AGNR ‘ROUND THE WORLD!
“Around the World in Eighty Days” is a popular movie from the late 1950s based on the Jules Verne book from the late 1800s. It challenges and excites the imagination that with the help of then-modern technology – the hot air balloon and enhanced railway systems – one could travel around the world in a mere 80 days. It was remarkable and unbelievable in the 1950’s. With all of our advanced technology today, it’s a bit overwhelming to realize that AGNR, as one academic unit, is functioning around the world on a daily basis while continuing to serve the needs and interests of Maryland students and citizens.

Through many of the international programs we have established over the years, we are able to share our expertise while also learning from situations in remote corners of the world to address the diverse and complex challenges we face in Maryland. Our AGNR students come from across the state, nation and now, from around the world – learning from and with each other in ways that can’t be included on a course syllabus.

I think you will find this issue of Momentum interesting in the variety of programs AGNR is supporting around the world as well as the technologies employed to keep our faculty and staff in touch with Maryland students and citizens. These programs have not come to fruition overnight and I would like to thank all of those who have worked diligently for years to forge relationships with governmental and educational leaders to make their visions reality. I would like to personally thank Dr. Raymond Miller for his leadership of the International Programs in Agriculture and Natural Resources (IPAN) as he enters into the world of retirement. He has inspired students and faculty to embrace the international experience and AGNR continues to benefit from his passion and vision.

In addition to the feature stories, I hope you will take a look through the back section of the magazine to appreciate the many accomplishments of our Ag-mazing students, alumni, faculty and staff. I am always pleased, yet not surprised, when talented AGNR family members bring home local, national and international recognition in their chosen areas. Their passion for their subject matter is an inspiration to all of us as we continue to move AGNR forward as a premier college on campus as well as earning the reputation as an exceptional educational and agricultural institution around the world.

As always, I enjoy seeing you when I travel throughout Maryland. I look forward to seeing you at the many upcoming summer and fall events. Showcasing our college to the general public is one of the joys of being dean. There is so much going on all of the time, it is hard to share the excellence and excitement at a single venue. Through the Maryland State Fair and the AGNR Open House later this summer and fall, we have the unique opportunity of teaching Maryland citizens that AGNR is a part of daily lives and in everyone’s back yard through our 24 University of Maryland Extension offices. We celebrate that uniqueness and hope that you help us share information about the good things going on in AGNR.

I look forward to visiting with you personally throughout the summer and fall. Go Terps!!
MOMENTUM

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It is the policy of the University of Maryland, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station, and University of Maryland Extension that all persons have equal opportunity and access to programs and facilities without regard to race, color, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age, marital or parental status or disability.
Dr. Ray Miller is finishing his career at the University of Maryland just the way he likes it, with a suitcase in hand and a passport in his pocket.
Dr. Miller, director of International Programs in Agriculture and Natural Resources (IPAN) in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, is set to retire June 30, but before he does he will be making his fourth trip in two years to Ethiopia to meet with government officials to set up a test program to work with farmers and others. Already various programs have been developed in countries in Central Asia to the Pacific Rim and now the university is ready to include Africa and possibly South America.

The college’s international influence clearly is strong.

“Many universities aspire to international programs and many want to work with the best universities” in those countries, Dr. Miller said. “That’s good, but it’s not sufficient … I firmly believe that much like Extension, it’s important to work with the grassroots.”

Grassroots indeed. The college’s international initiative has included such projects as working with the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Afghanistan and Pakistan to train agricultural professionals, to teaching sustainable agriculture practices to farmers in Bulgaria, Albania and Russia.

Dr. Jim Hanson, associate professor in the Department of Agriculture and Resource Economics, for example, has worked with International Orthodox Christian Charities in Kosovo, Albania and Montenegro where villagers came up with proposals reflecting an agricultural idea to benefit the entire community. In one village it amounted to solving the problem of a lack of electricity, thus allowing farmers to dry and juice their fruit crops for market.

An international focus of sorts was already in place when Dr. Miller came to Maryland in 1986, but a decision was made 12 years later to step things up and Dr. Miller was asked to lead IPAN. According to the college’s website, it was important to have “international involvement and to seek to encourage and facilitate research, outreach and education efforts across the globe … We have extended knowledge gained from our own experiences and, in turn, benefited from our involvement with colleagues abroad.”

A Farmer at Heart

Dr. Miller, 79, was born and grew up in western Canada, later becoming a U.S. citizen. “My Granddad homesteaded in Alberta and I spent all my summers and vacations on the farm,” he said. “I’ve seen horse-drawn farming to what it is today. I was 11 when I drove my first tractor, one of those heavy ones with the big metal wheels. I was not strong enough to turn it.

“Working through high school, I milked a small dairy herd,” he said, all of these experiences helping him to connect and relate to farmers across the globe like the one he met in Uzbekistan who was getting just 7 liters of milk per cow. After working with a team from the U.S., he later brought production up to 27 liters per animal.

Dr. Miller graduated from the University of Alberta in soil sciences and came to the U.S. for graduate school, earning a master’s degree at Washington State University and a doctorate in soil physical chemistry from Purdue University. He began his first international work in 1977 when he was living in Idaho and on a team that went to the former Soviet Union as part of an
agricultural research exchange.

“My first trip was in December and I remember standing in Red Square. It was the coldest experience ever,” Dr. Miller said. He went on subsequent Soviet missions and “the FBI visited me after every trip.” When he and his wife visited Canada more than one boarder guard asked when looking at his passport “what is it that you do anyway?” During his career, Dr. Miller has visited “something like 35 countries.”

Looking at the future of international partnerships, he cautioned against “a lack of understanding about how good foreign relations are to the future of this country.” First and foremost may be the work that’s being done to give others “a decent life, but these countries are also potential markets” for the United States.

“Food security is a serious issue,” he said. “Americans are slowly going to understand that there’s not an excessive supply anywhere.” Some “turn up their noses at agriculture, but agriculture by definition is production, consumption, marketing — the whole bit.”

While some may view third-world farmers as uneducated and backward in how they go about producing food, Dr. Miller is just as taken aback by the lack of knowledge in the U.S. “They took a survey of school children in New York and asked them where carrots come from and most said the supermarket. It’s a serious problem how little the average person knows.”

Dr. Miller sees the international exposure to students and faculty as a way of experiencing another culture and realizing “ours is not the only one that’s viable ... they have to get out there and see it for themselves, not just depend on movies or books, but face time. We’re not islands.

“I’ve never been in a part of the world where people are different — no, they’re all the same,” Dr. Miller said. “They have the same desires: a decent environment, food and dreams for their kids.”

2+2 and Other Programs

In 2005, UMD started a partnership with China Agricultural University (CAU) in Beijing where Chinese students study two years at their home institution followed by two years at the University of Maryland. Agriculture and Natural Resources was the first
college to implement the program at Maryland.

Officials at both universities saw the program as a way for undergraduates to interact with those from another culture. Since CAU’s partnership, three more universities in China have followed suit.

“They come as full transfer students,” Dr. Miller said, recommended by the university and chosen for their high academics and English language proficiency. “They pay full tuition, board and room.”

Another program that is connecting Maryland with the rest of the planet is distance education. According to the college’s website, one example is Maryland soil scientists who “teach soil and water quality courses in English for first and second year Russian students” at Moscow State University of Environmental Engineering (MSUEE). “UM’s Dr. Richard Weismiller, a soil scientist, has been holding classes with MSUEE environmental students by weekly video-conference. The goal of the program is to familiarize the students with technical and scientific terminology through conversation with a native English speaker. The intent is to prepare the students for international employment opportunities.”

Dr. Kock received his M.S. in Extension Education from the University of Nebraska and his Ph.D. in Agricultural Education and International Studies from Oklahoma State University. He was raised in rural Nebraska on a sheep and cattle operation where his interest in agriculture development started. Prior to his work internationally, he was a faculty member of the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension Service for many years designing and implementing educational programs in youth, community and agriculture development.

Developing Extension services in other countries is yet another program designed to increase agricultural productivity, which in turn improves the farmer’s profits, in addition to improving knowledge and skill sets.

“We train our trainers,” Dr. Miller said, likening it to the concept of “each one, teach one.”

Dr. Tim Kock recently was named the new assistant director of international programs and has worked in the agricultural development sector throughout the world, managing USAID and USDA projects in Afghanistan, Armenia, Georgia, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan and Iraq. Throughout his time overseas, Dr. Kock worked to enhance youth and community development, gender equality and the use of practical agriculture technologies that meet the needs of the farmers. He recently served two years in Iraq as a member of the management team on a USAID funded countrywide agribusiness development project.

“The work done in Russia and other post-Soviet states, the exchange program with Asian universities and the work being conducted in Afghanistan will have lasting effects. I hope to see the college continue down the same path, and possibly provide faculty and students more international opportunities in the future.”

When Dr. Miller leaves Maryland, he said he and his wife plan to settle in Coeur d’Alene, a town situated on a lake in Idaho that is located on a Bald Eagle flyway. But don’t count on him to idly watch birds. He has raspberry bushes to tend and other garden chores.

“I was going through my old teaching notes,” he said. “It would be fun to teach again; there’s a junior college there.” Staying involved in the international work that he has valued throughout his career is also on the table. “Maybe I’ll still be involved in Ethiopia.”
Out of his Comfort (and Time) Zone

ENST professor tests waters with “instructing abroad”

By Sara Gavin

For Environmental Science & Technology Professor Robert Hill, being in two places at the same time is simply a routine part of the job. Through the magic of modern technology, Dr. Hill can teach a course inside a classroom on campus at the University of Maryland while simultaneously reaching a second set of students on the other side of the world via videoconference.
Last fall, however, Dr. Hill was challenged to step out of his comfort zone and turn the dual-teaching technique on its head. For the entire semester, he was the one on the other side of the globe – Northwest Agriculture & Forestry University (NWAFU) in Yangling, China to be exact – while he remotely taught students in College Park.

Dr. Hill’s experience at NWAFU was to serve as a test case of sorts for other UMD faculty members interested in going abroad during the school year. “It’s very difficult during either semester for faculty to go overseas for even two or three weeks,” he said. “Someone has to teach the courses while they’re gone.”

A teaching assistant in College Park and broadband internet conferencing allowed Dr. Hill to teach his regular soil hydrology and physics course to UMD students and offer the same course at NWAFU. He also led an interactive class – Environmental Issues and Culture in USA and China – that connected 12 students from Maryland and 14 students from China through video conferencing.

“I didn’t get a chance to study abroad so I wanted some way to make that connection and I read the description of the class and it sounded so cool,” says Danielle Russo, a senior Environmental Science & Technology major at UMD.

Russo says when she initially signed up for the course she didn’t realize Dr. Hill would physically be going to China for the duration of the semester. “It was actually so awesome having him there because I think it really connected the class to China,” says Russo. “It was like there was a piece of us in China.”

Communicating Across Continents

Due to the time difference, students in Maryland attended class at 7 p.m., while the Chinese class met at 8 a.m. Throughout the course, students from Maryland partnered up with their Chinese counterparts in order to work on projects and presentations – exchanging email addresses, Facebook accounts and Skype IDs to facilitate communication. At times, Dr. Hill and the other instructors would leave the classrooms to allow the students in both America and China to talk freely with each other.

“I think they were kind of scared to speak with us at first,” says Russo. “Around the (Presidential) election though, they had a lot of questions about that.”

“I found that the students of USA are always active -- not only their behaviors but also their thoughts. They always learn what they want rather than what they should,” says Bowen Wang, a NWAFU student majoring in graphic information systems. Yuan Ruina, a graduate student studying soil science at NWAFU, also enjoyed the interaction with UMD students: “I learned a lot from my American classmates, such as humor, open-mindedness, rigorous thinking and teamwork,” Yuan says.

For the American students, Dr. Hill’s cross-continental course offered exposure to another culture without the costs and time commitments associated with traveling abroad. For the Chinese, however, it provided a chance...
to practice their English-speaking skills and interact with an American professor – highly valued experiences that aren’t abundant in this rural region of China where the nearest city, Xian, is 50 miles away.

“They start taking English at a very early age but the problem is they rarely get an opportunity to speak it so their communication skills are not that good,” says Dr. Hill. “To have a course taught to them by a native-speaking English instructor is a big deal to them.”

Aside from interacting with students from another country and immersing himself in the Chinese culture, one of Dr. Hill’s primary reasons for spending several months at NWAFU was to pursue research interests and establish connections with scientists at the prestigious National Key Laboratories, which receive funding and support from the Chinese government. While working in the country, he was able to travel to several research stations to examine projects dealing with issues such as water storage in soils, increasing water use efficiency for crop growth in dryland environments and methods to reduce wind and water erosion.

**Overcoming Obstacles**

Dr. Hill admits juggling the responsibilities that come with spending a semester abroad was not without challenges. In order to keep up with classes on both continents, he was literally teaching around the clock – finishing up with UMD students sometimes after 11 p.m. and then rising with the sun to prepare for his course offered early in the morning on NWAFU’s campus.

Communication difficulties also cropped up during the course Dr. Hill instructed remotely to students in Maryland. Although NWAFU has a reasonably fast internet connection during the daytime, it becomes bogged down in the evenings when students are out of class and logging on in larger numbers. The course Dr. Hill was teaching to UMD was delivered at 10 p.m. Chinese time and as a result, the internet connection often broke up or failed during his lectures. “They (UMD students) are not used to dealing with unreliable internet connections and they quickly lost patience,” Dr. Hill says. “There are definitely some bugs to be worked out.”

Before spending the fall at NWAFU, Dr. Hill had only traveled to China twice before for fairly brief visits. Relocating to the country for several months created logistical obstacles he hadn’t anticipated. For example, when Hurricane Sandy was approaching the East Coast of the U.S., all he could do was hope his house would hold up. “I wasn’t sure what would happen during the storm and I was totally helpless to do anything about it,” he says. “Simple things can become big problems when you’re so far away.”

Fortunately, Dr. Hill’s home survived the storm unscathed and despite the various stumbling blocks, he says he found his overall instructing abroad experience rewarding and would be open to doing it again.

“When you go for a very short period of time, you don’t get much exposure to the culture where as if you stay longer you become more integrated and gain a better understanding of the culture and the students and the way they do business, their education system,” Dr. Hill says.

For students under his tutelage in both the U.S. and China, Dr. Hill’s efforts allowed them to bridge the gap between their two cultures without ever having to leave home. “It was maybe my favorite class I’ve ever taken here and I think (Professor Hill) is a great person to be doing this,” says Russo. “To me he’s just so American.”
Empowering Afghan Women through Agriculture
Four female members from University of Maryland Extension travel to Afghanistan for project centered on food security

By Sara Gavin

Volatile and war-torn Afghanistan – where crumbling infrastructure, persistent poverty, food shortages and security concerns continue to plague the population – likely doesn’t rank high on many people’s lists of travel destinations. However, when four female members with University of Maryland Extension (UME) heard about a project designed to empower women in this troubled region, they didn’t hesitate. “It just seemed like one of those things you should say yes to… even though a lot of people probably think you’re nuts,” says Stephanie Grutzmacher, a UME faculty research associate and Extension family health specialist.

The proposal for the Women in Agriculture Project was developed by Jim Hanson, an Extension specialist and professor in the Agricultural and Resources Economics Department at the University of Maryland. Maryland’s $1.3 million project is part of a larger program being funded through a $14 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) intended to improve the capacity of Extension services throughout Afghanistan. Three other universities are also doing work in the country through this grant including Washington State University, Purdue University and the University of California-Davis, which is leading the program.

Women Serving Women

Dr. Hanson’s aim was to specifically serve vulnerable women—those who have been abandoned, divorced or widowed—living in the poorest sections of Kabul. The goals of the project are to increase access to healthy food, improve the quantity and quality of healthy food, and to increase the income from the sale of home-grown food. While his intent was for the project to be entirely managed by women, Dr. Hanson knew the safety concerns in Afghanistan might make assembling a team a challenge. “I wasn’t actively recruiting people for this,” he says. “Anyone who expressed an interest, I told them to think about it for a while and then get back to me.”

It wouldn’t take long though for word to get around about Dr. Hanson’s proposal and to generate interest. Becky Ramsing, a faculty Extension assistant and nutrition, health and wellness educator in Howard County, was the first to sign up and traveled with Dr. Hanson to Afghanistan in March of 2012 to lay the groundwork. Soon after, Grutzmacher—along with Christie Balch, coordinator at UMD’s Center for Educational Partnership, and Amanda Rockler, a watershed restoration Extension specialist—joined Ramsing to form the Women in Agriculture team. “The opportunity to see how other countries are doing urban agriculture and working with women and educa-
tion and empowering and inspiring women is interesting to me, especially in an area that gets so much bad press,” says Rockler.

**Planting Seeds of Independence**

The foursome traveled with Dr. Hanson to Kabul in July of 2012 to put on a three-day workshop for a group of their Afghan counterparts – 15 female Extension agents employed through the Ministry of Agriculture. Their goal was to equip the Afghan educators with more dynamic, hands-on techniques, such as demonstrations and simulations, they could then take back to the villages they serve and teach other women how to support their families by growing their own food. Grutzmacher and Ramsing focused on a nutrition component while Balch and Rockler concentrated on backyard gardening. “They already knew much of the material but didn’t know how to teach it in an interactive way,” explains Balch. “The majority of their teaching involved just basically lecturing.”

Upon arriving in Afghanistan, all four of the women had reservations about how their lessons would be received. “We were worried going in that everyone was just going to stare at us and no one was going to talk,” says Rockler.

However, the group was pleasantly surprised by the enthusiasm their audience showed right from the beginning, establishing an easy camaraderie among the two nationalities. At the end of the workshop, the Afghan women took on the role of presenters and were asked to demonstrate to the Americans what they had learned. “They rocked it,” Balch says. “They totally got it. Their lessons were fun and engaging.”

Dr. Hanson actually left Kabul during the workshop to travel to another province so that the exercises would be entirely female-dominated. “I wanted it to be women working with women,” he says.

**Growing the Program**

Since that initial trip last summer, all four women have traveled back to Kabul at different times to provide additional training and to help advance the project. A large part of their efforts are now concentrated on developing kitchen gardens – small farm plots – on 100 acres of land delegated by Afghan President Hamid Karzai specifically for women to grow fruits and vegetables. The land sits in the shadow of Darluman Palace, a massive building that was once ornately decorated and housed kings but is now a bombed out shell. Problems with water supply initially made it difficult to develop the land into plots that would produce food but project team members are helping to install a gravity-fed container on a platform in the middle of the farm to provide irrigation.

Money from UMD’s grant is paying for a full-time person to live in Kabul to oversee the Women in Agriculture project; American Sophia Wilcox, who
was hired on in February of 2013 as Deputy Chief of Party. With support from project team members, Wilcox conducts training sessions at the Darluman Farm each Saturday for Afghan Extension agents, who then apply those lessons when reaching out to women either in their own homes or at various community gardens located throughout Kabul. The lessons focus on basic food production, nutrition and marketing to enable women to profit from the sale of their produce.

Finding Common Ground

While oppression against women remains rampant in Afghanistan, members of the UME team were encouraged to see that a portion of the female population, particularly in Kabul, is well-educated, employed and motivated. “They are really at the mercy of their family and how tolerant their family is of learning new things,” Ramsing explained. “They have a desire to do things well if they can and to make their country better.”

The American women enjoyed discussing cultural differences with the Afghan women but the two groups also bonded over many similarities. “Schooling-wise we’ve all sort of gotten to this Extension position in a similar way,” said Rockler. “Their Extension is set up very similar to how ours is.” Each of the American women wore the traditional head scarves during their time in Afghanistan, some studying YouTube videos beforehand to learn the technique for tying them correctly—a gesture their Afghan friends noticed and appreciated. “I liked wearing it,” Balch said. “I didn’t have to do my hair.”

Hope for the Future

The team stayed at a house in Kabul rented by the Chief of Party – the person who oversees the entire program being funded by the USDA – and found little pockets of time to explore the city. The Americans did not travel with armed guards but were careful not to draw attention to themselves. While they were encouraged by the hopefulness portrayed by the Afghan women with whom they interacted, it was impossible to ignore the scars of war evident everywhere—on the buildings, the infrastructure and the landscape—and the daunting battle to rebuild that lies ahead. “I wasn’t shocked by what I saw but I was very uncomfortable,” Grutzmacher recalls. “I mean it was almost unlivable.”

As for the future of their project, Maryland’s Women in Agriculture team is cautiously optimistic. “The people that we are working with are great. It was really good building relationships so I think we can definitely make differences there,” Ramsing said. “Then there’s the other side - not knowing where things will go and realizing the future there is still quite bleak.”

The Women in Agriculture Project will continue in Kabul through August of 2014 but for the contingency from the University of Maryland involved in leading the project, its impact will last a lifetime.

“These women are so resilient and so determined,” says Balch. “They inspire me and they really give me perspective on my work in Maryland.”
By Becky Brashear

He was one of eight 4-H’ers from Maryland to travel some 7,000 miles one way last year, to find out for himself what humanity is like in another part of the world and to set forth a life-changing career focus.

For Joseph Degreenia of Anne Arundel County, his two and one-half week experience in Tanzania last June and July as part of the University of Maryland Extension’s 4-H International Exchange has undoubtedly set the stage to build upon his abilities in problem-solving skills, increased his appreciation for diversity and given him ways to explore other avenues to complete any task set before him.

According to Jeff Howard, University of Maryland Extension Assistant Director and Maryland 4-H Program Leader, that’s just what today’s CEOs of major corporations are looking for in their employees ... and it’s what they are finding, in youth who have traveled abroad.

Degreenia’s commitment in all of these areas has been imbedded in him throughout his extensive 4-H career, as president of the Maryland 4-H Teen Council and now as a student at Virginia Tech. In the future he plans to engage in international agricultural development so that he can help people who are eager to learn, like those he helped in Tanzania.

“When I first heard of the (international) program and the goals, I knew it was something that I wanted to participate in,” Degreenia said. “I’ve always been the type of person who has a strong desire to do rather than just donate, and I saw this as an excellent opportunity to help people my age halfway around the world who share the same interests with me.

“My most memorable experience through the

4-H’ers value the International
Eyes of Youth
Exchange Experience

occupied right after we hiked through the Amboni caves,” he continued. “I was sitting on a rock taking a break with a Tanzanian 4-H member named Julius, talking about cows. Earlier that week I went to Julius’s house and saw his first calf that he recently bought with the profits made from his rabbits. He told me about his goal to one day have a large farm and own over 100 cows.

“He had asked to see pictures of my cows so I showed him the ones that I had on my phone. Julius was amazed by the size of my cows and looked at me and asked, ‘Joseph what can you do to teach me more about cows and help me become successful?’ That question still remains on my mind and is a main reason why I want to pursue a career in international agricultural development so that I can help people like Julius,” Degreenia added.

As the exchange coordinator, Dr. Howard couldn’t be happier about results like this, and others similar from 4-H’ers who also made the trek. Also on the trip were Julia Bowers of Allegany County; Brittany Hill of Carroll County; Olivia Stibolt of Anne Arundel County; Rebecca Creighton and Jasmine Ammar, both of Charles County; and Katie Larrimore and Holly Brown, both of Cecil County. Chaperones along with Howard were Chris Anderson, 4-H Youth Development Specialist, University of Maryland Extension and Christa Stibolt, UME Adult Volunteer in Anne Arundel County.

“These international exchanges give the opportunity to travel and see what others do without …,” Dr. Howard said. “It helps them want to invest more in their state and in their local communities. It helps individuals look for situations in their own community, like Habitat for Humanity, and become involved and most importantly, engaged.”

During their stay in Tanzania, the 4-H’ers focused on humanitarian efforts – painting schools, planting gardens, working with 4-H’ers in livestock project work and Trees for the Future because 85 percent of the fuel in Tanzania is burned wood.

The Maryland delegation traveled with a 4-H group from Finland, stayed at the camp in the Morogoro Region and hosted training for 4-H coordinators throughout the country. “The conditions were primitive at best,” Dr. Howard said, “with open-sided sleeping quarters, sleeping under mosquito nets and no western toilets.

“The delegation had to be prepared for those kinds of conditions before even leaving the United States,” Dr. Howard said, adding that four orientation sessions were held for delegates to play active roles in investigating the Tanzanian culture and share their findings.

“I encourage everyone in 4-H to participate in international opportunities because it allows you to have a different perspective on situations,” Degreenia said. “Since I’ve been back from Tanzania, there hasn’t been a day that’s gone by that I haven’t thought about my experience and the friendships that I made with both the Tanzanian and Finnish 4-H’ers.”

Dr. Howard gives much credit to the Maryland 4-H Foundation for helping make this once in a lifetime experience possible. “For Maryland, the 4-H experience is about that … the development of children into productive citizens,” he said, “and it’s great to have the financial support.”

Later this year, Maryland 4-H families will receive 10 inbound exchangees from Japan.
Wheat is an important commodity for Maryland’s economy. As one of the state’s most widely grown crops, wheat earns a significant amount of money for Maryland each year. The more efficiently we can produce healthy, viable wheat, the better. The University of Maryland’s College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (AGNR) is making strides in deploying and identifying disease-resistant wheat genes that could impact farming in the state and around the world. One chief influence in this progress is the university’s collaboration with the University of La Plata in Argentina. By collaborating on this issue, students gain international exposure, and each location benefits from the end results.
Most wheat grown in Maryland is soft red winter wheat, a low-protein wheat used for products like cookies, cakes and pretzels. Two of the biggest fungal adversaries of soft red winter wheat are scab and leaf rust. These diseases can be devastating to crop quality and yields. For areas like Maryland, that is a big problem.

“Agriculture is one of the main sources of income for the state,” explained UMD Plant Science and Landscape Architecture professor and advisor, Dr. Jose Costa. “There are about 300,000 acres of wheat grown in Maryland every year, which are worth approximately over $100 million at the farm gate.”

To prevent scab and leaf rust, fungicides are used to help kill or prevent fungal diseases from growing. However, these fungicides can be detrimental for the environment, causing polluted water runoff. To find a solution to these wheat-plaguing problems while staying environmentally-friendly, Dr. Costa has led research efforts both here and abroad in Argentina as part of a research collaboration between the University of Maryland and the University of La Plata. The goal of the research is to map wheat genes for disease-resistance and breed disease-resistant wheat.

In November 2012, Dr. Costa, accompanied two of his graduate students, Daniela Miller and Ben Conway, to Argentina where they evaluated genetic characteristics of a wheat population infected with leaf rust. While there, the group also toured high-tech facilities, attended a seminar lead by Dr. Costa and met with faculty from the University of Buenos Aires to collaborate on additional related projects. Reversely, Sebastian Staltari, a student from the University of La Plata, spent two months in 2012 in Maryland fields, greenhouses and labs doing scab-resistant gene research through a fellowship sponsored by UMD’s College of AGNR.

Their success means Maryland and Argentine farmers would have better, stronger, and greater wheat yields, earning more income for each location. It would also reduce the need to use fungicides, which also saves farmers money and helps the environment. However, the success of this research would impact more than just Maryland and Argentina, but potentially the world. In addition to other countries using the disease-resistant wheat, Maryland often sells wheat to other countries. The disease-resistant wheat would lead to more and higher quality wheat for other countries to import.

In addition to the agricultural benefits related to this international research, the hard-working students involved in the program realize other benefits. Besides the opportunity to do important work in their field, students are exposed to new people and new cultures that broaden their overall education and give them a well-rounded experience. For some students, the chance to study in a foreign country is incredibly valuable and a must-have in their education. Dr. Costa noticed this trend with some of his students.

“When Daniela Miller applied for the program here, she was considering other universities, and one of the things that set us apart was the chance to do international work,” Dr. Costa explained. “I think that is one reason she decided to stay here instead of going somewhere else. That international exposure is something students look for. In a way, it helps you recruit top students.”

With the success of the program, the beneficial research done so far and the quality of students it attracts, it is obvious why Dr. Costa plans to continue this program. Throughout the experience, he has made contact with several professors at the University of Buenos Aires who are considering sending their students to do research at the University of Maryland as well. If 2012 is an indication of things to come, the fellowship should have no problem finding new recruits.
On every continent and in every corner of the world, students in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources fearlessly venture abroad to enhance their educational experiences. To these worldly Terps, we say: Buen trabajo! Bravo! Молодцы! Magnifico! Job well done!
In today’s globalized economy, international study and travel are paramount to producing successful, world-class citizens of the future. That’s why the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (AGNR) strives to make studying abroad an integral part of the educational experience for all students, regardless of their financial situations.

Several generous scholarship donors help the College of AGNR achieve this goal of turning its students into world leaders. For instance, the John & Marjorie Moore International Travel Scholarship has provided $20,000 to support international student travel since it was first established in May of 2003 by Dr. John Moore, Professor Emeritus from the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics. Over the last ten years, the Moore Scholarship has enabled AGNR students to travel to countries spanning the globe including Italy, France, Peru, Ecuador and Africa.

Meanwhile, the Donald Leishear International Programs Fund supports students planning to travel to underdeveloped regions in countries like Russia, Uzbekistan, China, India and Africa. Established in 2001 by 1968 AGNR alumnus Donald Leishear, the endowed scholarship typically pays for foreign travel for two to four students annually.

For many students, the experience of studying abroad is life-changing and helps chart their future career paths, but would not be possible without the aid of scholarships set up by donations to the College of AGNR. To add to these international travel scholarship funds or to create your own, please contact me at (301) 405-7733 or bmagness@umd.edu.

Thank you for your support of our College.

Brian

Keep Us Growing

Brian W. Magness
Director of Development
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**STRENGTHENING TIES WITH TAIWAN**

As Dean of the University of Maryland’s College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (AGNR), **Dr. Cheng-i Wei** knows the key to developing a world class program is cultivating partnerships with foreign countries – not just for students, but instructors as well. “It’s important to have globalization,” says Dean Wei. “Our faculty needs to have international opportunities.”

One specific partnership Dean Wei has worked hard to strengthen over the last several years is the College of AGNR’s relationship with National Taiwan University (NTU) in Taipei. Dean Wei is a native of Taiwan and received an M.S. in medical microbiology from NTU in 1972. In January, he and a group of department chairs and other administrators from the College of AGNR traveled to Taiwan to meet with their NTU counterparts and discuss potential collaborations.

AGNR administrators had the opportunity to explore Taiwan’s Experimental Forest run by NTU’s College of Bio-Resources and Agriculture. Spanning nearly 35,000 acres, the Experimental Forest is known as a premiere spot in Southeast Asia for conducting forest research, training and field practice. The delegation from UMD also toured a wood products factory owned by NTU as well as a tea plantation where Ulong tea is made, before visiting NTU’s main campus in Taipei. There they met with faculty members and administrators from the university’s College of Bio-Resources and Agriculture to talk about ways the two universities can strategically share resources in order to advance research and bolster instruction.

**SPREADING THE 4-H PHILOSOPHY TO SERBIA**

Talking about the benefits of and principles behind the 4-H program is something **Kendra Wells** and **Nia Imani Fields** could likely do in their sleep. Wells is a retired 4-H Youth Development specialist for University of Maryland Extension (UME) and Fields is a current 4-H educator in Baltimore County. In September, the two women embarked on a rare opportunity to share their passions for 4-H with Extension professionals in Serbia.

During their week-long trip, Fields and Wells led training sessions with the aid of a translator for Serbian Extension workers on how the 4-H program functions and had a chance to visit schools in both rural and urban areas of the country.

**FORMER AGNR DEPARTMENT CHAIR RECEIVES NATIONAL COMPOSTING AWARD**

Professor Emeritus **Francis Gouin**, PhD, was recognized at the U.S. Composting Council’s 21st annual conference awards luncheon as a compost pioneer and industry legend. Dr. Gouin received the 2012 Hi Kellogg Award for outstanding service to the composting industry. He is a nationally and internationally recognized scientist and Extension specialist in the area of compost use and ornamental and environmental horticulture. During his career with the University of Maryland, Dr. Gouin served as chair of the Department of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture, authored hundreds of papers, articles and newsletters and developed the Master Composters Program in conjunction with the Master Gardeners program in Maryland.
AREC PROFESSOR TO FILL NEW LEADERSHIP ROLE AT NOAA

Associate Professor Doug Lipton, PhD, from the Agricultural and Resource Economics (AREC) Department, has been tapped to fill the newly created position of Senior Research Economist at NOAA Fisheries. Dr. Lipton takes his deep experience in fisheries economics to his new role at NOAA as the agency works to support the economic vitality of the nation’s coastal communities and the productivity of our ocean resources.

During his 25 years at the University of Maryland, much of Dr. Lipton’s research has focused on valuing marine resources such as fish, shellfish and recreation, and on understanding how water quality affects the value of those resources. In addition, he has served as program leader for the Maryland Sea Grant Extension Program for 20 years. “I am excited and honored to be appointed NOAA’s first Senior Research Economist,” says Dr. Lipton. “However, I won’t be leaving the University of Maryland behind. I plan to continue working with students and faculty in the AREC Department and with Maryland Sea Grant to enhance collaborations between the university and NOAA.”

AGNR SCIENTISTS DISCOVER PROTEIN THAT ENABLES SAFE RECYCLING OF IRON FROM OLD RED BLOOD CELLS

Humans survive by constantly recycling iron, a metal that is an essential component of red blood cells, but which is toxic outside of those cells. Almost 50 years ago scientists first began hypothesizing that our bodies must have a special protein ‘container’ to safely transport heme — the form of iron found in living things — during the breakdown and recycling of old red blood cells and other types of heme metabolism. Now a team of scientists led by associate professor Iqbal Hamza from the Department of Animal & Avian Sciences at the University of Maryland has identified this long-sought heme-iron transporter and shown that it is the same HRG1 protein that a common microscopic worm uses to transport heme. In humans, the iron in heme is the component that allows hemoglobin in red blood cells to carry the oxygen needed for life. The team’s findings offer new insight into how iron deficiencies and genetic disorders of iron metabolism in humans are caused and could lead to new treatment options. The findings were published in the February 5 issue of the journal Cell Metabolism.
Former Herdsman Inducted into Maryland Dairy Shrine

Congratulations to Franklin L. Walbert who was inducted into the Maryland Dairy Shrine on February 23, 2013. A native of Queen Anne’s County, Frank began his career with the College of Agriculture in 1964, as herdsman at the University of Maryland Agronomy, Dairy and Forage Research Farm in Howard County. He became manager the following year.

Frank made many contributions to the dairy industry and brought acclaim to the University by improving the Holstein herd. The herd received the Progressive Breeders Award more than 20 years and also received the Genetic Merit Award. Under his leadership, numerous excellent cows were bred and developed including Terrapin Finley, 1287 who was scored “3E-94” – triple excellent/94 on a 100 point scale. University herd animals were shown extensively and won several All-Maryland awards. In addition to working with the cattle, best management practices including the introduction of “no till” cropping was introduced at the farm. He was also a leader in introducing embryo transfer work with dairy cattle breeding.

Frank was born and raised in Queen Anne’s County on a diversified family farm. He was active in 4-H, winning the Maryland and National Dairy Judging Contest in 1955. He was part of the first-place team at the International Contest in England. He met his wife of over 60 years, Paige Bishop, at 4-H Club Week in 1952. He attended the University of Maryland but had to return to the family farm to help his dad. He and Paige farmed on the Eastern Shore until 1964 when he took the position with the University.

Frank revived the Howard County Dairy Club and served as leader for many years. The club and his family won multiple Hoard’s Dairyman Judging Contests and he also coached the Howard County 4-H Dairy Judging and the Maryland Dairy Bowl teams.

After 30 years at Clarksville, Frank retired and returned to Centreville where he continued to work an additional 17 years with the beef program at the Wye Research and Education Center. Frank and Paige moved to Florida in 2010.

New Assistant Director of International Programs

The College of Agriculture and Natural Resources welcomes Dr. Tim Kock as the new Assistant Director of International Programs in Agriculture and Natural Resources. Dr. Kock has worked in the agricultural development sector throughout the world, managing USAID and USDA projects in Afghanistan, Armenia, Georgia, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan and Iraq. He recently returned to the U.S. after serving two years as a member of the management team on a USAID funded country-wide agribusiness development project.

Dr. Kock received his M.S. in Extension Education from the University of Nebraska and his Ph.D. in Agricultural Education and International Studies from Oklahoma State University. He was raised in rural Nebraska on a sheep/cattle operation where his interest in agricultural development began. Prior to his work internationally, he was a faculty member with the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension Service for many years, designing and implementing educational programs in youth and agriculture development.
Grow It Eat It Team Wows Crowds at the White House

For the second year in a row, a group of University of Maryland Extension (UME) experts spent part of their Easter weekend at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. A team of six faculty, staff and Master Gardeners from UME’s Grow It Eat It program was invited to attend the 135th White House Easter Egg Roll on Monday, April 1, to help educate children and families about food gardening, nutrition, insects and more. More than 30,000 people from all 50 states swarmed the White House South Lawn for games, demonstrations, stories and of course, the traditional egg roll.

Terps Tackle Stormwater

Six UMD students with various backgrounds and interests including landscape architecture, civil engineering, sustainable development, conservation biology and public policy teamed up to create a project proposal for the EPA Campus Rainworks Challenge. The national competition invites undergraduate and graduate student teams to create innovative green infrastructure designs for sites on their campuses that demonstrate how managing stormwater at its source can benefit the community and environment.

The team ultimately chose an area next to the Byrd Stadium parking garage as the focus for their project, in part because of its high visibility and traffic on campus and interviewed students walking by the garage to find out what they would want to see there. This interdisciplinary team of Terps met at least once a week throughout an entire semester to come up with a design that would not only treat runoff from the stadium garage, but beautify the space and make it a multifunctional outdoor recreational and educational facility. Their design includes stepped rain gardens utilizing plants native to Maryland that would help absorb and clean rainwater runoff from the garage, as well as a cistern that would store water underground to be used for irrigation by the UMD Arboretum Outreach Center.

AG-complishments

AG-Mazing Students

Inside the Agricultural Outlook Forum

Rubbing elbows and engaging in discussions with elected officials, national policy makers and agricultural industry leaders might be intimidating for some college students. But for Nathan Lim and Gabrielle Rovegno – both students in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (AGNR) – it was an energizing experience that left them wanting more.

Nathan and Gabrielle were among 30 students from across the country selected by U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack to attend the 2013 Agricultural Outlook Forum held in Arlington, Va., in February. Students from universities all over the nation submitted essays on the subject of “Agriculture as a Career” for a chance to attend the forum free of charge.
When the turf gets tough, Terps get tougher. Students from the Institute of Applied Agriculture (IAA) and the Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture (PSLA) set a school record by placing three teams in top spots (3rd, 4th and 11th) at the 19th Annual Collegiate Turf Bowl held in San Diego, CA, on February 7. A total of 247 students on 68 teams took part in the competition. In January, a team of Terps also took first place in the Sports Turf Managers Competition in Daytona Beach, FL.

AGNR Students Win Green Fund Scholarships
Two students with the University of Maryland College of Agriculture & Natural Resources (AGNR) were recently rewarded for their work on innovative, cross-disciplinary proposals to improve the environment both at home and abroad.

Graduate student Joe Maher from the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics (AREC) and his partner Xiaopeng Song (Geography) were the winners of the first annual Green Fund Fellowship – a competition that encourages students to think outside the box and to reach across disciplines when approaching environmental problems. The fellowship is awarded by the university’s Council on the Environment and carries a stipend of $10,000. Maher and Song’s project is entitled: Linking Remote Sensing and Economics: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Protected Areas in Reducing Tropical Deforestation.

Due to the overwhelming response to the fellowship announcement and the high quality of proposals received, the Council on the Environment added an additional $10,000 from its own funding to provide support for a second fellowship. The recipients of that award were Scott Tjaden, a student with the Department of Environmental Science & Technology, and David Dailey from the A. James Clark School of Engineering. Their project titled Improving Efficiencies: Integrated Green Roof and Photovoltaic Research aims to compare the energy production from a combined green roof with photovoltaic panels to achieve economic, ecological and social sustainability.

AG-Mazing Students
The College of Agriculture and Natural Resources proudly welcomed two new students of the feisty, four-legged variety to campus this spring. For the first time in roughly 30 years, two foals were born on the Campus Farm as students and faculty watched in wonder. The practice of foaling on campus was common before the mid-80s, when the Campus Farm had more acreage. However, Dr. Amy Burk, coordinator of the equine studies program in the Department of Animal and Avian Sciences (ANSC), has been working for the past several years to bring foals back to campus.

Animal science students were involved throughout the entire process of preparing the horses to foal and bringing them to campus. In order to overcome space constraints on the Campus Farm, two pregnant mares were kept on the university’s demonstration farm in Clarksville, where research is being conducted on the effects of rotational grazing on pasture management. The mares were transported to campus about a month before the first – named Cassie – gave birth on March 8. The foals made the farm quite a popular spot for students, faculty, staff and visitors on campus.

In the middle of a bustling, expanding, urban university, the Campus Farm serves as a small patch of rustic tranquility and a constant reminder of the University of Maryland’s heritage as an agricultural college. Now, the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources (AGNR) is embarking on a bold mission to turn the unique piece of property into a teaching facility for the future.

With help from experts at Blackburn Architects, the College of AGNR has developed a master plan for the Campus Farm’s revitalization which it unveiled to the public for the first time at a special presentation held inside the Riggs Alumni Center on December 5.

“The University of Maryland is one of the only land grant universities that has a working farm actually located on its campus,” said Cheng-i Wei, Dean of the College of AGNR. “Current national trends and emerging interests in topics like urban agriculture, buying locally grown products, micro-farming and food security make this the perfect time to invest in upgrading what is
already a major asset for our College and university.”

Proposed improvements to the campus farm include expanding and renovating current structures, creating indoor teaching spaces, streamlining the layout to more efficiently move animals throughout the site, improving accessibility and increasing the farm’s visibility on campus – all while preserving its bucolic charm. Although it sits on just 4.3 acres, the Campus Farm is used for hands-on instruction in a variety of undergraduate courses offered through the Department of Animal & Avian Sciences, ranging from livestock management to equine nutrition and small ruminant parturition, affectionately known as “lamb watch” at the university.

This dynamic vision for the Campus Farm won’t become a reality without support from private donors. In a show of confidence and enthusiasm for the project, Dean Wei announced the College will match any monetary gift donated specifically toward revitalizing the Campus Farm, which Blackburn Architects has estimated could cost between $5 million and $7 million.

To learn more about and make a donation to the Campus Farm Revitalization, please visit http://agnr.umd.edu/campusfarm or contact Brian Magness at (301) 405-9235 or bmagness@umd.edu.
Unbeknownst to many, the University of Maryland is home to a herbarium – a collection of catalogued, preserved plant specimens – that boasts roughly 87,000 specimens of flowering and cone-bearing plants, algae, mosses, liverworts, lichen and fungi. Established in 1901, the Norton-Brown Herbarium has recently seen a revival of sorts after very nearly being lost to the university. The large filing cabinets stacked with rows upon rows of pressed plants were housed in a classroom inside the HJ Patterson building for several decades, where they were largely under lock and key, inaccessible to researchers, students and general plant enthusiasts.

In 2011, the herbarium moved into a space inside the Research Greenhouse Complex on campus where it remains today. Dr. Tanja Schuster was hired as curator in July of 2012 and since then, has been trying to breathe new life into the collection of dried plants by hosting workshops, putting up displays and in general, trying to spread the word that the herbarium is still around and more active than it has been in decades.

People around the world can now access a steadily growing number of the University of Maryland’s collection through the new digital herbarium where pictures and attending information of roughly 5,000 plant specimens are currently available in a searchable database. For more information on the Norton-Brown Herbarium, visit http://www.nbh.psla.umd.edu.

Dr. Tanja Schuster with dried plants.
Sustainability Minor Among Most Popular at UMD

With students gravitating toward environmentally focused careers, the relatively young sustainability studies minor – jointly supported by the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources and the School of Public Policy – has quickly become one of the largest at the University of Maryland.

With 213 students enrolled in the program as of the spring 2013 semester, the minor is second in size only to human development, which holds 217 students. Created in January 2012, the sustainability studies minor was meant to enhance the university’s commitment to becoming a model in the field, said academic advisor Jess Buckley from the Department of Environmental Science & Technology. With a growing number of students clamoring for experience in the field on top of their other degrees, the program focuses on ways to creatively address today’s most pressing environmental issues.

UMD Food Safety Students, Training Lab Featured on ABC News

Graduate students from the University of Maryland’s Nutrition and Food Science Department made their debut on national television in February. ABC World News conducted an experiment on the effectiveness of hand sanitizers at the Joint Institute for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition’s (JIFSAN) International Food Safety Lab located in the university’s Patapsco Building in College Park. Students from JIFSAN Director Jianghong Meng’s laboratory volunteered to coat their hands with E. coli bacteria to aid in the experiment.
More than 80 students received bachelor’s degrees from the College of Agriculture & Natural Resources this December, while 25 received master’s degrees and nine completed PhDs. Their fields of study encompassed seven diverse programs ranging from animal science, plant science and environmental science to agricultural economics, nutrition and veterinary medicine. During their time with the College of AGNR, many students had the opportunity to take their studies to different countries around the world or put them into practice during internships and volunteer programs.

Nutrition and Food Science student Julie Mongeon served as the student speaker at the College of AGNR’s December graduation ceremony.
Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley inducted the family of Edwin R. Fry ’69 into the state Agriculture Hall of Fame on Thursday, February 7th. The induction was made before nearly 700 agricultural leaders and legislators during the annual “Taste of Maryland Agriculture” event held in Annapolis.

Members of the Fry family are the 44th recipients of this prestigious distinction. Accepting the honor were Edwin R. Fry and his wife Marian, a 1970 UMD graduate in Sociology, as well as sons Matthew and his wife Megan Fry, and Chuck and his wife Kathryn Fry. Also in attendance from the family were daughter Amanda and her husband Lt. Col. David Halla. The Edwin Fry Family owns and leases 1,350 acres of Fair Hill Farms, Inc., in Kent County and leases 800 acres of the Maryland Sunrise Farm, LLC, in Anne Arundel County. The business includes a Holstein and Brown Swiss milking herd, an Angus beef herd, grain, hay, vegetables, facility rentals and agri-tourism. The farm land includes 1,445 acres that are certified organic.

When Jia Li ’11 earned her PhD from the top-ranked Agricultural and Resource Economics (AREC) program at the University of Maryland in 2011, she knew her education and training would take her places. However, she didn’t expect one of those places would turn out to be the White House.

In February, Li started a one-year detail with the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). Established in 1969 as part of the National Environmental Policy Act, the CEQ is charged with developing national policies to recommend to the President that will help improve environmental quality and conservation efforts while balancing the social, economic and health impacts those policies will have on the public. Li won’t be the first graduate of UMD’s AREC Department to work on this prestigious council. In fact, she’s the third AREC alum to be put on detail for the CEQ in just the last four years. Heather Klemick ’07 served on the CEQ in 2009 and 2010 and Glenn Sheriff ’04 was on detail from July of 2011 to August of 2012.

During the 2013 General Assembly session in Annapolis, visitors to the Miller Senate Office Building were able to view a series of portraits of Maryland farmers taken by award-winning photographer and University of Maryland alumnus Edwin Remsberg.
Their idea might seem simple: develop a product that allows anyone to grow vegetables in their own backyard without having to dig. But on April 5, University of Maryland alums John-Randall Gorby ’10 and Philip-Michael Weiner ’11 proved that sometimes simple is the surest route to success.

Gorby, a graduate from the Environmental Science and Technology Department, and Weiner, an Economics major won the $50,000 grand prize in the 2013 Cupid’s Cup, a competition created by the Dingman Center for Entrepreneurship at the UMD Robert H. Smith School of Business. The contest expanded nationally this year and attracted 55 applications from entrepreneurs at 25 universities in 16 states.

Gorby and Weiner wowed the judges with their invention, the Nourishmat: a polypropylene mat that shows budding vegetable gardeners exactly what and where to plant. It’s outfitted with a drip irrigation system that works by simply plugging in a hose and comes with a supply of seed balls included.

In addition to the $50,000 prize money, Gorby and Weiner also walked away with the $2,500 Audience Choice Award and will be granted exclusive access to a member of Maryland alumnus and Under Armour founder and CEO Kevin Plank’s professional network. To learn more about the Nourishmat, visit www.nourishmat.com.
As a part of the annual meetings of the Association of Public Land Grant Universities, schools from the BIG10 invited local Terps to join them in their annual reception held at the American Farm Bureau Federation headquarters in Washington, D.C. Twenty-five Terps and guests joined alums from other BIG10 schools in an evening of fellowship and networking. Five AGNR undergraduate members of Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity and Sigma Alpha Sorority also attended. As a bonus, AGNR Terps were able to visit with Terp parents whose children attended Maryland – their new state institution as their careers had brought them to the DC area from across the nation. The reception was coordinated by BIG10 members of the National Agriculture Alumni and Development Association’s alumni professionals at BIG10 schools. Alumni from Rutgers were also part of the nearly 200 attendees.

Laytons Receive Prestigious Master Farmer Honor

AGNR Alumnus, Joseph Layton, Jr. ’70 and his son, William ’96, business logistics; were one of four members of the 2013 class of Master Farmers from the Mid-Atlantic introduced in late March at the annual Master Farmers meeting in Harrisburg, PA. They are part of the 80th class of Master Farmers – a title that only .9% of farmers in the region attain.

“Eastern agriculture is strong in diversity, ingenuity, productivity and commitment to leadership service,” according to John Vogel, editor of the American Agriculturist magazine which co-sponsors the program with Extension educators in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. These Master Farmers join the 658 men and women tapped for the award since 1927. State totals now include 12 from Delaware, 56 from Maryland, 27 from New Jersey, 552 from Pennsylvania and 18 from West Virginia.

The Laytons operate Lazy Day Farms and Layton’s Chance Vineyard and Winery on close to 1,900 acres, including 800 acres of owned crop and about 600 acres of woodland. Their cash-grain and winery enterprises are in Vienna, Dorchester County. The winery rose to the top of five farm expansion opportunities considered, based on opportunities for the next generations and development at a pace they chose.
Richard O’Hara

Richard O’Hara ‘01 was recently promoted to the position of general manager at the Farmers Cooperative Association, Inc. (FCA) of Frederick. O’Hara graduated from the University of Maryland with a degree in Agricultural Business Management and worked for various local agricultural companies prior to joining the FCA team in 2002. With FCA, he has worked in numerous capacities including Inside and outside sales, and most recently as assistant general manager. FCA operates three divisions; Feed, Fertilizer and Petroleum – providing the area with high-quality products and services. The feed division is most widely known as manufacturer, wholesaler and retailer of “Maryland Quality Feeds.” O’Hara and his wife, Shimae, reside in Waynesboro, PA.

The Laytons excel in family teamwork. After graduation from the University of Maryland, Joe went back to farm with his father. When William graduated from the University of Maryland, he took his business logistics degree to Toyota. In 2003, William brought fresh enthusiasm back to the farm and the men began planning the future. Today, William and wife Jennifer own the farm, while Joe and wife Laura share in ownership of Layton’s Chance Winery.

Joe oversees the farm operation and grain marketing. His wife, Laura, manages the books of both businesses. William is the winemaker, overseeing all vineyard and farm operations. Jennifer is general manager of the winery and its marketing.

The elder Laytons also have a daughter, Susan Conner ‘98 AGNR who resides in Florida, and the younger Laytons have two children, Stephen and Alison. Joe is supervisor for the Dorchester Soil and Water Conservation District and treasurer of his church. He’s a past president of the National Coalition for Food and Agriculture Research, the county Farm Bureau and county school board. He was also vice president of the Maryland Soybean Board. William is president of the Dorchester County Farm Bureau and vice president of the Maryland Soybean Board. In 2001, they received the Best Managed Farm Award by Farm Futures and in 2011 they were inducted into the Maryland Agriculture Hall of Fame

Another Maryland Agriculture Hall of Fame Family (2008), Extension leader and friend of AGNR was also a part of the 2013 class of Master Farmers. David and Ann Patrick of Woodbine, known worldwide for their 170 head of high-quality Ayrshire and Holstein dairy cattle, were inducted with the Laytons. Maple Dell Farm consists of 250 acres of owned crop and pastureland, plus 800 acres of rented cropland.
Several of the 21 members of LEAD Maryland Class VII had ties to the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, being either alums or faculty/staff members. At the conclusion of the two-year leadership development program, members traveled to Chili for nine days to see firsthand what Chili and Maryland agriculture have in common. Appreciating the challenges and differences is a goal of the travel component of the LEAD MD program. Chili designated this year as the “Year of Innovation” which includes working together to solve vital social, agricultural, economic and export issues.

Class members kept journals of day to day experiences while on the trip which included visits to orchards, vineyards and vegetable crop operations, as well as cattle, sheep, alpaca and llamas farms. Fellows also learned about the fresh seafood industry as well as the natural resources at national parks. Relationships with the U.S. were eye opening, including the fact that all of the Pioneer Seed Corn for planting in the U.S. is produced in Chili. The Delmarva Farmer special supplement includes the journal: http://www.americanfarm.com/publications/the-delmarva-farmer/special-sections/1852-lead-maryland-class-vii-trip-to-chile

Among Class VII members was AGNR’s photographer, Edwin Remsberg who has posted additional photos at http://agnr.zenfolio.com/chile. A storybook describing the impact of the LEAD MD experience for fellows can be found at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JWyJmxs_5c4

The LEAD Maryland Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and operates the curriculum-based LEAD Fellowship Program in partnership with the University of Maryland Extension and other funding and supporting partners.
**MEMORABLE MARYLANDERS**

**Dr. Russell J. Balge**, retired Maryland regional Extension horticulture specialist died suddenly at home on January 3, 2013.

Born on September 10, 1940, Dr. Balge once said he started gardening at age 8. “I just grew up loving plants,” he said. He began preparing for his career in horticulture in 4-H, working in vegetable and flower programs. He worked in local greenhouses as gardener before college.

He earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the University of Wisconsin Lacrosse in the 1960s. While there, he was in charge of the grounds and gardens of the executive mansion of the State of Wisconsin. Earning his doctorate from the University of Delaware in 1974, he joined the Extension faculty of the University of Maryland Baltimore County. He had a weekly television show and wrote a newspaper column and a monthly gardening newsletter in addition to serving as a consultant in commercial horticultural interests.

The American Nursery and Landscape Association selected Dr. Balge as the 2000 Nursery Extension Award recipient. The award recognized outstanding and valuable contributions to the nursery industry made by an Extension agent.

He is survived by his wife, Gillann Thorndill. They had recently moved to Hudsonville, Michigan, and were busy working on the house and landscaping at the time of his death.

**Thomas Luther “Tom” Browning ’67** died Tuesday, February 19, at his home in Mt. Airy after an extended illness. Born July 23, 1945, he was the son of William H. and Marianne E. Browning and was a 1963 graduate of Frederick High School. He was an Agricultural Economics major at the University of Maryland and earned his M.S. at Pennsylvania State University. After completing his Master’s, he began his career at the U.S. Department of Agriculture with the Extension Service at the University of Minnesota. While there he completed his studies for the Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics. He returned to Maryland in 1975 to work in the USDA’s Agricultural Research Service and as natural resource policy and program analyst and advisor to the Farm Service Agency Administrator, the position from which he retired in 2003.

Following retirement, Tom became very active in the Frederick County Farm Bureau, using his professional skills to become a successful leader of the legislative committee for several years and served as president of the organization. He continued to be active in the organization until the time of his death. The Frederick County Commissioners appointed Tom as the farm representative in drafting the documents for the charter government plan for the county. An article remembering Tom as a “dedicated and eloquent advocate for farming and farmers rights” was published in The Frederick News Post on February 23, 2013.

He is survived by his daughters, Melissa Browning Lizmi of Mt. Airy and Sarah Elizabeth Browning of Shoreline, WA; grandchildren Jack Thomas Lizmi, Julia Marianne Lizmi and Nolan Browning Lizmi. He is also survived by brothers, William H. Browning, Jr. of Mt. Airy and Robert F. Browning of Olney and one uncle, Earle Lynwood Browning of Mt. Airy. Memorial donations to support the Schoolhouse Chick Program may be sent to the Thomas L. Browning Memorial Fund, Frederick County Farm Bureau, P.O.Box 3340, Frederick, MD 21705-3340.

**Alfred Danegger**, long time University of Maryland photographer with the Office of University Relations, died on February 21, 2013. He was born February 16, 1924 in Spring Lake, N.J. and grew up in Milford, Del., where his father operated Danegger’s Hi-Way Nursery. His enrollment at the University of Maryland was interrupted to serve in the U.S. Army with the Signal Corps as a combat photographer. Al returned to the University of Maryland and the day after graduation began his long career working with the Office of University Relations. He was a leader in the University Photographers Association, serving as president twice. With fellow photographer Arthur Rothstein, he directed a series of conferences at the University College on “Photography in Visual Communications Today.” He returned to Delaware following his retirement after over 50 years of service to the University of Maryland community.

He is survived by his wife of 45 years, Dorothy; son, Robert and his wife Deborah of Bethesda, and their children, Rachel Elizabeth Danegger and Jacob Emil Danegger; daughter Anna and her husband David Jarrell of Severna Park, and their son, Andrew Jarrell; brother-in-law, C. Everett Milteer and his wife Lynda of Virginia Beach, Va; and treasured nieces and nephew and their families. Memorial donations may be made to the Rehoboth Art League, 12 Dodds Lane, Rehoboth Beach, Del. 19971, or to The Rotary Foundation, Collections Center Dr., Chicago, IL 60693

**Henry J. Dorn, ’53**, of Frackville, PA died January 31, 2013 at Ridgeview Healthcare and Rehab Center, Shenandoah Heights, Pa. He was 89.

Henry enlisted in the United States Army in 1943. He did not attend high school, however he subsequently received a Maryland Certificate of High School Equivalence in 1947 and was able to enter the University of Maryland at College Park in September of 1949. In April 1952, Henry was
inducted as a member of the honorary fraternity, Alpha Zeta and in June 1953, he graduated from the University of Maryland with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture.

Henry married Camille J. Shaffer at the Memorial Chapel on December 21, 1949. She was employed at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and they initially resided in the Veterans Families Unit on the University of Maryland Campus. In the spring of 1952, he was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in the Air Force Reserve through the Air Force Reserve Officers Training Corps. He served as an active Air Force Reserve Officer until his discharge from active reserve duty on October 27, 1967. He retired with the rank of Captain in the Air Force Reserve. After graduation, he was employed by the Continental Can Company in Chicago. He was hired by Zapata Industries as the manager of research and development. He holds a number of patents associated with the bottling and canning industry. He later became vice president of research and development for Zapata Industries, a position he held until his retirement on December 31, 1988. He continued to work as a national and international consultant in the bottling and canning industries.

Henry was a generous philanthropist. In 2009, he and his family joined university officials for the ribbon cutting for the Henry J. and Camille J. Shaffer Dorn Dietetic Teaching Laboratory in Marie Mount Hall at the University of Maryland, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Following a luncheon, he conducted a personal tour of the campus for those in attendance. The establishment of the Camille J. and Henry J. Dorn Scholarship Fund constituted the largest donation in the history of North Schuylkill School District.

Memorial donations may be made in Henry’s name, to the St. Joseph’s Church Memorial Fund, 7 S Broad Mountain Ave, Frackville, PA 17931.

**ROGER B. W. NEAL’79 of Taneytown, died unexpectedly Friday, February 22, 2013. He was 56 years old. He was a hay farmer in Carroll County along with his wife of nearly 30 years, Linda Stanton Neal whom he met at the University of Maryland. He earned a degree in agricultural science and enjoyed hunting, fishing and riding his horses and mules.**

He was predeceased by his father, Robert C. Neal. In addition to his wife, he is also survived his mother, Elizabeth Boyle Neal, of Florida; a son, Pete Neal, of Taneytown; daughters Rose Neal and fiancé Brandon Krantz, of Baltimore, and Josie Neal, of Taneytown; sisters Carbery Neal and husband Mitt Doda, of Vermont, Julia Neal and husband Dan Rosis, of South Carolina, Letitia Neal and husband Si Campbell, of Florida, and Suzannah Neal and husband Jeff Browne, of Kansas; and several nieces and nephews.

**ROBERT B. RATHBONE, chairman of the University of Maryland’s department of information and publication from 1975 until his retirement in 1981, died March 5, 2013 at the Asbury Methodist Village retirement community in Gaithersburg. He was 93.**

Before coming to the university, he was the director of the information division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Agricultural Research Service from 1966 to 1975. He received the USDA Superior Service Award and was a lifetime member of the National Association of Science Writers.

A native of Manhattan, Kansas, he earned his degree in journalism from Kansas State University in 1942. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II in the Atlantic and Pacific theaters. He moved to Washington, D.C. to work for the Agricultural Research Service in 1950. He earned his master’s degree from American University.

He was predeceased by his wife of 36 years, Lila Maxine Ewing, who died in 1978 and his second wife of 11 years, Ann Eastwood, who died in 1999. Survivors include three children from his first marriage, Susan Schriver of Spring Hill, Florida, Mary Ann Bates of Woodbine and Robert E. Rathbone, of Gaithersburg; seven grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren.

Sympathy is extended to AGNR colleagues Karen Rane, Coordinator & Director of Plant Clinic & Extension Specialist, and Gerald Brust, Senior Agent & Extension Specialist, IPM Vegetables at the Upper Marlboro Research Facility, and the extended family and friends of Stephen Alex Rane who died suddenly on February 12, 2013, in College Park, Maryland. He was 22.

Stephen was born June 18, 1990, in Lafayette, Ind., attended West Lafayette Junior/Senior High School and was a 2009 graduate of Centennial High School in Ellicott City. Stephen was a senior at the University of Maryland, majoring in English and Linguistics, at the time of his death.

In addition to his mother, Karen Rane and stepfather Gerald Brust, he is survived by his father Stanley Rane and stepmother Teresa Pena of Glen Mills, Pa., sister Alison Rane and her husband Maxime Paquin of Chicago, and sister Noelia Rane of Glen Mills, Pa. He is also survived by his grandmothers, Helen Klein of Frederick, MD, and Genevieve Rane of Philadelphia, and numerous aunts, uncles and cousins.

A vigil was held in Memorial Chapel on campus on the day of his death. The funeral was held in Malvern, Pa., on Saturday, February 16. Contributions in Stephen’s name may be made to a charity of one’s choice.
Upcoming Dates and Special Events

AGNR at the Maryland State Fair
for the 11 Best Days of Summer
AUGUST 23–SEPTEMBER 2, 2013, TIMONIUM

Featuring:
• AGNR Dairy Cattle
• U-Learn Farm – family educational activity center in the Cow Palace ~ AGNR, Maryland 4-H Foundation, Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation, Maryland State Fair and several commodity groups collaborate to provide hands-on activities throughout the fair.
• AGNR joins Maryland Department of Agriculture in the Farm and Garden Building near York Road
• AGNR students assist with the Birthing Center
• Showcase for Maryland 4-H Youth Development programs and projects to share exhibits in the 4-H Building, Cow Palace, Livestock Pavilion, Horse Ring and Animal World
• Dean’s Awards for Excellence in 4-H Showmanship for all species on exhibit

AGNR Open House
at the Central Maryland Research and Education Center Clarksville Facility,
4240 FOLLY QUARTER ROAD, ELLICOTT CITY
10 a.m.–3 p.m. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2013

This is a great opportunity for the general public to learn about all the components of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources – academics, research and outreach – through fun, family-oriented educational activities and exhibits. Farm tours, pumpkin painting and cutting edge research presentations round out the nearly 60 ongoing activities. Free and open to the public.

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

Homecoming –
AG-toberfest
AGNR Tailgate at the Campus Farm
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2013
3 HOURS BEFORE KICK-OFF AGAINST CLEMSON

Watch AGNR’s Facebook page for details about the 2013 Ag-toberfest. Contact Gail Yeiser at gyeiser@umd.edu or 301-405-2434 for sponsorship opportunities.
http://www.facebook.com/pages/University-of-Maryland-AGNR-Alumni-Chapter/115419941422