

2021

Exchange

The path forward

KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Agricultural Economics

Contents

The Exchange, Fall 2021

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The Exchange is for Kansas State University Department of Agricultural Economics friends and alumni. If you have story ideas, comments, or suggestions please let us know.


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On the cover: The Canopy Walk in the botanical gardens at the University of Ghana, Legon.

After more than a year of limited travel due to the COVID pandemic, Dr. Vincent Amanor-Boadu made a trip to Ghana to initiate a new study to evaluate the impact of a \$57 million USDA investment in the Ghana poultry industry five years ago. The investment focused on increasing productivity and income of Ghana's poultry farmers and improving corn and soybean production. The study is a joint project between METSS and KSU.

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From the desk of **Allen Featherstone**



“After 49 years of teaching and more than 4,000 students, Barry left a lasting impact on the department and U.S. agricultural policy.”

After more than a year of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are excited to have students, faculty and staff back on campus this fall! Although the Department was able to continue teaching and research activities remotely and through hybrid online/in-person, it is great to have everyone back in Waters Hall. Faculty and staff have also been able to travel throughout the State, U.S. and even internationally, allowing for face-to-face interaction.

In this issue of the Exchange, we wanted to highlight some of our achievements, activities and future opportunities in the Department of Agricultural Economics at Kansas State University. You can read updates on numerous awards won by Department faculty, staff and students for their research and teaching efforts; Dr. Glynn Tonsor was asked to provide testimony to the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry on beef-cattle markets; this year’s scholarship recipients; our Distinguished Alumni; the ribbon-cutting ceremony on the Biere Family Undergraduate Student Center; and much more.

On October 2nd, we celebrated the life and legacy of Dr. Barry Flinchbaugh after his passing on November 2, 2020. You can find a video of the celebration and other tribute videos at <https://www.k-state.com/news/flinchbaugh.php>. After 49 years of teaching and more than 4,000 students, Barry left a lasting impact on the department and U.S. agricultural policy.

If you’d like to contribute to a scholarship in his honor, there are two funds at the Kansas State University Foundation:

- Flinchbaugh Agricultural Policy Chair (Account O64415),
- Flinchbaugh Agricultural Policy Student Scholarship (Account O64410).

The other Department Scholarship accounts are:

- Ag Econ Departmental Support Fund - D15290
- Ag Econ Emeritus Faculty & Friends Scholarship Fund - O50290
- AgManager.info - D15180
- Arthur Capper Cooperative Center - C55950
- Coolidge (J.H.) Farm Management Fund - D58235
- Kansas Society Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers - O08650
- Master of Agribusiness Scholarship Fund (MAB) - O01137
- Risk Management Center - D84855

Finally, we encourage you to share your career and family developments so we can keep your fellow alumni informed. Please e-mail me afeather@ksu.edu or Mary Bowen, our communications coordinator, at mjbowen@ksu.edu with information you would like to share with the department.

Go Cats!

Dr. Allen Featherstone

Department Head, Professor, Master of Agribusiness Program Director



Barry Flinchbaugh



Award-Winning Faculty, Staff and Students

The Agricultural Economics Department has a history of award-winning faculty, staff and students. During the COVID pandemic, members of the department continued to teach, conduct research and author publications. We are pleased to highlight our award winners.

Llewelyn wins K-State President's Award for Excellence

Rich Llewelyn, Ph.D. and Extension Economist, won the Kansas State University President's Award for Excellence for Unclassified Professionals in the Distinguished Accomplishment Award category for his contributions in 2020. He also was recognized as the K-State Professional Staff of the Week in February 2021.

In a typical year, Llewelyn manages four large programs for the department, manages the award-winning extension website, AgManager.info, and teaches a spring semester class. His productivity and commitment to K-State and the department is award-worthy in a normal year, however 2020 proved to be anything but normal. Llewelyn transitioned his course online and was able to showcase expertise of the agricultural economics department across the country by using Zoom technology in timely and professional webinars.

"The last year or so with the pandemic took a lot of effort, by a lot of people. It's very cool to be recognized for this, but there were a lot of folks involved with our agricultural economics educational efforts, particularly our extension specialists who provided a lot of content during this time. My job is to help others succeed in what they're doing by getting that content out to those who need it. I appreciate the recognition, and I appreciate all the other folks who helped us share a lot of good information," Llewelyn said.

The President's Award of Excellence for Unclassified Professionals fosters excellence in the workplace by rewarding and recognizing unclassified professional staff

members who achieve excellence and/or make exemplary contributions to the mission and values of Kansas State University.

The first major effort was offering a series of webinars; providing understanding of what was happening in the commodity markets, as well as providing information about government programs that could be helpful to farmers, such as the Paycheck Protection Program and the Economic Injury Disaster Loan from the Small Business Administration, and the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program via the USDA. Thirteen large webinars were conducted with nearly 2,500 participants around the country and more than 10,000 views of the recordings.

The program would not have been possible without Llewelyn taking charge of organizing, marketing, running technology during the webinars and managing the website with the recordings. All while continuing to teach, manage multiple departmental conferences and the AgManager.info website that has more than 20,000 users per month.



Rich Llewelyn

Bergtold receives three awards for teaching



Jason Bergtold

Teaching during a pandemic requires professors to be flexible and open to trying things to keep students learning and engaged. Dr. Jason Bergtold, Professor of Agricultural Economics, received three prestigious awards in 2021 for his efforts during the pandemic and his career: K-State's Coffman Chair for University Distinguished Teaching Scholars, the

Applied Agricultural Economics Association (AAEA) and the Western Agricultural Economics Association (WAEA) Distinguished Teaching Awards for Undergraduate Teaching Ten or More Years' Experience.

"The previous year greatly impacted how I approach teaching my classes," Bergtold said. "Because of the pandemic, I offered all of my classes using hybrid formats: remote live-streamed, recorded lectures and in person. In addition, I changed how I approached organizing and engaging with students, as all instructors had to do."

As part of the Coffman Chair, he will spend the next year studying how new teaching platforms, styles and techniques for remote and hybrid learning that he and his fellow faculty members adopted because of the pandemic impact. Bergtold plans to share what he learns during a series of workshops on scholarship, teaching and learning.

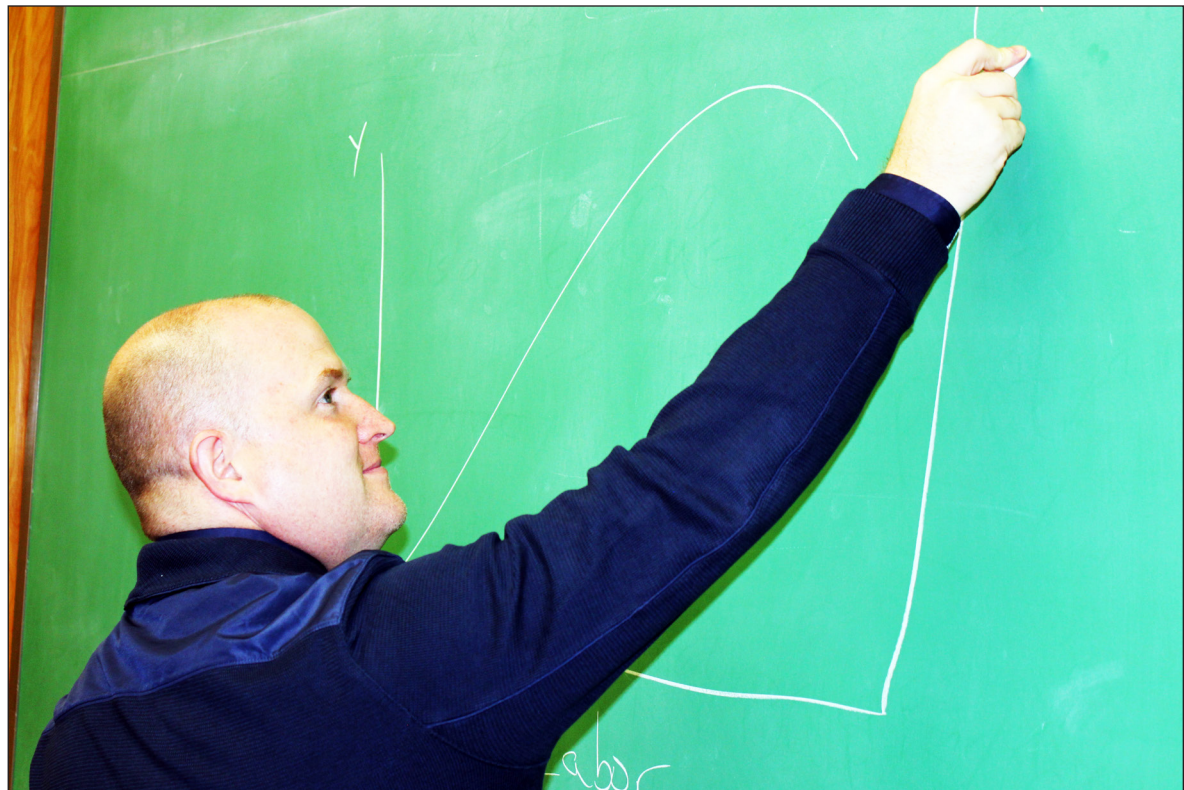
Bergtold will survey undergraduate students during the fall semester and faculty and staff in the spring to determine what improvements can be made to courses online and in person.

"We want to find out what pieces of online and hybrid teaching we can bring back to the classroom to optimize classroom engagement and learning for both students and faculty," Bergtold said.

The AAEA and WAEA teaching awards were presented during a joint conference in August. The awards recognize and encourage meritorious performance in undergraduate teaching in agricultural or applied economics, creativity in designing and using innovative teaching methods, and impact on student learning and department teaching.

"Winning three different teaching awards in the same year was unexpected, but a great honor," Bergtold said. "It's not just about me, the awards reflect on our department and teaching faculty. We have a phenomenal group of teachers in the Agricultural Economics Department that learn from each other and strive for excellence."

He has previously been honored for his teaching at the college, university, professional and national levels. His awards include the U.S. Department of Agriculture's 2018 Food and Agricultural Sciences Excellence in Teaching Award; 2016 Outstanding Teacher Award for Less Than 10 Years of Experience from the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association; the 2015 Outstanding Teaching Award for Less Than 10 Years of Experience from the Western Agricultural Economics Association; and the 2014 Presidential Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching from K-State. The College of Agriculture has honored Bergtold with its 2019 Excellence in Graduate Teaching Award.



Hendricks research selected as best article

Nathan Hendricks, agricultural economics professor, along with Joe Janzen, assistant professor at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, received the *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy (AEPP)* Best Article Award with their article, "Are Farmers Made Whole by Trade Aid?"

The *AEPP* journal is published by the Applied Agricultural Economics Association to share high-quality research in a forum that is informative to a broad audience of agricultural and applied economists, including those both inside and outside academia.

The article addresses one of the most important issues in the U.S. farm policy over the past three years: the unprecedented surge in ad hoc government payments to U.S. farmers.

"Between 2018 and 2020, the United States Department of Agriculture made two rounds of Market Facilitation Program (MFP) payments totaling \$23 billion as compensation for market losses caused by trade retaliation from countries such as China. This trade retaliation concentrated on U.S. agricultural exports as part of a larger global trade conflict," Hendricks said. "These payments were so large

and the programs to distribute them developed so quickly that many questioned their size and distribution. For example, the Senate Committee on Agriculture issued a Minority Staff Report suggesting MFP overcompensated certain regions and crops."

The article explains how the trade war impacted exports and prices for each commodity and how these impacts compare with the MFP payment rates. They compare payments across counties of the United States, and use farm-level data to discuss how payments for an individual farm changed from the first to second round of payments based on differences in farm characteristics within the same county.

The three key findings of their research included seeing MFP payment rates generally followed export losses across commodities, but that MFP payment rates generally exceeded short-run price impacts estimated by economists—with larger differences for some commodities; although aggregate payments were largest in Corn Belt states, the payments per farm were largest in Southern counties; and payment rates exceeded short-run price impacts, but the program may not compensate for long-run damages caused by the trade conflict.

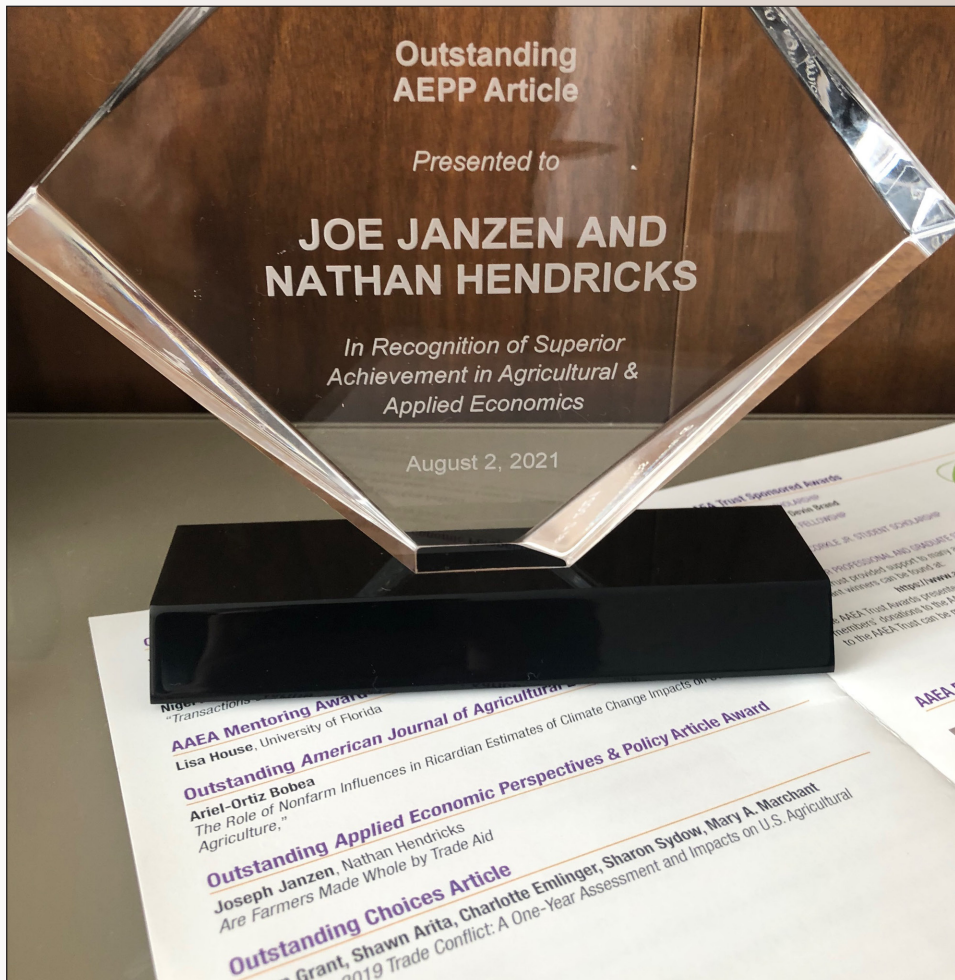
"While several groups, created maps of payments rates on per acre terms or total payments per state our paper was the first to create county-level maps of payments for an average sized farm and payments relative to rental rates," Hendricks said.

Not only did their article receive the *AEPP* best article award, it was also cited by major print media outlets such as The New York Times, Bloomberg, NBC News, DTN/Progressive Farmer, Agri-Pulse, Successful Farming, and others.

He added, "It is a great honor to have our article selected by the editors of the *AEPP* as the outstanding article."



Nathan Hendricks



Additional Awards:



Chelsea Arnold



Micah Cameron-Harp



Allen Featherstone



Gabriel Blair Fontinelle



John Green



Lauren Benavidez



Megan Hill



Florence Lwiza



Jaime Luke



Priyanka Sharma



Hannah Shear

Since 2010 KSU Ag Econ Graduate Student Case Study teams have earned:

- 1st place 7 times
(including the last three)
- 2nd place 5 times
- 3rd place 1 time

- **Chelsea Arnold**, Applied Agricultural Economics Association (AAEA) Graduate Student Extension Competition Third Place
- **Micah Cameron-Harp**, Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences (NRES) Graduate Fellowship Awardee.
- **Allen M. Featherstone**, AAEA Agricultural Finance and Management Section Publication of Lasting Impact Award for “*Factors Influencing a Farmer’s Decision to Invest in Long-Term Conservation Improvements*,” Land Economics, 1993.
- **Gabriel Blair Fontinelle** AAEA Outstanding Master’s Thesis Award Honorable Mention
- **John Green, Lauren Benavidez, and Megan Hill**, AAEA Student Case Competition, First Place
- **John Green, Lauren Benavidez, and Megan Hill**, International Food and Agribusiness Management Association (IFAMA) Graduate Student Case Competition, First Place
- **Florence Lwiza**, International Association of Agricultural Economists (IAAE) Eicher Award Honorable Mention
- **Jaime Luke and Priyanka Sharma**, AAEA student case competition, Second Place
- **Hannah Shear**, AAEA Graduate Student Policy Communication Competition, First Place
- **Hannah Shear**, K-State College of Agriculture Richard Elmore Brown Teaching Award

Called to Testify: Tonsor shares expertise during Senate committee hearing

When asked to testify before the United States Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, Dr. Glynn Tonsor, professor of agricultural economics, shared his knowledge and expertise in beef, cattle and meat markets. Here's a quick Q&A about the experience.

How/why were you selected to testify?

Tonsor: Chairwoman Debbie Stabenow's office extended the invitation for me to testify. I suspect that invitation reflected my engagement broadly on related meat-livestock economic issues for many years, both as an active researcher and Extension educator.

What was the session about?

Tonsor: The U.S. Senate session covered a range of topics reflecting varied interests of that committee's members. The topics I focused on are outlined in my written testimony where I attempted to summarize key economic concepts and past research findings on fed cattle markets and the beef-cattle industry.

Information shared with the group, a brief summary.

"The U.S. beef and cattle industry is arguably the country's most economically important agricultural sector with cash receipts exceeding \$66 billion in 2019.^{1,2} Besides the sheer size of the industry, the vast number and diversity of operations differs from many other agricultural sectors. The unique importance of the industry to society was reaffirmed with President Trump invoking the Defense Production Act classifying meat and poultry processors as essential infrastructure."

What was the experience like?

Tonsor: The experience was certainly a unique one. Given the elevated emotion in the industry and related interest of elected officials in cattle markets, the exchange of research was deemed essential in my judgement. That guided my efforts both in formulating my testimony as well as how I attempted to usefully respond to questions raised both during the hearing and later in formal questions received from some committee members.



A banner for the United States Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry. It features the Senate seal on the left and the text "COMMITTEE HEARING CHANNELS" with five stars. Below this, it reads "Hearing entitled, 'Examining Markets, Transparency, and Prices from Cattle Producer to Consumer.'" and "Coverage begins at 2:30 pm." At the bottom, it says "COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION & FORESTRY".

What other projects have you been working on this year?

Tonsor: I continue to work on a wide range of projects that span a diverse set of economic topics. Some of these are consumer focused such as assessing demand for plant-based proteins and monitoring meat demand. Other projects are more producer or supply-chain focused including topics such as cattle market price discovery and alignment of processing capacity with cattle inventories.

Reflecting on the experience, Tonsor says he would encourage fellow academics to seriously consider accepting invitations to testify when they are received on topics well-aligned with the expertise of the invited party. While the process is stressful and requires a significant investment of time and energy, the opportunity to help inform decision-makers is one that academics should always seriously consider."

ACCC and partners research skills gap analysis

When cooperation and collaboration intertwine, exciting things happen. The Arthur Capper Cooperative Center (ACCC), a public-private partnership between the Department of Agricultural Economics at Kansas State University and the Kansas Cooperative Council (KCC), has put together a research project blending the strengths of university research with the needs of the cooperative industry.

Recognizing that engaged and knowledgeable directors are keys to the success of any cooperative, the ACCC Advisory Council has guided the creation of a Director Skills Gap Analysis research project. The project is pursuing answers to two key questions: What makes a successful director? What skills are needed?

Dr. Brian Briggeman, professor and ACCC Director, noted, "Applied research benefits greatly from industry input. In our case, cooperative directors and CEOs have the insight and experience on what it takes for a farmer to be a successful director on a cooperative's board."

The research plan includes:

- Interviews with farmer cooperative directors and CEOs will identify skills of well-informed and highly engaged directors as well as identifying areas for improvement.
- A research team of cooperative and governance experts has been formed consisting of faculty, a cooperative council leader and a Ph.D. graduate student.
- Interview findings will be used to develop a survey to glean additional insights from a nationally representative sample of local and regional directors.

The research results will:

- Provide data for workshops, papers and presentations.
- Guide future educational programs for cooperative directors.

Cooperative partners saw the value in the research

KANSAS STATE AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

Arthur Capper Cooperative Center



"As a young researcher, I want my work to impact agribusinesses and family farmers. This project is one way that I can make that happen and it will springboard my research program into the future."

- Jody Wendt

opportunity and stepped forward to provide funding. ProValue Insurance made the initial investment in the research project. CHS, CoBank and Pride Ag Resources have also contributed. Land O'Lakes's Member Co-op Match Program funds can be used for this research project. Additional funding opportunities are also available for cooperative partners.

KCC President/CEO, Brandi Miller, is part of the research team and is working with the ACCC to recruit research participants. Briggeman, is leading the research project with Ph.D. graduate student, Jody Wendt.

"This research project is allowing my interests to come full circle," Wendt said. "In high school, I studied the benefits of cooperatives. My family has taken advantage of several local cooperatives to advance their farming operation over the years. Now, as a young researcher, I want my work to impact agribusinesses and family farmers. This project is one way that I can make that happen and it will springboard my research program into the future."

The ACCC Advisory Council engages industry partners on innovative research projects and strengthens the core of the cooperative educational programs. By working together on relevant cooperative research, the cooperative community will gain valuable insights into the skills needed to be a successful director. This will help guide cooperatives to look for those skills in their membership to find the best people to serve on their boards to move their cooperatives forward. The university gains research experience for students, builds on the collaborative partnerships with the cooperative community and provides valuable data to industry and academia. Teamwork makes the dream work!

Agricultural Economics honors two *Distinguished Alumni*

The Department of Agricultural Economics was pleased to present the 2020 Distinguished Alumni Award to Dr. Christine Wilson and the 2021 Distinguished Alumni Award to Congressman Tracey Mann. The award is given annually to an alum who has demonstrated significant professional achievement related to agricultural economics or agribusiness.



Christine Wilson

Christine Wilson

For the past 20 years, Christine Wilson's commitment to students and teaching has never wavered. Today, Wilson leads the office of academic programs as an associate dean in the College of Agriculture at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind.

Raised on a farm in southwestern Kansas, Wilson

earned her bachelor's in agribusiness, her master's and doctorate in agricultural economics from Kansas State University. She began her career in industry, working as a grain market analyst for Koch Industries. She then returned to the university setting as an Extension Economist for Kansas State University focusing on farm management and land use value appraisal.

"I am very honored to be selected as a Distinguished Alum of the Agricultural Economics Department," Wilson said. "The Department has had many successful alumni throughout the years so it was unexpected. It is a tremendous honor. K-State's Ag Econ Department has definitely had a significant impact on my career both academically and professionally."

In 2001, Wilson joined the faculty at Purdue University teaching a variety of agricultural economics courses and conducting research in the agricultural finance, agribusiness and farm management areas. She returned to Kansas State University to serve as assistant dean for academic programs for student services and retention in the college of agriculture in 2008 and rejoined the faculty in the agricultural economics department as professor and director of undergraduate

programs in 2015. She began as associate dean and director of academic programs for Purdue University's College of Agriculture in 2020.

Responsible for undergraduate academic programs, Wilson enjoys the challenge to provide students with opportunities and give them a transformational experience, in and out of the classroom while at Purdue.

"As part of leadership in the College of Agriculture, I am responsible for the vision of academic programs. We work to support our students, help them grow academically and professionally, and be successful in their chosen careers," she said.

Throughout her career, Wilson has received recognition for her excellence in teaching and advising, including the David Mugler Outstanding Teaching Award from the Kansas State Ag Alumni Association, the Kansas State University Presidential Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching and the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association Distinguished Teaching Award More Than 10 Years' Experience in 2019. She also received the Charles B. Murphy Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Award from Purdue University and the Richard L. Kohl's Outstanding Undergraduate Teacher Award from Purdue's College of Agriculture.

She and her husband, Eric Coates, have two sons: Christopher and Evan.





Tracey Mann

Tracey Mann

Named the 2021 Distinguished Alum, Congressman Tracey Mann is a fifth generation Kansan, who was born and raised on his family farm just south of Quinter. He is also the fifth generation to live in the family farmhouse that his great-great-grandfather ordered from the Montgomery Ward catalogue in the early 1900's.

Growing up in production agriculture Congressman Mann learned the value of hard work at a young age as he spent thousands of hours in the fields and on the family feed yard. Some of his fondest memories of those days were working cattle with his grandfather, father, and brother on Saturday afternoons while listening to K-State football on the radio.

He earned his bachelor's degree from K-State in Agricultural Economics in 2000, served on Student Senate, and was Student Body President during his time on campus.

"I still use the lessons learned in Dr. Barry Flinchbaugh's ag policy class every day," Mann said about his time at K-State.

"I was shocked when Dr. [Allen] Featherstone called about

receiving the Distinguished Alum Award. I am very honored and grateful for the education I received at K-State."

He was elected to the 117th Congress of the U.S. House of Representatives and serves the "Big First" District of Kansas. Congressman Mann is a tireless advocate for Kansas agriculture and conservative Kansas values.

"I decided to run for Congress because I was concerned about the direction the country was going. I could either complain and be angry, or I could run for office and do something about it. I love serving Kansans and advocating for agriculture," Mann said.

Congressman Mann proudly serves on the House Agriculture and House Veterans Affairs Committees.

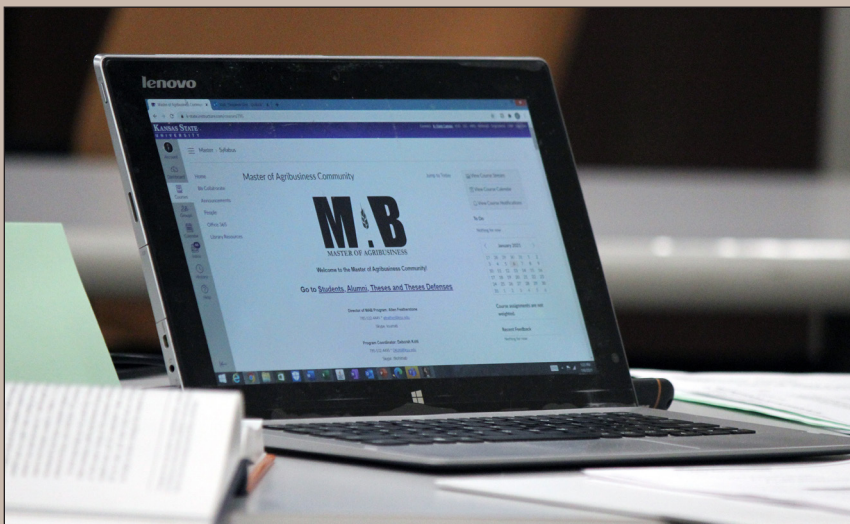
Prior to representing the First District, Congressman Mann served Kansas as the 50th Lt. Governor of Kansas. Congressman Mann has worked in commercial real estate for the last 20 years. His civic engagement includes serving on several boards for Kansas organizations including Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership (KARL), Kansas Chamber of Commerce, The City Teen Center in Salina, and Legacy Financial.

Mann and his wife, Audrey, live in Salina, Kansas with their four children.

Master of Agribusiness professional development webinar series

The Master of Agribusiness program is celebrating its 25th year of developing leaders in the food, agriculture and animal health industries. With more than 600 students and alumni in the program, they began featuring recent alumni and their research in a #MABforLife webinar series.

The webinar series was launched to keep the ever-growing MAB alumni group engaged with current research. There has also been a focus on brushing up skill sets. The September webinar with Sara Trattles (class of 2019) featured a rousing discussion around the blueberry market, and the methods Trattles used to set budgets and forecasts in her thesis. MAB alum, and former graduate student staff member, Jody Wendt (class of 2019) worked with Trattles and her major professor to create a white paper based on the thesis for distribution in industry.



The MAB program is always looking for ways to engage both alumni and the industries they serve. If you have suggestions for a refresher on any of the skills or content you picked up in the MAB program, please let us know! We would be happy to work with you.

If you'd like to learn more how the MAB program can help advance your career, we also offer informational webinars on the first Tuesday of each month. Managing Director Deborah Kohl provides an overview of the program and answers questions.

A list of upcoming webinars can be found at <https://mab.k-state.edu/webinars.html>.



Agricultural Economics Faculty and Students make the move to **USDA**

When the United States Department of Agriculture announced it planned to move its offices from Washington, D.C., to Kansas City, it provided the opportunity for Agricultural Economics faculty, staff and students to share their experience and expertise at a new level.



Keith Harris

Keith Harris, National Program Leader and Acting Division Director in the Division of Family and Consumer Sciences, National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)

I lead the effort to bring ground-breaking scientific discoveries that integrate research, education, and extension out of the laboratory and into the hands of those who can put them to work.

As National Program Leader, I provide national leadership and inter-agency coordination for the following grant programs: SBIR (Small Business and Innovation Research), ERME (Extension Risk Management Education), FBMB (Farm and Business Management Benchmarking), and AFRI (Rural Economic Development).

As an Acting Director in the Division of Family and Consumer Sciences, which is organizationally structured in one of the four Institutes within NIFA, I direct the activities of other National Program Leaders, Program Specialist and Program Assistants to administer federal funding to address food and agriculture issues through several funding mechanism.

My time as a faculty member in the Agricultural Economics Department gave me a chance to think deeply and broadly about economics and sociology. I was able to revisit some of my previous understandings of agribusiness management and economics, and bring in new concepts that helped to further explain some of the practices in industry. My time in the Department helped me to define the type of economist I want to be. I've learned to frame problems in a way that helps me to focus and rely on qualitative and quantitative techniques/methods to explain a phenomenon. Overall, I was able to combine both the theoretical and practical applications of economics.



Bryn Swearingen

Bryn Swearingen, Agricultural Economist in the Crops Branch of the USDA-ERS

I am currently an Agricultural Economist in the Crops Branch of the USDA-Economic Research Service. My main responsibilities are focused on wheat market outlook. I'm a contributor for the Wheat Outlook that is published monthly and sit on the Interagency Commodity Estimates Committee (IGEC) for wheat. My position allows me to dig deep into research but also learn more in-depth about the composition of the WASDE reports. The wheat outlook provides more details on why changes in the WASDE took place which is beneficial for producers to understand as it gives them an insight into what to watch ahead of the next report.

The Ag Econ department helped prepare me by teaching me the basic statistical software that are beneficial in analyzing and merging large datasets. This allows me to automate my day-to-day tasks more efficiently. It also helped to think of the overall picture of the ag industry from production to government policies. Overall, I felt like my time in the Department prepared me well for taking on this position. ERS supports universities through their cooperative agreements, and I was lucky enough to be funded through one as a graduate student. I look forward to working again with professors in the department as I move further into my career here at ERS.



Hannah Taylor

Hannah Taylor, Beef Analyst with USDA ERS, Markets and Trade Economics Division, Animal Products and Cost of Production Branch

I work with a team of other analysts to help provide the beef portion of the monthly Livestock, Dairy and Poultry Outlook. I also help update the Livestock and Meat Domestic data on the ERS website. In addition, I get to work on research projects relating to beef and animal products.

I have been able to use more of my livestock background and knowledge than I ever anticipated. My position within ERS allows me to use and build upon my background and experience. Even though I'm not out in the barn working with livestock directly, I still get to be involved in the industry, working on forecasts and research.

While I do get to use skills I learned in classes the Ag Econ department, the most important thing I took away from my education was knowledge of resources available to help me learn what I need to perform my job. My classes gave me a fundamental knowledge of agricultural economics and the ability to build upon that knowledge and apply it to the specific aspects of my job.



Francis Tsiboe

Francis Tsiboe, Research Agricultural Economist, ERS, Agricultural Policy and Models Branch of the Market and Trade Economics Division

My major duties include: Applying economic, econometric, and statistical principles and concepts to conduct high-quality research and analysis; and improve the quality, and enhance the analytical usefulness of data; Providing advice and guidance to Agency and external colleagues; Serving as a technical expert on research and program development activities; Conducting research involving theoretical and empirical issues of concern to Agency programs; and Communicating difficult concepts and findings in both verbal and written forms to officials responsible for public policy.

My time at the Ag Econ department was very fulfilling. I was well educated by brilliant professors, through the communication of complex topics and ideas. Learning outside of the classroom was also an important part of my educational experience. Some of the relationships have developed into research collaborations with already published papers and a few in the pipeline. I am glad I decided to go to K-State because it has improved my communication skills, interpersonal relations, and provided a better sense of judgment and analysis of issues in agriculture risk management in the U.S. and globally.



Monte Vandever

Monte Vandever, Research Economist with the Animal Products and Cost of Production Branch, ERS

I'm a part of the Cost of Production team, a group of five researchers who develop estimates of annual costs and returns for 12 major commodities, on a regional and national basis. This is a data product which Congress has mandated since the 1970s, and that ERS has produced ever since.

My time with K-State Extension kept me in the midst of the farm management world, looking at all kinds of decisions and related farming practices. I am well prepared to sort through all the categories of farm expenses and returns we use to develop our COP estimates. I'm grateful for the good friends and excellent co-workers I had with K-State Extension and KSU's Department of Agricultural Economics.



Yacob Zereyesus

Yacob Zereyesus, Senior Economist in the International Trade and Development Branch of the Market and Trade Economics Division, ERS

I am a co-lead author of ERS's annual report on international food security assessment (IFSA). This report uses a demand-driven model that integrates income, price, and food supply shocks to assess current-year levels of food security and projected changes over the next decade for 76 low- and middle-income countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Asia. The report helps USDA and its stakeholders estimate medium-term projections of food security in the selected countries.

The Ag Econ department prepared me in so many important ways, from laying the fundamental theoretical economic principles and econometric tools that are vital to conduct sound and rigorous economic research to equipping me with the effective leadership and management tools. My close personal and professional connections with former professors, ag econ staff and graduate students, who become colleagues when I was on faculty at K-State, have instilled confidence and helped me become an effective decision maker.

2021 Agricultural Economics *Scholarship Recipients*

Congratulations to all of our 2021 Scholarship Recipients and a big “Thank You” to our generous donors who make the awards possible!

American Ag Credit Scholarship

Curtis Bloom
Ellie Bowman
Sage Dierks
Katie Pralle

David and Susan Barton Cooperative Leadership Scholarship

Summer Santillana
Bryston Warren

Dan and Beth Bird Scholarship in Agricultural Economics

Spencer Rahn



Jim and Mary Lou Birkbeck Family Scholarship

Riley Buss
Grete Olson

Farmers National Company Foundation Scholarship

Chase Fisher

Hosea S. Harkness Agricultural Economics Scholarship

Aaron Maxwell

E. Robert and Donna Kern Agricultural Economics Scholarship

Daniel Middleton

John and Pearl E. Bullock Scholarship

Baylee Wulfkuhle

Flinchbaugh Agriculture Policy Scholarship

Reed Middleton

Ted Health Memorial Scholarship Fund

James Foote

Cleo Harvey Kuhn Scholarship

Katie Pralle

CHS Foundation Scholarship

Hannah Ballard
Sage Collins
Ashley Hartman
Grant Holle
Rhett Larson
Caleb Stout
Joseph Stout
Shymel Townes
Kaitlyn Urban
Paige Vulgamore

Orlen Grunewald Agricultural Economics Scholarship

Erin Lakamp

Thomas G. Hobbs Memorial Scholarship

Cody Jarvis

Joseph Lieber Memorial Cooperative Scholarship

Justin Brown

Bill Hanson Crop Insurance Professionals Association Memorial Scholarship

Alexander Brown
Latham Schwarz

Dr. Walter Heid Agricultural Economics Scholarship

Reagan Hoskin
Garrett Muller

Tim Lim Undergraduate Scholarship in Agriculture

Ely Eslinger

CoBank Outstanding Student Scholarship

Alexis Hansen
Kinsey Harlan
Ellie Schwertfeger

George R. Hanson Scholarship in Agriculture

Curtis Bloom
Sage Dierks

J. Adair Hodges Memorial Fellowship

Cole Regehr
Courtney Sherbert

Sam and Martha Logan-Kruse Family Scholarship

Kaitlin Bell

Kansas Ag Bankers Scholarship

Jacob Deay
Sarah Wood

William S. May Scholarship for Ag Finance

Kaleb Guilfoyle



Curtis Bloom and Summer Santillana accept their scholarship certificates from Dr. Allen Featherstone at the 2021 Scholarship Banquet.

**Leonard W. Schruben
Agricultural Economics
Scholarship**
Daniel Middleton

**Seyfert Family – Vanier
Family Scholarship**
Brooklynn Bennett

**Matthew Kent Stamper
Memorial Scholarship**
Jalen Tucker

**Triangle Insurance
Scholarship**
Walker Clawson

**W. Dan and Lynn Weaver
Scholarship**
Kinsey Griffith

**Charles Dean and Harriet
McNeal Memorial
Scholarship**
Evan Rosenow

**Otis and Mary Lee Molz
Cooperative Scholarship**
Riley Sorrell

**Aaron Patrick Morrison
Scholarship**
Walker Clawson

**Duane and Pauline
Murphy Scholarship**
Sydney Beesley

**Charles W. and Lois H.
Nauheim Agricultural
Economics Scholarship**
Brandon Carp
Koby Royer
Jacob Seager
Parker Vulgamor

**Packebush Family –
Mary Vanier KSU Family
Scholarship**
Samantha Mies

**Adrian John Polansky II
Scholarship**
Ben Jensen

**James E. Purden, Jr.
Memorial Scholarship**
Olivia Logan

**Gladwin A. Read
Memorial Fund**
Hannah Ballard
Sydney Beesley
Kaitlin Bell

Ellie Bowman
Richard Branson
Paige Burkhart
Sage Collins
James Foote
Landon Gegen
Jacklyn Geiger
Abby Goins
Kinsey Griffith
Kinsey Harlan
McKenzy Harsch
Ashley Hartman
Robert
Hermesch
Reagan Hoskin
Cody Jarvis
Ben Jensen
Luke Kaiser

Nicki Kirchoff
Olivia Logan
Kade McGinn
Matthew Melchor
Garrett Muller
Grace Otott
Jonah Porting
Halle Schindler
Piper Schlatter
Dalton Springer
Maccoy Stika
Lauren Trecek
Alison Wilson
Baylee Wulfkuhle

**W.L. "Bill" Webber
Memorial Scholarship**
Kristopher Wagner
Stanley G. Wendland

Memorial Scholarship
Maci Gerken
Isaac Wingert
Reed Middleton

**Dave Woolfolk
Scholarship**
Cole Neely

**97 Scholarships & more
than \$214,000 were
awarded in 2021**





Ph.D. students learning and teaching

As part of their educational experience, the opportunity for Ph.D. candidates to teach in a classroom is as important as taking classes and passing tests. Agricultural Economics Ph.D. students Chelsea Arnold and Kaitlyn Dinges got the chance to do both while teaching the AGEC 420 Commodity Futures course.

Commodity Futures is an undergraduate course that focuses on understanding the role of futures and options as risk management tools for ag producers and agribusinesses along with investment opportunities for speculators.

“Throughout the class, we discussed the basic principles of futures contracts and options trading, but as the semester progressed, students were able to learn how to use futures contracts and options trading and different hedging strategies for commodity producers and users. Students were even able to put these skills to use by participating in a trading game challenge facilitated by AgYield,” Arnold said.

Both said interaction with their students during class is a highlight of teaching.

“One of the best parts about this semester was connecting with my students. I even had a student send me an email during their internship letting me know that they had the opportunity to meet the company’s merchandiser, and they followed the whole conversation and knew what was happening because of my course. That experience and similar experiences throughout this past spring really ignited my passion for being in the classroom,” Dinges said.

Arnold and Dinges credit their classmates and professors in the department with helping them prepare for teaching the course. Asking for advice and suggestions on course materials made the transition from student to instructor easier.

“I first prepared for the class by re-familiarizing myself with the current condition of the commodity markets and their market outlooks,”

Arnold said. “Also, speaking with the professor who had taught the class before to gain advice and ideas for structuring the class was very beneficial in establishing the outline and expectations of the course. Speaking to fellow graduate assistants that had taught before was an amazing place to go to for advice on how to be more engaging with students, how to best interact with them, and how to handle any challenges that I was facing.”

However, teaching and learning during a pandemic adds an extra layer of complexity for both students and instructors. Arnold and Dinges had to develop all of their course materials and then figure out how to teach in a hybrid environment with students in the classroom and online.

“A major challenge for this semester was trying to navigate teaching a hybrid course because my COVID-19 room capacity was smaller than my total number of students,” Dinges said. “This meant I had to get creative with getting students to interact during lectures if they attended via Zoom, as well as how to structure exams given heavy calculation problems. Technology as a whole was overall a challenge, but we managed!”

“Overall, teaching this past semester was a fantastic experience. Not only was I a student in one course, but I was teaching another, so while it was an interesting semester, it was also one of the most rewarding semesters I’ve had at Kansas State to date. I can’t wait to get back in the classroom!”

Kaitlyn Dinges teaching in the classroom and online during Spring 2021 semester.

From graduate student to *Assistant Professor*

Hannah Shear just started an Assistant Professor position this fall at Oklahoma State University, where her focus is on teaching and researching in the Agribusiness and Farm Management areas. Her passion for teaching is what pushed her to earn her Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics at Kansas State University.

Shear's passion and work ethic is what helped her to become the recipient of the Richard Elmore Brown teaching award. An award from the College of Agriculture to reward graduate students for their work with students in teaching.

"To be recognized for doing a good job at something I love is an honor," Shear said. "Too often the art of teaching is looked down upon or considered a secondary task at universities, and I appreciate the College of Agriculture providing an opportunity to reward a graduate student for their work with students."

The Agricultural Economics department helped prepare Shear academically throughout the courses she took.

"The department is designed to prepare us academically, and the department excelled at this. The courses were taught by some of our departments best professors, and I enjoyed every class taught within the department." Shear said. "However, I have found the soft skills that are not directly taught in the classroom are what set me apart from others on the job market. Soft skills such as leadership development, communication skills, networking, and such. These are the skills I have found to be most useful now that I am working in academia. I am grateful that my adviser [Dr. Dustin Pendell] and the department allowed me to pursue training and advancement in those areas while I was at K-State.

Shear's time spent on the fourth floor of Waters Hall is time she won't forget, as she spent it with her fellow graduate students that over time turned into good friends. A memory that she cherishes is when the graduate students held a work day to spruce up the fourth floor. Shear remembers all the laughter and good times that were spent with her classmates.

While there were bumps along the road during her time in the Ag Econ program, the support and encouragement she received from people in and out of the department helped her to continue her course in earning her Ph.D.



"Having people in the department who haven't lost sight of the value of true human connection and the value of family, is something I will be forever grateful," she said.

While she earned her Ph.D. at K-State, Shear also served as K-State's Graduate Student Council President.

"Serving as President of the Graduate Student Council was both very rewarding and time consuming. I spent countless hours in university budget meetings, and academic affairs meetings, in addition to maintaining my research and teaching during a pandemic. The graduate school administrators were right

there alongside us, working to make sure graduate students were taken care of during the Covid-19 pandemic. I am appreciative of my time on the council and believe it played an integral role in preparing me for my career in academia," Shear said.

As she was finishing her time at K-State, Shear placed first in the AAEA Graduate Student Policy Communication Competition. The competition required graduate students to submit a two-page policy brief on a policy of their choice for the

first round of the competition. From there eight finalists were chosen and asked to present a 10-minute presentation on their topic.

"My policy brief covered the need for an expansion and reform of the U.S. Guest Worker Program (H2A Program) as the ag sector continues to experience labor shortages. The program is costly and can be cumbersome for small and medium sized producers to utilize," she said. "I was proud to be recognized for the work on this brief."

It has been a big change for Shear as she has transitioned into the Assistant Professor role at OSU after being a graduate student. However, she is excited for this opportunity and continuing to work hard to showcase her passion, "teaching and engaging with students is the highlight of my day."

Photo above left to right: Graduate School Vice Provost Claudia Petrescu, President Richard B. Myers and Dr. Hannah Shear

"The department is designed to prepare us academically, and the department excelled at this. The courses were taught by some of our departments best professors, and I enjoyed every class taught within the department."

- Hannah Shear

Partnership provides ag business development courses for Latin America

The U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC), the IGP Institute and Agricultural Economics Department at K-State partnered to create a program featuring live virtual and on-demand classes promoting expertise in business management for livestock, aquaculture, and feed businesses in Colombia and other Latin American countries.

“As new generations take over agribusinesses, companies grow and evolve; some grow into larger family businesses and others were sold to local or larger international corporations,” Guy Allen, IGP Senior Economist, said. “Feed compounders, cattle growers, and swine and poultry producers have integrated their business and become important players in the industry. In order for these businesses to continue flourishing, they need to develop skills that will allow them to assess their businesses from a new perspective and develop strategies for future success.”

Along with faculty and experts from IGP, Drs. Allen Featherstone, professor, Vincent Amanor-Boadu, professor, and Keith Harris, former associate professor, provided

materials and sessions on principles of agribusiness management, principles of risk management, supply chain management, financial risk management, operational structure and risk, strategic thinking, business plan development and execution, procurement, sourcing, and contracts, strategic competencies for leadership, and economic environment.

“Coming out of the pandemic is challenging for all industries, but especially challenging for the food industry. The level of uncertainty has increased as supply chain and logistic partners experience unprecedented labor shortages, 12 and other challenges. The timeliness of this

course was impeccable. It provided the participants with the tools to come out of the pandemic strong and focused,” Amanor-Boadu said. “I worked with them on minimizing supply chain risks while enhancing competitiveness by transforming market transactions into relationships, into strategic alliances. These relationships focus on growing the pie for all partners in ways that commit everyone to the other. It is built on trust and on respect. It relies on confidence that everyone has everyone else’s interest as their focus.”

IGP conducted delivery of this training program via a blended approach consisting of on-line live delivery and on-demand prerecorded delivered from July through September.

Materials were set up so that access could be obtained by each participant at their own convenience, time, and place. Course materials, audio and written, were presented in English with Spanish language translation.

Individuals from large feed compounding companies, swine, poultry, and cattle operations in Colombia and Latin America with a university education were selected to participate in the courses.

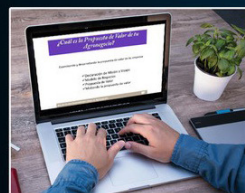
“Through this project, USSEC will work closely with the next generation of agribusiness leaders, helping them to acquire the capabilities that will allow them to recognize the needs of the future in managing their businesses and thus ensure the permanence of the company in an ever-changing, ever more complex business environment,” Allen said.

“In order for these businesses to continue flourishing, they need to develop skills that will allow them to assess their businesses from a new perspective and develop strategies for future success.”

- Guy Allen

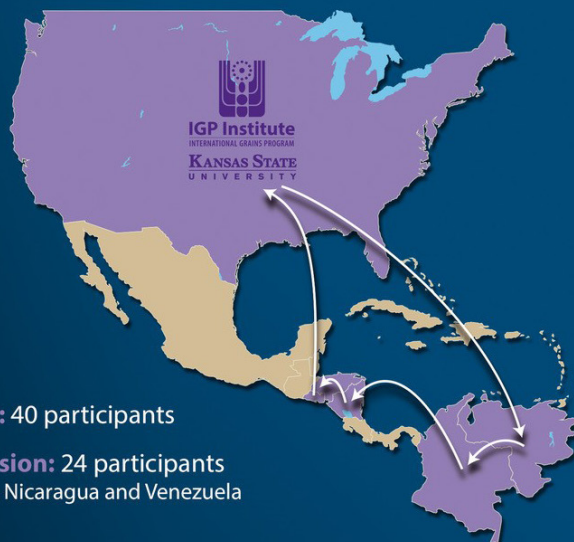
USSEC Practical and Strategic Education for the Next Generation of Ag Business Leaders

USSEC (United States Soybean Export Council) and the IGP Institute (International Grains Program) at Kansas State University have partnered to create a program featuring live virtual and on-demand classes promoting expertise in business management for livestock, aquaculture, and feed businesses in Latin America. Courses are designed to help participants acquire the capabilities that will allow them to recognize the needs of the future in managing their businesses in an ever more complex business environment.



Colombia Session: 40 participants

Latin America Session: 24 participants
El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Venezuela



Biere Family Undergraduate Student Center

On Friday, September 17th, we officially opened the new Biere Family Undergraduate Student Center with a ribbon-cutting by Dr. Arlo and Diane Biere and an open house.



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