

Agricultural Education News

Welcome Dr. Robert Torres— NEW Department Head *Torres to begin duties late Spring 2010*

By Matt LaScala

Recently I was given the chance to sit down with Dr. Robert M. Torres, the incoming department head for Agricultural Education. The addition of new faculty is always exciting within AgEd, and this is no exception. Dr. Torres will start at the University of Arizona sometime in Spring 2010, but before he gets here, there were a few things I wanted to know.

-What is your personal philosophy on Ag Education?

(Torres) "I believe agricultural education should be open and available to all students in grades 7-12. The purpose of agricultural education at the secondary level is to develop students' ability to become aware, knowledgeable, and proactive within the agriculture, food, and natural resources industry and related areas. I believe that agricultural education instruction can and should provide students with relevant and meaningful learning experiences in and out of the classroom. Toward this end, I believe agricultural education has many delivery tools available to include the appropriate facilities (e.g. classroom, laboratory & greenhouse), FFA, Supervised Agriculture Experiences, Career/Leadership Development Events, and the local community, to name a few. I believe agricultural education to be a program, rather than a collection of classes with pathways contributing to the interest and career goals of the students. Further, I believe the curriculum and instruction in agricultural education develops students' ability to think, reason, and solve problems...life skills that will serve ALL students well in to the future."

- What ideas do you have for the future of the department, and is there anything you would like to implement?

(Torres) "Perhaps it is premature to begin spouting change for the department until I have had an opportunity to fully assess the program's strengths and weakness. However, change happens. With the blessing of and discussion with immediate stakeholders, we will investigate opportunities and challenges that contribute to the department's ability to reach its stated goals and objectives; investigate opportunities to make efficient use of resources, and opportunities to make the department a vibrant and attractive environment where people want to be. My goal is to continue the traditions of the program and situate the Ag Ed Department as a major 'player' in the CALS, the Campus community, statewide, and the national level."

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This newsletter is dedicated to Dr. Billye Foster for her years of service. She is leaving for Tennessee Tech where she will be the new Director of the School of Agriculture (see story on page 2).

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Dr. Billye Foster Bids Farewell to the U of A, and Hello to Tennessee Tech!

By Robyn Ollerton

When you walk into Dr. Billye Foster's office, you feel like you are walking in to chat with a friend or your own mother. The walls are sprinkled with inspirational quotes, pictures of family, and agricultural memorabilia. This is no surprise coming from the native Texan. As daughter to a cattle rancher and teacher, sometimes the apple does not fall too far from the tree.

With agriculture running through her veins, Billye Foster set out to share her passion with younger generations through various leadership roles. National secretary/treasurer for Alpha Tau Alpha, secretary and second vice president for AAAE Western Region, first committee chair for the National FFA Creed Speaking CDE, ongoing chair for the Arizona FFA Job Interview CDE, are only a few among her many accomplishments. Alongside her research of women in academic agriculture, Billye developed, edited and published *Desert Roses Newsletter*, a publication in support of women agriculture educators that reached nation-wide for over 10 years.

One of the premier agriculture education educators at the University of Arizona can also be added to Foster's list. Full of many heartwarming, humorous, and educating stories, one in particular stands out in Billye's teaching experiences. The first year she was the advisor for Alpha Tau Alpha Agriculture Education honorary, she took the group to the national meeting at National FFA Convention and participate in the debate contest. New to the situation, students Karen Salyers and James Perry agreed to participate in debate. Little did they know that four contestants were required for the contest. With no experience at all, Billye helped the two students through the contest with all their heads held high. The chapter learned so much from their experience that the next year the U of A placed in the top three and within the next three years they became national champions! Success stories seem to find their way to Dr. Billye Foster and her students. Her exceptional character,

passion, and love for educating the students are things that one does not cross often.

When asked about her favorite part of educating students, her face brightens and passion radiates from every phrase: "Watching the students go through the classroom and become teachers is like watching your own children growing up. You see them through their trials and errors and help them through it." Foster reminisces, "You develop your own family."

Dr. Foster is now taking her passion and brightening another section of the nation with her inborn fondness of teaching agricultural education. She explains that you take a little piece with you everywhere you go. Because of the great experiences she has had here at the University of Arizona, the next chapter at Tennessee Tech will be a success story as well. A school full of opportunity, Dr. Foster is looking forward to this new adventure and new groups of students. While Dr. Foster may no longer be walking the U of A halls on a constant basis, her passion, incredible character, and legacy live on through her students and the atmosphere she has created throughout the department. Tennessee Tech is lucky to get such a wonderful treasure.

When asked about what she expects upon her arrival out east she laughs, "You can't predict or see what is going to happen. It would be dull if you could. It's the adventure and the unknowing that is a lot of the fun." Good Luck Dr. Billye Foster, in all adventures that find you at your door!

Dr. Foster leaves at the end of the Fall semester. She will be the new director for the School of Agriculture, Tennessee Tech. The Department wishes her the very best of luck, and thanks her for all her years of hard work, dedication, and support towards the Department. We will miss you!



National Convention or Bust

By Justin Waltman

A wave of students bearing national blue and corn gold corduroy jackets from across the nation found themselves competing in rigorous skill events, listening to influential speakers who have shaped the youth of today, and watching the next round of true leaders come forth and lead the National FFA Organization during the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana October 20-October 24. This annual youth convention is the largest youth organization convention in the country, outsized only by the Republican and Democratic National Conventions respectively. Between numerous career shows, inspirational leadership workshops, and numerous attractions, students have opportunities to gain experiences other organizations don't offer to their members.

It is not only the students that learn from this wonderful experience. Between the long hours, grumpy students, and action packed days, the advisors had plenty of opportunities to test their student managerial skills. As is tradition at the U of A, the student teachers in the Department of Agricultural Education accompanied their respective co-operating centers when they embarked upon this rewarding, and for some, life-changing journey. For most, this was their first experience dealing with the many pleasures and pains that go along with taking students on an overnight excursion. Every tool that could be found in their bag of tricks proved to be the key to their success. Let's congratulate them for their successful venture as temporary advisors at the 81st National FFA Convention.

Convention Results

Gold

ENR – Elfrida (2 Gold, 2 Silver)
Livestock – Safford (3 Gold, 1 Silver)
Parli Pro - Basha

Silver

Agronomy – Safford (3 Silver, 1 Bronze)
Ag Mech – Chandler (3 Silver)
Creed – San Simon
Dairy – Buckeye
Floriculture – Red Mtn. (2 Silver, 2 Bronze)
Food Science – Gila Ridge (4 Silver)
Horse - AAEC-PV (2 Gold, 2 Silver)
Job Interview - Highland

Bronze

Ag Comm – Amphi (5 Individual Bronze)
Ag Issues – Basha (3 Silver, 1 Bronze)
Ag Sales – Highland (1 Gold, 1 Silver, 1 Bronze)
Dairy Foods – Yuma (4 Bronze)
Extemp – Queen Creek
Forestry – Ft. Thomas (1 Gold, 1 Silver, 1 Bronze)
Ag Bus – Chandler (1 Silver, 2 Bronze)
Marketing Plan - Basha

Way To Go!

Meats – Gilbert (1 Silver, 3 Bronze)
Nursery Landscape – Red Mountain (4 Bronze)
Poultry – Duncan (1 Silver, 2 Bronze)
Public Speaking – Chino Valley

U of A students had fun in Debate, Quiz Bowl, and Program of Excellence. Seven teams participated in Debate, 15 teams in Quiz Bowl, and 12 programs in Program of Excellence. The Program of Excellence involved paper and presentation. The U of A students came in first in the Fundraising portion of Program of Excellence.

Also a tip of the hat to Cole McGuire, the Arizona candidate for National office. Cole did an outstanding job of representing us all!



**Congratulations to
everyone who
participated!**

2009-2010 Student Teachers

Each year, the Department is fortunate to work with student teachers. This year, twelve students are enrolled in our program. We would like to introduce four of them in this newsletter edition.

Name: Jadee Lin Garner

Hometown: Sedona, Arizona

School: Gilbert High School

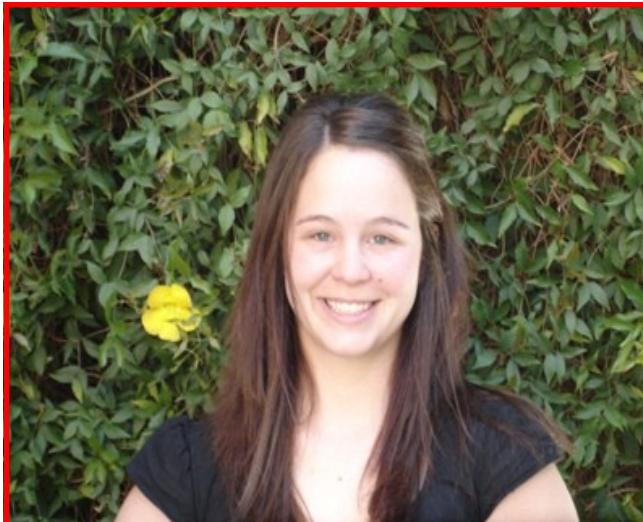
Cooperating Teacher: Mr. Ken Johnson

Graduation: May 2010

Long term goals: My long term goals consist of being happy, and succeeding in the world of agricultural education. I would like to purchase a vehicle when I get out of school, maybe a horse trailer, and get back into professional rodeo.

Hobbies: Rodeo, drawing, small animal medicine

Other: Quote: "Life is short. Break the rules. Forgive quickly. Kiss slowly. Love truly. Laugh uncontrollably. Never regret what made you smile."



Jadee Garner



Kevin Hartfield

Name: Kevin Hartfield

Hometown: Woodridge, IL

School: Casa Grande Union High School

Cooperating Teacher: Mr. Steven Sipes

Graduation Date: May 2010

Long Term Goals: Finding a steady job as a teacher, getting married, owning my own home, staying close with my mom and dad.

Hobbies: Sports (basketball), fishing, camping, music, movies, spending time with friends

Other: In high school my varsity basketball coach would always say, "It doesn't get any better than this!" It took me a while to fully understand what he meant but now I try to live my life that way every day.



Student Teachers

Continued...



Alicia Gutierrez

Name Alicia Gutierrez

Hometown – Chandler, AZ, went to Mesquite High School.

School: Chandler High School

Cooperating Teacher: Mrs. Kari Williams

Graduation Date : May 2010.

Long Term Goals: Be an Arizona Agriscience teacher and FFA Advisor.

Hobbies: Entomology!! Reading, hanging out with my friends, Scroll saw work, and Jacobs-Cline Society

Other: I was very active in FFA in high school and owe the organization for helping me find my path in life. My Ag. teacher was a very important and influential part of my life. I hope that I will be able to exert the same kind of positive influence in the lives of my students.

Name Cash Veo

Hometown: Chandler / Maricopa Arizona

School: Safford High School Bulldogs

Cooperating Teacher: Mr. Lance Fite

Graduation Date May 2010

Long Term Goals: Successfully teach high school students in a complete agriculture program that meets the needs of a rural community, as well as own my own farm.

Hobbies: Hunting, fishing, being outside, hanging out with friends

Other: “Work hard now so we can play hard later.”

Cash Veo



New Department Head- Dr. Robert Torres

continued...

- *Is there anything in the department that you already want to change?*

(Torres) "Yes...the departmental website [smile]. In preparing for my interview, I found the departmental website a bit out-dated and not very user-friendly."

- *Where are you originally from and what is your background with agriculture?*

(Torres) "I was born and raised on a sheep and cattle ranch in northern New Mexico. As a youth, my involvement in 4-H and FFA fueled my interest to pursue a career in agriculture. Did I know I was destined to be an educator? No! In my case, it was about being influenced by the 'right' person....my undergraduate advisor, Dr. Leon Wagley. The rest, as they say is history. Upon graduation, I began my teaching career in Wilcox, AZ, only to later pursue a Ph.D at The Ohio State University after frequent encouragement. I was fortunate to return to the Southwest to become a teacher educator at New Mexico State University for 9 years. Opportunities were extended to me at the University of Missouri where I joined the faculty in 2002 and contributed to the development of teacher educators in agricultural education. I have continued to focus my teaching and research on developing effective agriculture instructors and improving secondary agricultural education programs. You might say agricultural education is a family business...I have three brothers who currently teach secondary agricultural education. My wife also has an agricultural education degree."

- *What activities were you involved with in college?*

(Torres) "I have always been a 'student of opportunity'. I was very active at the collegiate level ... particularly with the Collegiate FFA; serving as an active member and officer. I was also active in my fraternity and with my hometown friends attending socials, organized campus events, games, and hanging out on campus."

- *Talk about your family, and any activities you enjoy outside of work.*

(Torres) "My family is my pride and joy. My wife, Sara, is also an educator who has taught 7th & 8th grade Agriscience, 6th-7th Science, and is currently the K-12 Science and Health Curriculum Coordinator for the local school district. We have four busy children ranging in age from 10 to 3. Our oldest son, Austin, is in 5th grade; Brandon is in 3rd grade; Canyon is 5 years of age and will begin Kindergarten next year. Our youngest, Shyann, is 3 years of age and loves shoes! Outside of work, my family and I like to travel and spend time lake side swimming, fishing, jet skiing, and boating. Our sons are active in seasonal organized sports...so we spend a lot of evenings supporting them and cheering them on."



Cooperating Teachers

A **big thank you** to the following cooperative teachers, who will be working with our student teachers Spring 2010:

Mr. Curtis Willems, Mr. Ken Johnson, Mrs. Sharon Metzger, Mr. Lance Fite, Mr. Gilbert Zammudio, Mrs. Kari Williams, Mr. Steve Sipes, Mrs. Amy Dillard, Mr. Tyson Sorensen, Mr. James Kaltenbach, and Mr. Matt Lewis.

ACT Members Attended International Federation of Agricultural Journalists Congress

In a recent trip to Fort Worth, Texas, the UA ACT Chapter attended the National ACT Conference held in conjunction with the International Federation of Agricultural Journalists Congress. The National Conference was a first for the UA ACT members, who were not only eager to meet other ACT Chapters, but professionals in the industry as well.

During the conference the members were able see a new part of the country that was extremely rich in history, as day one included a tour of Fort Worth's agricultural industry. The consecutive days included many breakout sessions, at-



Nick Lanford was selected to be a flag carrier during the closing ceremony for the IFAJ Congress

tended by ACT Members and industry members, lunch with informational/inspirational speakers, formal dinner events, social mixers, and a trade show filled with many companies looking to hire Agricultural Communication students..

"I believe I share this feeling with my fellow attendees when saying that I am more excited and enthused to get into the world of Agriculture Communications after seeing the endless opportunities that were presented to us in this short trip," Justin Waltman. Through our extensive networking at the conference the students were able to gain a new perspective on what they will be able to accomplish with their degrees once they graduate. Nick Lanford, Matt LaScala, Justin Waltman, and Amanda Webb are grateful for their experiences in Texas, and hope to benefit from the connections they made. "I hope that future students will have the opportunity to experience the cultures, skills, and specialties that I was able to experience this year at the Ag Media Summit," Matt LaScala.

ACT

ACT stands Agriculture Communicators of Tomorrow. This dynamic group consists of students within the Department of Agricultural Education. As you read through this newsletter, you will notice several articles written by members of the ACT group. With Heather Jepsen as their advisor, they are involved in many activities that help them learn and experience the ever-changing world of communication.



Seniors Nick Lanford, Amanda Webb, Matt LaScala, Heather Jepsen Advisor, and Justin Waltman, Senior

Mid-Winter Conference

The Mid-Winter Conference is right around the corner. It is scheduled at Arizona State Polytechnic on December 4, 2009.

A few of the CDEs include on-line exams. In order to administer the on-line exams, you should have an agreement on file with the Department of Agricultural Education at the U of A. If you do not have an agreement on file, please visit the Arizona FFA CDE Testing Certification web site at <http://www.ag.arizona.edu/aed/cde/certificate/>. The training does not take very long. Afterwards, please print out the agreement, sign, have your administrator sign, then fax to Kristen Vann at (520) 621-9889.

Please call (520-621-1523) or email (akvann@ag.arizona.edu) to schedule your on-line exams. The window for the on-line exams is between November 2, 2009 and November 20, 2009.

“GOING TO TENNESSEE!”

Please join us to bid farewell to Dr. Billye Foster, as she embarks upon a new adventure as the Director, School of Agriculture at Tennessee Tech.



Hope to
see you!

When: December 5, 2009 (Saturday)

Time: 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Where: Courtyard, Old FCS Building

Please feel free to drop in for a few minutes, or stay the entire time!

Light refreshments will be served.

Just A Few Farewell Comments

- ◆ “Dr. Foster is an enthusiastic, passionate instructor who uses innovative teaching styles to reach diverse student groups. Dr. Foster really reflects a deep concern for the future success of her students.”
- ◆ “Dr. Foster is a creative and enthusiastic instructor. She integrates exciting teaching techniques with a love for students.”
- ◆ “Dr. Foster was my advisor as an undergraduate in Ag Education. With her help, I graduated in only two years. She was like a second mother, either encouraging me or kicking my butt to work harder whenever she thought I needed it. I think I may go to Tennessee to get my Ph.D!”
- ◆ “Dr. Foster is very supportive. I told Dr. Foster about a 5K run/walk I organized on campus called the Diversity In Action Run, and she told her class about it. She gave extra credit to her students who came out for the run. The run was scheduled for 7:00 a.m. and I was surprised Dr. Foster came out. She came up to me and thanked me for organizing the 5k run/walk. Thank you, Dr. Foster!”
- ◆ “Dr. Foster has an amazing ability to surprise us everyday. She is always pushing us to go beyond our comfort zones and learn more and more each day. We will miss her amazing stories and experiences. She is an amazing teacher.”
- ◆ “It is said: *The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires.* (William Arthur Ward) Dr. Foster has been an inspiration to many; especially me...Thank you for challenging me, and inspiring me, to be the best I can be.”

University of Arizona

Old FCS 205
1110 E. South Campus Drive
PO Box 210033
Tucson, AZ 85721-0033

Phone: 520-621-1523
Fax: 520-621-9889
<http://ag.arizona.edu/aged>

Home of the Wildcats



Telephone Numbers

In an effort to economize and redirect precious resource, the faculty voted to eliminate seldom used telephone lines in the Department. Where appropriate two lines were condensed to one cell phone. The following list of contact numbers should make contact with the faculty an easy matter:

Jim Knight, *Professor and Interim Department Head*
520-940-3710

Billye Foster, *Professor*
520-909-6906

Ed Franklin, *Associate Professor*
520-940-3718

Quint Molina, *Lecturer*
520-940-2471

Heather Jepsen, *Lecturer*
520-621-7175

VISION

To be a leader in Agricultural Education by providing a better quality of life through agricultural technology management and formal and informal education for our students, the people of Arizona, and society.



MISSION

To serve a diverse population through teaching, application, integration and discovery in agriculture, education and applied science and technology leading to successful careers in Agricultural Education and related businesses and industries.



Kerry Schwartz, *Project WET Coordinator, WRRC*
520-792-9591 x22

Jane Shovlin, *HOSA*
602-228-5281

Isaac Way, *Technology Technician*
520-626-1287

Michelle Hintz, *Accountant*
520-621-2239

Kristen Vann, *Administrative Associate*
520-621-1523

Please note: Main office phone is not able to transfer calls to faculty phones.

Mattie DeRose, *Graduate TA*
520-621-7175

Kristen Geary, *Graduate TA*
520-621-7164

Bethany Masters, *Graduate TA*
520-626-2230

Affiliate Faculty

Barbara Hutchinson, *Assistant to Director, Ag. Experiment Station*
520-626-0329

Paul Kohn, *Vice Provost, Enrollment Management*
520-621-3705

Steve Poe, *ABE*
520-621-5879

Sabrina Tuttle, *Gila County Ext.*
928-475-2350

Patty Merk, *Maricopa County Ext.*
602-470-8086 x357

Ag Mechanics Lab
520-327-8602