Students Land Summer Internships

Agricultural Education students are completing professional internships this summer across a wide range of companies and organizations. We wish them a summer of success and skill development!

- **Jaclyn Benekohal** - University of Illinois Staff Human Resources, Labor Relations, Urbana, IL
- **Jennifer Boberg** - University of Illinois Extension, Lake County, IL
- **Sam Brumleve** - Illinois Beef Association, Springfield, IL
- **Clayton Carley** - Dow Agrosciences, Field Scientist Intern, Danville, IL
- **Shelby Cooper** - College of ACES Summer Research Internship, Chicago, IL
- **Dan Czyz** - Mix-a-Gogo, Inc., Redondo Beach, CA
- **Devin Daugherty** - University of Illinois Animal Science Department, Urbana, IL
- **Greg Fassnacht** - Horticulture Research Center, St. Charles, IL
- **Erika Ferguson** - State Representative Norine Hammond, Macomb, IL
- **Claire Geiger** - University of Illinois Crop Sciences Dept., Urbana, IL
- **Amanda Goin** - University of Illinois Extension, 4-H Memorial Campgrounds, Monticello, IL
- **Guy Hainline** - Beck’s Hybrids, Downs, IL
- **Rachel Hazen** - University of Illinois Extension, Madison, Monroe, St. Clair Counties, IL
- **Brock Johnson** - Integrated Pest Management, Urbana, IL
- **Samantha Kowalczyk** - University of Illinois Extension, Jo Daviess, Stephenson, Winnebago Counties, IL
- **Jessica Kozak** - University of Illinois Extension, Champaign, Ford, Iroquois, Vermillion Counties, IL
- **Jacob Meisner** - Osborn Barr, St. Louis, MO
- **Joe Melisi** - University of Illinois Extension, Office of Program Planning & Evaluation, Urbana, IL
- **Jeff Reale** - University of Illinois Department of Crop Sciences, Urbana, IL
- **Nicole Worley** - Elanco Animal Health/MWI Veterinary Supply, Kennard, NE
Cooper Selected as National AFA Ambassador

Shelby Cooper, a junior in Agricultural Science Education (ASE), was recently selected to serve as one of 17 Campus Ambassadors for Agriculture Future of America (AFA). In this role, Cooper and her fellow team members serve as liaisons between AFA and their college campuses and AFA’s corporate partners.

From leadership positions to internships, Cooper pursues experiences that set her apart from her peers and prepare her to pursue her dream of being a voice for agriculture through a career in agricultural education. “AFA has helped me make so many connections and is continually helping me find out how I want to make a difference in the industry. Not being from an agricultural background, I’m always trying to learn more about the daily lives of agriculturalists, the diversity of their activities, and current issues in agriculture,” says Cooper. “I would recommend being involved in the organization to anyone who wants to meet collegiate leaders in their academic or interest area, including industry partners looking to network with college students who will be the future of the industry.”

AFA is a leader and professional development organization for collegiate leaders and young professionals. Providing leader development, intern support and scholarships, AFA seeks to be a catalyst in preparation of a new generation of agriculture leaders.

Did you someone who loves agriculture & would be an outstanding teacher? Contact Gary Ochs @ garyochs@illinois.edu for more information about Illinois Ag Ed!

Student Teachers Tour Ag Programs and Businesses

After student teaching, seniors in the Ag Science Education (ASE) concentration, along with Dr. Erica Thieman, visited several ag businesses and high school programs in Illinois, Missouri, and Oklahoma. Industry and educational experiences help build content knowledge for the future teachers.

The first business tour was the Cargill Pork Processing facility in Beardstown, IL. Students observed the process of harvesting and processing pork. The group then went to Earth City, MO, to visit Hummert International, Inc. to learn about different structures, products, and services related to horticulture and landscaping for teachers. The group also visited Maramec Springs Park, where they observed an old steel mill that had been turned into a fish hatchery.

In addition to business tours, seniors also visited the Rolla Agriculture Program, located in the Ozarks of Missouri. They learned about facilitating agricultural mechanics work and running a busy agriculture program from veteran teacher, Mr. Tom Strain. They also toured a private agriculture-focused PreK-12 school in Tulsa, OK. The group visited the school farm, toured facilities, and met faculty and administration. On the return to Illinois, they attended the closing session of the Missouri FFA Convention.
The Agricultural Education Program recognized two students, Kirsten Blackford and Trent Hawker, as the 2014 Outstanding Seniors at the College of ACES Student Awards Banquet.

Kirsten Blackford, from Paxton, Illinois, was recognized as the Outstanding Senior in Agriculture Science Education (ASE). Blackford is a member of the Ag Ed Club, where she served as President in 2012-2013. She has also been a member of Alpha Tau Alpha, Collegiate FFA, and the Illinois Association of Vocational Agriculture Teachers Student Branch. In addition to her internship with University of Illinois Extension, she completed early field experience at Sullivan High School with Mr. Don Lockwood and student taught under Mrs. Diana Loschen at Tri-Point High School. Blackford has accepted a teaching position at Blue Ridge High School.

Trent Hawker, from Potomac, Illinois, earned the Outstanding Senior Award in Agriculture Leadership Education (ALE). Hawker has been the Agriculture Education Club’s Vice President of Recruitment for two years, a presenter at the FFA Greenhand and Student Leader Conference, and served as a recruitment representative for the State and National FFA Conventions. He has also competed at National Alpha Tau Alpha Conclave in Parliamentary Procedure, Quiz Bowl, and Program of Excellence. In addition to coursework and leadership activities, Hawker is a Horticulture/Youth Development intern at University of Illinois Extension, Unit 13, which serves Champaign, Ford, Iroquois, and Vermilion Counties.

Class of 2014: Ag Ed Students Leading the Way

Students participated in the College of ACES Commencement on May 18th and are leading the way in a variety of careers!

- Kirsten Blackford - Agriculture Teacher, Blue Ridge High School, Farmer City, IL
- Brittany Brown - State of Illinois Natural Resources Department, Chicago, IL
- Danielle Brown - Illinois Farm Bureau, County Farm Bureau Manager Trainee
- Caitlin Chrzanowski - Illinois Farm Bureau, County Farm Bureau Manager Trainee
- Jacob Ekstrand - Monsanto Company, Stevens Point, WI, Chemical Account Manager Trainee
- David Fulton - United Prairie, Precision Planting and Innovation Farm Testing, Ivesdale, IL
- Liz Harfst - Agriculture Teacher, Normal West High School, Normal, IL
- Caroline Hoff - Teach for America, Chicago, IL
- Bryanne Kalous - Seeking ag teaching position
- Kiersten Kasey - Seeking ag teaching position
- Shelby Lahey - Program Assistant, Ohio State Extension, Shelby County, OH
- Mark McKown - Agriculture teacher (pending board approval)
- Austin O’Neill - Commodities Associate, Lewis B. Osterbur & Associates, Leroy, IL
- Liz Reynolds (MS Degree) - Assistant Director, Leonhard Day Camp, Champaign Park District, Champaign, IL
- Gina Kun Yuan - Graduate Student, Social-Organizational Psychology, Teacher’s College at Columbia University, New York

Ag Education Recognizes Outstanding Seniors

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Students Create *Blueprints for Change in Ag Ed*

The chance to leave a legacy. That’s what nearly 70 seniors were allowed to do in their final semester before graduating as they completed AgEd 480: Collaborative Leadership.

Collaborative Leadership is a senior-level course for Ag Ed students concentrating in Agricultural Leadership Education as well as the capstone course for the campus-wide Minor in Leadership Studies.

The course requires students to synthesize prior learning in personal leadership, team development, and organizational needs assessment to propose their own *Blueprint for Change* in a community they care about. Student teams were asked to bring three collaborative partners to the table to help address a social or educational change issue. The goal was to communicate an inspiring vision, enough to bring organizations together who hadn’t necessarily collaborated in the past.

A dozen teams produced Blueprints impacting 30 organizations across multiple areas of the community including nutrition education, campus recycling, women’s health, small business development, elderly education, youth mentoring, and animal care.

The Spring 2014 course was team-taught in two sections by Dr. Kari Keating, Ag Ed Teaching Associate, and Tiffany Macke, Community & Economic Development Educator with University of Illinois Extension Unit 20. Together Keating and Macke bring more than 30 years of community development career experience to the classroom. They used a learner-centered instructional design wherein students created the experience they wanted and led the way.

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**Burgoon Earns Campus Teaching Excellence Award**

Lisa Burgoon, Program Coordinator of the Minor in Leadership Studies and instructor of AGED 260 Introduction to Leadership Studies, received the Illinois Student Senate Teaching Excellence Award this spring. Every year this award garners several hundred nominations from the student body and Lisa was one of five instructors chosen by the Committee on Academic Affairs of the Student Senate.

Burgoon has taught in the College of ACES for eight years, the last six in Agricultural Education. One statement from a nominee’s letter sums up the reason she was chosen for this award: “I have seen first-hand the amount of time and care she puts into each lesson, into the needs of each student.” Congratulations to Lisa on this outstanding honor!