Summer Internship Experiences

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!

- **Kaitlyn Bickers** - Monsanto Corn Production
- **Jessica Biernacki** - Cook County Farm Bureau
- **Chandler Bruns** - Bayer Crop Science Sales Intern
- **Tim Callahan** - Agricultural Education Program, Leadership Studies Course Development Intern
- **Clayton Carley** - Dow Agrosciences, Field Scientist Intern, Northern Crop Protection Research Division
- **Shelby Cooper** - National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE), Communications Intern
- **Devin Daugherty** - Miller Park Zoo
- **Jacob Dickey** - National FFA Organization, Washington Leadership Conference
- **Morgan Doggett** - University of Illinois Admissions
- **Taylor Friedrich** - Heritage FS (GROWMARK)
- **Jordan Horwich** - University of Illinois Extension, Cook County
- **Brock Johnson** - Johnson & Johnson Insurance
- **Sarah Luce** - AgriGold Marketing
- **Katherine Mammoser** - University of Illinois Extension, Unit 19; Clay, Effingham, Fayette, and Jasper Counties
- **Abby Marten** - FLM+, Indianapolis, IN
- **Samantha McCann** - University of Illinois Extension, Unit 22; Madison, Monroe, & St. Clair Co.
- **Jacob Meyer** - University of Illinois Extension, Unit 13; Champaign, Ford, Iroquois, Vermillion Co.
- **Jacob Meisner** - Osborn Barr, Account Services Intern, St. Louis, MO
- **Andrew Nagy** - Bayer Crop Science
- **Molly Novotney** - University of Illinois Extension, Unit 8; Bureau, LaSalle, Marshall, and Putnam Co.
- **Christopher O’Connor** - Division of Intercollegiate Athletics
- **Nataly Sandoval** - Chicago Park District
- **Michael Smith** - University of Illinois Research Apprentice Program (RAP) Intern
- **Kaity Spangler** - University of Illinois 4-H Youth Development Intern
- **Jacqueline Walters** - Crop Production Services

**Cooper, AFA Ambassador**

Shelby Cooper, a junior in Agricultural Science Education (ASE), is serving as one of 17 Campus Ambassadors for the Agriculture Future of America (AFA) organization. Cooper and her fellow team members serve as liaisons between AFA and their college campuses and AFA’s corporate partners.

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.
Ag Education Recognizes Outstanding Seniors

The Agricultural Education Program recognized Erika Ferguson and Jennifer Boberg as the 2015 Outstanding Seniors during the ACES Student Awards Banquet.

Erika Ferguson, from Bushnell, Illinois, was the Outstanding Senior in Agriculture Leadership Education (ALE). Ferguson has been very involved in Ag Ed Club as Social Chair and ACES Council Representative, and has served the leadership program as a recruiter at ExploreACES and the State FFA Convention. Ferguson assisted Dr. Keating with two ALE courses; she assisted with class scheduling, critiqued resumes, and helped students create professional website profiles. She says, “One thing I have taken away from majoring in Agricultural Leadership Education is involvement. College is the time in your life to get involved and be active in not only your major and the clubs it represents, but also campus as a whole. I loved my experience and it is definitely because of how active I was!”

Jennifer Boberg, from Paxton, Illinois, earned the Outstanding Senior Award in Agriculture Science Education (ASE). Boberg was involved in the Agricultural Education Program as a judge for FFA events and worked for the Ag Ed faculty. She completed student teaching with Mr. Don Lockwood at Sullivan High School. Her advice to students is to “give these college years all you have. They really are gone in the blink of an eye. Do all the FFA events, workshops, trips, etc. that you can. It will give you a ton of ideas and experiences that you will be thankful for when you’re in the ‘real world’.”

ASE Seniors Experience Puerto Rican Agriculture

After student teaching, seniors from the UIUC Agricultural Science Education (ASE) Program spent a week in Puerto Rico to expand their knowledge of tropical agriculture, Caribbean history and ecology, and the Puerto Rican economy. From May 3 through May 9, Dr. Erica Thieman, accompanied by Mr. Gary Ochs and Dr. Cecilia Suarez, led a study abroad experience for a group of 10 UIUC students as they toured farms, el Yunque National Park, and points of cultural interest on the island of Puerto Rico. Through cooperation with Wanda Perez from the Farm Service Agency (FSA), a division of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the group toured five unique farming operations and a coffee processing facility along the southern coast and central mountainous regions. Also included were tours of a university agricultural experiment station, a grain mill, and a university tour. Additionally, students visited an Indigenous Culture Center, beach, and closed out their week with a two-day stay in the rainforest.

Claire Geiger said, “The trip to Puerto Rico was an amazing opportunity to see different agricultural practices. Being immersed in the culture also gave me a better understanding for the reasons they produce the variety of produce they do. What an experience!”

A full summary of the experience can be read at https://goo.gl/F4Ul1p.

Students returned from the trip with many photos, a much deeper knowledge of fruit and vegetable production, and lesson plans utilizing information from their experience for the agriscience classrooms they will be teaching in beginning Fall 2015.

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Ag Ed Class of 2015 Commencement Ceremony

Students and faculty participated in the College of ACES Commencement on May 17th. Students are pursuing a wide array of professional opportunities!

**Bachelor of Science Degree**
- **John Andress** - Graduate school, University of Illinois, Agricultural Education Program
- **Jennifer Boberg** - Agriculture Teacher, Windsor
- **Sam Brumleve** - Seeking employment opportunities
- **Ashley Davis** - Graduate school at University of Minnesota, Human Resources and Industrial Relations
- **Josh Evans** - Seeking agriculture teacher employment
- **Erika Ferguson** - Seeking employment opportunities
- **Claire Geiger** - Agriculture Teacher, Nokomis
- **Amanda Goin** - Seeking agriculture teacher employment
- **Brianna Harmon** - Agriculture Teacher, Alwood
- **Rachel Hazen** - Graduate school, University of Illinois, Agricultural Education Program
- **Malory Hughes** - Agriculture Teacher, Gibson City-Melvin-Sibley
- **Jessica Kozak** - Government Inside Sales Executive, Wolfram Research
- **Joe Melisi** - Seeking employment opportunities
- **Sarah Moore** - Agriculture Teacher, Athens
- **Jeff Reale** - Agriculture Teacher, Canton
- **Brandon Smith** - Agriculture Teacher, Payson
- **Nic Turner** - Manager, Hanner Farms, Oakland, IL
- **Nicole Worley** - Platinum Insurance, Sales Representative for East Central Illinois

**Master of Science Degree**
- **Justin Ebert** - Agriculture Instructor, Highland Community College
- **Sara Marten** - Purdue Extension, Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development
- **Caitlin Morris** - University of Illinois Extension, Champaign Co. 4-H Program Coordinator
- **Alicia Schneider** - Seeking employment opportunities

**Ag Ed Club Holds Annual Student Reception**

The Agricultural Education Club held their annual student reception on April 19 in the ACES Library, Information, and Alumni Center. After a time of socializing and enjoying desserts prepared by club members, officers and members were introduced to those in attendance. Members who completed internships, early field experiences, or student teaching recognized their placement sites and supervisors.

Four new members were inducted into Alpha Tau Alpha (ATA), the national professional honorary agricultural education organization. New members are: Sara Barton, Clay Carley, Abby Marten, and Samantha McCann. After the ceremony, seniors introduced their parents and announced their career plans. The reception closed with remarks by Mr. Gary Ochs, Advisor, and Abby Marten, President.
Students Participate in Research Symposium

Three Agricultural Leadership and Science Education undergraduate students -- Shelby Cooper, Tim Callahan, and Rachel Hazen -- participated in the campus-wide Undergraduate Research Symposium in May.

Shelby Cooper’s research project addressed the needs of Master Gardeners (MG) in Cook County. She spent 12 weeks visiting community gardens, youth garden sites, and other Master Gardener-run projects to evaluate their projects and conduct a literary analysis of other MG programs across the country. She conducted interviews with MGs and coordinators. Through her research, Cooper found that 40% of Illinois’ MG population are located in Cook County; within this population, Cook County MG have more specific needs for urban gardening education, youth exposure to agriculture, and community outreach as compared to the remaining population of MG volunteers in Illinois. She presented the findings to MG Coordinators at the end of the summer, and assisted in implementing many changes that could better serve MGs in youth education and organization of programming.

Rachel Hazen and Tim Callahan’s project, “Using Path-Goal Theory to Identify and Address Obstacles that may Hinder Successful Undergraduate Research Involvement,” evaluated ways undergraduate research advisers and professors could use the Path-Goal Theory of Leadership to help ease their undergraduate research assistants into their roles within their respective labs, remove any obstacles they may encounter, and help the advisers or professors understand why many situations may occur with new research assistants. The research was based off of their own experiences as new research assistants with no prior experiences or knowledge of expectations. Hazen and Callahan determined the main obstacles faced were lack of knowledge; the need to learn different skills or skill sets for certain tasks; and the lack of understanding for proper utilization of time between research lab work, schoolwork, and other responsibilities. Their advisor was Dr. Dave Rosch.

Ag Education Faculty Serve as Keynote Speakers

Lisa Burgoon, Director of the Minor in Leadership Studies, delivered the keynote address “Turning your leadership in NJAA into career skills you can use” during the Raising the Bar National Junior Angus Association (NJAA) leadership conference in March. She shared insights about how the leadership they are learning and practicing in NJAA will help prepare them for future work, education and community leadership.

Dr. Cecilia Suarez, Teaching Associate in the Agricultural Education Program, was the keynote speaker during the campus-wide Latino Congratulatory Graduation Ceremony in May. “I am humbled and honored to be selected to share words with a large portion of Illinois’ graduating Latino students and their families as they celebrate their wonderful accomplishments. I am excited to represent the Agricultural Education Program at this ceremony.”