

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY ANIMAL SCIENCES AND INDUSTRY

FAMILY & FRIENDS

OCTOBER 7, 2023 | STANLEY STOUT CENTER | MANHATTAN, KS





INSPIRE

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

More than 1,100 celebrated at the Stanley Stout Center on Oct. 7, 2023, 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 2023 Don L. Good Impact Award Winner, Dr. Larry Corah, as well as other K-State ASI family and friends' stories and successes.

Sincerely,

FAMILY & FRIENDS PUBLICATION EDITORS

Table of Contents



04 **DON L. GOOD IMPACT AWARD
DR. LARRY CORAH**
Dr. Larry Corah receives the Don L. Good Impact Award for his influence in the beef industry.

08 **PHOTO STORY:
FOOD & FELLOWSHIP**

10 **ELEVATING EDUCATION**
Three new faculty join the department.

12 **A WARM WELCOME**
The department welcomes three new staff members.

14 **BEYOND THE TROPHIES**
Meat animal evaluation team members walk away with more than just a national champion buckle.

16 **LIFE AS AN ASI STUDENT**
Five Animal Sciences and Industry students share about their experiences within the department.

18 **CONGRATULATIONS DEPARTMENT
AWARD WINNERS**

20 **PHOTO STORY:
BRINGING THE BEAT**



22 PHOTO STORY:
SPOTLIGHT ON STUDENTS

24 ONE OF A KIND
Remembering the historical Weber Arena.

27 IF THESE WALLS COULD TALK
Memories and stories from some who have walked the hallowed halls of Weber.

36 BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE
Ag Innovation project includes new Billbrey Event Center plus Weber and Call Hall renovations.



38 PHOTO STORY:
FUTURE WILDCATS

40 PHOTO STORY:
FACES OF FAMILY

42 THANK YOU FAMILY & FRIENDS
SPONSORS

45 MEET THE FAMILY & FRIENDS
PUBLICATION STAFF



A World of Impact

Dr. Larry Corah receives the Don L. Good Impact Award for his influence in the beef industry.

STORY BY MADDY ROHR

Fitting the puzzle pieces of innovation with tradition in the beef industry is challenging for everyone involved. From incorporating new technology with proven methods to investing in the success of others in the cattle business, one man had a hand in it all — from research in the field to consulting conversations — leaving a lasting impact with every interaction.

Originally from North Dakota, Dr. Larry Corah made an impact both on a national and international level. Starting as a civil engineering major at North Dakota State University in 1960, Corah quickly realized his passions were in animal science.

“I took my first drawing class and realized I had zero aptitude to be an engineer, so I quickly switched over to animal science,” Corah says.

After completing an internship with DOW Chemical focused on a new product to control flies in grazing cattle, Corah took an extension position in Valley City, North Dakota. Wanting to continue his education, Corah applied to graduate school at Michigan State University and received his master’s degree in ruminant nutrition in 1967.

“As I was just completing my master’s degree, there was a gentleman from Australia who gave a seminar, actually on the nutritional requirements of rats of all things, and at the end of his seminar he said that he was going back to Australia to work on feedlot research at an experiment station, and I’d always been interested in international work so that intrigued me,” Corah explains.

After expressing interest in the research being done in Australia, Corah was offered a two-year appointment in producer education and feedlot development in southern Australia.

“There’s a lot of paperwork involved so I didn’t go immediately from graduate school to Australia, but I took a management training program with Oscar Meyer, where I was exposed to everything from selling product to buying cattle to working in human resources,” Corah says.

After gaining hands-on experience in the packing industry, Corah and his family moved to Hamilton, Victoria, Australia, for two years, focused on feedlot research as Australia was developing a global market for fed cattle.

Corah says Oscar Meyer and Australia were the stepping-stones that helped formulate his early career. When Corah and family returned to the United States, they went to Roseau, Minnesota, where he took an extension livestock position for just more than a year. Not ready to settle, they moved to Laramie, Wyoming, where Corah received a doctorate in ruminant reproductive physiology from the University of Wyoming.

With interest in extension, Corah looked into an opening in northwest Kansas.

“Ironically, the day I interviewed, the gentleman that was in the beef cattle specialist position resigned to go into industry and Don Good offered me his position,” Corah recalls. “There was never any committee or interview

process. He offered me the position and sure enough, a week later I got a contract, and I was offered a job to be on campus here at K-State, so I told my wife ‘I

guess we’re moving to Kansas.’”

Corah started his K-State career as an extension feedlot specialist.

“The feedlot industry in Kansas was still in its early infancy and so it was really a neat experience to work with a lot of young feedlot managers and it really positioned Kansas for the future in terms of their role in creating fed cattle and the impact Kansas has on the beef industry,” Corah summarizes.

After spending five years in this position, Corah became the section leader of K-State animal science extension.

“My responsibilities were oversight for all of the extension livestock programs but continued to focus my own activities more in the cattle industry and later transitioned more to the cow-calf side,” Corah says.



When Corah started at K-State, he had no intention of working with graduate students, but the opportunity arose and he advised 27 students in total through his tenure.

“They had a huge impact on both me personally but also just on what we’re able to accomplish,” Corah says about his graduate students. “That was one area of my career at K-State that I really enjoyed. I always said I had the best job in the world and one of the reasons was working with graduate students.”

He also taught cow-calf nutrition at the vet school for 10 years and did continuing education trainings for practicing veterinarians in 19 states and six Canadian provinces.

Through his K-State position, Corah impacted people across Kansas and the nation through field research trials with cattle producers. While the research provided valuable information to continue building the beef sector of Kansas agriculture, Corah said the people are what made his job so unique.

A CONTINUED LEGACY

In 1997, Corah took an early federal retirement from K-State but furthered his impact on cattle producers nationwide as the director of producer education at the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association (NCBA).

Although he planned to retire from NCBA, Corah didn’t end his impact on the cattle industry there. Mick Colvin, founder of Certified Angus Beef®, asked Corah to step into his place as CAB president and relocate to the CAB headquarters in Wooster, Ohio.

Corah didn’t want to relocate to Ohio, so he helped set up a satellite office in Manhattan, where he worked to find the next

CAB president and develop the supply chain program needed for the brand to grow.

“He played an influential role in helping the beef industry transition away from the ‘pounds only’ commodity-minded business it once was into the much more value-based, quality-oriented, consumer-centric business it is today,” says John Stika, CAB president. “He has been a champion for the industry’s transition for cattle feeders and producers to garner more dollars for raising the type of cattle that align with the growing consumer demand for premium beef.”

Stika adds that Corah is constantly helping producers better understand the things that could be done at a ranch level and in the feedlot to better target their cattle for a quality end point. This included researching and communicating about the combined influence of genetic selection, cattle health management, nutrition and the use of implants and other cattle performance tools that can have an impact on carcass quality and overall profitability for individual beef operations and the industry.

“Larry has been and continues to be a leader in the beef business and his influence and contribution can be seen through many of the significant trends currently shaping the landscape of the beef industry,” Stika says.

“While no single person is responsible for all of this positive change, Larry has definitely played a leadership role within this beneficial transformation and contributed his share of hard work and effort toward it to improve the economic viability of many beef producers across Kansas and the nation as a result.”

After 18 years with CAB, Corah retired to

serve the next generation of beef producers. While Corah spoke in Dr. Dave Nichols’ advanced beef systems class once or twice a semester, retiring from CAB allowed him a chance to assist Nichols more in the classroom.

“I enjoyed working with students on the teaching side,” Corah says. “Two-thirds of the students were going back to family operations, so we spent a lot of time talking about the things they need to be successful.”

Nichols said you would be hard pressed to find anyone who has had more experience in the beef industry. From conception to consumption, Corah has been a part of all phases making him valuable to students.

“I owe so much to Larry,” Nichols says. “Frankly, he was responsible, along with Dr. Good, for making a way for me to stay at K-State when I completed my doctorate. And most of the great things in my life have happened because of K-State. I always feel better after I talk to Larry. He is one of the most positive people I have ever met.”

When COVID-19 impacted Corah’s role in the classroom, he decided to step back from teaching, but his industry involvement hasn’t stopped. Select Sires Vice President Lorna Marshall then asked him to work as a consultant, developing a supply chain program for beef genetics that are being used in dairy herds.

“Few people have had as big or as lasting of an impact on the industry as Dr. Corah,” Marshall says. “It’s amazing the impact that his ideas have had, and the significant changes that he helped drive that has made our industry more competitive and more sustainable.”

Marshall explains Corah has been a mentor

to her since college. She describes Corah as unique in his leadership and ability to help create positive change.

“He has one of the largest and most impactful networks in our industry, and it is his ability to leverage that network, bring about collaboration and consensus, and get people working together toward a goal that has enabled Dr. Corah to have such an impact on the industry,” Marshall adds.

THE PEOPLE BUSINESS

Many people influenced Corah’s success and involvement in the beef industry, including his father and advisor at North Dakota State University.

“My father was very progressive and curious and tried new things, so it kind of taught me a lot about the value of trying new things,” Corah says. “The second individual was probably my advisor at North Dakota State University. He got me involved in meat judging and livestock judging.”

As Corah reflects on his travels, he notes that in the nine years before coming to K-State, his family lived in 10 different houses, six states and two countries.

“Never once did my wife say, ‘why are we doing this?’” Corah recalls. “So we were dragging kids around and making a lot of moves and that’s not easy.”

Corah notes his greatest blessing is his family. “My wife Mary, of nearly 59 years, was the rock of the family always holding things together while I spent days on the road,” he says.

Corah has four children — Michelle (Derek) Estes, Tom (Sally), Chad (Becca) and Mark plus six grandkids — Luke, Morgan,

Kaden, Madison, Tucker and Payton (Ward).

Additionally, Good left a lasting impression on Corah that continues to affect his career and the K-State ASI department.

“Dr. Good and his impact on the livestock industry, K-State and in the animal science department specifically, was immense,” Corah says. “He had such an influence on the department here, taking it from being a good department to a great department.”

Corah adds that there are things that he learned and still resonate with him that came from Good.

“One of the great statements he’d always say is, ‘what’s the pulse?’ meaning what are people thinking? What does Kansas State need to do to help people? What are they interested in? What’s going on in the industry? What are their concerns?” Corah recalls.

Corah continues an impactful career in the beef industry with this mindset.

“One of the most valuable things I learned was from the example he set, by being a true servant leader, by investing in people, in always having an open mind, curious thought process that allows others to see possibilities, and by watching him leverage his investment in people to make the world a better place,” Marshall says. “Everyone has a unique role and opportunity and I know of nobody who has come closer to fulfilling their role than Dr. Corah. There will never be another Dr. Corah, but there are hundreds of people like me that will strive to emulate his example every day.” K

*Editor’s note:
Scan to watch
Corah’s award video.*





FOOD & Fellowship

The combination of food and fellowship at the reunion created a recipe for lasting memories. With plates filled with beef, pork and chicken plus dairy drinks and desserts, the menu not only represented the various interest areas within animal sciences but also encouraged conversations and connection. As attendees gathered around the tables to enjoy the meal, they exchanged ideas, experiences and stories, creating a memorable meal for all.





ELEVATING *Education*

Three new faculty join the department.

STORY BY ABI LILLARD

Weber Hall and Call Hall, headquarters for the Kansas State University Animal Sciences and Industry Department, are known for the highly honorable faculty who walk the halls. In 2023 three new faculty joined the distinguished group. Nationally recognized individuals with a passion for agriculture and the people in it, the new additions bring diverse knowledge and experience to the program.

DR. PAYTON DAHMER

Hired to serve as instructor and livestock judging coach, Dr. Payton Dahmer grew up in Nevada, Missouri.

“I grew up as kind of a traditional ag kid,” he explains. “Raising multiple species of livestock and being really involved in 4-H and FFA showing primarily small species.”

It is through these youth organizations where Dahmer developed a great passion for livestock judging. After high school, Dahmer took his passion for livestock judging and advanced it further by competing at the collegiate level. He competed on the livestock judging team at Butler Community College.

After Butler, he attended K-State to pursue an ASI undergraduate degree and compete on the livestock judging team. While competing at K-State, he was a member of the 2018 Reserve National Champion Livestock Judging Team and named a 2018 All-American. He also was

a member of the 2018 National Champion Meat Animal Evaluation Team. Additionally, he received the prestigious F.W. Bell Award.

After completing his bachelor’s degree, he stayed at K-State for a master’s degree with Dr. Cassie Jones, focusing on animal nutrition. While pursuing a master’s, he assisted the 2019 and 2020 livestock judging teams. Once he finished his master’s, he stayed for his doctorate, which he finished in May. While working on his doctorate, he managed the K-State Sheep and Meat Goat Center. Dahmer also helped teach the swine section of the ASI Undergraduate Research Program as well as Sheep & Goat Science.

“When I came to K-State as a student, I liked the family atmosphere within the animal sciences department. Every instructor here treats every student not like a number, but like a person,” Dahmer says.

With his time as a graduate student, he has had the opportunity to work with faculty while also teaching students.

“I wanted to be that mentor for the forthcoming students, like most of those faculty had been for me,” Dahmer explains.

His appointment is focused 100% on teaching, dedicating his time to the classroom — as well as coaching the livestock judging team.

“I liked the tradition of excellence and the kind of standards that this department holds

for its faculty members and its students and so I wanted to continue to be a part of that,” Dahmer summarizes. “Obviously having a great interest in the livestock judging program, I knew that I wanted to potentially coach somewhere, so when the opportunity presented itself to do it here, at my alma mater, I kind of jumped on that. So, it worked out perfectly.”

DR. NICHOLAS WEGE DIAS

New ASI assistant professor Dr. Nicholas Wege Dias hails from Brazil — growing up in a city larger than New York City. It is in Brazil where he began studying veterinary medicine.

Dias earned his doctor of veterinary medicine from São Paulo State University College of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science in 2016. While studying in Brazil, Dias had the opportunity to explore various areas of study through classes and internships to figure out what he was truly passionate about.

“At one point, I was thinking meat science, but I ended up falling in love with reproduction and reproductive physiology,” he explains.

During his senior year, Dias had the opportunity to go to Virginia Tech and complete a six-month internship program. Halfway through the internship, his advisor invited him to complete his master’s degree in the poultry and animal science department. He then completed his doctorate in 2022.

While at Virginia Tech, Dias assisted in extension programs that trained state extension agents and producers on courses about reproductive technologies.

“I got accepted into the program that was called graduate extension scholars,” he explains. “Essentially what that does is provides money for you to create your own extension programs. At the same time, you know you have classes that teach you how to create and perform outreach programs and that kind of thing.”

These experiences in extension development allowed him to gain an understanding of the important role that extension plays in educating producers about the research universities develop. While working on his doctorate, Dias joined the graduate teaching scholars program to also gain the same experience and skills towards the teaching part of academia.

A reproductive physiologist, Dias has a 40% research and 60% teaching appointment. His research program focuses on the ultimate fertility factors of cows to create management strategies for producers that help improve fertility in their herds. He is teaching ASI 400: Farm Animal Reproduction.

“I knew from the beginning that I wanted to go to academia. I was glad K-State was one of the places that had an open position just based on the impact that the department has on agriculture and animal science,” he says. “I knew it was one of the most impactful departments in the United States.”

DR. MACI MUELLER

It is in the Midwest where Dr. Maci Mueller, newly hired assistant professor of animal breeding and genetics, developed her passion for the livestock industry. Originally from Princeton, Nebraska, she grew up on a first-

generation registered Angus operation.

“As a first-generation operation, and the oldest of four siblings, we were really the boots-on-the-ground labor force, which instilled in me a lot of really great qualities of hard work and perseverance,” Mueller says.

It is through her own operation where she got to experience the genetics side of things.

“I really found a love for genetics actually by being involved with submitting data to the American Angus Association and being able to see firsthand how that improved our genetic predictions,” Mueller adds.

Because of the influence on her family’s operation, she chose to follow her passion and got a bachelor’s in animal science at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. After completing her bachelor’s, she decided to pursue both a master’s and a doctorate at the University of California, Davis.

Mueller’s appointment is 70% teaching and 30% research. As part of her teaching appointment, she currently teaches the introduction to genetics course, ASI 500. As far as research goes, Mueller will focus on investigating ways to apply new advanced bio technologies to improve cattle production both from an animal health and welfare standpoint, as well as sustainability and profitability.

“One of the tools that I’m really interested in is gene editing, which involves using molecular tools to make precise changes in the DNA that can ultimately influence traits of interest,” Mueller explains.

With the K-State ASI department’s tradition and recent recognition of excellence, Mueller could not pass up the opportunity to work with such a reputable group of industry leaders.

“When I visited campus, I really did feel what is often referred to as the K-State family. There’s a wonderful sense of community here,” she summarizes. **K**



Payton Dahmer



Nicholas Dias



Maci Mueller

A warm

W E L C O M E

The department welcomes three new staff members.

STORY BY ALEA DURST

Kansas State University's Animal Sciences and Industry Department has a long tradition of planning and hosting great events and making guests feel at home. The department has three new hires who are continuing that tradition.

Emily Grund, ASI recruitment and marketing assistant, joined the staff in November 2022. Katie Smith started as the department's event coordinator in January 2023 and Stacey Chard joined the team in April as the department's administrative associate.

EMILY GRUND

Growing up an hour away from Manhattan, Grund considered no other school than K-State. A passion for helping agriculture tell its story led her to major in agricultural communications and journalism, with a minor in ASI and leadership studies. During her

time at K-State, Grund was a student worker assisting Angie Denton with marketing and communication projects including helping with the annual K-State ASI Family & Friends Reunion. After graduating from K-State, Grund worked as an individual contractor, working with a variety of agricultural and non-profit companies, and served as the marketing and advertising coordinator at KanEquip.

"I've always had a special place in my heart for the animal science department," Grund says. "I really value the people here and enjoy interacting with all the faculty, stakeholders and students within the department."

Grund serves the department through various responsibilities, but her primary focus is on recruiting potential ASI students. She also serves as an advisor for the ASI Mentors, a group of 25 students who show prospective students around campus and the ASI department.

"Recruitment and communications are a big part of my job, but also, what's unique, I think about the College of Agriculture, but also our department specifically is we have so many events that we bring in prospective students for," she explains. "We get so many prospective students at a young age on campus for various events and I work to capitalize on those events that are already taking place on campus."

In her time at K-State, Grund has strived to find ways to bring high school students into Weber and Call Halls and the ASI department.

"Emily has brought much-needed innovation and coordination to our student recruitment efforts," says Dr. Karol Fike, ASI teaching professor. "With her leadership and the efforts of ASI Mentors and the rest of the recruitment team, there is renewed enthusiasm and momentum for the future. Prospective students and their families are seeing and

'feeling' firsthand all the exciting possibilities K-State Department of Animal Sciences and Industry can offer them for a successful future."

Grund and her husband, Callahan, and their two sons live near Wamego, Kansas.

KATIE SMITH

Smith was born and raised in Manhattan. Having grown up with her father working for K-State's ASI department, she developed a deep appreciation for both ASI and K-State. Like Grund, Smith attended many K-State events such as football games during her childhood.

Smith attended K-State and studied photography. Prior to joining K-State ASI she was a catering sales and events specialist for HCI Catering where she worked in the service industry, managing restaurants and ultimately working in catering.

Throughout her time at HCI, Smith catered for events like Cattlemen's Day, Swine Day and the Family & Friends Reunion. "I had experienced a lot of these events and worked on them on the catering side," she explains. "So, coming into this role, I already knew what those events were like and was excited about the opportunity to work here."

When asked how the transition from catering to planning ASI events went, Smith explained it was completely natural and smooth.

"The Family & Friends Reunion was honestly my favorite catering I did every year," she adds. "I would work on tons but that was the one that I was the most excited about. It was the most unique. You had all these different varieties of food and all these people that were just so into this department, this industry. They cared about it and loved it so much that it was my favorite event to work on every year."

Looking forward to their time at K-State, both Grund and Smith want to continue to grow the already long-standing traditions at K-State, like the Family & Friends Reunion.

"It inspires me, it makes me more excited to get out of bed every day and come to work and get the day rolling," Smith says.

STACEY CHARD

Chard has an extensive career in the education industry. She joined the K-State College of Architecture, Planning & Design in July 2016 as an academic advisor. Before coming to K-State, she worked as the assistant director of student advising at Emporia State University, and as an online academic advisor at Fort Hays State University.

Chard has the pivotal role of coordinating various activities within the department. This includes collaborating closely with the department head, teaching professionals, research experts, extension coordinators, graduate program leaders, faculty, evaluation committee members and staff. This position plays a central role in these endeavors, serving as the primary contact for a wide range of stakeholders, including students, alumni, supporters and other affiliates associated with the ASI department.

A K-State ASI graduate, Chard adds, "I really enjoy being able to give back to the department that influenced me so much. It truly feels like coming home."

"We are thrilled to have Emily, Katie and Stacey as part of our Animal Sciences and Industry team," says Dr. Mike Day, K-State ASI department head. "All three bring unique skill sets and experiences to the department." **K**



Emily Grund



Katie Smith



Stacey Chard



BEYOND *the trophies*

Meat animal evaluation team members walk away with more than just a national champion buckle.

STORY BY LAUREN GATZ

For many Kansas State University Animal Sciences and Industry (ASI) students being a part of a judging team is the highlight of their collegiate experience. The K-State judging programs are rich in tradition with a strong history of success. Beyond that, students gain invaluable experiences and connections to prepare them for a career in the agricultural industry.

The meat animal evaluation team is no exception as they brought home their third consecutive national championship from the National Meat Animal Evaluation Contest

in March 2023, following the three-day competition. The contest, hosted annually, brings together the K-State livestock and meat judging teams for the most comprehensive test of students' knowledge of the factors that impact the production of meat from livestock. Team members compete in four different categories: communications, market animal, breeding animal and meats.

"Our team spent months preparing for the contest, whether that was time spent in the meat cooler or practicing evaluating live animals at the K-State animal units,"

2023 team member Ellie Kidwell says. "The competition brings together our livestock and meat judging teams to pool their knowledge and past experiences together."

The team prepares for market animal carcass predictions, live breeding evaluations, meat evaluations, marketing options and pricing structures. All of this preparation paid off when they brought home the national championship in addition to the top scores in breeding, beef, communications, market, swine and sheep divisions.

“Not only has it given me a great basis of knowledge for evaluating livestock, but it also gave me a unique perspective of many different facets of production,” Kidwell explains. “It is a really holistic approach to looking at the agricultural industry in terms of raising production livestock.”

Kidwell, a native of Walhonding, Ohio, was drawn to K-State ASI for the countless opportunities for growth and the family atmosphere. Her experiences on the wool judging, meat judging and meat animal evaluation teams have since become a highlight of her undergraduate career and solidified her decision to come to K-State.

“One thing I will take with me from my experience on the Meat Animal Evaluation Team will be the connections I have made. If I hadn’t done this, I may have never interacted with a lot of my teammates who have become close friends,” Kidwell adds. “The friends that I have made and the time I have gotten to spend with them is priceless.”

As a recent graduate, she knows that her experience on the judging teams will continue to benefit her for years to come. While she is just beginning to see the benefits of her experience on the meat animal evaluation team, 2019 ASI graduate and member of the 2018 meat animal evaluation team, Shilo Schaake has already seen the impact his involvement on the team has had on his career.

Schaake and his wife, Jaimie, currently reside in Garden City, Kansas, where he is a cattle buyer for National Beef Packing Company. In his current position as a fat cattle buyer, his job is to evaluate and purchase pens of cattle at various feed yards.

“Everything I learned while being on the meat animal evaluation team I apply to my career daily,” Schaake says.

For Schaake, being a part of the judging teams at K-State helped him develop important career credentials such as quick decision-making, public speaking and accurate reasoning proficiency. Although he recalls being overwhelmed on the first day of practice, he says it soon became like second nature.

“Meat animal evaluation is challenging because it not only tests a student’s ability to evaluate livestock and meat but it also requires problem-solving when estimating pricing,” he explains.

Although it was challenging, one of his favorite parts about the team was being able to apply what he had learned from his time on the livestock judging team and linking all the factors together. He enjoyed getting to make estimates on the live livestock and then getting to judge them in the cooler the next day. Schaake’s experience on the team also opened his eyes to new career opportunities within the beef industry.

“It sparked my interest in the packing industry and influenced my decision to take an internship with National Beef and ultimately secure a full-time position as a cattle buyer,” he says.

Similar to Kidwell, the relationships Schaake built during his time on the livestock and meat animal evaluation teams made all the time commitment worth it.

“Above all, the value in connecting with leaders of the livestock industry is unmatched. I will always value those relationships for many years to come,” Schaake explains. “I am very thankful I was able to be a part of both judging teams because of the knowledge, lifelong friendships, and industry-leading people I met along the way.” **K**



Ellie Kidwell



Shilo Schaake

LIFE AS AN ASI STUDENT

Five Kansas State University Animal Sciences and Industry students share about their experiences within the department and how they found their home in Manhattan.

STORY BY CLAIRE NORRIS

Q: How did you know K-State ASI was where you wanted to call home?

DUNN

“I knew K-State was the place for me just because of the culture and the people. I had gone on visits to many other schools, and I truly just felt like a number at them, but it felt as if people wanted me here. Of course, you want to be at a place you are wanted to be at and that’s how I felt when I came here. Not only that but K-State ASI has great academics and professors that want you to succeed.”

BIAS

“From my sophomore year in high school I spent time researching K-State. My whole goal is to go to vet school. However, when I saw what they offered for multicultural students and the number of on-campus jobs, it truly felt like it was a place to call home. Not to mention when I visited here, people were so kind, and the campus was beautiful.”

HENE

“I had looked at all various land grant universities that all started as agriculture schools. However, once I stepped on campus, I could tell that agriculture was still very much the center of this university. Not only that but I wanted hands-on experience and from my first class here in the ASI department I got that even throughout COVID-19.”

KAHLER

“I grew up in Kansas 4-H and part of that is experiencing K-State in the smallest level. So, I was not only meeting extension agents, but I was also really involved in the 4-H camps put on as a state. So, I had already been on campus and at Weber Hall many times and so I was always very familiar with the K-States ASI atmosphere. It just felt like home from a very young age.”

WEIGAND

“As a transfer student, I enjoyed the atmosphere here and the small-town vibe you get but still being in a university that is well recognized around the nation. I also really liked how close all the units are and the opportunities that they bring for hands-on experience.”

Q: Why did you choose ASI and why have you stayed?

DUNN

“The main reason I chose ASI as one of my majors is that the beef industry is a big thing for me, as I grew up on a registered cow-calf operation. So, I always knew I wanted to work in the beef industry and even return home to our operation. So, ASI was indeed an obvious answer for me.”

KAHLER

“I have always loved animals and teaching the community about agriculture which also developed in 4-H at a very young age. So, I felt like ASI combined all my interests and was an easy answer.”

WEIGAND

“I had been taking animal science classes in junior college, but I grew up on a hobby farm where we raise, sell and show cattle. I have always really enjoyed working with animals and knew I always wanted to stay in animal agriculture as a career. So, I felt as if ASI was the perfect option for that career path.”



Preston Dunn
St. John, KS
Sophomore



Lailah Bias
Fort Worth, TX
Sophomore



Kristen Kahler
Bonner Springs, KS
Junior



Sara Hene
Aurora, IL
Senior



Macie Weigand
Monona, IA
Graduate Student

Q: Experiences beyond the classroom?

HENE

“I work in the Meat Chemistry Muscle Biology lab with Dr. Chao, conducting meat science quality research. I presented my research at the American Meat Science Association conference, where I placed second in the oral presentation contest. I am now compiling this research into a manuscript for publication. Additionally, I serve as a learning assistant for the freshman meats course ‘The Meat We Eat.’ This course is designed to help students adjust to college life while getting them excited about meat science. I am also a member of the KSU Equestrian Club Team.”

KAHLER

“My first semester here I started working at the K-State Sheep and Meat Goat Unit. The beauty of the units is that they are so close to campus but also how we facilitate the units here is what is extra special. The units are also very much so a community between them and the school. On top of that, I am also an

ASI mentor. I wanted to be able to teach and tell people why I love K-State ASI. Also, to be able to help other students find their home here as well. Through ASI mentors, we get to have one on one interactions with students who are thinking about coming to K-State and I then can tell my story, as I didn’t grow up in agriculture.”

WEIGAND

“I transferred here to be a part of the livestock judging team. I was also a member of an ASI quadrathlon team, where we won at K-State and then got to compete in the Midwest ASAS (American Society of Animal Science) competition and ended up being reserve team. I also attended the feedlot boot camp and I was also an ASI mentor.”

BIAS

“I am in the dairy science club which has opened the door to so many other opportunities. I am also in a club called Minorities in Agriculture Natural Sciences and Related Resources, which has given me a lot of professional experience.”

Q: Any advice you would give to incoming students?

HENE

“Explore all the opportunities provided here in the department, even if it doesn’t align with the future you envision. I truly believe you have something to learn from everybody and everything.”

DUNN

“I strongly encourage you to get involved and find a group of people that you can connect with. Go out of your way and meet people.”

KAHLER

“My first piece of advice is to fail fast. College is new to all of us and anything new becomes a failure, but if you can fail early on in college and learn how to re-adapt yourself you will be far ahead of others. You must get out there and just do it. If you don’t open the door in front of you may miss the opportunity of a lifetime.” **K**

DEPARTMENT AWARD



Jennifer Bormann
BIF Continuing Service Award



Elizabeth Boyle
2022 FFA VIP Citation



Michael Chao
College of Agriculture Graduate Teaching Award
AMSA Distinguished Achievement Award



Joel DeRouchey
AFIA Award in Nonruminant Nutrition Research



Teresa Douthit
November K-State Charlie Award



Jaymelynn Farney
Outstanding Young Extension Specialist Award



Cassie Jones
KSU Distinguished Faculty Award for Mentoring of
UG Students in Research
Mark & Eva Gardiner Innovation & Excellence



Joann Kouba
College of Agriculture David Mugler
Teaching Award



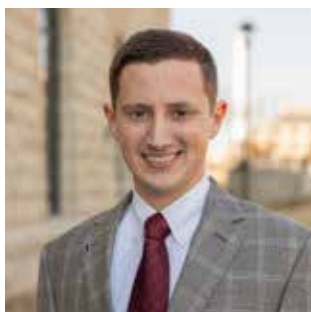
Jason Woodworth
Gary L. Cromwell Award for Mineral Nutrition

WINNERS



Erin Beyer

College of Agriculture Deans & Director Citation
for Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching



Payton Dahmer

Larry R. Corah Outstanding PhD Student



Elizabeth Dressler

ASAS Joseph P Fontenot Travel Scholarship
BIF Baker Cundiff Award



Ashley Hartman

College of Agriculture Deans & Director Citation
for Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching



Zhong-Xing Rao

Midwest ASAS Young Scholar Award



Mikayla Spinler

Outstanding Young Extension Specialist Award



Carolina Velasco

Outstanding K-State Food Science Student



Macie Weigand

K-State ASI Outstanding Senior



Madie Wensley

Midwest ASAS Stahly/Peo Outstanding
Graduate Student Award





BRINGING *the Beat*

A highlight of the K-State Family & Friends Reunion is the performance of the Pride of Wildcat Land Marching Band that captivates past, present and future Wildcats alike. The presence of Willie the Wildcat, the K-State Classy Cats and the K-State Cheerleaders adds an extra layer of Wildcat pride, enhancing the overall celebration of K-State spirit and camaraderie.



SPOTLIGHT *on Students*

The K-State ASI Family & Friends Reunion would not be possible without the help of student volunteers. From ASI club members to rodeo and judging team members, everyone plays a part in the success of the event. These images highlight some of the students who made the reunion possible.



ONE OF A KIND

Remembering the historical Weber Arena.

STORY BY MADDY ROHR



Hosting hundreds of Kansas State University Animal Sciences and Industry events for more than 66 years, Weber Arena has seen it all. From livestock and horses to elephants and tigers, the arena was used to bring animal agriculture on campus, support clubs and activities, and create a meeting place for hands-on learning in the industry.

Opening in 1957, the arena was originally a part of the animal science building, later renamed in 1963 when the complex was dedicated in honor of Arthur “Dad” Weber.

Weber served as K-State dean of agriculture and vice president from 1952-68. In 1966, he hired Don Good to be the ASI department head.

“Weber’s greatest claims of fame was he hired the famous Don Good,” Dave Nichols, K-State ASI professor emeritus, says. “The Don Good legacy, the Don Good addition and ultimately the impact of Don Good all go back to Weber because someone had to hire him.”

LEGACY SALE

Formerly known as the “Special K Sale,” the K-State purebred unit’s bull sale hosted in the spring started in Weber Arena in 1977. Before the Jack Riley Student Lounge was built, cattle were moved underneath the stands, where it was shaped like a racetrack with concrete tunnels. The sale ring was set up on the west end of the arena.

“In one year while Stanley Stout was auctioneering, the power goes out,” Nichols laughs. He noted that it was also very dark because the light fixture hung over the ring also went out.

“This gigantic hanging light was mostly PVC pipe and had all these big floodlights on it, making the sale ring really hot,” Nichols says. “But it did light up the ring, it was really good for that.”

Generators weren’t common, so Nichols says they ran extension cords from Call Hall to the PA system in the arena to keep the sale going. Nichols chuckles as he describes the safety hazard of electrical cords everywhere, but the sale continued.

After 36 years in Weber Arena, the Legacy Sale moved to the Stanley Stout Center.

BLOCK & BRIDLE

The arena was a staple for early Block & Bridle Club meetings including when they hosted the Shrine Circus, selling tickets to the show as a fundraiser. The grand entry of elephants staged on the driveway on the West end of the arena. Lions would be in large rolling cages parked outside the arena. Complete with clowns and zebras, trapeze nets and rings hanging from the ceilings for different acts to perform with.

“I remember one year the lion cages were parked next to a pen of sheep used for an animal science class in the arena,” Nichols recalls.

Block & Bridle also hosted a horse show in Weber Arena in the late 1970s.

“They would have entertainment at the show, and one year they had Leroy Van Dike and the singing auctioneers,” Nichols says. “It wasn’t university people but competitors from

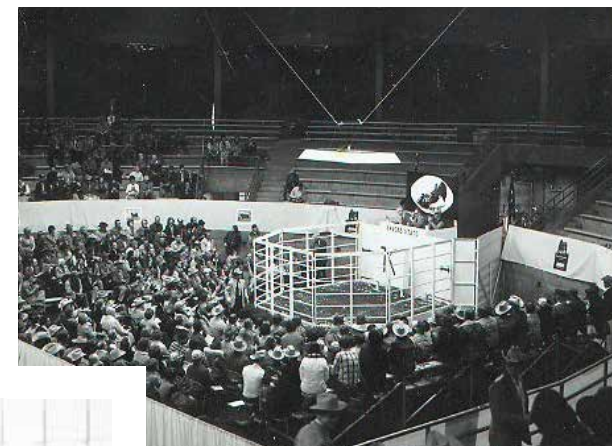
all over came and there would be a full crowd on Saturday night.”

The Little American Royal is one of the longest continued events for Block & Bridle, originally being hosted in Ahearn Field House until Weber Arena was built. Now, the LAR happens annually in the arena during the university Open House weekend, filling the floor with cattle, pigs, sheep, goats and horses.

RODEO

The K-State Collegiate Rodeo was also hosted in Ahearn prior to the construction of Weber Arena, which has been the home to the college rodeo each February since its construction.

One of the smaller arenas that the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association Central Plains region competes in, the crowd is





incomparable. Known for packed stands and the crowd's energy, Weber Arena has brought the western experience to campus for more than 60 years.

"It's really unique," K-State rodeo team member Kyleigh Winn says. "You forget how diverse the K-State campus is because animal science has such a family atmosphere, but other students post TikToks and videos asking why there are people on horses walking down campus."

The K-State Collegiate Rodeo is the only rodeo in the Central Plains region hosted on the college campus and not off-site.

Experiencing the rodeo from the stands, ASI Graduate Student Wyatt Banks says the rodeo is unlike any other event hosted in the arena and something he looks forward to each February.

"For a university to host an event that is packed wall-to-wall, standing-room-only and having that kind of support for collegiate rodeo contestants was incredible," Banks says.

TEACHING

Home of the Kansas FFA livestock judging, poultry judging and dairy judging career development contests, Weber Arena has hosted thousands of youth preparing for a career in animal science. The Kansas 4-H Sweepstakes is also hosted in the arena in addition to the K-State junior beef, sheep, swine and goat days. K-State ASI also hosts the Cattlemen's Day trade show on the floor of Weber Arena.

Beyond events for Kansas 4-H and FFA, almost all the live animal class lab portions are hosted in Weber Arena including Principles of Animal Science, Livestock and Meat Animal Evaluation, Principles of Livestock Evaluation, Form and Function and Animal Behavior in addition to a live cattle handling demonstration for Beef Science.

"The fact that any of our instructors could lecture in introductory animal science or an animal science lab out of a book or presentation and then take them out into the arena to understand the topic on a live animal is a phenomenal teaching opportunity," Nichols says. "The ability to have hands-on learning without using lots of class time is huge."

Nichols added that learning about a topic like the skeleton of an animal on a screen and then seeing the animal in person to discuss its structure is valuable to visual learners.

"We can take a market lamb out into the arena and give kids the opportunity to handle and feel the muscle and fat, which a lot have never done that," Nichols says. "There is a big difference between talking about it and actually feeling it. The arena has allowed us to do that for a long time."

The Jack Riley Student Lounge was built in the southeast tunnels connecting to the main building in 1988 and renovated in 2018. This is a high traffic area used by ASI students for studying, group collaboration and a hangout spot.

The K-State Animal Science Quadrathlon also utilizes the arena floor for the practicum portion, utilizing live animals to test students' skills in animal science.

Weber Arena has hosted thousands of people and supported the department's initiatives for decades. As students and staff look forward to new infrastructure to continue the cutting-edge research and teaching, Nichols says, "it's not as much the building as it is the people and I think we've got to focus on that at the end of the day. The people are what made Weber Arena great." **K**

*Editor's note:
Scan the QR code
to watch a
Weber Arena video.*



If These Walls Could Talk

Memories and stories from some who have walked the hallowed halls of Weber.

STORY BY MOLLY BIGGS

WEBER HALL

ANIMAL SCIENCE & INDUSTRY

Weber Hall has been home to Kansas State University's Animal Sciences and Industry Department since 1957. The hallowed halls are decorated with photos of Conoco, KSU Manhattan Gal, judging teams and trophy cases filled with awards. In 1863, Kansas State University was founded as the country's first land grant university and has worked since to promote the mission of the land grant university. A plaque in the Jack Riley Student Center (Weber Library) reads, "Kansas State, established in 1863 and the oldest Land Grant University, has always worked with the livestock industry to improve production, efficiency and quality animal products to serve mankind. Some of those involved in this cooperative effort: Henry Rogler, Wayne Rogler, A.D. "Dad," Weber, A.G. Pickett, Don Good and Earl Brookover."



Weber Hall

If only the halls of Weber could talk, it would tell the tales of stories past that helped to make K-State ASI what it is today.

Arthur D. Weber was born June 17, 1898, on a farm near Muscotah, Kansas. He earned a bachelor's degree in 1922, a master's degree in 1926 from Kansas State College and his doctorate in 1940 from Purdue University. While an undergraduate student, he worked with college livestock and lived at one of the barns. He was acting beef cattle herdsman for the College in 1920 and exhibited cattle for them at major shows.

From 1922 to 1924, Weber managed a purebred livestock farm. He returned to K-State in 1924 to teach, research swine and complete his master's. From 1926 to 1931, he oversaw sheep investigations at the University of Nebraska. He returned to the animal husbandry department at K-State in 1931 to teach and supervise beef cattle work. Weber was named department head in 1944, associate dean of agriculture and associate director of the Kansas agricultural experiment station in 1950, and dean and director in 1952.

Weber built a worldwide reputation as an authority on all classes of meat-producing livestock. He had a unique ability to evaluate livestock. He was the first American to select the Grand Champion Market Steer at the prestigious Chicago International, an assignment he had for 11 consecutive years.

In September 1963, ASI's current home was named Weber Hall in his honor. He was

a stockman, teacher, scientist, administrator, philosopher and a recognized international leader in agriculture, but above all, a humble man of integrity and exceptional moral character.



If These Walls Could Talk...

SCOTT SCHAAKE

Dr. Scott Schaake graduated from K-State in 1984 with an ASI undergraduate degree. Originally from Lawrence, Kansas, Schaake grew up raising and exhibiting livestock at his local county fair and credits his first county fair as a significant reason he attended K-State.

“At my first county fair, I watched the cattle show and was mesmerized. I mean, I was just like, this is cool. Don Good was the judge. He had such a status of professionalism that you are just drawn to. I sat there and I had no idea what they were doing. My family fed cattle and we had cows, but I wanted to show. So, the next year came around, we brought two steers to the show, and it just so happened that Miles McKee was the judge that year,” he says.

Schaake says he idolized men like Miles McKee, Don Good, Bill Able, Calvin Drake and Bob Hines growing up. He says that seeing them judging county fairs, they are what defined K-State animal science to him and the culture they created is the reason he chose to attend K-State.

“So, I always think back to that first year and how much I learned, and I think about Miles and Don and how, because of their exposure at my county fair, if I went to Kansas State, I was going to be on the judging team, because I wanted to be like them,” he summarizes.

Schaake was a member of the 1982-1983 livestock judging team and coached

the livestock judging team from 1992-2013, leading his teams to five consecutive national championships.

Schaake says it would be incredible if the halls of Weber could talk, mainly because it would tell us the why.

“I think that’s the coolest question. I wish they would because I think it would share with us, both the younger and newer faculty, the true character of those who were here before us and the driving force behind why they were here as a faculty. I promise everyone you talk to will say the same thing: they were here to help us students. This is where they wanted to be. And that’s cool,” Schaake says.



If These Walls Could Talk...

JENNIFER (HOTCHKISS) SHIKE

Jennifer (Hotchkiss) Shike graduated from K-State in 2000 with a dual degree in ASI and agricultural communications and journalism. A Washington, Iowa, native, Shike was the oldest of three and began her journey in agriculture as an active member of 4-H and FFA where she participated in public speaking and interview contests.

“I chose K-State because it had a great animal sciences program and had a communications option. I also wanted to be on the K-State livestock judging team coached by Dr. Schaake. I really looked up to him as a livestock evaluator and admired his coaching style. Choosing K-State was one of the best decisions and I found the most amazing network of mentors and friends in Manhattan,” Shike says.

Like many others, the people are what made ASI special to Shike. From Scott Schaake to Angie Stump Denton, she knows her mentors were critical in helping her develop her ability as an ag journalist.

“The people. The program and curriculum are amazing, but what makes it special is that I learned science from people who understand the application of that science to the industry. It’s not just a bunch of idealistic talk. I was surrounded by wise leaders who knew how to make it all applicable. I admired that and strive to do that today as an agricultural journalist. How do I take science and knowledge and make it relatable, practical and applicable in real

life? Great teachers do that. The K-State ASI Department was my family away from home. They made sure I always knew I wasn’t alone,” Shike says.

Shike says these are the leaders that the halls of Weber would talk about.

“So many legends of the livestock industry have walked the halls of Weber. I can only imagine the things those halls have heard – the questions, the heartaches, the celebrations, the lessons learned. I’m pretty sure they’d say, go dream big. You’re in good company here at K-State. Don’t be afraid to fail. Set your goals high. You’ve had the training, you’ve been encouraged, you’ve learned how to work hard. Now go chase those dreams,” Shike says.



If These Walls Could Talk...

SHANE WERK

Shane Werk grew up in West Central Minnesota on a diversified farm and purebred Hereford operation. With a family Hereford operation dating back to the 1940s, tradition was a word that resonated with Werk.

“After junior college, I chose K-State over the other land grant universities for a few reasons. First was the tradition at K-State and the tradition of their substantial contributions to the beef industry. My college years allowed me to make many lasting connections within the beef industry that still last today,” Werk says.

During his time at K-State, Werk competed on the livestock judging team, worked at the Purebred Beef Unit and, in 2004 was the winner of the Beef Cattle Division at the Little American Royal. This is now a “full circle moment,” for Werk.

The plaque that hangs in the entry of Weber, that lists Werks’ name, is now donning the names of students he has worked with in LAR.

“It was a fun experience, but what was most important was what it meant to me to be included on that plaque. It’s a who’s who of the beef industry’s purebred and commercial segments, and it is humbling to be included with folks of that caliber. This is a sentiment that I try to impart on current students whenever that time of year for the LAR rolls around,” Werk says.

Werk says the story of pride and tradition is what the halls of Weber would tell.

“There are so many people that have made such important contributions to the university and industry that have been here, but more importantly, the quality and

character of those individuals who carry on the tradition of the department. I think the walls would have a lot of pride in the individuals who inhabited the building over the years,” Werk says.

Graduating in 2004, Werk made his way back to K-State and is currently the manager of the Purebred Beef Unit and lives in Manhattan with his wife and three children.



If These Walls Could Talk...

CALLAHAN GRUND

Growing up bleeding purple, Callahan Grund, a native of Sharon Springs, Kansas, is a 2018 ASI graduate.

“I grew up on my family’s seedstock and commercial cow-calf operation. K-State was always a special place for me growing up. From Saturdays spent in the fall gathering cattle and listening to K-State football games to involvement in the youth 4-H programs, I always dreamed of coming to college at K-State like both of my parents. I considered myself very lucky to be the second generation in my family to not only attend college but attend it at Kansas State,” Grund says.

K-State pride and livestock run deep in the Grunds’ veins. That very aspect is what makes the ASI department unique.

“The ASI is the true embodiment of the family mantra associated with the university. The department has always been and always will be focused on serving the needs of rural agricultural communities through education, research and extension. To be able to take full advantage of the education component and to have the comfortability of a family environment is something that truly sets the K-State ASI department apart from its contemporaries nationwide,” Grund says.

The one-on-one interactions and faculty advising for each student is something Grund found very special about the department and like his father, Callahan’s advisor during his time at K-State was Dr. Dave Nichols.

“To no surprise by any that have had the pleasure of interacting with him, but Dr. Dave Nichols was the most influential person during my time at K-State. He served as not only my advisor, but also my dad’s advisor. Dr. Nichols helped provide unique experiences and helped position me on the career path I am on today. What meant a lot to me about his leadership and guidance, was his ability to help me navigate situations and my future based on relationships with people. As with many of his former advisees, I still consider Dr. Nichols a very close friend,” Grund says.

Family, relationships and its deep-rooted history in the ASI department made K-State special to Grund and says that if the halls of Weber could talk, it would be on the “best stories ever told.”

“I have always been infatuated with the rich history and tradition of the Kansas State animal science department.

Whether it be the tremendous history of its competition teams, the outstanding faculty instructors that teach lifelong lessons, or the groundbreaking, world-renowned research, the halls could tell a story that could stop any person in their tracks to listen,” Grund says.

“The title of this article is the core of what makes the K-State Animal Science and Industry

Department such a special place. If the halls of Weber could talk, they’d tell a powerful and heartfelt story of the rich tradition the department has embodied since its days as the first land-grant university. Never wavering from the commitment to serving their rural agricultural communities through education, extension and research, to continue to be the best since 1863 has truly been spectacular to see,” Grund says.

Since the halls of Weber truly cannot talk, Grund advises students always to take the time to listen to the stories shared by those who came before us, absorb that knowledge, and retell those stories so that the great legacy of KSU ASI can live on.



If These Walls Could Talk...

JARA SETTLES

Jara Settles grew up in northeast Nebraska on a purebred cow-calf operation. She attended Butler Community College while competing on the livestock judging team before attending K-State and graduating in 2011.

During her time at K-State, Settles was a member of the livestock and horse judging teams, and she had the opportunity to compete in the Little American Royal in 2010, where she was named the Champion Beef Showman.

“My dad participated in the Little American Royal when he was at K-State, and I knew I wanted to as well. I had a great time working on my heifer, which I called Toni,” Settles says. “I also became even closer friends with fellow LAR participants Sam Rucker and Heather (Oentrich) Bruning, during the process. Winning the showmanship was fun, but it was particularly meaningful to see other participants grow their confidence in showmanship.”

If the halls of Weber would talk, Settles thinks they would tell the story of progress.

“I think they would tell a story of progress while still honoring the past. If you’ve ever seen the livestock judging team practice reasons, you’ll have noticed them stalking up and down the halls of Weber with their heads down, talking to themselves silently; what a funny sight. On those many quiet strolls, I couldn’t help but look at the historical, black-and-white pictures of past champions (human and animal alike) that decorated the walls. I loved seeing the faces of old judging teams with names I recognized of kids who would

eventually become industry icons and leaders. Those pictures, over time, have become more reflective of a diverse industry of men and women of both traditional agricultural backgrounds and first-generation leaders. I think a commitment to nurturing and advancing progress and seeking out new talent, while also remembering the roots of where the College of Agriculture came from is what makes Weber special,” Settles says.



If These Walls Could Talk...

BRITTANY (PHARES) NICHEPOR

Brittany Nichepor grew up in a K-State family, as Manhattan was a special place for their family to visit on weekends for football games and a quick trip to Vista Drive-in. She recounts many special memories around campus and even went on one of her first dates with her husband at the K-State Rodeo. Today, Nichepor serves on her local extension board and has four children who bleed purple.

During her time at K-State, Nichepor worked for Dr. Dave Nichols and Michelle Hay-McCammant in Weber.

“They were passionate about helping kids succeed; it wasn’t just a job for them,” Nichepor says. “They pushed me to do so many things I wouldn’t have signed up for on my own. Michelle was an advisor for Collegiate Cattlewomen at the time, which got me involved in many activities. We planned the inaugural Tough Enough to Wear Pink event at Weber, participated in the Ag Olympics and the Little American Royal hosted in Weber Arena. Michelle also encouraged me to study abroad in Costa Rica. When I lost my passport on the plane to Dallas, she worked tirelessly to make sure I would still be getting to Costa Rica to join the group.”

Nichepor enjoyed her time in the classroom just as much as she did in extracurricular activities.

“Palpation class with Dr. Grieger was my favorite class,” she explains. “Dr. Grieger’s way of teaching was entertaining, but it

really helped the information stick. We had a classmate with a birthday on one of our palpation class days and I brought a cake to class. They were shaped and decorated as a bovine repro-tract with cupcakes for ovaries. It was a hit there but probably wouldn’t have been appreciated outside of Weber Hall.”

Today, Nichepor has four children who are all involved in 4-H and she is a club leader.

“I think these are programs that are important to our community,” she says. “My kids have taken advantage of many 4-H opportunities and my nephews have competed in the Sweepstakes events on campus. I think these contests are great experiences for students to be exposed to K-State and develop friendships and passions they would not find outside of these events.”

Nichepor says that if the halls of Weber could talk, they would fill a book.

“If you think of all the characters that have walked these halls, lectured in the classrooms, and rode in the arena it would be a very entertaining read,” Nichepor summarizes.



If These Walls Could Talk...

KORBEN CLAWSON

Korben Clawson is a current ASI student dual majoring in ASI and agricultural economics with plans to graduate in 2026.

Clawson grew up on his family's farm and ranch in southwest Kansas. He is the youngest of five children, all attending K-State.

"Weber Hall is a special place for my family," he explains. "Both of my parents were animal sciences and industry majors as well as two of my brothers. Weber Hall has seen many Clawson's throughout the years. There has been a lot of hard work, whether that be working toward a national championship on the meat judging team or just studying for their next exam. Many hours have been spent in these halls with unmeasurable growth in our knowledge of animal sciences as a family."

Growing up, Clawson was very involved in school, holding many leadership positions while also being involved with 4-H. At K-State he is an ASI Mentor and is involved in Farmhouse Fraternity, Collegiate Cattlemen's and is an Ag Ambassador.

"I chose K-State for many reasons. First and foremost, it is hard not to mention its leading research and studies within the Animal Sciences and Industry Department. I am blessed to live in a state with an institution like K-State and have a world-class program so close to home. With four older siblings attending K-State before me, it is easy to fall in love with the university growing up," Clawson said.

Like many, the atmosphere and the people make ASI special to Clawson.

"The professors and staff make KSU ASI special to me," Clawson says. "It is a great place to learn and have personable relationships with those in your classes. There are so many opportunities for each student to get their foot in the door for whatever area of study they are interested in. The professors are there to help you succeed in your classes and your future careers."

Clawson says that if the halls of Weber could talk, they would tell a tale about legacy and success.

"I think that if the halls of Weber could talk, they would have a great knowledge of the legacy that the K-State Animal Science Department has built. They have seen the history of where K-State started, as well as the future with the college students that roam the halls today," Clawson explains. "They have seen many ordinary college students become some of the top animal researchers across the

world. The conversations that have started in these halls have pushed many students and professors to research topics that have never been touched before. The Weber halls have seen it all and can answer any question about animal sciences." **K**





BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

Ag Innovation project includes new Bilbrey Event Center plus Weber and Call Hall renovations.



The vision behind Kansas State University's Agriculture Innovation Initiative is how driving new discovery and embracing next-generation learning requires interdisciplinary vision and facilities that offer collaborative spaces to enhance the problem-solving abilities of current and future workforces. The \$220 million project includes new facilities, renovations of current buildings and improvements in the technology and equipment necessary for interdisciplinary, cutting-edge research and continue to enhance the college's exceptional student experience.

The Ag Innovation Initiative is the single largest set of buildings project in the history of K-State. "With each facility that we build, renovate or demolish, we are one step closer to creating unparalleled opportunities for our faculty, staff and students to achieve their highest potential and make transformational impacts in agriculture," K-State President Richard Linton says.

Thus far, K-State has raised more than \$93 million toward the project, with an additional \$25 million from a challenge grant and \$25 million initial appropriation from the Kansas legislature.

The initiative also includes building the Bilbrey Family Event Center north of campus in the Animal Sciences Gateway Campus near the Stanley Stout Center. It will include a state-of-the-art arena and facilities for ASI teaching and extension events. This will be the site for the annual K-State Collegiate Rodeo, Cattlemen's Day, and youth livestock events such as Sweepstakes and FFA contests. Groundbreaking for the center was hosted December 15, 2023, with a completion target of August 2025.

Also included in this initiative is a remodel of Weber and Call Halls. "These upgrades will allow students to have hands-on learning on the main campus through the new learning pavilion," says Dr. Mike Day, K-State ASI department head. "This upgrade is critical for the unique learning experiences through classes like Livestock and Meat Evaluation and ASI 105, 106 and 107 labs. The pavilion will have adjacent animal holding facilities and direct access to the fully modernized Meat Lab. These improvements will allow ASI to continue and enhance our use of animals for hands-on experiences and life-cycle evaluation of livestock and meat production."

The new upgrades will improve Weber

Hall accessibility and provide updates to research and teaching labs in Weber and Call Halls. "It will be exciting for our faculty to teach, discover and provide outreach education from modern, state-of-the-art facilities," Day adds.

The initiative will fully modernize the Dairy Processing Plant in Call Hall to meet the needs of the industry, students and researchers. Along with the plant, Call Hall Dairy Bar will relocate to the main entrance of the new Global Center for Grain and Food Innovation, increasing its visibility and featuring all food products produced by the College of Agriculture.

"Students will continue to have access to comfortable studying and integration spaces like the relocated Jack Riley Student Center," Day explains. "Upgrades will also include modern classrooms and new, state of the art 'McKee Auditorium' for the larger ASI courses."

To learn more about the initiative, how you can support the project and to track construction, visit kstate.ag/innovation or use the QR Code. **K**



FUTURE

Wildcats

There is fun for all ages at the K-State Family & Friends Reunion. Kids can play in the Junior Wildcat Barnyard, sign their K-State Letter of Intent or play on the football field. A highlight for many is the toy drawing at the end of the night. These images capture just some of the fun had by our future Wildcats.









FACES *of Family*

Smiles and laughter filled the room as attendees reconnected with friends new and old during the K-State ASI Family & Friends Reunion. The event was hosted on Saturday, October 7 at the Stanley Stout Center. The following photos showcase just a few of those able to attend the event.



Thank you sponsors!

PLATINUM SPONSOR

KELLY AND MARCIE LECHTENBERG & FAMILY

Drs. 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 has recently retired as the clinic director for the Couple and Family Therapy Program in the College of Health and Human Sciences and continues her service as the founder of Innovations in Mental Health and Wellness, LLC.

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 at Midwest Veterinary Services from their home in Oakland, Nebraska, Youngest daughter, Dr.

Paige Andersen, is an owner/manager of TimberCreek Veterinary Hospital on the east side of Manhattan. Paige's husband, Max, owns Andersen Farrier Service and operates a Flint Hills stocker cattle operation. The Lechtenberg family holds 18 K-State degrees. More will likely follow, as five grandsons (Jackson, Carter, Cannon, Mason & Brooks) and two granddaughters (Madeline & Emily) can all be seen wearing a lot of purple.

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.



GOLD SPONSORS

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.



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

TYSON FOODS, SPRINGDALE, AR

SMITHFIELD, CRETE, NE

GOOD FARMS, OLSBURG, KS

ALMA CREAMERY, ALMA, KS

HILDEBRAND FARMS, JUNCTION CITY, KS

MEDIA

ALPHA MEDIA, TOPEKA, KS

KFRM, CLAY CENTER, KS

GOLD SPONSOR



KanEquip is a leader and trusted partner in providing quality products, support, and innovative solutions to agriculture producers in the Midwest. With 14 locations in Kansas and Nebraska, KanEquip represents major lines such as Case IH, New Holland, JCB and Kubota. Additional lines from Kansas companies include Landoll, Great Plains, Grasshopper and Land Pride. For more than 55 years KanEquip has operated on the values of integrity, financial strength, quality and teamwork. Craig Goff, Bryndon Meinhardt and Grant Meinhardt — all attended Kansas State University — lead the company which employs more than 300 people. KanEquip is a proud supporter of the Animal Sciences and Industry Department at K-State. Learn more about KanEquip Inc., at KanEquip.com.

SILVER SPONSORS

Tyson Foods Inc. is one of the world's largest food companies and a recognized leader in protein. Founded in 1935 by John W. Tyson and grown under four generations of family leadership, the company has a broad portfolio of products and brands like Tyson®, Jimmy Dean®, Hillshire Farm®, Ball Park®, Wright®, Aidells®, ibp® and State Fair®. Fresh Meats is the beef and pork subsidiary of Tyson Foods and is a leading supplier of premium beef and pork, as well as allied products, such as tanned hides.



Headquartered in Dakota Dunes, South Dakota, Tyson's Fresh Meats business employs approximately 35,000 people at 25 production facilities. Tyson Foods innovates continually to make protein more sustainable, tailor food for everywhere it's available and raise the world's expectations for how much good food can do. Visit Tysonfoods.com.

Certified Angus Beef (CAB), a subsidiary of the American Angus Association, is a rancher-owned, not-for-profit business. With a mission to drive demand for registered Angus cattle, CAB works on behalf of cattle producers, creating value for quality-based beef production from the ranch to the rail.



Based in Wooster, Ohio, the branded-beef program was the first of its kind and is the original Angus beef brand. To earn the logo, beef must meet our 10 quality standards, certifying that every bite is tender, juicy and full of flavor.

For more information, visit CABcattle.com or follow the brand on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

BRONZE SPONSORS



JUSTIN & MARY JANSSEN

FRANK & MARY HARPER

PAT & SHARON KOONS

EMILY & CALLAHAN GRUND

CHELSEA GOOD

PATRONS

SINK, GORDON, AND ASSOCIATES

PUBLICATION



STAFF MEMBERS

Thank you to this outstanding group of students who helped with the photography and writing in this publication.

The class was sponsored by the LMIC Board.

Pictured (l to r) are: Lauren Gatz, managing editor; Molly Biggs, photo editor; Kady Figge, video editor; Ava Perrier; Maddy Rohr, editor; Claire Norris; Madison Wooderson; and Alea Durst.

Don L. Good IMPACT AWARD



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

Kansas State University



Animal Sciences and Industry

K-STATE ANIMAL SCIENCES & INDUSTRY | WEBER HALL | 1424 CLAFLIN ROAD, MANHATTAN, KS 66506
ASI.KSU.EDU/FAMILYANDFRIENDS | @KSTATEFAMILYANDFRIENDS



Livestock & Meat
Industry Council