding animals

and cleaning their cages, at the LSU Dairy Farm and at the LSU SVM cleaning test tubes and laboratory equipment.

After not getting accepted into the veterinary school on his first try, he worked as a volunteer for a year at the SVM, rotating through the various specialty services. He gained a reputation as a hard worker. Simultaneously, he took higher-level courses to improve his GPA, replacing previous C grades with A's.

"During my first years of undergraduate school, I did not have the best grades. I enjoyed going to New Orleans a little too much," he said with a laugh.

Arce credits his stubborn nature with keeping him focused on his goal of becoming a veterinarian. "It's what I wanted, and I was determined to do it," he said.

For as long as he can remember, being a veterinarian was his goal, although the only pets he had growing up were fish in aquariums. He spent his summers in Spain on his grandfather's farm, and he spent a lot of weekends on his godfather's farm in Puerto Rico. As an undergraduate at LSU, he kept cats as pets, hiding them in his apartment, which did not allow pets. He truly believes living among pets makes his life better.

"I always found a way to be around animals. I know it sounds kind of corny, but, yes, I always knew I would be a veterinarian," he said.

He worked hard to achieve his lifelong goal, waiting tables and working in Baton Rouge bars while volunteering at the SVM and keeping up with coursework. He also worked as a veterinary assistant at Burbank Veterinary Hospital, served as president of the Pre-Vet Club and as student senator to the LSU Student Government Association. After obtaining his bachelor's degree, he worked as a research assistant at the Caribbean Primate Research Center.

Once admitted to the LSU SVM, he was elected class representative to LSU's Student Chapter of the American Veterinary Medical Association and served as SCAVMA treasurer during his sophomore year.

According to Arce, he would not be a veterinarian without some of his mentors, who challenged him to be his best.

"It took me longer than many to get into veterinary school, but I wouldn't change it for the world. If it hadn't, I wouldn't have met my wife and business partner," he said.

In 1998, Arce moved back home to Puerto Rico, and in 2003, he and his wife, Anik Puig, founded Miramar Animal Hospital. He is president and co-owner and has a special interest in dermatology, ophthalmology and ultrasonography.

Continued from Page 37

Michael Kaller, professor and coordinator of undergraduate programs led the breakout session for the School of Renewable Natural Resources. He shared that watershed sciences will be an additional concentration offered. This will be the 10th concentration offered by the school. Wildlife ecology is currently the largest concentration, drawing attraction from pre-veterinary medicine students, as well as students interested in wildlife conservation and management.

While the wildlife ecology major continues to grow, some of the other concentrations offered by the school are declining in enrollment numbers. Kaller feels that this is because more students focus on the wildlife ecology concentration and not the other concentrations offered by the School of Renewable Natural Resources. Kaller noted that there had been an increase in the diversity of the students entering the school, especially with students coming from diverse backgrounds, including a large increase in students from urban areas.

At the end of the breakout room session, attendees were brought back to the main session. Richardson concluded the event and gave stakeholders a summary of the next steps in the strategic planning process.

As the college moves forward, the feedback provided by our stakeholder groups will be essential to planning efforts. The college hopes to make the stakeholder event an annual program to share updates on the college's progress and continue to use the feedback of our key stakeholders as drivers to help us go beyond the goals set in the strategic plan. ■

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CoA FACTS:

- **1,563** undergraduate and **312** graduate students.
- Fall 2020 incoming class: **407** students.
- Total CoA numbers: **8.2% increase** in total undergraduate numbers.
- Tiger to Tiger **mentoring program** **up** to 25 students from 13 in 2018.

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