GROWING
LEADERS
FOREWORD

LEADERSHIP TO SUCCEED
SOMEONE MUST FOLLOW.

Many words are used to describe leaders and leadership in this issue: collaboration, trustworthy, passionate, effective communicator—the list goes on. What’s implied, and I think worth expressing, is that to be a leader you must inspire someone to follow. Together you must accomplish a shared objective or goal. The following pages are filled with students, faculty, staff and alumni who inspire others to work collaboratively, serve others, be innovative and advance agriculture and life sciences.

We’re pleased to bring you a feature on the college’s best known leader, Enoswood Dean Wendy Wintersteen (page 20). Dean Wintersteen spoke to a group of women in agriculture attending the Farmer’s Conference last fall. Her main message to the young women in the audience has stuck with me: Be genuine. Be yourself.

Why is leadership important to the college? See Andy Zehr’s Voices piece (page 18) and research by CALS faculty and staff (page 17), which explain how extracurricular activities allow our students to tailor unique collegiate experiences preparing them for successful and meaningful careers.

The growing role of women in agriculture is featured in a profile on student services specialist Stephanie Zimbach (page 18). Our CALS undergraduate student body is now 50 percent women. You’ll meet several young women in leadership roles across the college in this issue. One is following in the footsteps of her father, Adelai Seaver and her dad Stuart are the first parent-child legacy to serve as Agricultural Business Club presidents (page 24).

Alam Todd Hall, senior vice president of Cargill, demonstrates the passion and ability to inspire that many attribute to leaders. He’s helping develop future leaders at Cargill and at Iowa State through support of the Global Resource Systems major (page 20).

Leaders who’ve inspired me most over the years have been those I’ve stood with me side-by-side and said, “Let’s make this better, together.” I took a moment as this issue went to press to reach out to a few of those folks who’ve inspired me to follow them and also inspired me to be my own brand of leader. I encourage you to reach out to leaders in your life who’ve made a difference. You may find others follow your lead.

Kind regards,

Melena Reicks Licht

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ON THE COVER
Hannah Fisher, a sophomore in agriculture and society and participant in the Dean’s Leadership Seminar, showcases a leader she looks up to—CALS Dean Wendy Wintersteen. Wintersteen is holding a photo of Fred Poston, who recently retired as dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at Michigan State University. Poston was a professor of entomology and mentor of hers while she was an undergraduate. “A mentor can’t guarantee success, but the best ones provide the opportunity to test one’s self,” Wintersteen says (read more on page 20). Images by Christopher Gannon, photo illustration by PUSH Branding and Design.

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On consecutive weeks this spring, we hosted the 28th annual Iowa FFA Leadership Conference and the 22nd year of the World Food Prize Foundation Iowa Youth Institute.

The main sessions of both events were held in Hilton Coliseum.

The state FFA leaders put on quite a show. Lasers, pyrotechnics, fog machines, slickly produced videos and high-decibel rock’n’sroll and hip-hop brought the house down. The theme was “Amplify” and the conference delivered. When you’re in the same space with more than 5,500 energized, blue-jacketed Iowa FFA members, you feel it from the top of your head to the soles of your feet. It’s a celebration of hard work, dedication and entrepreneurship—frolicking with incredibly accomplished young leaders in agriculture.

The World Food Prize Iowa Youth Institute is a study in contrasts. About 300 students from 130 Iowa schools gathered around tables in Hilton to understand more about global food security and combating hunger and poverty. It’s serious and sometimes sobering business, and leads into presentations of their own ideas and findings. If there are lasers and pyrotechnics, they’re found within each of the participants as they discover more about other people and cultures—and more about themselves as they seek to make a difference in the world.

Despite the differing atmosphere and tone, the common threads between the two events are many. All these young people are passionate about food, agriculture and the future of Iowa and the planet. In their own unique ways, all have immersed themselves in programs that bring out their very best.

Some successfully commingle their involvement. Six of the nine Iowa FFA state officers had participated in the Iowa Youth Institute.

The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences is proud to be a perennial sponsor of the state FFA leadership conference. We’re proud to be a long-time partner with the World Food Prize Foundation on making the Iowa Youth Institute a premier event to explore food security issues.

For these two institutions, a common thread with Iowa State is that we’re all about providing opportunities for transformative experiences for young people. All of us believe that these experiences will have a lasting impact on their future. The challenges that Iowa and the world face are formidable—but they can be overcome with the energy and commitment we see every day in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, and that we see every year with the state FFA conference and the Iowa Youth Institute.

The World Food Prize calls the engagement with students the search for “The Next Norman.” Maybe the next Norman Borlaug—or Norma Borlaug—will be one of those 300 Iowa Youth Institute participants or one of those 5,500 FFA students. Now that’s exciting to imagine.

Wendy Wintersteen
Endowed Dean of Agriculture and Life Sciences

Elizabeth Martinez-Podolsky believes you need to give of yourself to learn about others. She does a lot of giving in her role as the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences multicultural liaison officer (MLO).

“We work to create an inclusive environment for students of all backgrounds who desire a quality education and an active student life. As the MLO, I work with students to help them make connections from their learning to their professional development.” Martinez-Podolsky says. “As our university and workforce begins to see a change in the demographics of engaged citizens, we must work towards making space to accommodate and normalize different ways of thinking and learning.”

Martinez-Podolsky joined the college in April of 2015. ‘She is using student survey data and input from current students to develop ideas to improve diversity and multicultural programs and create future initiatives.

On a recent day Martinez-Podolsky spoke with the Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Regional Food Working Group on how to reach out to disenfranchised communities. She wrote a letter of recommendation for a student, drafted a weekly student newsletter and sourced funding for a professional development conference. There are no typical days for Martinez-Podolsky, but one theme drives her work.

“I promote an asset based mentality. I want to move our students away from focusing on deficits and instead use asset based language. I help students define and identify their skills—their cultural capital and wealth,” she says. “They have so much to offer and don’t know how to give themselves credit.”

This theme is ingrained into the language of Martinez-Podolsky’s program. To encourage students to think like academics she refers to them as “CALS Scholars” in her weekly student newsletter, Hello from MLO.

CALS students are introduced to Martinez-Podolsky at orientation and she speaks to each major’s introductory course. Students who self-identify as multicultural in their application materials receive information from her and others opt in as they become familiar with Martinez-Podolsky and the services she offers.

“I will serve any student. I’m here for those that identify as multicultural—Latino, Black, Asian Pacific Islander and others—and for those who are early parents, nontraditional students, veterans

“I help students define and identify their skills—their cultural capital and wealth.”

Caitlyn Miron, freshman in animal ecology, touches base with Martinez-Podolsky often for help navigating her student experience inside and outside the classroom.

Images by Christopher Gannon
We have a responsibility to ourselves, others and our ancestors to remember to help others.

Iowa State’s Shade Tree Short Course got its start 50 years ago in former Forestry professor Sande McNabb’s living room. The meeting was created to discuss Dutch elm disease, which was killing the popular trees across the country. This year’s meeting drew about 700 participants, and emerald ash borer—a destructive pest claiming the lives of millions of ash across the United States—was a prominent topic of conversation.

The annual, two-day event held each February is coordinated by Jeff Iles, chair for life, and this alone will present many opportunities to be successful. We must remember our communities as we progress, and this alone will present many opportunities to be successful. We must remember our communities as we progress, and this alone will present many opportunities to be successful. We must remember our communities as we progress, and this alone will present many opportunities to be successful. We must remember our communities as we progress, and this alone will present many opportunities to be successful. We must remember our communities as we progress, and this alone will present many opportunities to be successful. We must remember our communities as we progress, and this alone will present many opportunities to be successful. We must remember our communities as we progress, and this alone will present many opportunities to be successful. We must remember our communities as we progress, and this alone will present many opportunities to be successful. We must remember our communities as we progress, and this alone will present many opportunities to be successful. We must remember our communities as we progress, and this alone will present many opportunities to be successful. We must remember our communities as we progress, and this alone will present many opportunities to be successful. We must remember our communities as we progress, and this alone will present many opportunities to be successful. We must remember our communities(0,12),(997,989)

Elizabeth Martinez-Podolsky (left), CALS multicultural liaison officer, helps create an inclusive environment in CALS. She meets regularly with students and co-advises the student organization Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences.
PREFACING AGRICULTURE

TOM POLITO REFLECTS ON CAREER IN CALS

I n high school, Tom Polito took an interest inventory that told him he should pursue a career in agriculture or theology. He says he’s been preaching agriculture ever since.

Polito (’76 agronomy, ’82 MS, ’87 PhD) is an assistant professor in both agricultural education and studies and agronomy. He’s also interim assistant dean for student services for the College Agriculture and Life Sciences. For the past 38 years, Polito has led the college’s student services office and worked simultaneously as an administrator, adviser, teacher and researcher. As Polito prepared for retirement in May he shared a few thoughts on what it’s been like to lead the college’s student services office.

Have students changed throughout your career? I’ve observed students to be a product of their times.

During the Vietnam War, males didn’t worry about a resume because we knew upon graduation, we would be drafted and probably traveling to exons: South Vietnam.

Then in the 1970s, the big challenge was feeding the world. When the green revolution increased food production, the emphasis switched to maintaining our environment. Today students are again worried about feeding the world and doing it in a sustainable way. As the challenges facing society evolve, so do our students.

The processes at ISU have changed too. It doesn’t seem like I’ve been here for 38 years until I think of how technology has changed what we do. When I started, students submitted paper pre-registration forms or stood in line to register. Today instead of standing in line, students can use their laptops to schedule classes while sitting on central campus!

How did the 1980s farm crisis affect the college? The Farm Crisis of the 1980s devastated our enrollment. We dropped to 1,895 students in 1987. Also, the students were under a lot of stress. We have students who deal with stress now, but there was more then. Students were worried about grades, paying tuition and what was happening at home. For some, what was happening at home was a constant concern and weighed heavily on them — it was a challenging time.

Any memorable moments? My memorable moments revolve around students.

For instance, I had one student who wanted to be a veterinarian but who initially struggled in his classes. He changed from pre-vet to general agriculture where I helped him choose a major and recover from his poor start. I made it through vet school and I have a great job. Thanks for believing in me.

Whencever students thank me for helping them or making a difference in their lives — that’s a memorable moment. I’ve been fortunate to have many in my career.

Who are your heroes? My heroes have always been our advisers — the advisers who not only advise, but who also mentor students. They take time to meet the student’s needs and come in after hours to advise student groups. They tell students what they need to hear, even when the student may not want to hear it. When I started we had great advisers that I emulated. Detroy Green, Fred Foreman, Jim Dinsmore (fisheries and wildlife biology) and Woody Hart are a few. Today we still have great advisers, Barb Clasenew (93 ag and life sciences education), Howard Tyler, Mike Retzliff (95 PhD ag and life sciences education), John Burnett and many others. I also had the two best mentors. I could hope for in emeritus associate dean of academic programs Louis Thompson (97 MS agronomy, 98 PhD) and former director of college career services Roger Bruene (’96 agronomy). Those are my heroes. I have a lot of them.

What is your biggest accomplishment at Iowa State? I have trouble identifying anything major I accomplished on my own. My accomplishments were usually team accomplishments. I take great satisfaction that we had 4,000 students enrolled this fall, instead of 2,500. I was part of that, but so was everyone in this office, the CALS student ambassadors, our partners in the departments and the admissions office and our deans.

What is your number one piece of advice for students? I tell students to identify their dream job 10 years from now. Once they decide that, I tell them to use the opportunities and experiences at Iowa State to build the toolbox they will need in the future. Use summer internships, clubs, electives and advisers to acquire the knowledge and skills they need to reach their goals. I tell them to deliberately build the best toolbox they can while they are here.

What are you most looking forward to in retirement? Last summer I took my 8-year-old grandson fishing for the first time. He caught his first fish, a 14-inch brown trout. He was grinning from ear to ear. I look forward to having time to pursue more goals on my grandkids’ faces. I also look forward to the time when the academic calendar is no longer controlling when my wife and I travel.

I have a great job. Thanks for believing in me. After hours to advise student groups. They tell students what they need to hear, even when the student may not want to hear it. When I started we had great advisers that I emulated. Detroy Green, Fred Foreman, Jim Dinsmore (fisheries and wildlife biology) and Woody Hart are a few. Today we still have great advisers, Barb Clasenew (93 ag and life sciences education), Howard Tyler, Mike Retzliff (95 PhD ag and life sciences education), John Burnett and many others. I also had the two best mentors. I could hope for in emeritus associate dean of academic programs Louis Thompson (97 MS agronomy, 98 PhD) and former director of college career services Roger Bruene (’96 agronomy). Those are my heroes. I have a lot of them.

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Even my teaching was a team effort. I convinced instructors in three other courses besides my soils course to partner in integrating our courses into a combined student experience. The same students were in all courses and the point of integration was a consulting relationship we shared with an area farmer. All the instructors will tell you it was a very rewarding experience. Many of the students told us they achieved more than they thought they could.

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A former student of Tom Polito’s, Elin Bartges, created a scholarship in his honor to support activities that impact students’ outlook on agriculture and life sciences and help refine their life goals. For information on contributing to the Polito Scholarship for High Impact Transformative Experiences visit STORIES online.
**WOMEN IN AGRONOMY**

**FINDING A PLACE OF THEIR OWN**

Stephanie Zumbach’s office is a busy place. Students drop in to chat about career prospects, course planning, transfer credits and internship possibilities. For many, her office is the first stop on their Iowa State University adventure.

Zumbach (90 agricultural studies) is a student services specialist in the Department of Agronomy. She’s also a recruiter, marketer, counselor, mentor and friend to countless students.

**A Woman’s Place**

As part of her charge to recruit, serve and retain students in the department, Zumbach leads the Women in Agronomy Program. Ricked off more than 15 years ago, the program provides a safe and open venue for women to learn, network and thrive. The program is supported by department funds, industry grants and university diversity funds.

“Our agronomy student body is about 33 percent women,” says Kendall Lamley, agronomy professor and chair. “This program is important because women are underrepresented in production agriculture and we feel women will be important to bringing change to the industry.”

Zumbach lines up a roster of speakers, including many Iowa State alumni, who share their experiences with students, offer facility tours and workshops. Topics include balancing work and family life, unique interview scenarios, practical on-job advice and suggestions for maximizing the student experience at Iowa State.

“Welcome Home”

Helping students find their home in the Department of Agronomy is rewarding for Zumbach.

Coleman Kneifl, an agronomy freshman from Nebraska, says meeting with Zumbach is what helped seal his decision to attend Iowa State.

“I’d say she’s like our mom, but everyone knows that’s Mary (Wiedenhoeft). Steph is more like a friend. She’s always willing to help with anything,” Kneifl says. When she heard he was really struggling with chemistry, he dropped in to his class. “When she heard I was really struggling with chemistry my first semester she encouraged me to consider a tutor. She followed up with an e-mail on where to find one and how much it cost. She wanted to connect me with what I needed to succeed.”

Drawn to Iowa State for her love of science “and the agriculture behind it,” Kneifl made fast friends in the Women in Agronomy program. The junior in agronomy and animal science credits her peer mentor and personal invites from Zumbach for getting her interested in the program. She’s now a peer mentor and president of the Agronomy Club.

What’s the overall message students like Kneifl take away from the program? “I’ve learned agriculture is a great place for women,” she says. “Speakers introduce us to all different types of paths. They encourage us to be proactive and self-aware. They give us practical advice for dealing with interview situations, field calls and business travel.”

Zumbach worked for 13 years in the seed industry before joining the agronomy staff. She can speak from experience about working in a predominately male industry.

“I know what it’s like not to have my voice heard at meetings. I’ve experienced some of the same things they’ll be dealing with. They know I support them and can relate,” Zumbach says. “Hearing other women’s stories shows students success is possible. They see what they can aspire to, how they can overcome issues and inspire other women. They know they’re not alone.”

**I’m an Agronomist**

The “I’m An Agronomist” recruitment campaign, which Zumbach oversees, seeks to build pride in the profession and illustrate the diversity among agronomists to attract prospective students to pursue the field.

“The campaign really challenges me to highlight students with different backgrounds, interests and goals,” Zumbach says. “This results in attracting a diverse group of students for our program.”

Her efforts are making a difference. Agronomy enrollment increased 25 percent during the past three years. The department has 335 undergraduates and 316 graduate students.

“Stephanie has been key to both our undergraduate recruiting and our ability to recruit women. We now have as many women in our program as we had total undergraduates when I became chair,” says Larskey. “This increase in women undergraduates has been due to Stephanie’s efforts and vision.”

In addition to recruitment and retention efforts, Zumbach manages student orientation for approximately 1,000 incoming freshmen and transfer students each year and allocates $90,000 in freshman scholarship awards.

Her efforts are making a difference.

That visit confirmed Iowa State was the place for me.”

Elizabeth Widder says Zumbach is known as a friendly and helpful resource for all students in agronomy.

“I’d say she’s like our mom, but everyone knows that’s Mary (Wiedenhoeft). Steph is more like a friend. She’s always willing to help with anything,” Widder says. “When she heard I was really struggling with chemistry my first semester she encouraged me to consider a tutor. She followed up with an e-mail on where to find one

The “I’m An Agronomist” campaign is important because women are underrepresented in production agriculture and we feel women are important to bringing change to the industry.”
Every Tuesday night Carol Cornelius, a seed analyst in agronomy, shows up at the local Panera restaurant after it has closed. She is gleaning Food at First, a perishable food pantry and free meal program in Ames. Cornelius collects food Panera is donating to the effort, which is now in its 12th year.

She has been involved for about four years, working about 15 hours a week. Cornelius wanted to do something for the community and a friend mentioned it. After starting, she stepped in when a core market volunteer left.

“I’m struck by the network of people out of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences who spent their careers in the field of developing and producing food and now are focused on feeding people in our community,” says Steve Padgitt, emeritus professor of sociology.

Padgitt (95 ag journalism, ’71 PhD rural sociology) and many of his former CALS colleagues volunteer 15 or more hours a week for Food at First. The service provided by the program and the reliability of its volunteers are well-known in Ames.

Food at First serves an evening meal seven days a week, at First Christian Church in Ames, to an average of 75 people. Nearly 25,000 meals were served last year. The program also distributes food from its perishable food pantry, at a free market, three days a week.

“People don’t want to come to me and say, ‘I need food,’” Padgitt says, “so I coordinate the gleaning efforts of my fellow Ames Noon Kiwanians who do food pick-ups per week from campus cafés. I make the arrangements, promise location managers we will pick up and fill in for volunteers on vacation,” White says. “My volunteers tell me this is a very meaningful experience for them. Even though it gets complex when the weather is bad or they have difficulty getting on campus, they would not give it up. They are totally committed to this effort.”

In addition to gleaning, hundreds of Iowa State students volunteer for Food at First markets is donated from local grocers, bakeries and restaurants, as well as from local growers.

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“People don’t want to come to me and say, ‘I need food,’” Padgitt says, “so I coordinate the gleaning efforts of my fellow Ames Noon Kiwanians who do food pick-ups per week from campus cafés. I make the arrangements, promise location managers we will pick up and fill in for volunteers on vacation,” White says. “My volunteers tell me this is a very meaningful experience for them. Even though it gets complex when the weather is bad or they have difficulty getting on campus, they would not give it up. They are totally committed to this effort.”

In addition to gleaning, hundreds of Iowa State students volunteer for Food at First markets is donated from local grocers, bakeries and restaurants, as well as from local growers.

“I’m struck by the network of people out of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences who spent their careers in the field of developing and producing food and now are focused on feeding people in our community,” says Steve Padgitt, emeritus professor of sociology.

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The hands-on nature of the agricultural systems technology major appealed to Colin Connor, and it turned out to provide ample opportunities for leadership development. As a freshman and sophomore, Connor served on committees in the 80-member Agricultural Systems Technology (AST) Club. He became treasurer as a junior and was elected president as a senior last year.

“I wanted to get involved. I was a leader of different clubs in high school and I enjoyed it,” he says. “I liked getting to know the younger members and helping them progress through their careers at Iowa State.”

Connor runs the club’s meetings and helps organize fundraisers including snowblower and lawnmower service days open to the Ames community. The club hosts speakers at each meeting to help members learn about internships and full-time job opportunities. Connor helped plan a technology industry night co-hosted by the AST Club and the HEC Club prior to the CALS Career Fair to encourage student networking with industry professionals.

“I like to bring together ideas from everybody and try to come up with the best idea possible. To me, the most important qualities of a leader are respect, responsibility and communication,” Connor says. “As AST president, I had to communicate with a variety of people including companies that hire AST majors, our department chair, our club advisers and club members.”

Connor says he appreciates his executive team and their help achieving club goals. He completed the club’s entry executive team and their help achieving club goals. He completed the club’s entry for one of the club’s major events or leading club meetings, Colin is an important quality of a leader are respect, responsibility and communication.”

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A sorrel miniature horse with a flaxen mane follows Aimee Schulz anywhere she leads—even to Iowa State University. Her name is Lulu. She can jump higher than she is tall and she’s only the second miniature horse to be inducted into the United States Equestrian Federation and EQUUS Foundation Horse Stars Hall of Fame. Schulz, a sophomore in genetics from Becker, Minnesota, says Lulu’s been a showstopper since she began performing in 2009.

Keeping Lulu in shape for the show season requires practice. During a workout inside a practice arena Schulz led Lulu through her runs without a halter.

“Horses won’t follow you unless you are a leader,” Schulz says. “This isn’t something you can teach a horse. The horse has to offer it to you. They have to choose you as their leader and their herd mate.”

Lulu was rescued from a collapsed metal building with 45 other miniature horses, ponies and donkeys on Mother’s Day in 2008. She was severely traumatized and her right eye was so damaged it had to be removed.

“I spent hours just trying to touch her and gain her trust. She was absolutely wild. She was shaking, but I kept talking to her,” Schulz says. “Finally she walked up to me and decided to adopt me. She fell in love with me and I fell in love with her.”

Schulz says working with horses has taught her perseverance, dedication, patience, responsibility and time management. During her freshman year Schulz won Regional Champion, Semi-Finals Champion and went on to represent Iowa State’s Western Equestrian Team at the National Championships at the Kentucky Horse Park in May.

“I believe if it weren’t for Lulu and all the other horses in my life I wouldn’t be where I am today,” Schulz says.

Schulz is on a path to success. During her freshman year Iowa State was invited to participate in Iowa State President Steven Leath’s Leadership Class and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Dean’s Leadership Class. Both provided scholarships and opportunities she couldn’t pass up.

“President Leath is so cool. He’s laid back, down to earth and he commands the attention of the whole room,” Schulz says.

Each fall, first-year students are selected for the class based on their curricular involvement, service and high school academics. The students meet with Iowa State University President Steven Leath and his wife, Janet, every Tuesday throughout the year.

“Aimee is an active, thoughtful member of the President’s Leadership Class, which consists of 30 of the very best freshman at Iowa State. Her passion for learning and her leadership skills differentiate her even in this elite group of students,” Leath says.

The Dean’s Leadership Class introduced Schulz to leaders in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and industry leaders throughout the nation.

“I want to be a pioneer in my field, do cutting-edge research and find a way to help the world. No one is going to hold me back,” Schulz says.

Working with Matt Hufford, an assistant professor in ecology, evolution and organismal biology, was another assistant professor in ecology, evolution and organismal biology, was another opportunity she couldn’t pass up. She is working on various projects until she can start her own research project.

“My lab specializes in maize and teosinte (corn’s ancestor). We are trying to identify highland and lowland adaptations of maize, look at hybridization of teosinte, and see how different climatic conditions change the appearance of maize and teosinte,” Schulz says.

Her interest in genetics began in junior high after her team lost a 4-H Knowledge Bowl contest because of a genetics question. Schulz began to pursue answers to questions and learned genetics.

Both Lulu and Schulz are leaders in their classes. Lulu serves as the unofficial mascot for the Iowa State University Equestrian Club and visits nursing homes and hospitals. Schulz hopes to certify Lulu as a therapy horse and continue to find new opportunities to make a difference in everything she does.
Mica Magtoto is armed with a heart for service.

“I’ve always known I want to leave a positive mark on the world by serving others,” she says. The junior in nutritional science, international agriculture and public relations found her calling as a high school student in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences George Washington Carver Research Internship Program.

The program offered her unique opportunities like studying eye cancer using a zebrafish model and assisting research to detect environmental toxins.

The internships identified the scope of agriculture and helped me understand how I can contribute to others,” she says. Iowa State was a clear choice for Magtoto. When selecting a major, her goal of serving others was paramount.

“Atlist, creating opportunities to learn with communities,” she says. “Nutrition affects applying that knowledge and helping people and making a positive mark on the world by serving others.

Mica Magtoto, a social entrepreneurship major, endorses the need to serve others.

Her experience studying abroad was followed by an internship in Peru with an organization providing outreach, nutrition resources and education to domestic workers and youth.

“I saw children who had so little, but loved going to school, loved learning and loved life,” she says. “The experience inspired me and gave me a passion for educating others.”

Magtoto returned from the internship and began service with AmeriCorps, providing educational programming in food culture and nutrition at the Ames Boys and Girls Club.

According to Theresa Cooper, assistant dean of diversity for the college, Magtoto’s continual search for knowledge and ability to apply what she’s learned in daily life makes her unique.

“Mica is a careful and creative thinker with an eye for details and a devotion to logic,” she says. “These skills are making her an excellent scientist and will serve her well in the future as an advocate of multicultural diversity.”

For her doctoral research, she sought to identify and describe experiences of undergraduate extracurricular involvement that result in increased leadership development.

“The prevention of disease is a strong goal of serving others was paramount for the college of Agriculture and Life Sciences students are known among recruiters for their involvement and leadership in extracurricular activities,” Foreman says.

“Colleges that I’ve seen in the midwestern states have a strong focus on students being involved in extracurricular activities, and those students who are involved are more likely to have leadership roles in the future,” she says.}

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“Based on our research we can tell students if they want to be a good leader when they graduate from college, they should be involved in extracurricular activities,” Foreman says.

Students reported participating in more than 10 clubs or activities. Results showed optimum involvement was between three to four clubs. Nearly three-quarters served as officers, and the students spent an average of five hours a week on extracurricular activities.

“Student leadership development increases dramatically with participation in up to three to four clubs, but after that it goes down just as dramatically as it went up. Once people got involved in the quality of those experiences went down,” Foreman says.

Reflection is important in helping students make meaning of their experiences and apply what they learned to future experiences. Foreman says this can be accomplished in a variety of ways, such as journaling and group discussion.

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Dana Robes is a storyteller. Ask any student who has received a scholarship from Dana and his wife, Martha. Most have met him personally and heard tales of his adventures—particularly the one about how he, as a young man from New Hampshire, discovered Iowa State through dairy judging and an enthusiastic coach. He’ll tell you how he stumbled upon “The Harvard of Agriculture” in Ames, Iowa.

Like any good storyteller, Dana has a purpose for each anecdote. He has a message, and he knows how he’d like it to make you feel or act. As the director of recruiting for the college, I can relate.

My position was created by a gift from Dana and Martha. They recognized that to increase our enrollment we needed to invest in new and creative ways to reach prospective students. That’s what I try to do every day.

Student leadership plays a key role in our story.

I connect with this remarkable couple several times a year. One theme that’s been constant over nearly a decade is Dana’s message to scholarship recipients: He reminds students that education is the one thing a person receives that can never be taken away. In some ways, the refrain sounds very familiar—I’ve heard it from other schools, and I’ve heard Dana say similar things. What makes Dana’s statement unique is how he applies it. Dana and Martha share this vision of leadership development with the college and they join us in investing in it. They work with us to develop unique programs providing tuition for classes while encouraging key leadership experiences out of class.

For example, Dana and Martha believed that promoting participation in student clubs and organizations would lead to increasing enrollment, retaining students and developing leadership skills. They created the Fred Foreman Scholarship for Growth in Leadership Participation to reward students active in clubs with preference to those who serve the college by recruiting students. Dana chose to name the scholarship in honor of Fred Foreman, a faculty member in dairy science who personally urged Dana to get involved. To date, nearly 500 scholarships have been awarded to student leaders in the college through this single program.

Mentorship plays a key role in our story.

Also consistent in Dana’s stories is the importance of personal attention. In his experience, the mentorship he received through on-campus work at the Iowa State Dairy Farm was important to his retention. This tradition is still a priority of the college today, and one Dana and Martha wanted to preserve. So we developed the Dean’s Leadership Scholarship, a program, for 20 out-of-state freshmen and sophomores. This opportunity includes a considerable scholarship and stipends to support on-campus work with faculty. It brilliantly allows us to draw top talent with an attractive award and a resume-building work experience. Most importantly, it pushes students to make mentoring connections during their first year that will keep them on campus and possibly last their entire career. To date, over 130 student-faculty connections have been made.

There’s always more to the story.

My position, the Foreman Scholarship and the Dean’s Leadership Scholarship are results of an ongoing dialogue. They aren’t three separate gifts or programs. They blend a number of academic goals—increasing enrollment, encouraging club participation, developing leadership, first-year retention, study abroad, undergraduate research—in a way that provides a very personal experience for students.

The true impact of the Robeses’ investment isn’t measurable in dollars or number of students impacted. The true impact lies in each student’s unique combination of experiences—the gift that can never be taken away. All these students go forth into the world to tell their own stories. Together this collection of stories becomes our story.

Andy Zehr is director of marketing and recruiting for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

Since 2008, more than 1,100 scholarships have been awarded from the Fred Foreman Scholarship for Growth in Leadership Participation, the Dean’s Study Abroad Scholarship, and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Dean’s Leadership Scholarships, all of which are funded by the couple. They have created an endowed professorship in the Department of Animal Science and a marketing and recruitment director position in the college. The Robeses frequently travel back to Iowa State to participate in college events; while on campus, they try to meet with all 130 of their annual scholarship recipients.

The Robeses spend nine months of each year living in St. John, Virgin Islands and have a second home in Round Pond, Maine. They worked to bring expertise from Iowa State’s Department of Horticulture to the students at Gift Hill School, a coeducational day-school serving St. John. Through the Robeses’ generosity, the Education and Resiliency through Horticulture program—otherwise known as EARTH—was created, teaching students about growing crops in a sustainable fashion and the ways in which horticulture can enhance and improve their daily lives.

More than 30 Iowa State University interns, both undergraduate and graduate, have worked with the EARTH program. They are members of the Order of the Knoll William M. Beardshear Society and Campanile Society, and are life members of the ISU Alumni Association.
A CONVERSATION ON LEADERSHIP

with DEAN WENDY WINTERSTEEN

Story by Brian Meyer
Images by Christopher Gannon

What do you recall about leadership from your days as an undergraduate student? I majored in agricultural crop protection at Kansas State University in the mid-1970s. Honestly, I simply wasn’t focused on leadership. At that time, in many of my agriculture classes, I was either the only woman or one of the few women present. That sometimes led to unique or at least memorable experiences. I remember one class where the professor blithely likened memorable experiences. I remember one class where the professor blithely likened the topography of farmland to a woman’s body, which resulted in most of the class snickering. Today in Iowa State’s College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at Michigan State University, Fred was a professor of entomology. He opened the doors to me to work in his laboratory and with his field research for three years. His research was on management strategies for southwestern corn borer. He was the one who really acquainted me with this thing called “science.” He gave me an opportunity to prove myself. In some ways, it was an opportunity not only to prove myself to others, but just as importantly to prove myself to that person I saw in the mirror every morning. Working on his research project for three years as an undergraduate helped me realize that my abilities, my ideas and my thoughts had value and importance. A mentor can’t guarantee success, but the best ones provide the opportunity to test one’s self.

What did you learn about leadership as a graduate student? My graduate school years were spent here at Iowa State, after a few years working for ISU Extension. As I worked on my doctorate, I was asked to lead the statewide Postside Applicator Training program. If I had better understood what a huge program it was, I might have declined. But instead, I orchestrated it. I saw it as an opportunity not only to prove myself to others, but just as importantly to prove myself to that person I was creating the direction of that pathway, and that choices lead to pathways with various consequences. He taught me to recognize I was on a pathway and that I needed to listen deeply, absorb the comments and make a plan. When you listen, it seems much easier to accomplish the other tasks of leadership, like building partnerships to work on agriculture-related issues, negotiating conflicts or communicating a vision. When people understand that you have listened to their interests and concerns, and have creatively tried to respond and move things forward, they will get behind you. One of my more recent mentors is Catherine Woteki, who was the dean of the college before me. She taught me how to model professionalism, the scientific approach and how to be engaged passionately. Coming from an extension background, I was a bit of a skeptic. Catherine taught me that you honor them by carefully considering their comments. Immediate responses, without a time for reflection, can prove to be counterproductive.

Who mentored you as a graduate student? Dave Foster was my major professor for my Ph.D. Dave was my mentor by example. I often joke that he barely spoke to me in the first three months, yet I heard loud and clear his verbal and nonverbal messages. In his laconic way, he mentored me by his actions. From his actions, I learned how to model professionalism, the scientific approach and how to be engaged passionately. Coming from an extension background, I was a bit of a skeptic. Catherine taught me that you honor them by carefully considering their comments. Immediate responses, without a time for reflection, can prove to be counterproductive.

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This is not just an Iowa State University problem or an agricultural college problem. This is an extremely important global issue that I am providing leadership on, along with many others, including Brian Meyer, our CALS communications director and the board members and alums of the Charles Valentine Riley Memorial Foundation, of which I currently serve as president. Hopefully, Congress will listen and respond with resources and leadership to address this critical need.

Growth and moving forward requires new approaches, not just for research funding but for many aspects of leadership. What my experiences have taught me is that striving for something more is liberating. Cultivating a new belief or expectation about what is possible should always motivate leaders. It’s an important part of what motivates me.

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**DEAN’S LEADERSHIP SEMINAR**

Each fall semester, a new cohort of students takes the Dean’s Leadership Seminar. The students are offered the opportunity as recipients of some of the college’s premier endowed scholarships. The seminar, co-taught by Dean Wendy Wintersteen and Associate Dean of Academic and Global Programs David Acker, introduces the freshmen to leadership qualities, problem solving on current issues, global perspectives and responding to societal needs in agriculture and life sciences.

Hannah Fisher, a sophomore in agriculture and society, featured in this issue’s cover, was a member of last year’s class.

“The Dean’s Leadership Class brought together 15-20 first year students from all different backgrounds,” Fisher says. “The best part was everyone was so excited to be there—so excited to learn—even the deans. ”

Fisher says she built lasting friendships with many in her class. They spent weekly sessions investigating case studies, discussing leadership characteristics and qualities and exploring global issues. They also get to know the deans.

“Dean Wintersteen is an engaged leader and her passion for what we do here is obvious—without passion, the other characteristics of a leader aren’t effective. She has the respect of students, the university, our community and beyond,” she says. To Fisher, it’s inspiring to have a woman in the dean’s office.

“It’s empowering to see her as a woman at the forefront of CALS. She represents that women have a place leading in agriculture, in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math), it’s not just a man’s world,” she says.

Fisher is an active leader serving as vice chair of the CALS Ambassadors and was on the hiring committee for the assistant dean for student services. She was among the young women selected to represent the college at the Iowa Women’s Leadership Conference last fall. She works for Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Local Foods as a communications assistant and for sociologist Carmen Batts as a research assistant.

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When it comes to her music, Batts says she enjoys teaching more than performing. She will student teach in the spring of 2018 before graduating with her vocal education degree. After graduating she plans to move back to Grafton, Iowa, to help with her parents’ grain farm, work with her husband to build a livestock operation and teach private music lessons.

**Marena Bartz**

Marena Bartz shares her musical expertise with a young piano student during a recent lesson in Music Hall. Bartz shared her genetics expertise and extracurricular involvement at a National Academy of Sciences workshop this spring in Washington, D.C. She was invited to represent Iowa State College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

The meeting was organized by the Board on Agriculture and Natural Resources—which is a major part of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Members of the board asked for input from university students about incorporating experiential learning, internships, club activities and hands-on research into the curriculum.

Batts says the only resource she lacks is time. In addition to being a peer mentor, she’s president of the Genetics Club. She also works as an undergraduate research assistant in the plant pathology and microbiology department, helping with research on soybean cyst nematodes.

“Marena has a jam-packed schedule juggling two very different majors, research lab work and work as a peer mentor,” says Lori Cottam, Iowa State biology and genetics adviser. “As a peer mentor, she provides assistance to individual students and the group as a whole.”
LIKE FATHER
LIKE DAUGHTER

A LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP

Story by Melea Reicks Licht
Images by Christopher Gannon

For Adelai Swanson, former president of the Agricultural Business Club, there was never any other major to consider. Just ask her dad Stuart, who led the club 25 years before she did.

“You could say I was encouraged to major in ag business, but it was more like forced,” Adelai jokes.

“That commitment from ag business advisers and the relationships they have with their students are really unique,” Stuart says. “I wanted that for my kids.”

That special relationship started at orientation for Adelai when Ron Deiter, Stuart’s adviser, called her out as the daughter of a former club president. It continued when Adelai showed up to her first advising appointment—with Deiter.

“Dr. Deiter is still excited to be teaching,” Stuart says. “You can see his passion. I recognize and appreciate that not just from him, but also from all our advisers, staff and faculty. It feels like a family.”

Stuart, a farmer near Galt, Iowa, worked with the Frank Brothers before returning home to the family farm. He’s kept connected with his fellow agri-cultural business alumni through industry leadership teams.

He’s served terms on cooperative boards and numerous industry leadership teams. When Stuart was president in 1988, enrollment in agricultural business was around 100. He says he was drawn to the major because of its good placement rates despite the downturn in the farm economy.

The percent of women in the major was around 10 percent. President Gordon Eaton was in charge at Iowa State and Dean David Topel led the College of Agriculture. Johnny Orr was head basketball coach and Jim Walden led the Cyclones on the football field.

The Agricultural Business Club had not led the Cyclones on the football field. Stuart says. “You can see his passion. I recognize and appreciate that not just from him, but also from all our advisers, staff and faculty. It feels like a family.”

The Agricultural Business Club had not led the Cyclones on the football field. The Agricultural Business Club had not yet won an Outstanding National Club award. Carol Elliott was secretary in the agricultural business office.

“Times were tough then. There wasn’t a lot of pride in agriculture—it wasn’t as popular as it is now. Farm kids would choose to major in business and that frustrated me,” Stuart says.

In Fall 2014, when Adelai was president, there were more than 485 agricultural business majors at Iowa State—30 percent were women. More than 300 students were in the club, which had won 15 Outstanding National Club awards.

Club activities of the past such as mock interviews and the VIEISHA food tournament, a pre-career day mixer, industry tours and many more.

“So we focus on networking and professional development. Our industry support for the club is growing—like the endowment in Dr. Dieter’s honor from Farm Credit Services of America. We do a lot to build community, too,” Adelai says.

When she was president, participation in learning communities and in the Agricultural Entrepreneurship Initiative was commonplace for agricultural business students. Steven Leah was president of the university and Wendy Wintersen was dean of the college. Paul Rhoads was head football coach and Fred Hoiberg was head basketball coach.

“Adelai was the change agent for the rest of the club. She hit the ground running and made a huge first impression on me. As president, she raised the bar immensely in terms of how to conduct meetings and how to effectively communicate with an officer team.”

At first Adelai tried to blaze her own trail away from agricultural business. She became involved in Greek life, student government, dance organizations, “anything and everything.” But she says she kept feeling a pull to the club where, like her father, she found a family and worked hard to create that feeling for others.

“My goal was to empower students and make them feel comfortable so they had a place to call home. Many in our officer team returned and I love what they’re doing with the club now. Others have moved on to leadership roles elsewhere in the college and are improving the university on a larger scale.”

It’s statements like this that led to Adelai being recognized as the Ag Business Club’s ‘biggest cheerleader.’

“I told Adelie when she came to college I didn’t want her to have a list of regrets she didn’t take advantage of during her time on campus,” Stuart says.

Adelai studied abroad in South Africa, Argentina and Australia. She’s been on the Dean’s List each semester and received the Fred Foreman Scholarship for Growth in Leadership Participation. Her list of leadership positions, campus involvement and internships doesn’t leave much room for regret: member of the President’s Leadership Council; model in the Iowa State Fashion Show; active member of Alpha Delta Pi; intern with Coalition to Support Iowa’s Farmers; North Central Cooperative and FLM+; the list goes on.

She graduated in May with degrees in agricultural business, international agriculture and public relations and a passion for agricultural policy. She accepted a position with Dow Agro-Sciences as a sales trainee.

The next eldest Swanson daughter, Celeste, is a sophomore in agricultural business at Iowa State. She’s also a leader on campus in Alpha Delta Pi, Bacon Expo, the Student Alumni Leadership Council and the Agricultural Business Club.

Stuart, who met his wife, Lori, at Iowa State, says his other two daughters, Lilian and Delta, are excited to follow suit and find their own adventures at Iowa State.

Adelai, the oldest of four daughters, made a good early first impression among her peers and was named the club’s Outstanding Freshman.

“With Adelai, it’s ‘like father, like daughter’ when it comes to academic ability and leadership skills,” Deiter says. “She hit the ground running and made a huge first impression on me. As president, she raised the bar immensely in terms of how to conduct meetings and how to effectively communicate with an officer team.”

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Adelai studied abroad in South Africa, Argentina and Australia. She’s been on the Dean’s List each semester and received the Fred Foreman Scholarship for Growth in Leadership Participation. Her list of leadership positions, campus involvement and internships doesn’t leave much room for regret: member of the President’s Leadership Council; model in the Iowa State Fashion Show; active member of Alpha Delta Pi; intern with Coalition to Support Iowa’s Farmers; North Central Cooperative and FLM+; the list goes on.

She graduated in May with degrees in agricultural business, international agriculture and public relations and a passion for agricultural policy. She accepted a position with Dow Agro-Sciences as a sales trainee.

The next eldest Swanson daughter, Celeste, is a sophomore in agricultural business at Iowa State. She’s also a leader on campus in Alpha Delta Pi, Bacon Expo, the Student Alumni Leadership Council and the Agricultural Business Club.

Stuart, who met his wife, Lori, at Iowa State, says his other two daughters, Lilian and Delta, are excited to follow suit and find their own adventures at Iowa State.

Adelai, the oldest of four daughters, made a good early first impression among her peers and was named the club’s Outstanding Freshman.

“With Adelai, it’s ‘like father, like daughter’ when it comes to academic ability and leadership skills,” Deiter says. “She hit the ground running and made a huge first impression on me. As president, she raised the bar immensely in terms of how to conduct meetings and how to effectively communicate with an officer team.”

At first Adelai tried to blaze her own trail away from agricultural business. She became involved in Greek life, student government, dance organizations, “anything and everything.” But she says she kept feeling a pull to the club where, like her father, she found a family and worked hard to create that feeling for others.

“My goal was to empower students and make them feel comfortable so they had a place to call home. Many in our officer team returned and I love what they’re doing with the club now. Others have moved on to leadership roles elsewhere in the college and are improving the university on a larger scale.”

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The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Student Council serves as a unifying body among students and administration. The council is composed of representatives from 35 agricultural-related student organizations. The council hosts annual events such as National Ag Day, Freshman/Transfer BBQ and CALS Week.

How does CALS Council serve the college? 
CALS Council brings together leaders from every aspect, background and focus within the college. Having this diversity of membership allows for CALS Council to reach students all across the college. Most of the decisions we make revolve around opportunities for the council to pursue.

As a member of the executive team, what do you plan to do for CALS Council? 
I hope to create the positive experience that I had last year for the new members. CALS Council really brought me out of my shell and introduced me to so many great people as well as influenced me to take on leadership roles at the collegiate level. I hope this year’s council has a similar experience. -Katie Schrodt

What are the most important decisions you make as a leader for your organization? 
Being on the executive team really puts into perspective how much emphasis the college puts on the opinions of students. There are many meetings and surveys that we participate in to give feedback to the university on behalf of all CALS students. I have been better able to ask others’ opinion on issues that concern the student body. -Pat White

What is one characteristic that you believe every leader should possess? 
Communication is the number one role a leader should possess. Communication is a two-way street. Communicating happens when someone is talking and someone is listening. -Mitchell Hora

What are the most important things you plan to do for CALS Council? 
I believe that being trustworthy is the most important part of being a leader. Being the treasurer, the college has put its trust in me to manage funds effectively and fairly. -Katie Schrodt

2016 CALS Council SENIOR LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNER

Drew Mogler (*13 agricultural business) • Agricultural Business Peer Mentor • Agricultural Business Club Officer • Agriculture Marketing and Management Organization Officer • CALS Student Council Vice President • Iowa State Bacon Expo Committee Co-chair

Mogler offered the student address at the college’s spring convocation celebration. You can read or watch his address at: www.stories.cals.iastate.edu.

Mogler joined the staff of the Iowa Pork Producers Association following graduation as director of producer education.

By Allison Rossman, sophomore in agricultural and life sciences education, communications option
A kōʻa ‘aina (pronounced eye-nah) or “love for land” is a way of life on the Hawaiian island of Molokai. The people have a profound respect for nature and an understanding that from mauka (inland towards the mountains) to makai (seaward) everything is connected.

Molokai was, and still is, short on modern conveniences. There are no stoplights, malls, movie theaters, fast food restaurants or full-time veterinarians.

“I lost a lot of animals to trivial illnesses that could have been prevented,” says Jenkins. “With no vet to administer vaccinations, I lost a dog to Parvo. Another dog was hit by a car; but there were no emergency services, no vet. So I lost him.”

Jenkins knew she wanted to be a veterinarian and began volunteering for the local animal shelter at the age of eight. The Molokai Humane Society was housed in a 40-foot converted shipping container with no running water or x-ray machine. The next year she began volunteering to help with bird counts for a wildlife biologist and learned the connection to helping the community.

Back home Jenkins spoke Hawaiian Creole English, usually referred to as Pidgin by Hawaiians. It is the first language of the majority of Hawaiians. It’s known for drawing upon Hawaiian culture to connect with others.

Elizabeth Martinez-Podolsky is a multicultural liaison officer for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and was known for using Hawaiian words, traditions and philosophy to connect with others and support residents of Larch Hall.

While Jenkins says she’s a self-described extrovert who makes friends easily and loves to talk, when Jenkins first became a CA for Larch Hall, she was very shy and had no running water or x-ray machine. She was going to be that person for others, says Jenkins. “This is my third year. It’s been a long road with ups and downs, but I’ve learned a lot from it.”

After a tour of her top seven college choices, in the summer of 2012, Jenkins chose Iowa State for its pre-veterinary medicine and animal ecology program, and because “it was a big school with a small school feel.”

After graduation, Jenkins will attend Pomona, California.

At Iowa State, I think we’re such a unique mash-up of different cultures,” says Jenkins. “I’ve made friends from a lot of different countries. It’s been fun to learn about their cultures. Even people from different states have unique things to share, like I have being from Hawaii.”

Jenkins’ Iowa State adventure has included a study abroad semester in Ecuador and the Galápagos Islands, where she assisted with spay and neuter operations on feral dogs. She has assisted veterinary medicine professor Wilson Rumbelh with toxicology research since May 2014 and spent a summer on Maui as an endangered wildlife management intern.

After graduation, Jenkins will attend Western University of Health Sciences, College of Veterinary Medicine, in Pomona, California.

“I’ve volunteered at the Molokai Humane Society my whole life. They’re excited that I am the first person to get into vet school from my island,” says Jenkins.

After graduating from vet school, Jenkins plans to spend two years shadowing a vet who specializes in shelter medicine and then return to Molokai to offer the veterinary services that the island has been without for so long.
A painting of a smiling young man wearing an Iowa State hoodie hangs inside the main doors of the Molecular Biology Building. It commemorates Rob Stupka who was a senior majoring in biochemistry when he was killed in a traffic accident in 2005.

Research was important to Stupka. He worked with transgenic plants to increase crop yields through improved pollination with the goal of feeding more people worldwide. He had the idea of creating an undergraduate research symposium in the department, led the effort and served as chair of the first one. Stupka died before it took place, but it now bears his name.

These many years later, he continues to inspire those who study in the Roy J. Carver Department of Biochemistry, Biophysics and Molecular Biology (BBMB). The anniversary event expanded to two days to feature BBMB alumni, former Stupka scholars and committee members.

The symposium has many facets, but its central theme is to inspire those who study in the Roy J. Carver Department of Biochemistry, Biophysics and Molecular Biology (BBMB). The symposium is organized by Stupka Undergraduate Organizers of the symposium held in memory of Rob Stupka. Stupka, featured in the portrait, was killed in a traffic accident in 2005 while chairing the first symposium.

The symposium gives undergraduates in the department a chance to present their original research to others, in poster and lecture formats, thereby honing presentation and networking skills that are central to future success in a scientific career,” says Kristen Johansen, interim department chair.

“Stupka was the first annual event expanded to two days to feature BBMB alumni, former Stupka scholars and committee members. Alumni traveled from 16 different states to attend. An event of this scale required an increased budget and Sarah Brinkman, who majors in agricultural business, has been treasurer of the Biochemistry, Biophysics and Molecular Biology Club. “The planning and presentation of this event is significant because it promotes scientific interaction and communication.”

Each year the committee selects and invites two world-class scientists as keynote speakers. One important criterion for their selection is that they actively mentor undergraduate students conducting research. To give students the opportunity to talk with these outstanding researchers, keynote lunch sessions are scheduled for students only.

The success of last years’ alumni participation resulted in having an alumni speaker selected each year.

“Having alumni from past symposia return in such strong numbers in 2015 served to strengthen our community but also to demonstrate the power of the Stupka experience for today’s students,” Gunning says.

Two poster sessions are held in the afternoon followed by the speaker program which features three student speakers. At the conclusion, the audience gathers in the Molecular Biology Building atrium for dinner and continued conversation.

Tyler Gilbreath, an agricultural biochemistry and microbiology major, is already planning for next year’s symposium. He has volunteered for two years and serves as co-chair of the speaker committee.

“Stupka is very prestigious within the department, university and beyond. Last year we were one of six regional clubs or student organizations recognized by the American Society of Biochemists and Molecular Biologists,” he says.

Ben Brown, a senior in agricultural biochemistry, has been treasurer of the symposium for two years. He also presented a poster of his research at the last symposium.

“I got involved with Stupka because it seemed like a great way to get to know people in my major and I wanted to experience some leadership in a new area. I’d never been a treasurer before. I figured, what better way to learn to balance a real budget than by doing it with the symposium.”

Rob Stupka’s family attends the symposium each year. His father Bob Stupka gave an emotional address at the 10th anniversary celebration, clearly moved by the attention his son’s efforts generated.

“Can’t tell you what a difference it has made in our lives the last 10 years,” Stupka said in his remarks. “We get a chance to see through these alumni when we hear what they’re doing, we get to see Rob going forward and I want you to know that we’re as proud of you as we would be of Rob. You’ve just done such a good job taking his ideals and moving them forward.”

For the 10-year anniversary Sarah Brittsman, who majors in agricultural biochemistry and agricultural business, was the CALS Council representative for the symposium and the Biochemistry, Biophysics and Molecular Biology Club. The anniversary event expanded to two days to feature BBMB alumni, former Stupka scholars and committee members. Alumni traveled from 16 different states to attend. An event of this scale required an increased budget and Sarah Brinkman, who majors in agricultural business, has been treasurer of the Biochemistry, Biophysics and Molecular Biology Club. “The planning and presentation of this event is significant because it promotes scientific interaction and communication.”

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The symposium has many facets, but all focus on the journey from student to scientist,” says Desiree Gunning, co-adviser of the Biochemistry, Biophysics and Molecular Biology Club. “The planning and presentation of this event is significant because it promotes scientific interaction and communication.”

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Marcella Szymanski is on the front lines of the global trade war surrounding genetic engineering. To her, it’s really more of a trade wreck.

“When we’re dealing with genetic engineering we’re dealing with a regulated technology. Some countries regulate this technology differently than we do,” Szymanski says.

Szymanski (’97 PhD forestry), deputy director for agricultural policy for the U.S. Department of State, works in the Agricultural Policy Office in the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs.

“The U.S. considers regulation on a product-by-product basis, the European Union regulates by technique. This tends to produce trade wrecks, rather than trade wars. Trade wars occur when a country tries to keep a product out because they say their consumers don’t want it. Think poultry chlorine washes or hormones in beef. With those we have a trade war. But with biotech, we have had, such as in Europe, trade wrecks,” Szymanski says.

Szymanski is responsible for developing and implementing U.S. trade policy related to new agricultural technologies and working with foreign governments to address regulatory barriers to U.S. agricultural exports. She also works closely with officials from developing countries to support the development of biosafety legislation and facilitate technology transfer to increase agricultural productivity.

“We are not going to feed the world on organic or non-input agriculture,” she says. “We need 60 percent more food by 2050 using less land, water, fertilizer and pesticides. To do this we need science. We need to find the solution in agriculture.”

One potential solution is genetic engineering, a biotechnology tool used to speed up the results of conventional breeding. Genetic engineering uses modern molecular biology to transfer well-characterized genes into a plant resulting in a genetically modified organism (GMO). The alterations are made to achieve a desired trait such as drought resistance or improved nutritional value. The technical precision and knowledge of manipulated genetic information makes the risks of this type of gene transfer comparable to or less than classical breeding, according to the American Society of Plant Biologists.

How did a technique used by plant breeding scientists get so polarized?

“Science is moving beyond the speed people are comfortable with, says Szymanski.

“Now, thanks to the ‘tweetification’ of risk the new school of risk is calculated by multiplying the hazard times media exposure. The result is the perception of risk. Perception drives policy.”

Szymanski continues to encourage scientists to lead the discussion about GMOs and other agricultural biotechnologies as they are key tools in meeting the global food challenges of tomorrow.

Prior to joining the State Department, Szymanski taught and worked in agricultural extension with the University of Kentucky. She received her masters in forest genetics from Oklahoma State and her bachelor’s in forestry from the University of Georgia. She has worked with rural farmers in the United States and abroad as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Maragoli, Kenya.

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Szymanski has been building trust her entire career.

She was introduced to policy work when she accepted a science and technology policy fellowship with the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 2004.

While on fellowship to the U.S. Department of State, she served as a desk officer advising on science and technology issues for Pakistan. Szymanski says after 9/11, strengthening a long-term U.S.-Pakistan relationship became a priority. Her efforts to bring together scientists, educators and officials in collaborative talks helped improve non-military cooperation with Pakistan. They formed 18 joint working groups and more than 30 joint science projects were funded.

Fullbright exchanges and cooperation also were expanded and groundwork laid for private sector partnerships and vocational training.

She joined the U.S. Department of State in 2009 and two years later had the opportunity to step up and play an integral role in diplomacy at a crucial time in Bangladesh’s history.

“Bangladesh had one foot in a coup and one foot in a democracy. I acted as the desk officer several times and as an interlocutor with Bangladesh Foreign Service officials,” she says. “I prepared and presented analyses to senior U.S. officials on developing a road map toward democracy, monitored a rapidly changing political situation and met with human rights and other intermational non-governmental organizations.”

“I believe technology will help us meet these challenges. A great example is in 2013 the World Food Prize awarded three distinguished scientists—Marc Van Montagu, of Belgium, and Mary-Dell Chilton and Robert T. Fraley of the United States—for their independent, individual breakthroughs in founding, developing and applying modern agricultural biotechnology.”
It seemed like such a logical plan for Andrew Lauver. Graduate with an ag studies degree from Iowa State University in 2012. Get a good job. Help run the family farm. Marry your high-school sweetheart. Start a family.

Then came Dec. 27, 2014. Just a week earlier, Lauver had returned from a 12-month stint with DuPont Pioneer in Canada, and he and his girlfriend, Chelsey Henkenius, were relishing their time together. The pair spent the evening of Dec. 26 with friends and family in Carroll County and Carroll County. “Faith, family and farming drive me, in that order.”

When he woke up in the hospital, his first thought was “Where’s Chelsey?” Lauver says. “When I found out she died instantly, my first thought was, ‘It should have been me.’”

The months since that dark December night have been a time of pain, healing and hope. “Life will change without your permission, but it’s your attitude that will determine the ride,” says Lauver, a sales promoter and Encirc certified services agent with DuPont Pioneer for Calhoun County and Carroll County. “Faith, family and farming drive me, in that order.”

These commitments also define leadership to Lauver, who was named the 2016 Emerging Iowa Leader by the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. He was selected for making significant contributions in the college’s young alumni program—The Curtis League—an initiative providing recruitment, awareness and advocacy opportunities for alumni age 40 and younger. “Through his leadership and service, Andrew is an effective advocate for agriculture and demonstrates the impact our graduates make in their communities,” says Wendy Wintersteen, endowed dean of Agriculture and Life Sciences. He was also named a 2016 STATEment Maker by the Iowa State University Alumni Association.

Lauver’s 10 tips for leadership success
1. Grow where you’re planted. Lauver grew up on a farm between Rockwell City and Lake City. “I always wanted to be like my dad,” says Lauver, whose father, Kevin (81 ag business) is a Pioneer Hi-Bred account manager. Lauver credits his parents (including his mother, Linda, also an Iowa State alum), his church youth group, 4-H and FFA for learning leadership basics. “When I was a kid, Dad emphasized that the calves eat breakfast before I do,” Lauver says. “My parents also took active leadership roles in our community, from the hospital board to the local Rotary club.”

2. Find mentors. Lauver values his fellow ag professionals (including John Chism with Pioneer Hi-Bred and Rodd Whitney) who lead by example. Lauver strives to share this wisdom with local students and other young ag professionals.

3. Learn from history. Lauver finds inspiration in Henry A. Wallace, the founder of Pioneer Hi-Bred who integrated his interests in agriculture, politics and writing. Lauver admires President Theodore Roosevelt, who experienced a double tragedy at age 25 when his mother and wife passed away within hours of each other. Lauver also respects President Abraham Lincoln, who overcame countless obstacles.

4. Advocate for agriculture. The need for strong ag leadership became evident to Lauver when he served as a legislative intern in Washington, D.C. in 2013 for Iowa Sen. Charles Grassley. “I learned how vital it is to have professional communication and leadership skills to keep agriculture at the forefront.”

5. Always keep learning. After serving as president of Iowa State’s Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity and joining the Iowa Corn Growers Association Colleague Advisory Team, Lauver continues to learn through the DuPont Commercial Development Program, Agriculture Future of America, Iowa Foundation for Agricultural Advancement, Future Seed Executives and other professional groups.

6. Strengthen relationships. Networking is important. “So is caring about others—something Chelsey exemplified,” Lauver says.

7. Embrace gratitude. Lauver was transformed by his international travels, including his Iowa State study-abroad experience in Costa Rica. “These trips taught me to be grateful for all we’ve been blessed with in America,” he says.

8. Give back. Lauver, a Jackson Pioneers 4-H Club leader, serves on the Calhoun County Corn Growers board, Calhoun County Corn Growers board, District Advisory Board of the Iowa Soybean Association, Rotary International and more. “Winston Churchill said most of the significant contributions that have been made to society have been made by people who are tired,” Lauver says. “I enjoy pushing myself.”

9. Dream big. Lauver spent 2014 in Saskatoon, Canada, developing digital marketing strategies and more for Pioneer Hi-Bred. “I was inspired to pursue new goals and accomplish things I didn’t think I could do,” he says.

10. Act now. Don’t wait to follow your dreams. “I’ll never forget Chelsey telling me, ‘Let’s do this now, because we don’t know how much time we have,’” Lauver says. “I want to do what I can now to ensure future generations of ag leaders have an even better experience than I did.”
ALUMNI CYCLONE FAMILY

For more than 90 years the Lyon family of Toledo, Iowa, has been milking Jerseys.

Left: The Lyon Jersey partners—Eric, Joe and Eric—were recently honored with the American Jersey Cattle Association’s prestigious “Master Breeder” award. Center: The Lyon family has been milking Jerseys for nearly 100 years starting with brothers Robert (left) and Earl (right) in 1921. They are pictured with their father Garrett. Above: The Lyon Jersey students at the dairy judging workouts on their farm, offer scholarships and serve on advisory boards at Iowa State.

This story starts with two dairy farming brothers and ends with a herd of 50 Iowa State University alumni—and counting.

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Three recent graduates of the college were honored by the ISU Alumni Association for their personal, service, entrepreneurial, business and scholastic statements reflecting the spirit of an Iowa State education.

**Justin Saenz**, left, (’11 public service and administration in ag), 4-H and youth development agent, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Bryan, Texas

**Andrew Lauver** (’12 ag studies), farmer and seed sales professional at DuPont Pioneer, Lake City, Iowa

**Collie Hurst**, right, (’13 ag studies), founder and CEO of Agriculture Concepts, Roland, Iowa

The college also honored **Delbert “Hank” Harris** (’63 pre-vet med, ’67 DVM, biophysics), received the Order of the Knoll Faculty and Staff Award from the ISU Foundation.

**Jay-Lin Jane-Topel** (’84 PhD biochemistry and genetics) and **David G. Topel** (’71 animal science) and **Bellara Huang** (’11 agriculture and life sciences), left, of Pella High School and **Mason Olmenus**, of Southwest Warren High School, work in a hand-on immersion on soils and sustainability in an agronomy soils teaching lab during the World Food Prize Iowa Youth Institute. The college partners with the World Food Prize in hosting nearly 300 high school students from 125 schools at the annual institute.
NEW LEADERSHIP NEEDED TO “FEED THE 9”

Story by Melea Reicks Licht

Todd Hall, senior vice president of Cargill, is passionate about building the next generation of food and agriculture leaders.

It’s going to take a new type of leader to pave the way to global food security according to Todd Hall, executive vice president of Cargill.

Hall (’82 animal science) spoke at a Global Food Security Consortium symposium at Iowa State University in April. He emphasized that to successfully feed 9 billion people by 2050, agriculture needs leaders who can approach the volatility and interdependencies within the industry with open minds and global perspectives.

“To tackle these challenges we need a workforce with a thorough understanding of the issues and their complexity and the ability to bring informed, intelligent and global perspectives to the solutions. That’s one of the reasons Cargill is such an advocate and supporter of the Global Resource Systems major at Iowa State,” says Hall.

Building the next generation of leaders to navigate complexities and anticipate consequences of their decisions is a passion for Hall.

He is co-chair of the advisory council for Global Resource Systems (GRS) at Iowa State. GRS allows students to develop a core set of technical agricultural competencies. Students choose a world region in which to specialize. Then they develop competency in a relevant language and participate in an immersion experience in their chosen world region. They carry out a senior project related to their technical specialization within the context of that region to complete the program.

GRS’s multi-pronged approach makes students especially well-suited for being open to new viewpoints, says Hall. He appreciates how the major encourages thinking critically and creating innovative solutions—all key to meeting future global food challenges.

“Cargill has 150,000 employees who manage these complexities in 70 countries around the world every day,” says Hall. “We work with growers, producers, manufacturers and retailers to put food on tables every day. It’s likely everyone consumes one product produced by Cargill every day.”

In Hall’s more than 30 years with Cargill, he has held leadership positions within animal nutrition businesses regionally and globally. In his current role he’s responsible for strategy, execution, profit and loss in the area of animal protein and salt. Hall’s work with Cargill has taken him around the world. Most recently he worked as a platform leader focusing on poultry operations in Central America, China, Europe, Thailand and the United States before accepting his current position earlier this year. He also serves on Cargill’s Board of Directors.

Cargill has provided a $485,500 gift to the GRS program to enhance student recruitment, support faculty and award two new types of Cargill GRS Scholarships. Gail Nonnecke, Global Professor in horticulture and faculty coordinator of GRS, says programs made possible by the gift will strengthen the curriculum and develop students’ leadership skills and global competencies.

“We are excited to help develop future agriculture, food and natural resource leaders who have an understanding of resource systems, as well as the passion and ability to approach these challenges with a global perspective and understanding,” says Nonnecke.

Hall is co-chair of the advisory council for the Global Resource Systems (GRS) major at Iowa State. He visits with students on campus and provides input on the multi-pronged approach GRS offers students combining agricultural science, global culture and foreign language.
WHERE DID
Your Adventure
AT IOWA STATE
Begin?

Wandering through campus on the very first day of classes? Eating lunch beside the Fountain of the Four Seasons? Studying beneath the Grant Wood murals in Parks Library? Wherever it started, relive the experience with Campus Beautiful.

Campus Beautiful presents a stunningly illustrated overview of the origins and evolution of Iowa State University’s campus landscape, architecture and public art. Campus Beautiful is a full-color, hard-cover, 10-by-12-inch book with over 400 images and 480 pages about Iowa State’s beautiful and enriching campus.

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