frequently, when I mention that I am dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the traditional image of “cows and plows” comes to mind and I’m asked about the role of animal sciences on a suburban campus. As you read through this issue, you will find that the Department of Animal and Avian Sciences at the University of Maryland is providing excellent instruction and practical information based on science through our Extension programs while conducting world-class, award-winning research in a variety of areas.

The Department of Animal and Avian Sciences was formed via a merger of the Animal Science, Dairy Science and Poultry Science departments in 1997. The study of domesticated animals and their related nutrition, reproduction, and behavior have been a constant presence since the beginning of the university under earlier names of Poultry Science, Animal Husbandry, and Dairy Husbandry. While the names may have changed over the years, the principles and functions within the department have stood the test of time: “studying domesticated animals used for food, biomedical research and leisure.” The department currently focuses its programs in four areas: Animal Genetics and Cell Biology, Nutrient Utilization and Management, Animal Reproduction and Development, and Pathobiology and Infectious Diseases. As with previous issues of Momentum, the feature stories in this issue will give you a glimpse of how the Department of Animal and Avian Sciences touches each of us through their excellent work.

This issue also shares the many celebrations that we share within AGNR. Our spring awards convocation and the annual alumni reunion and awards celebration give us the opportunity to recognize students, faculty, staff, and alumni for their significant achievements and accomplishments. Again, this is just a sampling of the many recognitions some of our AGNR family receive in addition to being recognized by their peers in professional societies across the nation.

As always, I look forward to seeing you at a variety of events throughout the year and especially at the AGNR Open House held at the Central Maryland Research and Education Center’s Clarksville Facility on October 6th and at our annual tailgate prior to homecoming at the Campus Farm on October 20th.
It has been said that research is a bit like looking for a black cat in a dark room. Although this may be an overly simplistic definition, there is some truth to the unknown twists and turns in examining science and times of not being able to see exactly the target you’re trying to grapple.

In a university setting such as University of Maryland’s Department of Animal and Avian Sciences, there’s a balanced approach using both basic and applied research, said Dr. Tom Porter, professor and department chairman.

“Basic research addresses questions about the fundamental mechanisms underlying a problem,” he said. “It expands our general knowledge on a scientific discipline, and eventually might be incorporated into textbooks. An example would be a project aimed at determining how the cells of the small intestine absorb amino acids from the diet and how this process is regulated.”

“Applied research addresses an immediate issue and yields results that can be incorporated into management or industry procedures and practices in the next few years,” said Dr. Porter who has been department chairman for five years. “An example would include determining the optimum diet formulation for reducing nitrogen excretion into the environment while maximizing animal production efficiency.”

Through a merger of the animal, dairy, and poultry science departments, the Department of Animal and Avian Sciences was formed in 1997 and has four main research focuses: animal genetics and cell biology, nutrient utilization and management, animal reproduction and development, and the most recent — pathobiology and infectious diseases.

“One of the older people like me fit into several of these,” Dr. Porter said. “The department includes 23 faculty members, seven of them hired in the past five years, and, like the two-pronged approach he described, the research being done is “very basic to very applied. We have to get those grants and graduate students need to be trained” while at the same time there are industries needing solutions to problems, whether it’s aquaculture farmers wanting to know how to store striped bass semen to assure successful artificial insemination, or research leading to new drugs to kill livestock parasites. While basic research may have the luxury of time, with applied research Dr. Porter said, “the quicker the better,” adding that “most of us have more than one project” so that if one slows down, you can be working on another.

Another difference in the two approaches is that “those doing the more basic research often find that after you answer one question, it opens up more questions,” Dr. Porter said. “Applied research addresses an immediate issue and yields results that can be incorporated into management or industry procedures and practices in the next few years,” Dr. Porter said. On the applied side, once you’ve solved the problem you were tasked with, “you’ve answered the question.”

Asked what it takes to be a researcher, Dr. Porter said a common
A passion for puzzles

Also to be included on the list of traits that are common to researchers is passion.

“I can’t wait to get to work, I love what I do,” said Dr. Brian Bequette, who has been at the University for 11 years. “I’m 52 and I feel like my career is just taking off … if I’m not doing research and writing it’s not a good day.”

Dr. Bequette is working on several projects including one that hopefully will result in improved livestock feed, specifically as it relates to nitrogen content, as well as a project that has possibilities for livestock, humans, and wildlife involving in vitro fertilization. “It involves what nutrients have to be available so embryos develop normally,” the researcher said.

Yet another project that has him excited is one involving the National Zoo and cheetahs. The cats produce sperm that is not always viable and so researchers are developing biological markers to avoid implanting sperm that have no chance of resulting in offspring. The zoo currently has six cheetahs, according to a recent article in The Washington Post, and there are only about 10,000 surviving in the wild, mostly in Africa. The International Union for Conservation of Nature placed the cheetah, known for its speed, grace, and beauty, on a list of animals that are considered vulnerable, making research such as that being done at UMD even more crucial.

Dr. Bequette said that when he looks at basic and applied research, “it all has application to the field, it always overlaps. I always have to see the applied part, I have to see a reason for the work being done.

Dr. Iqbal Hamza is passionate about “a small soil worm that’s not even visible to the naked eye,” but is vital to his work on iron deficiency and parasites that make the condition worse. He said 30 to 50 percent of the world’s population is iron deficient, many in developing countries. The obvious danger is anemia, or the inability of the body to carry oxygen to tissues.

“Two things doctors recommend to pregnant women are iron and folic acid, so iron is absolutely critical,” Dr. Hamza said.

The microscopic worm, that has been part of the eight years of research performed by Dr. Hamza, “doesn’t make heme, but it eats it,” in typical parasite/host fashion. Heme is the deep red, non-protein component of hemoglobin. The “punch line,” as Dr. Hamza described his work, “was to devise a way to deliver iron more efficiently to humans and to identify new drugs to kill parasites in livestock and improve human health.”

One of the problems Dr. Jiuzhou Song is trying to crack is bringing Marek’s disease – “a very serious disease in birds” – under control. Caused by a Herpes-type virus and a problem worldwide, it mainly affects chickens, causing paralysis of the legs, wings, and neck, eye lesions, and weight loss. Dr. Song said Marek’s has resulted in at least $1 billion in yearly losses to the poultry industry. Vaccines have been used, he said, but he is researching genomics for a better solution to maintaining healthy flocks.

It is this kind of work that validates Dr. Song’s decision to go into research. “I like my research, this is what gives me a lot of my motivation, keeps me
By Krista Brick

While some kids get the opportunity to raise farm animals their entire life, it took Kelly Brower until college to get the chance to train a dairy heifer for Ag Day at the University of Maryland. It was an opportunity that is just one of the perks of being a student in the University of Maryland’s Department of Animal and Avian Sciences.

More important perks of the program – an 80 percent acceptance rate to veterinarian school for those that apply, an on-campus farm, a new aquaculture lab, and a new high-tech applied anatomy/physiology lab.

Giving the Utmost to Undergrads

Dr. Angela Black, DVM
In fact, the Department of Animal and Avian Sciences is experiencing the results of its program perks with an enrollment that has nearly doubled in the past five years, according to Libby Dufour, assistant director of the undergraduate program for animal science. Current enrollment sits at 280, up from 180 five years ago.

“A large part of our increased number is due to the reputation of the University of Maryland but also with the reputation of our program specifically,” Dufour said.

Nationally, 50 percent of students who apply are eventually accepted into veterinary schools. The program here who apply to veterinary school being admitted.

“Part of that is that the University of Maryland attracts a high quality student and the standards for admittance have increased. The student body as a whole for UMD is improving in quality,” Dufour said.

The Department of Animal and Avian Sciences formed in 1997 with the merger of the animal, dairy, and poultry science departments. Animal science is the study of domesticated animals used for food, biomedical research, and leisure. Animal Science also has a graduate program, offers research programs and options in equine studies and laboratory animal management. So the opportunities here are not just textbooks and classroom seminars. There is real hands-on work being done by students.

According to Dufour, nearly 70 percent of the incoming freshmen to the program start with an eye to veterinary school, learning and interacting with the farm animals which is mandatory that students meet with that advisor each semester before signing up for classes. They develop a relationship with that advisor to find out about new research opportunities.

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That is one thing we hear is that the larger majors don’t have the staff to advise students with the personalized advising we offer,” Dufour said.

Brower, who came to UMD from Gaithersburg, said her advisor helped her to determine that she enjoyed the research side of the profession.

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Another introduction to veterinary sciences course was new this year giving a hard science-based approach to what students should expect if they are going into veterinary medicine.

The school’s proximity to the National Institutes of Health, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the National Agriculture Library are other lures for students looking at unique research and internship opportunities. This year’s graduating class of 56 students with the Animal Science major included many who graduated with top honors from the University.
The department’s research programs range from animal genetics to reproduction and nutrient utilization. With its threefold mission – education, research, and Extension – Animal and Avian Sciences serves not only University of Maryland students but also people of all ages across the state, including young people through the 4-H program and countless others who are affiliated formally or unofficially with the dairy, equine, poultry, and beef industries. Department faculty and staff members conduct research and participate in events that take them far beyond the classroom or lab. Fieldwork – whether Extension- or research-based – builds relationships with arguably the university’s most important audience: citizens of Maryland.

"Extension is important to us because it is our connection not only to the animal agricultural industries but also to the youth in the state who are interested in animal agriculture," explains Tom Porter, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Department of Animal and Avian Sciences. "Those connections help us keep our research and educational programs relevant. They help us fulfill our departmental mission and the University’s land-grant mandate."

Through Extension activities, department faculty and staff members work with trade groups and industry organizations such as the Maryland Dairy Industry Association, the Delmarva Poultry Industry, Maryland Horse Council, the Maryland Cattlemen’s Association and others, Dr. Porter says, adding there is also a lot of one-on-one partnering. "And through the 4-H program, we interact with young people and with many volunteers throughout the state."

Extension, however, is only one of the ways faculty, staff, and students in the department get out in the field.

Associate Professor Roselina Angel, Ph.D., for example, has a special interest in animal nutrition and in minimizing the impact of animal agriculture on the environment. "I joined the faculty at UMD at a time of heightened interest on environmental implications of animal production, in part due to the pfiesteria scare in the Chesapeake," explains Dr. Angel. "Maryland is a perfect place for my research – where our main focus is on maintaining productivity while decreasing the environmental impact of poultry production."
With undergraduate and graduate students as well as five post-doctoral scientists on her team, Dr. Angel conducts both basic and applied research focused on developing, identifying, and optimizing tools to allow poultry producers to maintain or improve productivity while reducing nutrient excretions and environmental impacts. Much of the initial research takes place at the university’s animal research facility in Ellicott City. They set up a rotational grazing system for horses – common for livestock or dairy operations but relatively new to horse farm owners. “It’s a great way to maximize the pasture by breaking up the larger paddocks and rotating a small herd of horses through the smaller pastures over the course of the year,” Dr. Burk’s students and others work the rotational research pasture, which usually has four horses at any given time. Five times each year, people come to the pastures for evening or daylong events called “pasture walks.”

“We bring independent horse owners, people who have farms or run horse-related businesses, and even agriculture service providers to the farmette to learn from forage, conservation, and horse experts,” Dr. Burk explains. “We give a tour, show people how to set up a rotational system, and show them our pastures. We also give them education training on some specific topic and then have them do some hands-on exercise so they leave our events with a practical skill they can apply.” Groups range from 30 to 80 individuals; since the programs’ inception, about 550 people have benefited from these events.

In addition to providing a way to educate the public, the rotational grazing site is a source of data for Dr. Burk’s research. The data becomes a learning tool for her students, many of whom work at the site for practical experience related to their educational programs. “Pasture management, however, only scratches the surface,” adds Dr. Burk. “The breadth of what we do to educate members of the equine industry is extensive.” Other activities include hosting seminars and webinars, participating in industry conferences, and interacting with a wide range of organizations and people.

Dr. Burk gives a great deal of credit to staff member Jennifer Reynolds, coordinator of equine and poultry Extension activities, who provides support to Dr. Burk and other university Extension specialists in the equine and poultry area. “Jennifer makes us all look good,” she says.

Describing her position as both diverse and interesting, Reynolds says she coordinates a wide variety of activities. “As our faculty members are

From Poultry to Horses

Along with her research appointment, Dr. Angel also holds an Extension appointment, as does her colleague, Amy Burk, Ph.D, Extension horse specialist and associate professor. Dr. Burk joined the university in 2001 and since then has been involved in a wide variety of field activities related to her research and to outreach.

“When I first came to the university, we conducted an educational needs assessment of the horse industry in Maryland,” says Dr. Burk. “It turned out that the number two need was in one of my areas of expertise: pasture management.”

Explaining that because of urban sprawl in Maryland people are managing animals on smaller pieces of property, Dr. Burk says horse owners and farmers need to be creative. “We want to help people use their pastures not only for exercise but also for nutrition. I try to teach equine enthusiasts how to better take care of their pastures so they can reduce feed costs, use pastures as a forage source, and also to be aware that keeping healthy pastures is good for the environment.”

In 2007, responding to a clear need in the state, Dr. Burk and her team created a life-like, 5.5-acre farmette/research facility in Ellicott City. They set up a rotational grazing system for horses – common for livestock or dairy operations but relatively new to horse farm owners. “It’s a great way to maximize the pasture by breaking up the larger paddocks and rotating a small herd of horses through the smaller pastures over the course of the year.” Dr. Burk’s students and others work the rotational research pasture, which usually has four horses at any given time. Five times each year, people come to the pastures for evening or daylong events called “pasture walks.”

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Jennifer Reynolds

Equine Research Unit Manager.

From left to right, Jennifer Reynolds, Dr. Amy Burk, and Tim Shellem, Equine Research Unit Manager.
planning Extension events they want to host – educational events and opportunities for the public – I coordinate those events and make them happen," Reynolds says. “It’s important to get the work our researchers are doing out to the public and the producers so they can actually use the information," Reynolds says. “By connecting with the public, we can help people do a better job producing eggs or meat birds or a better job in handling needs they have with their horses – horse health, horse management, pasture management.”

The department’s other Extension coordinator, Kiera Finucane, supports outreach activities related to the dairy and beef industries.

“I support our dairy breed associations in the state and coordinate the state 4-H dairy bowl – a jeopardy-like contest on dairy science topics for our youth,” Finucane explains. “I also coordinate the 4-H dairy judging program at the state fair.

“Our department has continued to put an emphasis on hiring people who are interested in Extension and in youth development work,” adds Finucane. “Given the budget climate we’re in, we have remained committed to making sure our youth have the best possible experiences and opportunities.”

A Continuing Commitment

Research and activity approaches differ and are tailored based on the industry and the needs of the audience, explains Dr. Porter. “Our approach to poultry Extension for example has been through direct engagement with the poultry industry. Dr. Angel’s work is very applied research oriented as is the work of Dr. Nick Zimmerman, who does some small flock work and biosecurity work to prevent the transfer of diseases among birds.” Conversely, on the equine side, Dr. Porter explains, “though we have thousands of horse farms in the state, we have a lot of people in a very non-integrated industry. Dr. Burk and her colleagues give a lot of talks, give a lot of seminars, and go to a lot of meetings. We are very proud of the applied research of Dr. Angel as well as the demonstration project research of Dr. Burk – both of which will reduce the impact of animal agriculture on the Chesapeake Bay.”

The Department of Animal and Avian Sciences, he says, has decreased in size through the years. To make up for some of the loss, the department participates in extension, an interactive on-line learning environment used by land-grant universities across the country.

“The extension program is nice because you can provide a lot of information to a lot of people, the information is accurate and up-to-date, and it’s a great resource,” Dr. Porter says. “At the same time, though, face-to-face contact is extremely important. We need to hear from the people what their needs and concerns and interests are so we can create programs and solutions that will help them. While other departments and colleges nationwide have walked away from Extension in general and youth Extension in particular, we have not.

“It’s a high priority for us to be actively engaged with citizens in Maryland.”

From left to right, Dr. Amy Burk, and Tim Shellem, Equine Research Unit Manager, and Jennifer Reynolds.

Dr. Nick Zimmerman

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From left to right, Dr. Amy Burk, and Tim Shellem, Equine Research Unit Manager, and Jennifer Reynolds.
By Stacy Anderson

On March 6, 1856, the Maryland General Assembly chartered the Maryland Agricultural College, an institution now known as the University of Maryland. Between then and now, the University and campus have seen copious additions and changes, but the school still retains part of its Agricultural College roots. Within the University’s College Park campus, nestled between dormitories, sports arenas, and classroom buildings lies a unique piece of property – the campus farm. While sheared down to several acres of land by other campus projects, the campus farm is still a vital part of the Department of Animal and Avian Sciences. Now, a new project is underway to revitalize this gem and give it the attention it needs and deserves as an important part of University of Maryland’s history and future.

The campus farm as it stands today is a relatively small remnant of what used to be a large farm. The original Maryland Agricultural College campus consisted of 420 acres given by Charles Calvert, and was supported and supplemented by the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862. The act provided federal support for state colleges to teach agriculture, mechanical arts, and military tactics. In 1937, the campus livestock facilities were constructed via the Depression era Works Progress Administration Program. The last remaining buildings of the current campus farm were built during that time. Over several decades, the University has shaved down the campus farm acreage for different projects, the most recent being the Comcast Center. Today, the campus farm sits on approximately 4.5 acres of land.

Although at one time it included a working dairy farm, the campus farm is now used strictly for teaching. The location is a nice bonus for pre-veterinary students in the Department of Animal and Avian Sciences, many of whom come from suburban areas and have little experience with large animals. Students don’t need to go off-campus to get hands-on experience with these animals. Year-round the campus farm houses horses, sheep, and two ever-popular, ever-bizarre fistulated cows that help teach about nutrition. The fistulated cows, which are a source of wonderment, have a porthole in their stomach allowing students to reach in, feel and observe the digestive system, and even pull out partially digested food to analyze in the lab.

Students in ANSC 235, Small Ruminant Parturition, also known as Lamb Watch, get the opportunity to observe and take care of expectant sheep while awaiting the birth of their lambs to understand topics like anatomy and reproduction. Similarly, Foal Watch is coming soon. Seasonally, there is also a constantly revolving cast of...
animal characters, including steers, heifers, chickens, and pigs. They are on the farm on an as-needed basis for a class, then, go back to the off-campus research farms or other farms where they normally reside.

Surprisingly, for such a useful piece of UMD property, the campus farm has not seen a major renovation in at least 30 years. Brian Magness, Director of Development for the College, hopes to change that. He points out, “University of Maryland is one of the few land-grant universities that has a farm on campus. Many are located off-campus. It’s a very unique advantage to have our farm directly across the street from our department building.”

The goal of the Campus Farm Project is to create an ideal teaching lab for the next 20 years. That includes a better layout. “The campus farm is 4.5 acres, but only about 1.6 acres of it is pasture,” explains Farm Manager, Crystal Caldwell. Caldwell keeps busy year-round managing the entire campus farm and its budget, buying, selling, and feeding animals, loading manure, hiring and managing the farm crew, giving farm tours, and countless other tasks. With a small amount of space on the farm, an effective layout is important. Caldwell is excited about the new project’s potential. “The whole idea is to have buildings centrally located and the land radiating from that,” says Caldwell about the project plans. “That’s how it used to be, but with cutting back on the land, what was once considered an insignificant amount of land between centrally located buildings, is now the main farm. The facilities are sufficient, but not efficient. We want to be able to teach students the latest in farming.”

In addition to a new layout, the farm may see a slew of new, innovative technologies to efficiently use its resources. “We’re looking into a lot of sustainable technologies – solar panels, green roofs, green walls, water harvesting (a system to collect and reuse rain water), and a bio digester (a system that uses methane gas produced by manure to generate power),” Magness illustrates. He foresees the innovations that stem from the Campus Farm Project making a global impact. “Dr. Stephanie Lansing, a professor in the Environmental Science and Technology Department, is developing the bio digester technology, doing research across the globe, partnering with the USDA, and creating something that can help the planet. We can have that technology on our campus and teach about it. That’s really exciting.”

Although the campus farm is alive and kicking, the Campus Farm Project has the potential to make it a significant draw for potential students in the Department of Animal and Avian Sciences, as well as tourists. Even for those students who are not part of UMD’s College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the project is an opportunity to give UMD a fresh look.

“We hope the renovation will also give us a nice view, maybe give us more green space on campus, and help the college become more visible and more compelling. Imagine seeing the new farm when walking back from a basketball game!” says Magness, who plans to have an architect assess the farm and begin developing the project’s master plan by the end of the summer.

Crystal Caldwell, Farm Manager
**LAND-GRANT: Serving You**

**LAND-GRANT universities** are shaped by the people and the times. Through a threefold effort of academic instruction, research through the Agricultural Experiment Station, and outreach through Extension, the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Maryland at College Park and its 1890 counterpart, the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, pursue the land-grant mission. The following Federal statutes are the foundations upon which the nation’s land-grant institutions were built:

- **1862** – The Morrill Land-Grant College Act created a college in each state to educate citizens in agriculture, home economics, mechanical arts, and other practical professions.
- **1887** – The Hatch Act linked land-grant colleges and USDA, providing research funds for state agricultural experiment stations.
- **1890** – The second Morrill Act expanded the system of land-grant colleges to include historically black institutions, known as 1890 institutions.
- **1914** – The Smith-Lever Act established the Cooperative Extension Service, a partnership between land-grant institutions, local governments, and USDA that provides practical, research-based information to the citizens of each state.

From harvest to table, land-grant teaching, research, and outreach enhance Maryland’s number one industry—Agriculture.

The Rossborough Inn was the first Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station.

By introducing farmers to alternative crops, the Small and Part-Time Farmers’ Program at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore helps increase productivity while reducing costs.

The decision to revitalize the Campus Farm is a bold, strategic move by the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The goal is to insure that our students will have the best possible teaching environment for years to come. (See page 16 for more details.)

The College stands ready to make a significant investment in this iconic facility. In these times of dwindling financial support from state and federal sources, a project of this magnitude can only happen with the help of people like you—people who understand the importance of our educational mission and are willing to invest in the success of that mission.

Do you have fond memories of your time on the Campus Farm? Did you have an experience there that helped you become the person you are today? Would you like to help the next generation of animal and avian science majors have a similar experience? The support of our alumni and industry partners will be vital to the success of this project.

If you are interested in learning more about this exciting project and how you can get involved, please contact me at the number or email below. Together, we can make a difference in the future of Maryland—and global agriculture.

Brian W. Magness
Director of Development
bmagness@umd.edu
301-405-7733
Coale takes on new position

Dr. Frank Coale ’81 has accepted the position of Gemstone Program Director in the Honors College beginning as of July 2012. The program at the University of Maryland is a unique multidisciplinary four-year research program for academically talented undergraduate students of all majors. Under guidance of faculty mentors and Gemstone staff, teams of students design, direct, and conduct significant research. Gemstone students are members of a living and learning community comprised of fellow students, faculty, and staff who work together to enrich the undergraduate experience. This community challenges and supports the students in the development of their research, teamwork, communication, and leadership skills. In the fourth year, each team of students presents its research in the form of a thesis and one will complete a program with a citation and a tangible sense of accomplishment.

Dr. Coale is professor and former chair of the Department of Environmental Sciences and Landscape Architecture in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. His career-long contributions in research, Extension education, and policy development, and citizen understanding into implementable on-farm management practices and development of science-based public policies.

Dr. Coale has served on technical advisory committees to local, state, and federal agencies including USDA, USEPA, USM Chancellor William E. Kirwan, UMD President Wallace Loh, and UMD Vice President for Research Patrick O’Shea.

Diamond staff congratulated

Outstanding management and a hard-working crew have brought accolades to the dairy herd at the University of Maryland’s Clarksville facility. They have received a Quality Milk Award for 2011 from Dairy One for maintaining an average somatic cell rolling herd count below 175,000 cells/ml while producing an average of 114,000 pounds of milk.

Zhu wins campus invention honor

AGNR’s Xiaoping Zhu was among three honorees at the University of Maryland’s 25th Annual Invention of the Year Awards. His intracellular neutralization strategy against the influenza virus and a broad spectrum of pathogens brought him top honors.

Zhu has developed a novel antibody-mediated neutralization mechanism that can neutralize the influenza virus and other pathogens by targeting them inside the infected cells. This molecular mechanism is similar to the antibody-antigen method utilized by the body’s natural defense system to target pathogens that have already invaded and overcome the body’s first line of defense. This revolutionary technique will potentially broaden antibody treatment in a wide-range of diseases and provide more prophylactic and therapeutic applications like vaccine development against infectious diseases.

Winners were selected by an independent panel of judges consisting of representatives from on and off campus, who vote for the Invention of the Year in three different categories: information, life, and physical sciences. The University of Maryland’s Office of Technology Commercialization (OTC) hosted the ceremony to honor the promising faculty innovations represented by the winning and runners-up inventions.

Interns introduced

The University of Maryland’s Student Career Days Landscape Team placed 12th out of 62 teams at Kansas State University in March. There were over 820 students competing in 28 events. The group also took top three honors in four events and was in the top 10 percent of seven others. They were coached by Dr. Steve Gahan, professor in the Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture. Taylor Becker and his landscape installation teammates had a challenging
Students competing and their division and placement were:

- Arboriculture: first out of 38, Jordan Harris and John Mowbray
- Annual Perennial ID: third out of 94, Scott Carbone, 15th, Emily McHale
- Business Management: third out of 77, Bryan Chasney, 20th, Scott Carbone
- Construction Cost Estimating: 22nd out of 70, Taylor Becker
- Hardscaping Installation: 9th out of 53, Mickey Shuchart, Mike Moody
- Landscape Installation: 18th out of 58, Andrew Moore, Taylor Becker, Luke Alexander
- Leadership Skills: 15th out of 49, Art Perez
- Personnel Management: 8th out of 33, Art Perez
- Sales Presentation: 13th out of 41, Mike Moody
- Skid Steer Operation: 6th out of 57, Mickey Shuchart
- Tractor Backhoe Operation: 11th out of 62
- Turf & Weed ID: 11th out of 79, Tommy Hutson, 17th, Scott Carbone
- Woody Ornamental ID: 7th out of 106, Bryan Chasney, 16th, Jonathan Lin

On Saturday March 31, 2012, the Student Chapter of the Professional Grounds Management Society, headquartered in the Institute of Applied Agriculture, installed an approximately 400 square foot rain garden at the base of the Public Health Garden hillside. The northeast corner of the site, between the School of Public Health and Eppley Recreation Center, was in dire need of amendment after more than a decade of storm water erosion coupled with a summer’s worth of gardening had clogged the drainage systems with sediment.

PGMS Student Chapter President John Mowbray and Vice President Michael Walsh saw the problem spot as the perfect place to implement a spring service project. With faculty support from the IAA’s Ken Ingram, input and coordination with Public Health Garden Construction Manager and Landscape Architect, Bobby Tadten, and the perfect number of water-loving plants and student volunteers, the PGMS leaders were able to install the garden and transform the space in a matter of hours.

“I pass the site daily and had noticed significant erosion,” said Walsh. “Our student group is always looking for service projects that help us enhance the beauty of the campus. This was an exciting project because it is a teaching garden so we know it will serve to educate as well as function as a serve as a functioning rain garden.”

The plants used for the project, including three large river birches, were originally part of the university’s first-place winning entry in the International Solar Decathlon and were donated to the Professional Grounds Management Society by Karen Petroff of Facilities Management.

The Public Health Garden, a teaching and community garden that was kick-started last year with funding from the Office of Sustainability Green Fund through a grant awarded to the IAA, remains an exciting and inspirational “work in progress.” The same weekend the rain garden installation took place, the University’s Agricultural Sorority, Gamma Sigma Delta, gathered to build a wooden arbor, part of the original design for the garden, with funding they were awarded for the project after a fall 2011 proposal. Members of Sigma Alpha and Alpha Gamma Rho also helped with the project. While on site, they helped build the last of the raised beds that sit at the top of the permeably-paved, ADA-accessible portion of garden space and serve as living classroom for students of the IAA as well as a demonstration space for any and all students interested in participating in community gardening.
The AGNR Alumni Chapter held its annual reunion and awards celebration at the Samual Riggs IV Alumni Center on April 18, 2012. Over 200 gathered to congratulat graduating students and award winners. Nearly $2,000 was raised during the silent auction to support AGNR student clubs and scholarships. The chapter thanked those who have supported AGNR over the years by welcom ing one individual to the Circle of Friends and an additional supporter as an honorary member. Honoree Eric Flamino is a longtime partner, working closely with Jonathan Honoree Edwin H. Remsberg, president and general manager. Much of the collaborative efforts, promoting long-term support contracts with AGNR and USDA, capturing the agricultural story through his lens. He’s published several books including his most recent, Dishing Up Maryland, promoting local foods and recipes and he developed the 4-H Photo Challenge at the Maryland State Fair.

The AGNR Alumni Awards Dinner

County and continues as a volunteer in that county today. He and his family are the 8th generation to live and farm in the County. As a journalist major at Maryland, he interned at the Baltimore Sun and also with AGNR. Since 1989 he has been a free-lancer and enjoys long-term support contracts with AGNR and USDA, capturing the agricultural story through his lens. He’s published several books including his most recent, Dishing Up Maryland, promoting local foods and recipes and he developed the 4-H Photo Challenge at the Maryland State Fair.

Outside the classroom, Kemper teaches his passion, sense of humor and knowledge in high evaluations from students. His expertise as an instructor is reflected in high evaluations from students. He receives high marks on general evaluations with student comments reflecting his passion, sense of humor and knowledge of subject matter. He is a guest lecturer in other AGNR courses and neighboring university courses especially in the emerging field of alternative protein sources and enzyme production for health promotion and disease prevention. Over 2008 from the Department of Veterinary Medicine.

Dr. Zhu is well published, including six articles in Nature Biotechnology which have been cited by the press and media. His articles have focused on the connections between human and animal health. He has presented his research findings around the world giving great recognition to the University of Maryland. His publications are cited as being in the top 2 to 10 percent of all articles in his field.

Outstanding Alumni – Early Career

Dr. Erin Sorrell ’05 & ’08 earned her master’s in 2005 and her Ph.D. in 2008 from the Department of Veterinary Medicine working with Dr. Daniel Perez in co-authoring grants and using the ferret model as a model for human influenza transmission studies. She worked on developingavian influenza in 2005. She was a market research analyst and freelance writer for the Baltimore Sun for three years and founded the "Just Saying" blog for Maryland’s Eco-curious, with regard to green news, food, agriculture and sustainability which led her to the IAA’s program in sustainability. She currently works at Eco-Giants in Davidsonville which transports a herd of goats to help manage invasive plants and problem vegetation without chemicals.

While a student at the IAA, Deborah was instrumental in the establishment of the Campus Public Health Garden, integrating that project with her IAA course work. The student teaching and community garden demonstrates sustainable agriculture and best practices in support of public, environmental and community health. She wrote grants, grew the plants and managed the volunteers and pests. She continued her expertise in blogging to keep the campus and community up to date about the inaugural year of the garden. Since graduating in December, she enrolled in University of Maryland Extension’s “Annies Project” directed for women in agriculture. She volunteered to become a certified Master Gardener before pursuing her master’s in conservation biology.

Outstanding Graduate Student – Two Year Program

Deborah Lakowicz Dramby is a native of Howard County and earned her B.S. from Pennsylvania State University. As a graduate research assistant, she was the market research analyst and freelance writer for the Baltimore Sun for three years and founded the "Just Saying" blog for Maryland’s Eco-curious, with regard to green news, food, agriculture and sustainability which led her to the IAA’s program in sustainability. She currently works at Eco-Giants in Davidsonville which transports a herd of goats to help manage invasive plants and problem vegetation without chemicals.

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Outstanding Graduate Student – New Graduates

Dr. Scott Tjaden came to AGNR and Environmental Science and Technology via computer science. His concentration in ecological technology design was a perfect fit. Scott studied medicinal plants in Peru and tropical ecology in Bolivia. He also managed to play trumpet for the Mighty Sound of Maryland Marching Band and completed a CIVICUS project planting trees in unanted park in Washington, D.C. CIVICUS is an invitational living/learning program based on leadership, scholarship and community building. Scott also served as chair of AGNR’s Student Ambassadors.

Scott’s resume includes a variety of internships with the Maryland Clean Energy Center; the Furbush Company, a bio-filtration firm that installed a living bio-wall at the University of Maryland. Scott developed the University Greenhouse; as well as an independent study building a wetland as a model for Maryland’s School’s Wastewater entry. Scott helped put AGNR on the national radar with his role in the two-year, multi-discipline university entry into the Department of Energy’s Solar Decathlon project WaterShed, which won the interna tional competition last fall. He worked with students, faculty and professionals from the fields of architecture and engineering. Dur ing the two-week competition, Scott visited with the public providing details on how wetlands can purify water and how green roofs can keep buildings cooler.

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The 87th Annual Ag Day/Maryland Day provided a wide variety of expertise and areas of study as presented by faculty, staff and AGNR student groups through educational and interactive activities.

Breakfast is served
Scholarship donors and recipients were celebrated during the Egg-Citing start to Ag Day Breakfast. The Maryland Egg Council, Inc., in partnership with the AGNR alumni chapter, provided expertise as guests made their own omelets to kick off Ag Day.

HUNDREDS VISIT AG DAY

As an active AGNR undergraduate, J. Robert Frazee was named outstanding senior in 1977. He had served as president of the AGNR Student Council and was active in Collegiate FFA. He began his banking career with the Farm Credit Bank of Baltimore and has held a variety of positions in the banking community. He managed Garrett National Bank before returning to the Farm Credit community in 1992. Today, MidAtlantic Farm Credit has loans of over $2.4 billion to over 10,000 members in a territory that covers portions of Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia. As CEO, he has led the organization through two successful mergers.

Beyond his successful career in the Farm Credit system, Bob has been generous with his time and expertise serving on the AGNR alumni chapter board of directors and as chairman of the Maryland 4-H Foundation. He served as the first chairman of the Maryland Agriculture and Resource Based Industries Corporation (MARRIDCO) Board of Directors.

In 2006, Bob served on the Governor’s Intergovernmental Commission on Agriculture for the state of Maryland. He currently serves as the University of Maryland representative on the National Council for Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching (CARET) on behalf of AGNR and serves as a liaison for international programs and on the executive committee.

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Applying the Land Grant Mission to Achieving a Better Bay was the theme of the morning session at this year’s AGNR Awards Convocation on May 3, in the Stamp Student Union. Dr. Ray Miller, Director, International Programs in Agriculture and Natural Resources, and Dr. Doug Lipton, associate professor and program leader, Sea Grant Program, AREC, introduced the program which featured 16 faculty presentations.

Following lunch, Dr. Cheng-i Wei, Dean and Director, Agricultural Experiment Station and University of Maryland Extension, presented service awards to several faculty and staff members. Forty-year awards were presented to Janet Carroll and Norrine Smith. Honored for 35 years of service were Michael Embrey and Albert Pickett. Twenty-five-year awards went to Carole Dingess, Kay Riall, Timothy Ridgley, Elizabeth Weiss and Robin Wigley. Taking 20-year honors was Barbara Fisher.

Faculty and Staff excellence awards were presented during the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources Awards Convocation by Dr. Cheng-i Wei, Dean and Director, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and Dr. Wallace Loh, for Faculty and staff excellence awards were presented during the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources Awards Convocation.

Scholarships presented to Faculty and Staff

Dr. Wallace Loh, president of the University of Maryland, visits with Alicia Rezzonick and Dr. John R. Moore, professor emeritus in Agricultural and Resource Economics. Alicia is an animal and avian sciences major and is the recipient of the John R. and Marjorie C. Moore Fund for International Programs in Agriculture.

Toyota of Southern Maryland representative, Mary Roma, center, visits with three of the five inaugural scholarship recipients, along with Dr. Wallace Loh, right, president of the University of Maryland. From left, are recipients Jason Elkins and Steven Brandon.
David Wyand - Off-Campus Staff Excellence Award

David has been an integral part of the Western Maryland Research and Education Center (WMREC) since 1985. He is currently the district agent for the environmental programs group and responsible for the general grounds and maintenance, Federal Excess Property Program management for the center, hailing farm equipment and machinery, maintaining weather-station data, assisting with research projects and a key player in the children’s agricultural education program. In addition to these duties, he has demonstrated use of his carpentry, mechanical, electrical and plumbing skills in assisting the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources in several projects.

Daniel Rockemann - On-Campus Staff Excellence Award

Daniel joined the Department of Animal Sciences in 1975 as a technician in the bovine virology lab. In 1988, he began working in the molecular virology lab and assists/teaches many students in lab activities in the Department of Animal and Avian Sciences. He has been a major role in the success of Dr. Samal's lab publishing over 100 referred publications and receiving over $100 million in extramural grants. Daniel is the representative to the AGNR advisory committee, performs general lab maintenance and assists/teaches many students in lab techniques.

Wendy Whittemore - On-Campus Staff Excellence Award

A member of the Department of Environmental Science and Policy since 2000, Wendy has been an insightful advisor to over 1,000 undergraduates, a respected resource for the alumni of the program and a dedicated AGNR citizen. She has served as the associate director of the Environmental Studies Program of College Park Scholars for eight years, served as director for the Eco-House for three years, and is currently helping to get the new college-sponsored sustainability studies minor up and running.

Kristen Wilson - Off-Campus Junior Faculty Award

Kristen became coordinator of extension activities in the Department of Animal and Avian Sciences in 2005 and a year later, assumed the position of the state Extension horse specialist. In the past five years, Kristen has published several articles and Extension publications and successfully secured almost $400,000 in competitive grants, solicited funds and donations. She has won seven awards from the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents and has assumed leadership roles in Ag-Exploration and the Maryland Equine Studies program.

Lisa Taneyhill - On-Campus Junior Faculty Award

Lisa joined the University of Maryland four and a half years ago as an assistant professor in the Department of Animal and Avian Sciences. She has made significant research contributions, focusing on understanding the molecular basis of neural crest cell development, using the chicken embryo as a model system. She mentors a research group and developed a new course in organismal development. Lisa received the Outstanding Faculty Educator award at the AGNR Student Council banquet in 2011.

Steven Turley - Non Tenure-Track Faculty Excellence Award

Steven, faculty research assistant, has worked at the Wye Research and Education Center since 1990 as an environmental contaminant toxicology technician. He has completed an array of toxicological studies and perfected testing methods, as well as perfecting delivery systems. Steve has played a key role in mentoring students involved in the Gemstone Program, often exploring the interdependence of science and technology with society.

Richard Just - Faculty Research Award

Distinguished University Professor in the Department of Agricultural and Natural Resource Economics, Richard has made path-breaking contributions. He has received numerous awards for the quality of his research from the major academic society of his department's discipline. Richard played a central role in moving the AREC department from a middle ranking in early 1980s to ranking consistently in the top three among all similar department and helped lead to its Ph.D. program being ranked best in the world.

Joshua McGrath - Integrated Research and Extension Excellence Award

Since July 2006, Joshua has been part of the Department of Environmental Science and Technology as an assistant professor and Extension specialist. His integrated research has been focused on the environmentally effective use and utilization of plant nutrients and the fate and transport of those nutrients. He shares his expertise with county Extension personnel, consults with Maryland Department of Agriculture and hosts formal training sessions. He also serves as faculty advisor to the AGNR Student Council.

Jon Traunfeld - University of Maryland Extension Excellence Award

Jon has been an Extension specialist since 1994 and serves as the state coordinator of the Master Gardener Program (MG). He is recognized for his leadership in growing the volunteer contributions in MG. He became director of the Home and Garden Information Center in 2007. He has assisted in web based information dissemination. Jon shows great leadership in program evaluation, including the Grow It Eat It program.

Angela Black - The Paul B. Poffenberger Excellence in Teaching and Advising Award

Angela is coordinator of animal care in the Department of Animal and Avian Sciences and teaches ANSC 240 – General Animal Management. These two courses are unique hands-on courses that are not offered at the undergraduate level at many universities. She has been awarded several technology grants to allow a state-of-the-art classroom environment. She received the Gamma Delta Sigma Certificate of Merit in Teaching in 2011.

William Kenworthy - Dean Gordon Cates Award

William joined the faculty in March 1976 as an assistant professor in the Department of Agronomy. In addition to teaching, he was responsible for the soybean breeding project focusing on selecting cultivars with resistance to cyst nematodes and other regional pests. Bill serves as director of the annual Maryland Soybean Variety Test and has received a number of awards for his research. Under his leadership, the funds have almost tripled, the staff has grown and many partnerships have been established.
Kathy Hutson ’71

MOMENTUM

employee relations across the global NSA/occupational health and safety activities, HR strategic planning and development, around the world. Hutson was the chief of occupational health, environmental and safety services. In that role, she was responsible for developing new programs and initiatives to meet the evolving technology and changing regulatory frameworks, and for advancing its international objectives.

Before joining APHIS, she was the Assistant Deputy Administrator of the Office of Scientific and Technical Affairs of USDA Foreign Agricultural Service. In that role, she led the agency’s efforts to develop strategic and tactical approaches to address technical, sanitary and phytosanitary barriers to agricultural trade. As director of the biotechnology group, the coordinated program and policy development for agricultural biotechnology trade-related issues. Other positions within PAS include Assistant Director for International Trade Policy and Assistant to the Deputy Administrator for Commodity and Marketing Programs.

Simmons has also served as Agricultural Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in London. Simmons earned her undergraduate and graduate degrees in business/marketing and agricultural and resource economics from the University of Maryland at College Park.

Taylor was a member of the Maryland equestrian community. He was a trainer and active, supporting member of the National Association of Retired Federal Employees, and a former member of the Golden Goofers Square Dance Club.

He is survived by his wife, Jacquelyn, company is the world’s largest producer of pork, and sons, Xavier and Isaac. He is also survived by his parents, Taylor Spiers, Sr. and Margaret Mund Spiers, and brothers Paul, Cora and Alex and their families, his grandchildren, Christopher and his wife, Sarah Sheer.

Laura was an integral part of the Roll‐Across Show Stable in Brookeville as a trainer and active, supporting member of the Maryland equestrian community. Memorial contributions may be made to the Susan G. Komen for the Cure—Maryland, 209 East Joppa Road, Suite 417, Towson, MD 21204 or to the Fund for Johns Hopkins Medicine, ATTN: Avon Breast Foundation Center. One Charles Center 100 N Charles Street Suite 300, Baltimore, MD 21201.

LAURA PALMER PICKETT ’81
died on April 21, of complications related to cancer. She is survived by her husband, Brian; daughter, Kori Marie Pickett, and son, Christopher and his wife, Sarah Sheer. She is also survived by siblings, Lisa Flynn, Nancy, Steve and Eric Palmer.

Taylor joined Murphy Brown LLC, the grain marketing column for The Delmarva Farmer in June 2010 and relocated to North Carolina. He served as director of procurement for Murphy Brown East. The company is the world’s largest producer of hogs.

He is survived by his wife, Jacqueline, and sons, Xavier and Isaac. He is also survived by his parents, Taylor Spiers, Sr. and Margaret Mund Spiers, and brothers Paul, Cora and Alex and their families, his grandchildren, Christopher and his wife, Sarah Sheer. She is also survived by siblings, Lisa Flynn, Nancy, Steve and Eric Palmer.
October 20, 2012

AGNR Ag-toberfest (tailgate) at the Campus Farm will begin three hours before Homecoming Football Game kickoff. Join in the fun and food with alumni, students, faculty, staff and friends of AGNR. Ag-toberfest is FREE, reservations are requested by emailing Gail Yeiser at gyeiser@umd.edu.

Campus Homecoming information:

Game ticket purchases: http://www.umterps.com/sports/m-footbl/md-m-footbl-body.html

October 6, 2012

"The College in Your Backyard" - AGNR Open House - Bring the family to the Central Maryland Research and Education Center’s Clarksville Facility near Ellicott City and enjoy educational displays, wagon farm tours, hands-on learning, dairy cattle, baby chicks and many other FREE, fun-filled activities. There’s something for everyone - see what AGNR, "The College in Your Backyard," has to offer you! Visit http://agnropenhouse.umd.edu/ for more information or call 301-596-9330. Free and open to the public.