Ag Econ alum wins fellowship

Department alumna Katelyn Clements was awarded a Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship on June 1. The fellowship will enable her to complete a rigorous graduate program so that she can teach STEM subjects in rural and urban areas of Georgia, where STEM teachers are needed most.

The Woodrow Wilson Georgia Teaching Fellows program was launched in 2014, with the first cohort named the following year. Clements is one of 60 individuals from schools across the state to be named as fellows in the 2016 cohort.

Clements will be attending Columbus State University. While at UGA, she majored in agribusiness, and she graduated in 2014. She worked as a sales representative for a chemical company in Alpharetta until 2015, when she decided to pursue teaching.

Winning the fellowship was “immensely humbling,” Clements said. “The financial burden of going to college was something that I knew our family couldn’t afford. By keeping my grades up, I was able to qualify for financial aid and scholarships to fund my undergraduate program.

“Without this fellowship, I wouldn’t be able to attend graduate school. It is so humbling to know that people believe in me enough to invest in my education.”
Greetings from the Department Head

Dear friends:

I hope your summer is going well! With most of our students gone for the break, things are slow here in Conner Hall, but the faculty and I are taking the opportunity to work on our research and with our graduate students. We are greatly looking forward to everyone’s return in August.

As always, our annual Conner Connects awards banquet in April was a great success! I would like to extend heartfelt congratulations to all of our scholarship recipients and to the winners of our Outstanding Student awards and our Outstanding Faculty and Staff Awards. To learn more, see the Conner Connects section.

Also congratulations to all students who received degrees in May 2016. 51 of our undergraduates and five of our graduate students finished last semester and we wish all of them the very best!

I would also like to highlight that Amanda Smith received the Tifton Campus Excellence for Teaching award in April. Congratulations, Amanda!

Our next event is the J.W. Fanning Lecture, so please mark your calendars to attend on Nov. 9. This year’s speaker will be Dr. Jayson Lusk from the Department of Agricultural and applied Economics at Oklahoma State University, and his lecture is titled “Consumer Trends and Impacts on the Future Food System.”

Again, it is a pleasure for me to report to you the many accomplishments of our students, faculty, staff and alumni through this newsletter. Please consider sharing your updates with us so that we can write about them in the future.

Sincerely,

Octavio Ramirez

Department Awards and Achievements


Kirstie Hostetter (B.S.E.S., ‘16) received the Nesbitt-Flatt Outstanding Senior Award, as well as the 2016 Sustainable UGA Student Award.

Pourya Valizadeh (Ph.D. student) won the 2016 Rod Ziemer Ph.D. paper competition for his paper “Ripple Effects of Natural Disasters on International Stock Markets: Evidence from the 2011 Japan Earthquake.”

Nicholas Payne (M.S. student) won the 2016 Rod Ziemer M.S. paper competition with his paper “Can Cattle Basis Forecasts Be Improved? A Bayesian Model Averaging Approach.”

Katelyn Clements (B.S. ‘14) won a Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship, which will enable her to complete a cutting-edge master’s degree program in order to teach STEM subjects in urban and rural Georgia schools.

Amanda Smith, professor on UGA’s Tifton campus, received the Tifton Campus Excellence for Teaching award.

Tae-Young Pak (M.S., ‘13) is now an Assistant Professor at the University of Alabama.

Congratulations to our faculty and alumni for their achievements! The Agricultural and Applied Economics department is proud of all your accomplishments.

http://www.agecon.uga.edu
“Would you rather be given $49 a month from now, or wait six months and get $98?”

College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences agricultural economist Jeff Jordan and two colleagues from George Mason University asked 878 Spalding County, Georgia, eighth-graders this question in an effort to find out which students may decide to drop out of school.

Statistics show that a large percentage of students who drop out of high school do so around the time they turn 16, said Jordan, a scientist based on the UGA campus in Griffin, Georgia. Determining how long a child is willing to wait for a reward will help pinpoint when students make the decision to drop out of school. Researchers, like Jordan, hope to find ways to encourage students to stay in school.

The study began with a small starter grant for poverty research from the UGA Office of the Vice President for Public Service and Outreach. Using $49 gift cards as rewards, the research team asked the students how much money it would take, from $50 to $98, for them to wait six months for their reward. “Knowing whether a student wants something today or will wait for more later is the essence of high school retention,” Jordan said.

After collecting data in 2006, 2007 and 2008, the economists had to put the project on hold and wait for the students to graduate – or not. Then, the team cross-referenced factors, like how many days the student was absent, disciplinary referrals, standardized test scores in math and reading, whether they qualified for free or reduced lunch and whether they were in gifted or special education programs.

The results showed that males were more impatient than females; African-American students were more impatient than white students;
African-American males were the most impatient; students with higher math scores were generally less impatient; and the students who were the most impatient had higher discipline and dropout rates.

When the researchers controlled for race and gender variables, impatient students with high math scores had a 90 percent probability of graduating. Impatient students with low math scores were 59 percent more likely to drop out.

With the knowledge that impatience and math scores are strongly linked to the dropout rate, the researchers are now using mobile apps and other tools to explore ways to help impatient students increase their math scores. “Generally, when a child isn’t performing well in math, we offer tutoring or after-school help or more homework,” Jordan said. “We are just giving them more of the same of what they don’t do well in. We have to find other ways to improve their math skills and to help students understand that staying in school and reaching graduation is not only in their best interest but will pay off in the end. We need to find out whether that can be taught to 16-year-olds.”

The team has applied for a National Science Foundation grant to develop targeted intervention tools and determine at what age students’ time preferences (patience/impatience) form. The George Mason researchers are developing math game apps and other tools to encourage parent involvement and to teach parents how to help their children with math.

Jordan is leading a pilot program with kindergartners, first-, third- and fourth-graders at Jackson Road Elementary School in Griffin.

“We want to know at what age children understand the concept of money,” he said. “With these younger kids, we used Hershey’s chocolate KISSES and asked them if they wanted one today or if they would wait until next week and get four or more.”

So far, the kindergartners tend to be more patient than the fourth-graders. “Most kindergartners don’t understand money or time. They simply believe that getting more is better, so they were willing to wait,” he said. “Fourth-graders understand money, so they usually don’t want to wait.”
In her final undergraduate semester at UGA, Kirstie Hostetter spent her spring working as an intern for Sustainable Investment Group in Atlanta, Ga.

SIG, which recently celebrated its seventh anniversary at the end of May, primarily works with existing buildings to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, or LEED, certifications, a task they also do for design teams working on new buildings. Additionally, SIG has experience with other green building certifications, such as the Green Real Estate Sustainability Benchmark (GRESB).

A small company of fewer than 30 full-time employees, SIG is divided into two teams: an engineering team and a consulting team, which Hostetter worked with. While she mainly worked under Project Manager Collin Shepard, she also worked directly with the company’s CEO, Charlie Cichetti, on an awards application for a variety of properties SIG works with.

"[Cichetti] is very accessible to the entire team," Hostetter said.

In addition to her role as a sustainability analyst, she worked with SIG’s marketing team to produce blog posts for the company’s website on a wide variety of topics, from urban planning in developing countries to changes in the LEED rating system.

By far, Hostetter’s favorite experience working for SIG involved learning about GRESB, which she had never heard of before the internship.

“I had the opportunity to put together an hour-long educational presentation to be given to clients who might be interested in GRESB," she said. “With guidance from my boss I began to do intensive research on the origins of the sustainability benchmark and even read through the entire 200+ page GRESB reference guide. This experience gave me the chance to truly become an expert on a specific sustainability guideline and reporting system. I also appreciated that my co-workers trusted me enough and thought my work was of high enough quality that they would ask me to put together such an important presentation.

Hostetter credited a large part of her success at SIG to Dr. Nick Magnan’s development economics class.

“I believe that more classes could follow Dr. Magnan’s example and have us using Excel, writing blog post-type articles, researching policy white papers, and the like in order to prepare us for tasks that we are likely to encounter in the working world," she said.

In the end, Hostetter said she would highly recommend an internship with SIG.

“In a way that a classroom simply cannot, working in an office has enlightened me as to the dynamics of the real world in many senses of the word."
Conner Connects

The annual Conner Connects banquet and awards ceremony was held in the Garden Terrace Room at the State Botanical Gardens in Athens on April 26, 2016. Faculty, staff, students, parents and friends enjoyed a delicious meal while celebrating the department's accomplishments and award winners.
Scholarship Winners

Georgia Farm Credit Associations Scholarship
Elizabeth Isgar
Emily Braswell
Haley Vickery
Samantha Strickland
Tristan Smith

Firor Memorial Scholarship
Anna Trakhman
Kelly Thompson
Victoria Wright

Proctor Memorial Scholarship
Charles Orgbon

Tate Brookins Memorial Scholarship
Ashley Smith
Chase Sherwood
Hannah Rull
Malik Grace

Phyllicia Thomas
Sarah Newman

Brannen Scholarship
Jordan Rowe

Tom Frazier Memorial Scholarship
Mallory Warren

Wen Williams Scholarship
Bryan Tucker

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Ellen Coats won the award for Outstanding Master of Science Student. She has been a graduate research assistant since August 2014, and her research interests include programming, consumer behavior, food and nutrition, and non-market economic valuation. While an undergraduate at Mississippi State University, she received the Department of Political Science’s Outstanding Undergraduate Student award and the Mickey and Babbs Holliman Loyalty Scholarship.

Cole Nicholson won the award for Outstanding Master of Agribusiness Student. He has been on the Dean’s List since May 2014; that same month, he was awarded the College of Agriculture and Applied Economics Rotary Student Service Award for his work with UGArden. Cole has also served as a Commodity Classic Ag Conference Business Representative and as a member of the Rotaract Club.

Ashley Barfield won the award for Outstanding Ph.D. Student. Since beginning her career at UGA in 2006, she has been heavily involved with environmental activities and organizations around campus. Currently, she is a member of the Agricultural Economics Graduate Student Association. Her research interests include environmental and natural resource economics, non-market valuation and policy analysis.
Jerri Gray won the Outstanding Agricultural and Applied Economics Senior award, Haley Cook won the Outstanding Agribusiness Senior award, and Matthew Pace won the Outstanding Leadership award. Not pictured, Kirstie Hostetter won the Outstanding Environmental Economics and Management Senior award and Elizabeth Jackson won the Outstanding Food Industry Marketing and Administration Senior award.

Charice Stroud, pictured with Dr. John Bergstrom and Dr. Octavio Ramirez, won the Inspiring Student Award.

Dr. Joshua Berning won the Graduate Student Association’s Outstanding Faculty Award. Not pictured, Carly Puckett won both the Graduate Student Association and the Agricultural and Applied Economics Club’s Outstanding Staff Award, while Dr. Travis Smith won the Agricultural and Applied Economics Club’s Outstanding Faculty Award.
J.W. Fanning Lecture

The 32nd annual J. W. Fanning lecture will be on November 9, 2016 at the Georgia Center for Continuing Education. We are honored to have Dr. Jayson Lusk from the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics at Oklahoma State University as this year's speaker. His lecture is entitled “Consumer Trends and Impacts on the Future Food System.”

Dr. Lusk earned his Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from Kansas State University and is currently Regents Professor and Willard Sparks Endowed Chair of the Department of Agricultural Economics at OSU. He has also been an AAEA Fellow and a Samuel Roberts Noble Distinguished Fellow with the Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs since 2013. In 2011, Dr. Lusk worked in Paris as a visiting researcher at the French National Institute for Agricultural Research on a fellowship from the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development. He has been published in The New York Times, Wall Street Journal and more.

All events will take place at the Georgia Center for Continuing Education.

8:30 a.m. — Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia Board Meeting
   Craige Boardroom

10:00 a.m. — Registration and Refreshments
   Pecan Tree Galleria

10:30 a.m. — J.W. Fanning Lecture
   Masters Hall
   
   Welcome  
   Introduction of Speaker: Octavio Ramirez, Head and Professor, Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, UGA
   Lecture: Dr. Jayson Lusk

12:00 noon — Luncheon
   Magnolia Ballroom
   
   Presentation of J.W. Fanning Professional Awards: Bryan Tolar, President of Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia

1:30 p.m. — Adjourn

The cost of the luncheon is $30. There is no cost for attending the lecture only.
### Spring 2016 Graduates

#### Undergraduate Degrees

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<tr>
<th>Student</th>
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<td>Austin Ashe</td>
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## Spring 2016 Graduates

### Undergraduate Degrees (cont.)

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### Graduate Degrees

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<td>Xueqian Lu</td>
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<td>Shen Liu</td>
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As fellow graduates from the Agricultural and Applied Economics Department of the University of Georgia, we invite you to join the Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia. The investment is nominal, but the rewards and mission are great. It is our hope that most of you will want to support the organization that promotes our industry and field of education.

The Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia (AEAG) was established in 1976.

The goals of the Association are:

- To provide opportunities for the professional improvement of people interested in the field of agricultural economics
- To provide a forum for the discussion of economic problems and issues of mutual interest to people working in agriculture, agribusiness, and related fields
- To recommend solutions to economic problems facing Georgia's agriculture

Agricultural economics is involved in all sectors of our economy. The opportunities are greater now than ever before. We must recruit more students and better support agricultural economists if we are to meet the challenges for further application of agricultural economics to farm, resource, environmental, and agribusiness problems.

The AEAG board has new goals to support students in agricultural and applied economics as well as high school students who have yet to make decisions about college. We need your support to be able to carry out those goals to assist the future leaders in our field.

- AEAG membership offers benefits through the following:
  - Journal of Agribusiness
  - AEAG newsletter
  - J.W. Fanning lecture
  - Recognition for career accomplishments
  - Enhanced educational opportunities for students in agricultural economics

(continued)
In addition, AEAG enjoys an active relationship with the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics at the University of Georgia. The activities of the association provide occasions for interaction among AEAG members, faculty and students. This interaction provides students and professionals important opportunities to network for the purpose of future career connections and the sharing of information and knowledge.

Below you will find an application for membership. Lifetime memberships are also available. If you would like to know more about AEAG, visit the AEAG website at http://aeag.uga.edu.

Yes, I would like to join the Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia!

Name: ________________________________________________

Employer: ____________________________________________

Title: ________________________________________________

Address: ______________________________________________

City/State/ZIP: _________________________________________

Phone: ________________________________________________

Email Address: _________________________________________

Please check one:

_____ Student Member ($10)
_____ Individual Member ($25)
_____ Library/Institutional Member ($35)
_____ Corporate Member ($150)
_____ Individual Lifetime Member ($250)
_____ Corporate Lifetime Member ($1000)

Please send your membership application and dues to the following address:

Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia
303 Conner Hall
University of Georgia
Athens, GA 30602-7509

For more information, call 706-542-0763 or visit http://aeag.uga.edu.