



# FAMILY & FRIENDS

OCTOBER 8, 2022 | STANLEY STOUT CENTER | MANHATTAN, KS



# CELEBRATE

## *Celebrate*

Laughter and storytelling filled the autumn evening as the alumni and friends of Kansas State University Animal Sciences and Industry (ASI) joined together to celebrate the accomplishments of the department at the eighth annual K-State ASI Family & Friends Reunion.

More than 1,100 people celebrated at the Stanley Stout Center on October 8, 2022, in Manhattan, Kansas. The annual event is hosted by the Livestock and Meat Industry Council Inc (LMIC), in cooperation with the ASI department.

This publication is dedicated to showcasing the memories made and special moments shared by the attendees at this year's event. Alongside coverage of the event, highlighted is the 2022 Don L. Good Impact Award Winner, Dr. Dave Nichols, as well as other KSU ASI family and friends' stories and successes.

*Sincerely*

**FAMILY & FRIENDS PUBLICATION EDITORS**



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# DAVE NICHOLS

## *Timeless Legacy*

*Nichols retires after 41 years at K-State, leaving a positive influence on the future of the agricultural industry.*

BY: MADDY ROHR



**K**nown for his dedication to students and passion for the livestock industry, Dr. Dave Nichols, Kansas State University Animal Sciences and Industry professor emeritus and the 2022 Don L. Good Impact Award winner, leaves a lasting impact on everyone he meets. A people person with thousands of industry stories and experiences, Nichols has devoted his life to teaching the next generation of agriculturists and making a difference in the lives of those around him.

## IN THE CLASSROOM

After receiving his bachelor's degree from Purdue University in 1976, the plan was to go home to farm and raise pigs. When his older brother came home, Nichols knew there would not be enough work for both of them and decided to attend Kansas State University for his master's degree.

"Coming here was the greatest decision I ever made," Nichols says. "I have met so many wonderful people and the opportunity to go

so many places, I don't think that would have happened if I went back to the family farm."

Nichols finished his master's degree in 1979 and stayed at K-State for his doctorate. In October 1981 Don Good hired Nichols as a swine extension specialist. After two years of traveling across Kansas, Nichols moved to the teaching faculty. In 1998 Nichols became the ASI undergraduate teaching coordinator, continuing in this role until 2021.

"My two greatest roles at K-State were being the teaching coordinator and the instructor for ASI 102 — Principles of Animal Science," Nichols explains.

Seeing new faces each semester and instructing students in many different majors left him with a unique perspective.

"I learned something from everyone," he says. "While I was teaching students, every one of them taught me something because everybody had a different story."

Nichols' primary class was ASI 102, which introduced students to the basic principles of animal agriculture. During his tenure, he

lectured more than 15,000 students total in ASI 102 in addition to leading the livestock sales management class, which assists with the production of the annual Legacy Sale, K-State's bull and female sale, each spring. Nichols has been involved with the success of all 45 sales, which started when he was in graduate school.

"I have so enjoyed working with him teaching the livestock sales management class," says Angie Denton, K-State ASI communications coordinator. "He has devoted countless hours and enthusiasm to the K-State purebred unit and annual Legacy Sale. He takes teaching and student success to heart."

He also served on the planning committee for the Family & Friends Reunion and as faculty coordinator for the Purebred Beef Unit.

"I've been blessed to work with him the past seven years; it is my honor to call him a mentor and a friend," Denton says. "He never ceases to amaze me how he can balance all his ASI department roles — which would take hours for me to list. I'm not sure how we are going to survive a day without him after he retires."



## INDUSTRY INFLUENCE

Not only has Nichols been a vital part of many K-State ASI units and events, but he volunteers his time to multiple youth livestock associations in Kansas. He has served as the Kansas Junior Livestock Show (KJLS) beef superintendent in addition to assisting the American Royal on the board of directors, both roles he plans to continue in retirement.

“It’s the people,” Nichols says. “Both of these events are near and dear to me because of the people I have met.”

Matt Teagarden, Kansas Livestock Association chief executive officer and KJLS beef co-superintendent says, “Dr. Nichols strives to provide a positive experience for the exhibitors and their families. While much of the attention at the show is directed at how the livestock are placed, Dr. Nichols remains committed to the primary focus of livestock projects – youth development.”

Judging livestock shows has also been a rewarding experience for Nichols as he continues involvement in the livestock industry outside of the classroom. He has judged countless county fairs, state fairs and national stock shows across the country as well as international expos in Brazil, Costa Rica and Canada.

“When Good was department head, he encouraged us to judge county fairs,” Nichols says. “He saw that as recruitment.”

The people and relationships built within the livestock industry are one of the things Nichols is most grateful for. “I have been unbelievably lucky to have met so many students and so many people in my career,” Nichols adds.



Denton describes Nichols as a true friend of the livestock industry and livestock people. Having worked with him for many years, she says there is no one with a bigger heart or more passion for their career.

## MENTOR & FRIEND

As a professor, Nichols advised approximately 70 undergraduate students each year. His influence on their academic success and career preparation is unparalleled.

“His selfless focus on walking alongside others so that they can be the best version of themselves is what has always made Dr. Nichols special to his students, especially those of us lucky enough to be advised by him,” says Danette Amstein, former advisee of Nichols. “Dr. Nichols has had a huge impact on my life. I believe the solid reputation the K-State animal science department has is in part due to his significant investment in the students he advised and taught.”

Nichols was invested in each of his advisee’s future and made sure they had the resources and encouragement to succeed. “One of his greatest qualities is the genuine interest he takes in every student and his servant heart,” says Lorna Marshall, former advisee. “He takes advising to another level by truly getting to know his students, their passions and interests, and helps them navigate not only college but their next steps in life.”

In addition to teaching and advising, Nichols coached the K-State livestock judging team from 1986 to 1988. He also led many international study-abroad trips. Educating the future of agriculture through hands-on





experiences is part of Nichols' immeasurable impact on the industry.

"One class I taught was beef systems management and we would go visit and learn about different producers' operations throughout Kansas," he says. "If you observe and listen to people in the industry you can learn so much."

Teaching the artificial insemination course also aided students in real-world exposure to the livestock industry. "You are teaching one-on-one with the student which is such a contrast to the big lecture classes," Nichols says.

Mark Gardiner of Gardiner Angus Ranch and close friend says he knows how caring and devoted Nichols is to his students and the industry. "Dave Nichols has done an amazing job of making thousands of students excited about animal agriculture," Gardiner says. "He challenges people to be better and always shows up."

Nichols has received the University Presidential Award for Outstanding Advising, K-State Presidential Award for Undergraduate Teaching, Commerce Bank Outstanding Teaching Award and the David Mugler Distinguished Faculty Award. In 2020 he was presented with the Outstanding Alumni Award from Purdue University Department of Animal Science.

## FUTURE ENDEAVORS

Retirement is both a blessing and a challenge for Nichols who is passionate about students and teaching. "I am going to miss the people," he says. "All I have done my whole life is work with students and I am unbelievably lucky."

Nichols plans to spend more time traveling to see friends in retirement and visit their ranches, likely in a pick-up truck looking

at cows. He also plans to continue running A&D Ranch, an Angus operation outside of Manhattan with his wife, Anita.

Family was essential to Nichols' career, supporting his passion for students and livestock. "I have been married to my wife for 39 years and I could not have done any of this without her support," Nichols explains. "She is the rock that holds us together."

Nichols has two children, Drew and Amy, and a granddaughter, Madeline.

"This award means an immense amount to me because Don Good made a way for me to stay at K-State and it inspires me to be better," Nichols says. "I came to Kansas because of the people and I stayed because of the people." **K**



The Junior Wildcat Barnyard is a place for children of all ages to laugh and play while making new friends. Future Wildcats enjoyed face painting, coloring, life-size rocking horses, rope making and playing in the dirt and ankle-deep corn with farm toys. As the sun set and the band began to play, youth joined current K-State students for games of volleyball, football and cornhole. Of course the most popular activity was the famous toy drawing.

# FUTURE Wildcats





# MARY MCCURRY

## *The New Chairman*

*McCurry is appointed Reunion chairman in 2023, co-chair in 2022.*

**BY: KADY FIGGE**



**A**wife, mother, agriculturalist, member of the Livestock and Meat Industry Council (LMIC) Board, and she will be assuming the role of Kansas State University Animal Sciences and Industry (ASI) Family & Friends Reunion chairman in 2023, after co-chairing in 2022. “Honestly, I don’t ever think of stopping,” said Mary McCurry when talking about her motivation to stay involved.

## EDUCATION AND CAREER

McCurry started her journey to K-State at the University of Tennessee where she received her undergraduate degree in food science and technology and was a member of both the livestock and meats evaluation teams. Graduate school was next, and the application process was narrowed to K-State, primarily due to advising from University of Tennessee professors Dr. Curtis Melton and Dr. Jim Riemann. Both had graduated from K-State and received several awards and recognitions. Therefore, she went through the process of applying and was honored to be accepted.

As a graduate student at K-State, McCurry studied under Dr. Curtis Kastner, former Food Science Institute director, serving as his first graduate student. Additionally, she was guided by professors Donald Kropf, Melvin Hunt, Dell Allen and Michael Dikeman.

The first 20 years of her corporate career were in research and development. McCurry created the research and development center for Doscocil Companies (later to be bought by

Tyson) in Hutchinson, Kansas. She worked to help create and develop the precooked meat division for the pizza topping industry, making it safer to use pizza toppings for the top 100 food companies in America.

In 1992, she was approached with a job opportunity to start another research and development center for Cargill in Wichita, Kansas. Along with Riemann, she directed Cargill’s first-ever centralized research and development department.

For the next 20 years, McCurry worked in sales of human pharmaceuticals, specifically in the area of diabetes and insulin. Only three companies in the world manufacture insulin and she worked for two of those companies. After 13 years with Sanofi-aventis, she was approached by the company’s competitor, Novo Nordisk, to work with them to launch a new class of pharmaceuticals that revolutionized the treatment of diabetes.

## FAMILY ORIENTED

Along the way, she met her husband and raised a family. McCurry’s husband, Andy, was a nontraditional student at K-State. He was the first in his family to go to college, however he left college to return home to assist on his family farm. Later, he returned and graduated with an ASI degree.

Ten years later, Andy pursued a second career. He chose to pursue becoming a pharmacist, which entailed taking additional pre-requisite classes at Hutchinson Community College. Once he completed those classes, he was accepted to the University

of Kansas. Andy has been instrumental in helping guide others over the years. Whenever he hears “I wish I had...” from someone, he immediately counters with “you can if you put your mind to it.”

The family grew when Andy and Mary had two children — John and Emily. Together they started their family ranch with seven head of cattle and built from there.

“We didn’t have a hammer, nail or acre of land, but we made it work,” McCurry says.

John went to school at K-State and was on the livestock judging team. He is now married to Melody Shields McCurry, and they have three children — Aubree, Molly and Drew. Melody is a customer risk management specialist at American AgCredit, and John operates McCurry Angus Ranch hosting an annual bull sale, a custom hay business and is livestock feed sales director for KE Feeds.

Emily attended Hutchinson Community College and graduated from the University of Kansas. She then went back and got another degree in nursing through Garden City Community College and Fort Hays State University. She is now married to Tyson Mullen and they have two daughters — Avery and Hallie. Together, Emily and Tyson own two pharmacies in western Kansas. They also own a gift store called Next Door.

Throughout her life, McCurry has always been service-minded. She explains that she always loved to stay involved because of what her father instilled in her. “My father always said there are two types of people — there are those who take and there are those who give.”



## MOTIVATION

“Everyone does what they want to do, but I do it because I love doing it,” McCurry says. She likes to be involved with things that make a difference and that are not stagnant. She loves to work with people who elevate her, and she hopes to do the same for them.

As proof of her continuous involvement, McCurry highlighted just a few opportunities that she has had. She has been active in the American Angus Auxiliary since serving as the 1971 Miss American Angus. She also was the American Angus Auxiliary president in 1999. As her kids were growing up, they showed Angus cattle and because of that, McCurry was an advisor for the Kansas Junior Angus Association. While continuing to stay involved in the American Angus Auxiliary and the Kansas Angus Association, she is currently serving on the Kansas State Fairgrounds Foundation Board and the Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership (KARL) Program Board.

McCurry remains active in supporting K-State and is very thankful for her time as a student. The university was a great launching pad for her livelihood and career. It’s where she met her husband and made personal connections.

“You can never repay someone for those kinds of experiences, and it really prepared me for my life,” she says. “The professors embraced us, trained us, and treated us as equals.”

The family atmosphere that she experienced was one like no other. She says she owes K-State a tremendous amount and enjoys interacting with the youth.

## INVOLVEMENT

McCurry was honored to be asked to join the LMIC Board. At her first meeting, she was asked to take on the role of chairman for the K-State Animal Sciences and Industry Family & Friends Reunion for 2023 and be the co-chair for 2022. Patsy Houghton, the former chairman, says, “Mary is the perfect embodiment of a

leader and is the right choice to take the reins in 2022, and future Family & Friends Reunions.”

Houghton also says that McCurry’s enthusiasm, inherent ability as an “organizer,” and talent for bringing people together to work toward a common goal will be indispensable for the long-term success of the reunion.

“Mary leaves a positive footprint wherever she goes,” says Lois Schreiner, recently retired ASI event coordinator.

McCurry adds that she accredits everything to Houghton and the committee members. “With people like Patsy Houghton, Angie Denton, Lois Schreiner, Justin Janssen, Stan O’Neil and Dave Nichols, you can’t go wrong,” she says.

She appreciates all their hard work and talent. Additionally, she loves the uniqueness of the K-State ASI Family & Friends Reunion. As chairman, her goal is to keep the wonderful event going and continuing to grow. **K**



# FAMILY Faces

Members of the KSU ASI family enjoyed a fun-filled evening reuniting with family and friends.

The ASI Department is thankful for its loyal alumni who support the faculty, staff, students, department programs and events.

These pages capture just a few of our family and friends who celebrated with us.









# FRIENDLY Smiles

*Hugs and handshakes, conversations and catching up, laughter and smiles filled the Stout Center on Oct. 8 as the KSU ASI family gathered for this year's reunion.*



# LEAVING *an* IMPACT

*Odde retires after 15 years with K-State.*

BY: JOSEY MESTAGH



**W**ith deep roots in the Kansas State University Animal Sciences and Industry department as a student, faculty member and department head, Dr. Kenneth Odde's impact on ASI will be remembered for years to come.

Returning to Manhattan in January 2007, Odde finished his academia career at K-State. He spent 11 years as the ASI department head before transitioning to a full-time teaching role prior to his retirement in June 2022.

Odde brought outstanding professional and industry experience to the department. "He's a strong leader who understands from a wide variety of his own experiences in agriculture, from production to academia," says Dr. Karol Fike, ASI teaching associate professor. "He understands people, how to guide and how to be a decisive voice."

Odde received his bachelor's degree in animal science from South Dakota State University. Before continuing his education at a graduate level, he served two years in the U.S. Army as an officer and platoon leader. He then received a master's degree in reproductive physiology, a doctorate of veterinary medicine (DVM), and a doctorate in physiology at K-State.

While at Colorado State University for 11 years, he was a professor and conducted research on beef cattle reproduction and health. He then returned to his home state of South Dakota, where he worked for Pfizer Animal Health for six years before joining AgSpan for three years.

In 1996, Odde and his wife purchased land in Pollock, South Dakota, to start their ranch four miles from where he grew up. Since then, the ranch has grown and is now a cow-calf operation on 700 acres of owned land and 3,500 acres of leased land. In 2014, they started an internship program to provide students with cattle experience.

Odde joined North Dakota State University in 2003 as head of the animal and range sciences department. In June 2005, he transitioned to professor and director of Beef Systems-Center of Excellence, a public-private partnership designed to grow cattle feeding and processing in North Dakota, and the research and education support to the beef industry. Then, in 2007, he accepted the position as K-State ASI department head.

## BACK TO K-STATE

“I came back because I saw an opportunity to be a part of the culture that truly cares about students’ success and the livestock industry,” Odde says. “K-State is a university that cares primarily about its students; that’s important.”

This was a value he first saw as a student in 1975 and still sees today. When he switched

to instructing full-time, he taught two courses: Calving and Contemporary Issues in Agriculture. Both provide students with an insight into agriculture in real-world situations.

Odde also co-advised graduate students, including Esther McCabe. As a student, she worked side-by-side with Odde researching Superior Livestock Video Auction data. They created a database going back to 1995 showing the different factors that would influence the price of sale calves. A few of these factors included breed composition, calf health programs and how far the calves were being hauled. While McCabe was a teaching assistant for him and conducted research, she learned that Odde taught in a way that made students think critically and understand how concepts applied to the real world.

Odde contributed to many department improvements, including the Stanley Stout Center. He was part of the fundraising campaign to build the Center and saw the goal come to life. This became a multiple-use facility for the department and university. This building has housed Kansas Livestock Association (KLA) meetings, collegiate club meetings, the Legacy Sale and the K-State ASI Family & Friends Reunion.

“I am very proud of what we were able to

do” Odde says. “Now we have a tremendous facility that serves the department in many different ways. This building has opened lots of opportunities to bring people together.”

One of his greatest achievements was receiving the Jay B. Dillingham Award for Agricultural Leadership and Excellence in 2018. This award is given by the Agricultural Business Council of Kansas City.

During his tenure as department head, undergraduate enrollment grew from 793 students in 2007 to 1,226 students in 2017. Under his leadership, the department was able to build new and renovate old facilities as well as increase faculty and research productivity.

“Kansas State University, the College of Agriculture, and the ASI department has benefited tremendously from his leadership here,” Fike says. “He has had a meaningful and long-lasting impact.”

## FAMILY LIFE

Odde and his wife, Arlene, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in August. Arlene is a former teacher and county commissioner and does the bookkeeping and finances for the ranch. “She is the glue that holds everything together,” Odde says.

They have three kids — John, Carl, and Sarah — who have blessed them with seven grandkids. John, his wife, and their three kids live on the ranch in Pollock, South Dakota, where John is the ranch manager. Carl, his wife, and their two kids live in Brookings, South Dakota, where he is the engineering manager for the South Dakota Soybean Processors. Sarah, her husband and



their two kids live in Edina, Minnesota, where she is in food marketing.

In June, Odde returned to his ranch in South Dakota and plans to continue growing the internship program. Since its inception, 40 students have participated in the program that is offered three times a year —spring, summer and fall. They take students with or without a livestock background, prioritizing a good work ethic and good attitude. He believes if you bring these two things to an internship, all other skills, such as driving a tractor and moving cattle, can be taught.

He says after starting the internship program, he realized one of the largest issues was finding short-term housing. He then bought a house in town for his interns to live in for the duration of their internship. During retirement, Odde plans to assist other farms and ranches in the area start similar programs for students.

Although he is hanging up his hat as professor at K-State, he says he will be back for the Family & Friends Reunion and football games. Odde says he hopes that K-State continues to hold undergraduate education as a high priority and not get distracted by the almighty dollar.

When asked what advice he has for the ASI department, he says, “I don’t think the opportunity in agriculture has ever been greater, take advantage of that.” **K**



# STUDENT *Volunteers*

Students are an important part of the annual K-State ASI Family & Friends Reunion. The event would not be possible without these hard-working, passionate Wildcats representing ASI clubs and organizations, judging and competition teams, student employees and the ASI communications and event planning class. From set-up, parking, registration, serving food and facilitating the Junior Wildcat Barnyard to clean-up, our KSU ASI undergraduate and graduate students give their time to help make the event a celebration for the KSU ASI family.



# REPRODUCTION *of* LEARNING

*Stevenson retires after 42 years at K-State.*

BY: MOLLY BIGGS



**D**airyman. Writer. Reproductive physiologist. Researcher. Family man. Teacher. Man of faith. Volunteer. And occasional gardener. Dr. Jeffrey Stevenson, Kansas State University Animal Sciences and Industry (ASI) professor emeritus, is no doubt a man of many layers and vast knowledge.

## BEFORE K-STATE

Stevenson was born June 15, 1951, in Salt Lake City, Utah, and spent the first 16 years of his life there before moving to Portland, Oregon, where he graduated from Gresham Union High School in 1969.

From the age of 14, Stevenson's summers were spent working on his uncle's farm in southeast Idaho where they raised grain, alfalfa and the occasional potato. They would milk anywhere from one cow by hand to 90 dairy cows in a milking parlor. He also had the opportunity to spend one academic year feeding experimental cows with a mentor of his, Dr. Melvin Anderson, in Logan, Utah, and one year milking 70 cows on a commercial operation in Smithfield, Utah. Those years were where his interest in dairy cows began and would eventually lead him to major in dairy science at Utah State University (USU).

## EDUCATION

Stevenson attended USU for his undergraduate degree beginning in 1969. He started at USU as a physics major, and from 1970 to 1972 took a break to do ministry and missionary outreach in France and Switzerland.

Stevenson would return to USU in 1972, but this time enrolled in the college of agriculture, and in 1975 would graduate with his bachelor's degree in dairy science. Though he could have gone back to a farm, Stevenson had a never-ending desire to learn, and as he puts it, "I felt like I did not know enough about the dairy cow."

Stevenson would go on to study dairy science at Michigan State University (MSU) where he served as a research and teaching assistant until completing his master's in 1977. He then attended North Carolina State University (NCSU) where he pursued his doctorate in animal physiology, while serving as a graduate teaching assistant in the Department of Animal Science, from 1977 to 1980, under the direction of Dr. Jack Britt. During his time at NCSU, Stevenson conducted research on lactating sows, with his dissertation covering the endocrinology of lactation and estrus in sows and continued to work and do reproduction research with dairy cows.

## K-STATE

Stevenson began teaching at K-State in August 1980 and has been a part of the ASI faculty for the past 42 years. He began as an assistant professor with his appointment consisting of 70% research and 30% teaching, he was promoted to associate professor in 1986 and to professor in 1992. He has taught classes focusing on reproduction, dairy science and ovarian physiology. Specifically instructing the undergraduate courses of Farm Animal Reproduction (1980-2005), the dairy section of ASI 106 Dairy and Poultry Science (2005-2022), and a graduate course, Ovarian Physiology (ASI

832). In addition, he has served as the coordinator of the graduate seminar (ASI 890/990) for physiology and animal breeding students and was a faculty coordinator for the Dairy Teaching and Research Center and the Kansas Artificial Breeding Service Unit (KABSU).

Stevenson's research has spanned several species, specifically evaluating synchronization of estrus and ovulation in dairy and beef cattle to accommodate timed artificial insemination (AI) and early embryo survival in cattle. Beginning in 1993 he began conducting studies in beef cattle AI in conjunction with multiple colleagues at other universities, collecting data on thousands of cows during spring breeding seasons until 2019.

He says his goal in researching cattle reproduction was to determine how to facilitate genetic progress by using artificial insemination more effectively and efficiently getting more cows pregnant to high genetic bulls, and using ovulation and estrus synchronization to refine timed AI and increased pregnancy rates using timed AI.

While at K-State, Stevenson worked with several faculty on experiments concerning AI research of beef and dairy cattle.

"One thing to know about Jeff is he is a really early riser and gets to places promptly. I remember, say if we were going to get started at 6 a.m., so to me, that would mean like 6:05, Jeff would have been there for awhile already. It would not even be light out and you could hear gates opening and him sorting cows. You could not beat him to the job," says Dr. David Grieger, KSU ASI reproductive physiology professor.



During his 47-year career, including five years as a graduate student, Stevenson published 197 scientific journal articles.

Stevenson was a contributing monthly columnist for *Hoard's Dairyman* for 30 years (1992–2021), writing more than 275 articles during his tenure, a role he calls his “biggest contribution.”

“Although my research has been important, the satisfaction I felt was the greatest when I would go to conferences or speak with dairy farmers and veterinarians, and they would tell me how much they enjoyed reading my articles written in *Hoard's Dairyman*,” Stevenson says.

“They were written for the layman, about practical topics that would help veterinarians and dairy producers in their reproductive programs. It was very similar to a virtual audience, it provided me the opportunity to teach dairy farmers research-based information that applies to getting cows pregnant. I would use research to direct what people do and I think that is the mission of a college of

agriculture, to base what we do in science and not just anecdotes, or what we think is right. As you get older, you learn, you know less and less about what you thought you knew.”

“Dr. Stevenson was a contributing writer for *Hoard's Dairyman* for many years. His artificial breeding column provided practical research insights to dairy producers,” says Maggie (Seiler) Gilles, former KSU ASI student and *Hoard's Dairyman* associate editor. “He had a special talent and ability to take complicated research developments and make them approachable to dairy farmers. I most clearly recall the way he concluded his column with the encouragement – ‘Happy AI breeding!’”

“During my role at *Hoard's Dairyman*, I ran into Dr. Stevenson several times at meetings and events. My favorite thing about him is that he always had time for a quick conversation to catch up and find out how I was doing. His encouragement of my writing and work was always so appreciated,” Gilles adds.

In addition to his writing, teaching and research, he has volunteered at the Stockmen's

Dinner and with the K-State ASI Family & Friends Reunion. For 30 years was a co-advisor of the Little American Royal, working alongside Dr. Dave Nichols, Dr. Miles McKee, and later, Dr. Scott Schaake.

During his career he has had the opportunity to teach many, both in and outside of the classroom, and has been able to learn alongside and from his students. As a teacher, his advice is to never stop learning.

“You can't separate your academic learning from your teaching. In other words, the more you teach principles, the better you understand them. They [students] taught me to be clearer and more consistent in the classroom so they could understand better. I have enjoyed interacting with students, some are truly interested in learning. I have had 34 master's and nine doctorate students, and they have all taught me something. I have learned patience and to make sure that I am doing what I can to help them learn. I have learned to be more concerned with deep learning of the material, than covering a bunch of material. I think





that is something you must understand as a teacher. You learn that making it through all the curriculum is not as important as making sure students understand and grasp the major principles, and walk away with something they have learned,” says Stevenson. “It is very fulfilling when students come back to you after being in the real world and practicing principles and tell you that they use them and believe them. I think that is a measure of a good teacher, is what your students can tell you in 10 or 20 years.”

## FUTURE PLANS

Stevenson has no definite plans for the future and says that it is going to be a learning experience to figure out what retired life is like.

“Honestly, I am going to miss my job, I have mixed emotions about retiring. My last day of work was June 10th and five days later I turned 71, so I have delayed retirement. You know, right now I don’t have any plans to do anything special, I kind of have to get retired first and figure out what I am going to do with my time. Honestly, it is a little scary, which is why I have not retired before now,” he says.

## BEYOND K-STATE

In his personal life, he is dedicated to his family, his community and his church. He married his wife, Barta, in 1974 while he was attending USU. For most of his adult life, he has been involved in Boy Scouts and earned the rank of Eagle Scout as a youth. He has also received the adult scouting high honor of the Silver Beaver Award. From 1992 to 2019, he was involved

in the local troop through his church and at the district level, which includes 30 Boy Scout troops and 25 cub scout packs, being a District Commissioner and member of the Key Three District Leadership Team. He also attended two separate week-long adult leadership trainings at the Philmont Scouting Ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico.

Three years ago, he stepped away from this role. He says, “Honestly, I miss it. I enjoyed being with the young men and taking them on scouting trips and camps.”

He also has a garden and continues his research into genealogy and family history. He is the oldest son of three siblings and takes the lead in planning family reunions, virtual zooms, and even writes a family newsletter that goes to three generations.

He has been an active member in his church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and is a lay leader who has been called to preside over the congregation. In addition, he and his wife volunteered monthly for 10 years at their temple in Kansas City.

“My job has been really fun. Being a professor is probably the best job in academia. I have had colleagues that have become department heads and administrators, but they always said that the best job is being a professor. And what I have always liked about it is the interaction with young people in the classroom. I get to work closely with graduate students and, of course, animals. It has really been a fun career,” Stevenson says with a smile. **K**





# FAMILY FOOD

*Family. Friends.  
Fellowship.  
Great food. Four  
characteristics that  
made the 2022  
reunion memorable.*

*Cox Bros. BBQ and Coco Bolos in Manhattan catered the food for the evening. On the menu: pulled pork, smoked KC strip loin, herb roasted chicken and sides including garden salad, pineapple coleslaw, cajun creamed corn and roasted red potatoes. In addition, a little rancher's meal featured macaroni and cheese, a hot dog or hamburger and a dessert was offered to the future K-Staters. Call Hall ice cream served by the K-State Livestock Judging Team topped off the evening.*



# LIFETIME SERVICE

*Pope retires after 45 years at K-State.*

BY: JESSICA JENSEN



**F**orty-five years of service and thousands of memories later, Dr. Ron Pope retired from Kansas State University in June 2022. During his career he oversaw several activities and unique jobs that made the Animal Sciences and Industry department work.

“I tell everybody I am from Oklahoma and Texas,” Pope says. He was born in Oklahoma and moved to Texas when he was in high school. His family had a small cow herd and he actively showed cattle, sheep and pigs in 4-H. After high school, he attended Tarleton State University for one year then transferred to Oklahoma State University where he graduated with his bachelor’s degree. With the completion of his undergraduate degree, he went on to Texas A&M University and completed their master’s agriculture program.

Pope met his wife, Nita, during his time at OSU. They have three sons and one daughter who all attended K-State. On their family farm they raise cattle and sheep with a couple horses. His kids grew up showing cattle, sheep and pigs in 4-H. Pope was an active leader in their 4-H club and at church.

Pope joined the K-State ASI department as a research assistant for the Beef Research Unit in 1977. He managed the unit while also working on his doctorate. After 15 years at the unit, he assumed the role as farm shop manager for the next few years, then took a break and returned six years later.

In 1992, he began teaching ASI 105 — Animal Sciences and Industry Lab. Pope says he enjoyed being able to answer students’ questions and being able to see the students understand and recognize the difference in the livestock.

When he first began teaching, he had approximately 50 advisees. Pope explains what he enjoyed most about advising was getting to know them and find out about where they are from and their operations.

## BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

He was the Block & Bridle advisor for 25 years. “Dr. Pope was a major influence on me during my time at K-State,” says Taylor Belle Matheny, former K-State Block & Bridle president. “His guidance to our club and me as a student was tremendous as we navigated each year.”

While advising Block & Bridle, he attended and planned several conferences. He enjoyed listening to the speakers and getting to meet with members from across the country. Pope was always there to pitch in when students needed him or to answer questions at meetings.

With his focus on teaching and advising, Pope had several other duties during his time at K-State. Giving tours to school groups, prospective students and international groups is something he enjoyed. Setting up for Cattlemen’s Day and the ASI football tailgates were a couple more of his responsibilities each year.

“About 15-18 years ago it became Ron and I’s responsibility to hang the screen for Cattlemen’s Day,” says Tim Carson, ASI computer systems specialist. “We get to go up on the catwalk and hang the screen for Cattlemen’s Day and junior days.” Pope enjoyed his time of setting up the screen and being more involved on campus.

“So, like a lot of other things I inherited it,” Pope says about the ASI tailgates. He enjoyed being able to get reacquainted with the alumni and talk to new people. Serving around 400 people per game meant that he was able to reconnect with lots of them.

Besides taking trips for Block & Bridle, he was a chaperone on several international trips. One trip was to South Africa, there they visited various livestock operations.

“I was supposed to lead the group and I was reading the signs when the students just started taking off,” Pope recalls. “One of the girls said that Dr. Grieger should be in the front, so I was moved to the back to keep count.”

## MAKING AN IMPACT

During his time at K-State, Pope impacted several students and faculty, whether it was through Block & Bridle, tours, class or trips.

“From a student’s perspective, his impact in mentoring the next generation will be remembered for years to come,” Matheny says. “Any time I had a conversation with Dr. Pope, I always took something away that would better me personally or professionally.”

Pope was always willing to help answer questions or help on any projects asked of him.

This is how he attained so many unique jobs through the years. “I think there are a lot of things that he did that no one noticed, and I think that he taught 105 for so long that he has impacted so many kids,” Carson adds.

Pope’s retirement plans include working on the family farm with the livestock and spending time with his wife, children and grandchildren. He plans to still attend all ASI events that he can. “I will miss seeing everybody and the friends that I have made over the years,” he says.

Pope’s legacy at K-State will live on in the minds of his friends, students and co-workers.

“Dr. Pope has had a tremendous impact on the K-State ASI department,” Matheny summarizes. “His willingness to pitch in and help out was always an asset to the department.” **K**





# CALL HALL

# Purple Pride

*Chocolate, vanilla, strawberry and, of course, Purple Pride – no KSU ASI event is complete without Call Hall ice cream. Attendees enjoyed their treat as they watched the Cats defeat Iowa State in the “Farmageddon” football game.*



NEW FACULTY

# A WILDCAT Welcome

*Three new faculty members join Kansas State University Animal Sciences and Industry Department.*

BY: JILLIAN KELLER



DR. WILLIAM BROWN



DR. LOGAN THOMPSON



DR. JASON WARNER



**A**dairy nutritionist, a sustainable grazing systems specialist and an extension cow-calf specialist walk onto the Kansas State University campus. What do they have in common? They all just started their first day of being a faculty member in the Animal Sciences and Industry (ASI) Department.

In August, ASI welcomed Dr. William (Billy) Brown, Dr. Logan Thompson and Dr. Jason Warner — a trio who come to K-State with great knowledge and experience to share.

## **DR. WILLIAM BROWN**

Brown, assistant professor of dairy cattle nutritional physiology, grew up on his family's small beef and hay operation in Louisiana, Texas and Kansas. His passion for dairy came from working summers in the milking parlor at Tarleton State University, where his father was a dairy science professor.

"He would take me out there in the afternoons when they were milking and put me in the parlor with one of the students and I just thought that was the coolest thing ever," Brown says. "It is what hooked me on the dairy cattle industry."

From there, Brown decided to exhibit Jersey and Holstein heifers.

"I never did great with them, but it was still a blast and I used that to fuel my interest in the dairy industry," Brown says.

Brown attended K-State for his ASI undergraduate degree. While at K-State, he was a member of the dairy judging team, involved in the dairy science club and participated in events like Little American Royal.

After obtaining his bachelor's degree, he attended Michigan State University for his master's in dairy cattle nutrition.

"There I realized I wanted to expand my work experiences beyond science, so I found a job in ag marketing at KDA (Kansas Department of Ag)," Brown says. "It was a lot of fun and I got to promote dairy in Kansas and got to help Kansas be one of the fastest growing dairy states."

Although Brown enjoyed his time at KDA, he felt it was time for a change of pace. He decided to return to K-State for his doctorate in dairy cattle nutrition and then landed at the University of Wisconsin for his postdoctoral.

"It was so neat to be in the midst of that dairy culture in Wisconsin where everybody there is focused on dairy," Brown says.

Then the three positions opened at K-State for teaching and research.

"I decided to apply and was one of the lucky ones who got it," Brown says.

He will spend his time coaching the dairy judging team, teaching and doing research over dairy cow nutrition and nutritional physiology.

"I'm looking forward to trying to make K-State a destination for students interested in dairy, whether they are from Kansas or abroad and sparking a lot of interest in students," he says. "I'm really excited and honored to be here."

## **DR. LOGAN THOMPSON**

Thompson, assistant professor of sustainable grazing systems, is originally from central Texas where he grew up on a registered Hereford ranch. After leaving the ranch he started his educational journey.

"I started at Sam Houston State University and finished my undergrad at Texas Tech where I did some feedlot research, and then did my masters at Oklahoma State," Thompson explains. "After that, I did my Ph.D. at Michigan State and worked on how grazing management impacts nutrient cycling and greenhouse gas emissions then ended up at Colorado State for my postdoc."

Thompson comes to K-State with immense knowledge of sustainability and greenhouse gas emission mitigation and quantification and will use his expertise from both a research lens and a teaching perspective.

"I have always had a lot of respect for this department," Thompson says. "Having been around kind of everywhere at this point, you start to get an understanding of where K-State fits into the larger context of animal science departments and everybody has a lot of respect for it. Honestly, it feels like a little bit of an honor to get chosen to come here."

## **DR. JASON WARNER**

Warner, extension cow-calf specialist, is originally from Arapahoe, Nebraska, where he grew up on a cow-calf farm and diversified farming and ranching operation.

"I was really active in youth animal science events like 4-H and FFA as a kid and that kind of helped generate some interest in wanting to do animal science and livestock production for a potential career opportunity," Warner says.

Warner obtained his bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln before working for a private consulting company based out of Nebraska.

“There I primarily served cow-calf producers, backgrounding operations, stocker operators, feedlots and also did some feed mill consulting,” Warner explains. “So, I got involved with things like feed formulation and product development and helped out on the technical support side for mills and manufacturers which was also part of what I did in that role before I had an opportunity to come here.”

Warner’s primary role at K-State is to work as part of the beef extension team, whose core focus is doing beef extension work to help support the mission of our land grant university. He will work alongside both on-campus and off-campus faculty to help convey research generated at K-State to the industry and be a primary resource for local county extension agents and producers.

“The main goal that I have is to help be impactful with my extension programming

and research that we are conducting and to provide information that is applicable for folks to take and implement in their operations,” Warner says. “And to help folks utilize the information that we are generating here so they can make more informed management decisions to help improve long-term success and sustainability of their cattle operations.”

Several things piqued Warner’s interest in the position at K-State, but it was ultimately the unique resources that are available to both students and staff, as well as the people, that sealed the deal.

“I think K-State is a university that has a very strong animal science department that is heavily supported by stakeholders and is a well-respected institution,” Warner says. “One that I think has a lot of support in terms of not only funding, but it has a lot of very good opportunities to collaborate with people and access to great facilities.”

With Warner’s closet initially lacking the color purple or any sort of K-State gear, he’s looking forward not only to continuing to expand his closet but also meeting more citizens and stakeholders from around the state and understanding how K-State needs to serve them best in the future.

“When I think about land grant institutions, they are really about service to the people not only in our state but across the country,” Warner says. “I’m just fortunate and very thankful to have the opportunity to help support that mission.”

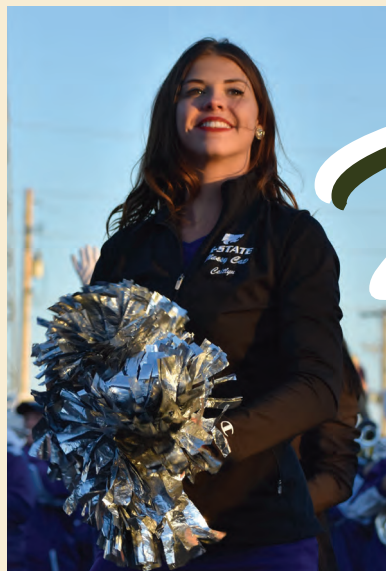
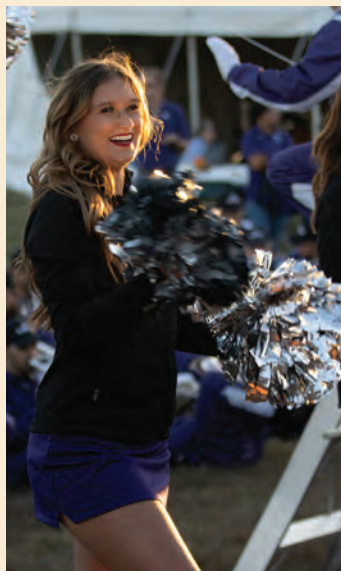
Dr. Cassie Jones, K-State ASI professor and teaching coordinator, says, “We are really excited about Logan Thompson because he has this depth of training in sustainability, beef systems management and carbon management which is a piece we haven’t had on faculty previously. We are also really excited to have Billy Brown back on campus, someone who bleeds purple and is very respected in the dairy industry, as well as Jason Warner who I’m excited to bring into the beef program collectively because he is a really well-respected beef cattle producer and extension specialist.”

Each one of these individuals brings exciting new knowledge and skills to KSU ASI.

“I’m really excited because I think they bring a new level of excitement, passion and perspective because they all are relatively recently out of school,” Jones adds. “But at the same time, they bring a great perspective from very well-trained institutions and help us offer the best knowledge and training to our students and stakeholders.” K







# MUSICAL *Memories*

*The beautiful fall evening weather set the perfect scene for the sound of the Pride of Wildcat Land and Too Many Degrees bands, that provided the soundtrack for the 2022 K-State ASI Family & Friends Reunion.*





# SUPPORTING THE *Land Grant Mission*

*New Arena, modernized Horse Unit, Ag Innovation projects being planned.*

BY: KAMI MCCOMB



*Proposed Animal Science Competition Arena that will be located adjacent to the Stanley Stout Center north of campus.*



*Proposed renovated Horse Unit.*

A dream coming closer to reality. A project in the works for the past 20 years is making strides toward breaking ground — enhancements to the Horse Unit and the development of an Animal Science Competition Arena. The purpose of this initiative is to build a new Animal Science Competition Arena and modernize the K-State Horse Unit that supports the Department of Animal Sciences and Industry (ASI) teaching and extension efforts.

The current plan represents the vision of the Equine Facilities sub-committee of the Livestock and Meat Industry Council Inc (LMIC). This committee is chaired by Dr. Justin Janssen, LMIC vice president, and co-chaired by Dr. Mike Day, ASI department head. The sub-committee includes six LMIC board members and representatives from the ASI equine program, rodeo and livestock judging. The new Arena and Horse Unit updates are the result of more than two years of

planning by the committee to define the scope of facilities that will best serve ASI in the future.

Day says the planned Arena, to be situated among the Stanley Stout Center, Purebred Beef Unit, K-State Rodeo facilities and Burtis Arena, will round out the Animal Science Gateway area. Adding the Arena to the Animal Science Gateway will contribute to the collective animal and product facilities that support ASI programs.

“The ASI animal facilities located north of Weber Hall and the animal products plants (Meat Lab and Dairy Product Lab) on campus provides essential hands-on training for the next generation of animal and food scientists,” Day says. “They are requisite for research discovery, translation of discoveries to technologies and applied research. Further, these facilities are essential to support the extension components of our land grant mission in ASI.”

The new Livestock Competition Arena is planned to include a 130-by-250-foot indoor arena with seating capacity of approximately 3,000; temporary housing for livestock to be used for teaching and to support the annual

collegiate rodeo; an 80-by-80-foot staging area connected to the main facility; and many other components to support the activities. The arena will be the site for the K-State College Rodeo and is envisioned to be used for other rodeo events, livestock shows and related animal agriculture activities.

Day says some of the ASI activities that may transition to this site include, but are not limited to, the Little American Royal, Cattlemen's Day, Kansas 4-H Livestock Sweepstakes and livestock judging contests.

Major renovations of the Horse Unit planned include adding teaching space, replacing the headquarters and breeding facility and adding a stall barn. The result will be a modern equine breeding and training facility equipped to support the extensive and expanding educational opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students in ASI and veterinary medicine. These improvements will augment the current equine breeding program, which is a joint effort between ASI and the College of Veterinary Medicine.

"The opportunities this will provide to educate ASI and veterinary students with hands-on, real practice experiences in equine breeding are highly valuable," Janssen says. Furthermore, the capacity to offer more equine industry workshops and other outreach education will be increased.

A later phase of enhancements to the new Arena project and Horse Unit include more animal housing adjacent to the arena and additional facility and pen upgrades at the Horse Unit. The Arena and Horse Unit renovation are two of many components of

a major and multifaceted strategic vision to build and renovate facilities for the K-State College of Agriculture. This effort, collectively referred to as the "Ag Innovation Initiative," will invest in agriculture, which represents Kansas' largest economic driver.

Other aspects of the Ag Innovation Initiative will directly impact ASI programs. ASI includes the animal and food sciences and is housed in Weber and Call halls. A new building, currently referred to as the Global Center for Grain and Food Innovation, will physically connect Weber and Call. This building will relocate the current Grain Science and Industry Department from Shellenberger Hall, and enhance opportunities for animal, meat, food, feed, bakery, milling and other scientists and industry to work together toward training future agricultural scientists. Major renovations and replacements of classrooms, laboratories, meat and dairy product labs, public areas, and other improvements in both Weber and Call halls are included in this initiative.

"It is an exciting time for K-State, the college of agriculture, and the department of animal sciences in terms of upgrading facilities to support the teaching,

research and extension missions," Day says. "These projects will have major, positive impacts on many of the student, youth and stakeholder programs that are core to ASI and K-State."

The potential timeline for the construction of the Global Center for Grain and Food Innovation and the Weber and Call renovations is to start in spring 2024 and the Arena and Horse Unit construction is to start winter 2024. Fundraising is currently taking place for these exciting projects, with core donors already identified.

To learn more about this project, visit: <https://ksufoundation.org/agmatch/> 



*Proposed Global Center for Grain and Food Innovation.*

# THANK YOU

## Sponsors

### PLATINUM



**KELLY AND MARCIE LECHTENBERG & FAMILY**

The Lechtenbergs are members of the KSU Foundation Board of Trustees. Kelly is also a LMIC Royal Board member. The Lechtenberg family are founding and continuous supporters of the Family & Friends Reunion to honor the purple magic of the K-State experience, which can help foster lifelong relationships through the power of mentorship, education and friendship that makes all of us part of the K-State family. The Lechtenberg family was recognized as the 2020 Don L. Good Impact Award winner for their dedication to K-State and animal agriculture.

**D**rs. Kelly and Marcie Lechtenberg are proud supporters of K-State's missions. The family's passion for K-State began when Kelly entered veterinary school in 1983 while Marcie was teaching at Riley County High School. Marcie earned her master's while Kelly completed his DVM degree in the College of Veterinary Medicine and PhD program in the College of Agriculture.

Kelly's educational background was critical to founding companies in Nebraska, Kansas and Iowa that provide research services focused on the development and regulatory approval of safe, efficacious products for food-producing animals. Marcie serves as the clinical director for the Couple and Family Therapy Program in the College of Health and Human Sciences.

Although not native to Kansas, the Lechtenberg daughters and their husbands are all K-Staters. Jana is a guidance counselor in the Manhattan High School system. Her husband, Drew, is the owner of The Barn Baseball Academy. Drs. Brooke and Charley Cull both serve as vice presidents and research scientists from their home in Oakland, Nebraska. Youngest daughter, Dr. Paige Andersen, opened TimberCreek Veterinary Hospital on the east side of Manhattan in 2016. Paige's husband, Max, owns Andersen Farrier Service as a Journeyman Farrier. The Lechtenberg family holds 18 K-State degrees. More will likely follow, as four grandsons (Jackson, Carter, Cannon & Mason) and two granddaughters (Madeline & Emily) can all be seen wearing a lot of purple.



## **GOLD** **DAN & BETH BIRD**



Dan and Beth Bird are no strangers to Kansas State University, and their legacy of philanthropic support, leadership and service in so many different colleges and programs is impressive. Dan received his degree in animal husbandry from K-State in 1962. Beth earned her degree in business administration from K-State in 1961.

The couple resides in Manhattan, Kansas. Dan is a part owner in Pratt Feeders, Ashland Feeders, Buffalo Feeders and Ford County Feeders. Beth is enjoying retirement.

Dan is a past member of the Alumni Association Board of

Directors. Both are lifetime members of the Alumni Association and members of the Beach Museum Board of Visitors, of which Beth is past chair. They are members of the Manhattan Catbackers. Beth served on the board for Hale Library, and both Dan and Beth served on the College of Agriculture's Innovation and Inspiration Campaign steering committee. They are also supporters of K-State Athletics, the K-State Gardens and McCain Auditorium building projects, and the K-State ASI Family & Friends Reunion.

Since Dan's first gift of \$10 in 1964, Dan and Beth have established five named funds and scholarships in the colleges of Agriculture and Business Administration, and across K-State. In 2018 the couple was awarded the K-State Medal of Excellence, which recognizes those who have advanced K-State through exceptional service, leadership and philanthropic contributions.

The couple has two children and two grandchildren.

## **GOLD** **RICHARD PORTER**



Richard Porter owns and operates a grazing and backgrounding operation located approximately 60 miles southeast of Manhattan, Kansas. He receives around 8,000 head of three-weight, high-risk calves annually and grows them out to eight-weights. For most of the year, the cattle are on native grass supplemented with distiller's grains. By mid-winter, the calves are in a drylot receiving corn silage.

Known for being an independent thinker, Rich has two degrees from Kansas State University — Chemical Engineering and Master of Agribusiness (MAB). He also holds a law degree. Rich has participated in numerous cattle

research trials with the Animal Sciences and Industry (ASI) department and is a proud member of the Livestock Meat Industry Council (LMIC) Board of Directors.

A staunch supporter of the K-State ASI department, Rich generously served as the lead donor for the Stanley Stout Marketing Center construction project. The Stanley Stout Center is currently used for a multitude of purposes, including serving as the venue for the K-State ASI Family & Friends Reunion.

Rich has three children and five grandchildren.

## **FOOD**

**ALMA CREAMERY, ALMA, KANSAS**  
**GOOD FARMS, OLSBURG, KANSAS**  
**HILDEBRAND FARMS DAIRY, JUNCTION CITY, KANSAS**  
**RIVER CREEK CLUB LAMBS, MANHATTAN, KANSAS**  
**SMITHFIELD, CRETE, NEBRASKA**

## **MEDIA**

**ALPHA MEDIA, TOPEKA, KANSAS**  
**KFRM, CLAY CENTER, KANSAS**

# THANK YOU SPONSORS

GOLD



KanEquip Inc., formerly Meinhardt Farm Equipment, has been meeting the farm equipment needs of Kansas producers for more than 50 years. Jim Meinhardt, who is a proud supporter of Kansas State University, co-founded KanEquip which has grown to 14 locations in Kansas and Nebraska. Headquartered in Wamego, Kansas. KanEquip represents major lines such as New Holland, Case-IH, JCB, and Kubota. KanEquip also sells Kansas lines such as Landoll, Great Plains, Grasshopper and Landpride. KanEquip works with K-State to provide quality equipment that meets the university's loaning, leasing and purchasing needs. Approximately 290 people are employed by KanEquip, and all three members of the management team — Craig Goff, Bryndon Meinhardt and Grant Meinhardt — attended K-State. KanEquip looks forward to continuing its support of the Animal Sciences and Industry department in the future. For more information about KanEquip Inc., visit [www.KanEquip.com](http://www.KanEquip.com).

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# 2022 MEAT JUDGING TEAM

## *Sets New Records*

“As I get older and I look at all of these wonderful end-of-year pictures, I spend much more time looking at all of the great students rather than anything on the tables,” says Dr. Travis O’Quinn, Kansas State University Animal Sciences and Industry professor and meat judging team coach.

“Every day was about getting better. Every day was about correcting mistakes and learning. As a coach, you can’t ask for anything more.

“The legacy they will leave as individuals is even greater. seven students from six different states who, 18 months ago, did not know each other, but who became the closest family that there could be. The growth that each of these students had, the people who they grew into, the difference this program had on their lives — this is what coaching teams and being a part of this program is about.” **K**

Team members (l to r) are: Lindsey Decker, Philo, Illinois, assistant coach; Alex Scovill, Laingburg, Michigan; Charles Bunker, Mebane, North Carolina; Rebecca Donaldson, Berryton, Kansas; Ellie Kidwell, Walhonding, Ohio; Chesney Efling, Highmore, South Dakota; Delaney Shaw, Tulare, California; Riley Krehbiel, Kingman, Kansas; and Dr. Travis O’Quinn, Manhattan, Kansas, coach.

**“THIS GROUP WAS SPECIAL. THEIR COMPETITIVENESS IS UNMATCHED BY ANY TEAM I HAVE EVER BEEN AROUND. THEIR MARK ON OUR PROGRAM WILL BE FELT FOR YEARS AND YEARS. ASIDE FROM ESSENTIALLY REWRITING THE ENTIRE K-STATE RECORD BOOK AS A TEAM AND INDIVIDUALS, THE STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE THEY SET FOR FUTURE TEAMS WILL BE HARD TO MEET.”**

This team embodied excellence all year and had some of the highest scores in the 96-year history of meat judging.

### ALL-TIME MEAT JUDGING RECORDS:

- Only team ever to have four scores above 4,200
- All-time record reasons score
  - 5th, 10th, 15th, 18th highest overall team scores
  - 1st, 8th, 9th highest team reasons scores
  - 4th, 8th highest beef judging scores
  - 3rd, 9th highest total beef scores
  - 5th highest pork judging score
  - Perfect 400 in specs at first contest

### K-STATE MEAT JUDGING RECORDS:

- Most wins ever by K-State team (5)
- Most divisions won (34)
  - 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th highest overall team scores
  - 1st, 5th highest reasons scores
  - 1st, 2nd total beef scores
  - 2nd, 3rd beef judging scores
  - 2nd highest pork judging score
  - 2nd, 5th highest yield grading scores
  - 3rd highest lamb judging score
  - 1st, 3rd, 5th, 8th highest total individual scores

The team finished as the champion team at the Southwestern, South Plains, Eastern National, Iowa State and National Barrow Show contests; the reserve champion team at the American Royal and International; and finished the year as reserve national champions. Additionally, the team had three students named to the prestigious Meat Judging All-American Team.





## Land Grant

# SETTING A NEW RECORD

BY: TAYLOR DIEBALL

a Hereford heifer, Miss Beau Real 7th 30781. In 1976 K-State exhibited Manhattan Gal and won multiple national Angus shows.

With the success of Manhattan Gal, McKee started the first annual Special “K” sale on Dec. 3, 1977.

McKee had the vision to allow students to gain real-world experience through a hands-on marketing class. K-State was the first institution to offer a class in sale management. The sale started as a three-year rotation between the Angus, Simmental and Hereford breeds.

The Special “K” Sale was hosted in conjunction with the Little American Royal. Students were assigned a sale bull to exhibit during the competition and once the show was over, the bulls would be tied outside of Weber Arena and walked into the sale ring later that evening. In 2008, the Special “K” Sale was renamed the Legacy Sale to honor 127 years of continuous beef improvement.

Land Grant was the feature lot in the 2022 Legacy Sale and is the prodigy of KSU Misty 956 ET, which was an embryo donated by Kevin Jensen and family of Courtland, Kansas.

“We decided to flush 956 to Genesis, as he is one of the hottest young sires within the breed. I like the calves he had been siring both phenotypically and genotypically. With his semen being higher priced, we took the chance on a bull that we thought would complement her well and it paid off,” says Shane Werk, K-State Purebred Unit’s herdsman.

Nichols adds, “I must give Shane Werk the credit for creating Land Grant and helping him get to sale day. He made the mating choices that worked and created the best bull that K-State has ever raised.”

K-State ASI graduate Kyle Perez of Perez Cattle Co. summarizes, “The public reception of Land Grant has been nothing but exceptional. He should have a positive impact within the Hereford breed and commercial cattle operations. Being homozygous polled, having 100% pigment and having that impressive genetic script will generate influence throughout the country.” **K**

**T**he atmosphere was electric as history was made on March 4, 2022, at the Stanley Stout Center when KSU Land Grant sold for a record-setting \$43,000.

“I was grinning ear-to-ear when he went past \$10,000,” says Dr. Dave Nichols, Kansas State University Animal Sciences and Industry professor emeritus and former K-State Purebred Unit facility advisor. “I was shocked when he brought \$43,000.”

Land Grant was purchased by STgenetics, Delaney Herefords, Dvorak Herefords and Perez Cattle Co.

This sale marked a milestone as the 45th annual, showcasing the hard work that Dr. Miles McKee started in 1977.

In 1881 K-State purchased Eyebright 4th 7131, an Angus heifer, then in 1888, they purchased a Hereford bull, Parley 30782, and

# ASI Mentors RECRUITING THE NEXT GENERATION

BY: TORI WHITE



**E**ngaging and guiding potential Kansas State University Animal Sciences and Industry (ASI) students and sharing their own experiences as K-State ASI students is the role of the newly formed ASI Mentors. The Mentors are a select group of ASI undergraduate students volunteering their time and talents in engaging with prospective students and their families as well as industry and university stakeholders.

The group was organized in the fall 2021 with four inaugural Mentors. “We were looking for a diverse group of students to help with this volunteer leadership role,” says Dr. Karol Fike, K-State ASI faculty member and ASI Mentors advisor. “This program is not to be confused with Ag Ambassadors, but instead is focused on the ASI department and compliments the Ambassadors who act on a college level.”

Mentors help with department visits, unit tours and events where they can engage with prospective students and their families.

“This experience has been tremendous and a glimpse into the work of our department,” says Ava Perrier, ASI Mentor. “I can share

how KSU has positively affected my undergraduate career and sharing the department’s wealth of history with prospective students and their families has been bar none. I enjoy helping host students in Weber and Call halls, giving department visits and traveling to events to reach out to those interested in K-State.”

Students can get involved by applying each spring by submitting a resume and cover letter to the organization’s advisors. Finalists are selected to participate in an interview.

In April 2022, a new group of 20 ASI students were selected to represent the department at events such as Kansas 4-H Livestock Sweepstakes, Kansas State Fair, Kansas Junior Livestock Show and the K-State ASI Family & Friends Reunion.

The K-State Livestock and Meat Industry Council, (LMIC) helps fund some of the ASI Mentors recruitment activities.

Along with helping recruit, faculty advisors hope the program helps the Mentors grow personally and professionally.

“I feel this program has helped me with

so many different opportunities in getting exposure within the department and making connections with the faculty at K-State,” summarizes Ivan Bueso-Interiano, 2021-22 ASI Mentor and K-State ASI alumnus. “I also loved connecting with students and sharing my story and hopefully inspiring kids to come to the animal science department.” **K**

## 2022-23 ASI MENTORS:

Tate Anderson, Overbrook, Kansas; Gavin Beesley, Conway Springs, Kansas; Mackenzie Birney, Bucklin, Kansas; Alicia Bohren, Longmont, Colorado; Isabel Bond, Green, Kansas; Taylor Dieball, Little River, Kansas; Avery Dull, Westminster, Maryland; Grace Fike, Westmoreland, Kansas; Elizabeth Fisher, Hahira, Georgia; Kirsten Kahler, Bonner Springs, Kansas; Katie Krejci, Frisco, Texas; Tara Hummel, Cabery, Illinois; Chanae Parker, Manhattan, Kansas; Ava Perrier, Eureka, Kansas; Kara Riffel, Westmoreland, Kansas; Jacob Schmeidler, Hays, Kansas; Charles Shepley, Winchester, Virginia; Sydney Tastad, Rolette, North Dakota; Lauren Thompson, Woodville, Wisconsin; and Macie Weigand, Monona, Iowa.

# DEPARTMENT AWARD *Winners*



**Teresa Douthit**

*2021 Natural Sciences Education (NSE) Outstanding Reviewer*



**Jim Drouillard**

*2021 International Educator of the Year*



**Karol Fike**

*2022 College of Ag Advisor of the Year  
2022 College of Ag Spring Faculty of Semester*



**David Grieger**

*College of Ag Mugler Outstanding Teaching Award*



**Cassandra Jones**

*USDA Excellence in College and University Teaching Award*



**Dave Nichols**

*2020 Purdue Animal Science Distinguished Career Award  
2022 Livestock Publications Council Headliner Award  
2022 Mark and Eva Gardiner Innovation and Excellence Faculty Award*



**Abbey Nutsch**

*September 2022 K-State Charlie Award*



**Karen Schmidt**

*2022 American Dairy Science Association Fellow Award*



**Erin Beyer**

*Larry R. Corah Outstanding PhD Student*



**Larissa Becker**

*Larry R. Corah Outstanding Masters Student*



**Gabri Leone**

*K-State ASI Outstanding Senior*

# FAMILY & FRIENDS PUBLICATION *Staff Members*



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SAVE *The*  
DATE

## OCTOBER 2023

**2023 K-State ASI Family & Friends Reunion**

*Watch for date announcement on our social media channels.*



K-State Animal Sciences and Industry  
*Family & Friends*  
**REUNION**

Kansas State University



K-STATE ANIMAL SCIENCES & INDUSTRY | WEBER HALL | 1424 CLAFLIN ROAD, MANHATTAN, KS 66506

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