

AEC REVIEW

FALL 2012

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Coming Home to AEC

By: Collier Clemens

More than 70 Agricultural Education and Communication alumni, faculty and students gathered for the department's first-ever alumni event in April.

AEC faculty coordinated the event, held at the Straughn Professional Development Center on the Saturday of the University of Florida's Orange and Blue football game.

The event was an effort to bring together the department's alumni in a fun, family-friendly event, said AEC professor Ricky Telg, one of the event's coordinators. The department put a lot of work into preparing and setting up for the event, Telg said. Staff, faculty and students all took part in some aspect of the preparation for the event.

AEC lecturer Becky Raulerson's Instructional and Event Planning course in the fall 2011 semester laid some of the planning groundwork for the spring event. Student groups had to develop themes and detailed plans for the event. The theme "Coming Home to AEC" was selected and was used in all of the promotional materials.

Raulerson, also an AEC alumna, attended the event and saw how the plan, begun in her course, was implemented. "It went off without a hitch," she said. "It was just perfect."

Telg said the planning team decided on the Orange and Blue game weekend because the team believed more alumni would be in

Gainesville for that game and would be interested in staying a little longer on Saturday afternoon to attend the AEC alumni event.

"It was extremely beneficial because it brought alumni who have not really been invited to alumni things before," Raulerson said.

After the game, alumni were treated to a barbeque where they had time to mingle with each other and the faculty. Children were entertained with crafts and coloring pages so that their parents could talk freely with other alumni. A short program took place after the meal.

The alumni event will be held every other year, Telg said. "I think everyone had a great time and are excited about the event being held again in 2014," he said.



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AEC Welcomes New Faculty Member

By: John Kieslich

The University of Florida's Department of Agricultural Education and Communication has added a new member to its faculty, someone who challenges his students to a deeper understanding of self and the world.

Assistant professor Tony Andenoro teaches Interpersonal Leadership. However, in the coming semesters he will teach such courses as a graduate level of Interpersonal Leadership, a leadership theory course, Groups and Teams, the first-ever leadership ethics course at UF, and Critical and Creative Thinking for graduate students.



Fall 2012 is Andenoro's first semester at UF after leaving Gonzaga University in Spokane, Wash., a university where he thought he may stay for life, he said.

"I think that the opportunity at the University of Florida is different from a lot of the other universities I worked at, specifically for students," Andenoro said.

The faculty members at UF are scholars within their respective fields, and, for students, there is a unique balance of high academic performance and Gator Nation pride, he said.

However, as with any university, it is a struggle to develop emotional intelligence in college students. Emotional intelligence is key to becoming a critical thinker, Andenoro said.

"You can't understand or interpret the world around you unless you can understand yourself and where your opinions come from," he said.

Three facets of emotional intelligence that Andenoro said he strives to have his students attain are a deeper understanding of self, the role of reflection in that process, and the significant actions stemming from self-awareness.

The students in his Interpersonal Leadership class engage in storytelling as an exercise of reflection and self-awareness, he said.

"They get up, they cry, they share things that they didn't think they could share, very personal

stuff about their families and friends," he said.

"I feel like the depth of the class lies in their ability to understand why they told the story and understand how they feel about that story."

His students also participate in five-minute discussions about themselves as a way to divulge what is most essential to their identity, Andenoro said.

"I want to know how they get here, why they chose the major they chose, what they are going to do after school. Inevitably, a five-minute conversation turns into a 30-minute to 45-minute conversation," he said.

Andenoro reflected that, as a student, he was involved in many clubs and that he valued his interactions with his classmates and friends, he said. His plans were to go to law school, but he discovered that his passion lay in guiding and working with students.

"When I design a class, I think that it's a tremendous opportunity and that students are paying a tremendous amount of money for it," he said. "I think of how I can live up to this expectation."

During his work in Zambia, Andenoro said he learned the life lesson that relationships are what matter most in this world. If he can fully engage with his students and get to know them on a deeper level, it will provide him the opportunity to aid them in achieving their own, personal and professional goals.

As an instructor, he strives to meet his students where they are, Andenoro said. A goal for him with his students is to find something that they are passionate about, inform that passion and guide them in the right direction.

UF associate professor Nicole Stedman has known Andenoro since 2005 when he was her teaching assistant at Texas A&M University. She complimented his energy in the classroom setting and the relationship-oriented program offered at Texas A&M University.

"You can't graduate from that program, leave that university without being passionate about your students and without wanting to help them with what they are passionate about," Stedman said.

Among Andenoro's research goals is to discover how to make professors more emotionally intelligent so that they can better relate to, empathize with and challenge their students to master knowledge and develop emotional intelligence along the way, Andenoro said.

"I really want to focus on creating a better experience for undergraduate education," he said. "I want to know how we use self-awareness and storytelling as a vehicle for the development of intercultural and global competencies."

AEC alum uses PR skills at FFB

By: William Prince

An Agricultural Education and Communication graduate is using the skills she learned at the University of Florida for the Florida Farm Bureau Federation as the communications specialist in the public relations department.

Mary Ficek joined FFBF in July 2011 after graduating from the University of Florida. Ficek majored in Agricultural Education and Communication, and also received two minors in mass communication and in leadership.

Before she was hired by the Florida Farm Bureau, Ficek interned with the Florida Organic Growers in May 2011, working in marketing and public relations.

"Being a part of an agricultural organization is definitely rewarding because on a daily basis you get to promote and advocate for something that is vital in people's everyday life," Ficek said.

While Ficek said she never expected to work in the agriculture industry, she said she loves her job.

As the communication specialist for the Florida Farm Bureau Federation, Ficek has the opportunity to keep up to date the company's Facebook page. She is responsible for everything on the page, from the content to the staff changes within the organization.

"Marketing and public relations have not been top priority within agriculture, but now with so much negative press about the industry it has become vital for the industry to continue to thrive, Ficek said.

Ficek said that organizations are utilizing



AEC graduate Mary Ficek is the communications specialist for the Florida Farm Bureau Federation. She is pictured (center) with FFBF's Public Relations staff members Joey Mazzaferro (left), communications coordinator, and GB Crawford (right), director of public relations.

social media as a free form of public relations, as well as a way to reach a broader audience. By utilizing this source, Ficek said companies are reaching a younger audience that they might have not reached otherwise.

"Free social media is a great way to communicate with the average consumer," Ficek said.

Some of Ficek's graphic design responsibilities within the Florida Farm Bureau include fliers, agendas and the layout of the company's Facebook page.

Ficek said she enjoys her job as well as the privilege to get to work in the agriculture industry.

Having a Ball With ATA

By: Kerstin Erickson

Alpha Tau Alpha (ATA) hosted the 9th annual AEC/ATA kickball Games and Picnic on November 4, 2012 at Lake Wauberg. Attendees included undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and staff in the AEC Department. In addition to this department social event held each fall, ATA hosts the Ag Issues Form and Graduate Programs Showcase each year with the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

Alpha Tau Alpha is a national honor society for students majoring in the agricultural education and communication. Undergraduate students with a 3.0 GPA or better and Graduate students with at least a 3.5 GPA are eligible for membership. The annual new member reception is held each April.



The University of Florida's Agricultural Education and Communication Graduate Student Association holds events throughout the year to encourage social interaction and outside learning for students.

AEC graduate student Emily Ott said the events are excellent ways for new graduate students to connect with their peers.

"Many of the graduate students are away from family, so the Agricultural Education and Communication Graduate Student Association becomes family to them," she said.

AECGSA President McKenzie Smith said the socials are interesting because of the diversity in the graduate students.

"Each has something unique to share or a special skill. All have stories and experiences that liven up the socials," Smith said.

Two of these events are the Hometown Feast and the farm tours.

The Hometown Feast, formerly called the Floridian Feast, is held every fall semester. Ott said the potluck dinner, featuring dishes representative of a student's hometown, is an opportunity for returning graduate students to get to know new graduate students.

"I love making my favorite dish for other students to try and trying what other students bring to the feast," Ott said.

Ott said around 30 people attended the hometown feast this year.

The farm tour is held every spring semester. In spring 2012 the graduate students went to the Zephyrhills water bottling plant, and in spring 2013 they are planning to go to Straughn Blueberry Farms, Ravine Gardens State Park and an Anastasia Caviar production facility.

Not only does AECGSA hold events, but they also do community service. They are planning to conduct a food drive for the Gainesville community, Ott said.

AECGSA also holds sporting events. They participate in a kickball tournament every year.

They have events called Pay Day Fridays where they go out to eat with each other or participates in extracurricular activities.

It is important for graduate students to understand the importance in participating in these activities, said AECGSA member Sarah Bush.

"Many individuals, myself included, move here by ourselves from far away to pursue our degrees," she said. "Graduate school can be trying at times and having a good support system is very important."



MEMBERS OF AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION 2012:

BRITTANY ADAMS
NICOLE ALBERTS
DANIEL BARBER
CARLY BARNES
MATT BERGE
SHAINA BENNETT
KAREN BLYLER
JESSICA BLYTHE
ADAM BOUDREAUX
CHANDRA BOWDEN
LYNDALL BREZINA
SARAH BURLESON
SARAH BUSH
NATALIE COERS
LAURA CONAWAY
AVERY CULBERTSON
KARA CUPOLI
ANDREA DAVIS
CHRIS DECUBELLIS
CATHY DIBENEDETTO
ALEXANDRA DRAPER
CHARLOTTE EMERSON
LIZ FELTER
TIFFANY FREER
JOY GOODWIN
LAURA GORHAM
JESSICA GOULDTHORPE
CHRISTIE HARROD
REBA HICKS
JESSICA HOLT
SARA HURST
JARON JONES
MATTHEW LAKE
KEVAN LAMM
DONNA LAVERY
ANGELA LINDSEY
YIQIAN MA
THERESA MAGETTE
HEATHER MANESS
GENEVIEVE MENDOZA-PEREZ
AUSTEN MOORE
CHRIS MOTT
MILTON NEWBERRY
DEBORAH NISTLER
EMILY OTT
AMY OXNER
JANINE PARKER
BRANDI PHILLIPS
SARAH PINKSTON
MARY RODRIGUEZ
ERIC RUBENSTEIN
CYNTHIA SAIN
NORMA SAMUEL
CYNTHIA SANDERS
ALYSSA SLAVIN
MCKENZIE SMITH
KENDRICK SPENCER
MARNA WESTON
GRETCHEN WULFF
ASHLEY YOUNG

Agriculture in Scotland

By: Daniel Benjamin



Jessica Gouldthorpe traveled to Scotland in the Spring of 2012 to research Scotland's agricultural extension system.

An Agricultural Education and Communication doctoral student recently conducted research in Scotland to learn about the relationship between the agricultural industry and the extension system.

In April, Jessica Gouldthorpe spent three weeks gathering information on the history and current practices of the agricultural extension system in Scotland.

"Scotland's university-based extension system is very similar to the system that we have here in place at the University of Florida," Gouldthorpe said.

As she began collecting background information for her dissertation, Gouldthorpe said she couldn't help but notice a major difference in the available resources about the agriculture systems for the United States and Scotland.

"Digitizing resources seems to have been less of a priority in Scotland than here in the United States," she said. "Most of their historical information can't be accessed through simple online searches."

As a result, she set off for Scotland to find the necessary information for understanding the Scottish advisory system.

During her explorations in Scotland's main agricultural corridor, she visited two campuses of Scotland's Rural University College, formerly the Scottish Agricultural College. While at Edinburgh's Bush Estate and Aberdeen's Craibstone Estate, she investigated some of the agricultural research being done in Scotland and the history of its extension system.

"The similarities vastly outweigh the differences between the Scottish and United States agricultural systems," Gouldthorpe

said.

"However, one of the biggest differences seems to be the importance of agriculture to the people."

One in 10 jobs in Scotland is somehow connected to agriculture and 75 percent of the land is used for agricultural production, she said. In the United States, only 44 percent of our land is utilized for agriculture.

Gouldthorpe hopes her work will create new, productive collaborations between the University of Florida and the SRUC that would ultimately result in better lives for the small farmers each university serves. Since her personal family connection to agriculture is rooted in both the United States and in Great Britain, she said she hopes to give back in honor of her forefathers who, through sweat and toil, cultivated the land before her.



University of Florida students work to bridge gap between researchers and the public

By: Tory Boyd

Agricultural education and communication students have teamed up with the Florida Museum of Natural History to create a permanent video exhibit based on University of Florida research.

The permanent video exhibit, called *Explore Research*, at the University of Florida, is a tool to connect UF researchers to the public and share their research topics in a manner that everyone can understand, said Caroline Roper, a graduate student at UF who worked on the videos.

The videos are shown in the museum to inform the general public about specific research projects affiliated with UF, Roper said. Agricultural Education and Communication professor Ricky Telg selects the students for this advanced agricultural communication video production class.

"The whole purpose of this project is to communicate the wonderful research that is being done at UF," said Becky Raulerson, a lecturer who teaches the class with Telg.

"Because the videos are being shown at the museum, they had to be very visual. You couldn't just have the talking head of the researcher."

The students work to provide a quality product for display at the museum, and the museum provides them a way to showcase their talents, Raulerson said.

Not only are the *Explore Research* videos benefiting the museum and the researchers to help inform exhibit visitors about research topics, but these projects are beneficial to the students, Raulerson said. Some students, such as Peter Byatt, have received jobs or internships from the skills they learn through the course. Byatt is now a videographer for the museum and works with the *Explore Research* project and other video projects the museum produces.

"Right now I work as a videographer for the museum and have also launched my own production company from the skills I have learned from Dr. Telg's video classes," Byatt said.

The *Explore Research* videos have

the potential to educate people of all ages, Raulerson said. Students working on the videos were exposed to topics they would not be familiar with otherwise, she said.

"One of my favorite videos was working with Dr. Edward Scott. He did research on salamanders that glow in the dark under black light, which was really cool," Byatt said. "He is basically studying regeneration properties of the salamander and trying to apply them to humans one day."

The display incorporates interactive components, such as touchscreen activities, along with the videos.

The *Explore Research* videos are updated monthly and are also posted to the museum's YouTube channel and to an educational video site called TeacherTube.

Explore Research videos are being shown locally on UF's PBS stations. Within a year, the Florida Virtual School, which provides online courses for K-12 students, will add *Explore Research* videos to its science curriculum.

REFLECTIONS AND RAMBLINGS ON STEM EDUCATION

BY: KERSTIN ERICKSON

On November 16, 2012, Dr. Glenn Israel presented the Inaugural Barnes Lecture entitled: "Reflections and Ramblings on STEM education in the Global Economy: Roles for Students, Parents, Citizens, Leaders and Teachers."

Dr. Israel is a faculty member in AEC and currently holds a three-year Barnes Professorship which was made possible by a generous gift from AEC alumnus John T. Barnes.

The next Barnes Lecture will be presented by Dr. Ricky Telg on April 19, 2013.



Keeping up with Culture

By: Anthony Brinkman

One Agricultural Education and Communication lecturer travels every summer to a different country around the globe to learn about that country's culture and bring that knowledge to the students of the university.

Dr. Marta Hartmann, who teaches both Intercultural Communications and Global Leadership, has been taking trips over the summer for the past 20 years so she can learn about different cultures. "I learn so much from these trips that I can bring into the classroom," Hartmann said.

This summer, Hartmann traveled to Turkey.

"Turkey has always been a very intriguing place for me because of its rich history, unique topography and diverse cultural factors," Hartmann said.

One of the cities that Hartmann visited was Istanbul, the largest city in Turkey. The landscape lies in both the continents of Europe and Asia, giving the city a distinctive character, she said. "It is where East and West meet, where the modern and traditional merge," Hartmann said.

Turkey has a long history with records dating back more than 2,000 years. In Turkey's central region called Cappadocia, Hartmann visited entire cities built inside of caves by the Hittite people. "These caves have a long history that includes the Greek, Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman Empires; and inside the caves people carved out houses, churches, and monasteries," Hartmann said.

"The rocks formed by the eruption of ancient volcanoes with time eroded into hundreds of spectacular pillars, making the Cappadocia region one of exceptional natural wonders and a cultural and historical heritage," Hartmann said.

Hartmann was in Turkey while the Muslim religious holiday of Ramadan was taking place. Hartmann witnessed firsthand Muslims fasting during the day and then the people gathering at night publicly, so they could eat the special foods they had prepared throughout the day. "Ninety-nine percent of the population in Turkey is Muslim," Hartmann said.

Because of this when Hartmann visited the world-famous Sultan Ahmed Mosque, she dressed in the attire that a Turkish woman would wear, so she could experience life in the Turkish culture.



Dr. Hartmann in Istanbul with the Rustem Pasha Mosque, built in 1561, and the Spice Bazaar on the background.

AEC AWARDS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2012

American Association for Agricultural Education

- *Alan A. Kahler Dissertation Award*: Lex Lamm
- *Journal of Agricultural Education Author of the Year (2011 volume)*: Andrew Thoron & Brian Myers
- *Research Poster, 2nd Place (Faculty Division)*: Andrew Thoron & Eric Rubenstein
- *Research Poster, 3rd Place (Faculty Division)*: Andrew Thoron & Sarah Burleson
- *Innovative Poster, 2nd Place (Faculty Division)*: Ed Osborne & Kate Shoulders

Association for Communication Excellence in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Life and Human Sciences

- *Outstanding Research Paper Award*: Quisto Settle, Joy Goodwin, Ricky Telg, Tracy Irani, Hannah Carter, & Al Wysocki
- *Outstanding Research Proposal Award*: Quisto Settle
- *Outstanding Research Proposal, 2nd Place*: Laura Kubitz
- *Outstanding Thesis Award, 3rd Place*: Carly Barnes

Extension Professional Associations of Florida

- *ESP Early Career Award*: Amy Harder
- *ESP Visionary Leadership*: Pete Vergot
- *Service*: Amy Harder

International Association of Programs for Agricultural Leadership

- *Outstanding Leadership Program Director Award*: Hannah Carter

National Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow

- *Community Service Activities*: UF/Agricultural Communicators and Leaders of Tomorrow
- *News Story, 3rd Place*: Erin Rauch

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ACLT Gives Back

By: Stehpanie Cuello

Members of the Agricultural Communicators and Leaders of Tomorrow volunteered their time to a local charity as a leadership and team-building experience for new and current members.

On Oct. 12, eight ACLT members participated in the Visiting Chefs Program at the Ronald McDonald House Charities of North Central Florida, located in Gainesville, Fla. The charity's mission is to assist the families of children with severe illnesses by providing temporary housing, meals and basic amenities, said Dorie Faulkner, volunteer coordinator for the North Central Florida chapter.

The Visiting Chefs Program provides a home-cooked meal for the families staying at the Ronald McDonald House, and is the most popular volunteer program at the Gainesville house, Faulkner said. ACLT purchased and prepared a dinner of salad, sloppy Joes, bread and dessert for up to 50 tenants.

"A great benefit of this program is contact with the families that the volunteers experience, being able to see how grateful these people are," Faulkner said. "It provides a great sense of satisfaction."

"ACLT participated in the program as a service project for the National ACT Chapter awards," said ACLT events coordinator Erin Rauch. "It was used as a team-building tool for new and current members to get to know each other and create relationships," Rauch said.

"This was a great experience for members because we were able to have fun and work together while helping those in need," Rauch said. "It was fulfilling to see how these people are affected by our hard work."

Brittany McDaniel, a new member of ACLT, said the volunteer activity was a great experience and allowed current and new members to work effectively together. All members equally participated, which made volunteering easy and enjoyable, McDaniel said.

"The club members present that evening all worked together very well and kept things running smoothly," McDaniel said. "I feel like that really helped keep the whole process relaxed."

As a new member, McDaniel said the dinner was a fun way to interact with current members and hear their stories and experiences with ACLT. It was a good opportunity to network with members while helping out families with children who are sick and need something to brighten their day, she said.

"I would highly recommend that ACLT do this again. At the Ronald McDonald House, you're not just helping a couple of kids get cookies or a Sloppy Joe; you're helping entire families stay fed while their children are undergoing medical treatment," McDaniel said. "You get to be there with the families and see how you are helping."

AEC AWARDS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2012

Association for International Agricultural and Extension Education

- *President-elect*: Grady Roberts
- *Outstanding Achievement Award*: Grady Roberts
- *Abstract Award (Student Category), 2nd Runner-Up*: Nathan Conner, Grady Roberts, Amy Harder, Jessica Gouldthorpe, Austen Moore, & Sara Hurst
- *Abstract Award (Professional Category), 1st Runner-Up*: Natalie Coers, Mary Rodriguez, Grady Roberts, Charlotte Emerson, & Kirby Barrick
- *Poster Award (Student Category), 1st Runner-Up*: Nathan W. Conner, Amy Harder, Jessica L. Gouldthorpe, & T. Grady Roberts
- *Poster Award (Professional Category), 1st Runner-Up*: R. Kirby Barrick, Amy Harder, & Brian E. Myers

College of Agricultural & Life Sciences

- *CALS Alumni and Friends Horizon Award*: Jim DeValerio (MS, '10) and Brian Estevez (MS, '07)

North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture

- *Graduate Student Teaching Award*: Catherine Shoulders, Christopher Estep, Christopher Stripling

University of Florida, Florida Blue Key

- *150th Anniversary of the Morrill Act Award*: Kirby Barrick

Ag Media Summit

By: Nicole Lytwyn



Agricultural Communicators and Leaders of Tomorrow members (l-r) Corinne Fredrick, Erin Rauch, Nicole Larson, Hilary Webb and Andrea Davis traveled to Albuquerque, NM, in August for the Agricultural Media Summit, a meeting of agricultural communication professionals and students.

Agricultural Communicators and Leaders of Tomorrow members traveled to New Mexico for the annual Agricultural Media Summit this summer to network with agricultural communication professionals and university students.

In August 2012, five ACLT members, including agricultural education and communication senior Corinne Fredrick, met and interacted with other students and professionals in their field of study by attending the Agricultural Media Summit in Albuquerque, NM.

UF/ACLT is a chapter of the National Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow, which fosters professional development for students who have an interest in communications and leadership pertaining to agriculture.

The Ag Media Summit is the annual meeting of three major professional agricultural communication organizations, which make up the industry's top writers, editors, publishers, photographers and

agricultural communication specialists. AMS sponsors various activities for agricultural communications students to participate in, ranging from shooting video to learning new desktop design skill to promoting your company better through the use of social media.

"The networking opportunities allow students to interact with professionals," said ACLT faculty advisor Ricky Telg. "The experiences they have held at the summit prepare them for internships and jobs. Many professors from agricultural communication programs go there to recruit the top agricultural communication students for their graduate programs. I always plug our grad program."

Fredrick said one of her favorite parts about attending the summit was being exposed to different activities outside of the college setting that were focused on her major. Telg encourages students to attend as many activities as possible and to attend all meal functions because that is the perfect time to talk

to professionals.

Fredrick said she enjoyed seeing how broad agricultural communications is. She never realized how many other students from other universities studied the same things as she does.

"It was awesome, actually," she said. "I'm actually looking to go again and attend the 2013 Ag Media Summit."

Fredrick said that if she had an opportunity to encourage other students to join student organizations like ACLT, she would tell them that it is not only a good way to meet new people but also to learn how to be more professional in the workplace.

"We work and we play, but the play is to be a better communicator," Telg said. "The students are a lot of fun, and they also have a professionalism about them that makes me proud to be their professor."

AEC grad serves dairy magazine industry

By: Jennifer Maddox

A recent graduate of the University of Florida's Department of Agricultural Education and Communication is putting the skills learned in the classroom right to work as the editor of four dairy magazines.

Lindsey Rucks is the editor of two bi-monthly publications, The Ayrshire Digest and Milking Shorthorn Journal, and two monthly publications, the Guernsey Breeders' Journal and The Brown Swiss Bulletin. She gets to do all of her work from the comfort of her own home.

Rucks is fond of her ability to work from her home in Okeechobee, FL. The ordinary concept of getting up and driving to work does not appeal to her all that much.

"Working from home is awesome," Rucks said, "but I think I work more than I would if I had an office job. I don't just turn off my computer at 5 and punch my time card. I work nights and weekends because my work is at home and is constantly in front of me."

Rucks' position requires a great amount of skill, effort and time out of her day.

"I'll start laying out a magazine early in the morning at 8:30, and I'll look up and it'll be 2 o'clock already, and I just don't even know where the day has gone," Rucks said. "I just get so absorbed in it that I don't realize how much I've been working until I'm hungry and my eyes hurt."

Many students are concerned about post-graduation job seeking, Rucks said.

"The one thing I'll tell you is, don't be surprised when you can't find the job you want right when you graduate," Rucks said as she explained her recent struggle with finding her dream job.

After she had been with the Purebred Publishing for a while, the job opportunities started rolling in and she has had to decline multiple offers.

"It's like when you're single and no guy wants to talk to you, then you get a boyfriend and suddenly everyone's like



Recent Agricultural Education and Communication graduate Lindsey Rucks (second from right) is pictured with her heifer named RAD-ical Rock It at the World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wisconsin. Rucks' heifer won the Summer Yearling Class and was named Best Bred and Owned. Others pictured are women from the National Brown Swiss Royalty.

"Hey, maybe she's not that bad," she said.

Rucks has many responsibilities as editor for the four publications. Her job normally requires a staff of three people in order to accomplish everything. As of now, her team has been working with only two staff members after a third member of the team resigned.

"Right now, I'm having to do all the editing, ad sales, all the layouts and all the layout design, as well as covering all the shows and sales on my own," Rucks said. "It's a little bit overwhelming this time of the year because we have four magazines and three calendars that need to be out, so I'm like a crazy lady."

Many of her courses at the University of Florida helped to prepare her for her current position, but not everything that is needed in the workplace can be absorbed in the classroom, she said.

"A lot of things I'm learning as I go," Rucks said. "I had Dr. Telg's classes that prepared me for a lot of this stuff, but the best way you learn stuff with Photoshop and InDesign is by just doing it every day, just constantly working with it and learning all the quirks."

Rucks is not just involved in the dairy industry through her job. She is also the owner of her own herd of Brown

Swiss dairy cattle and competes with them in shows across the country. She competed in three national shows in 2012 in Louisville, KY, Madison, WI, and Harrisburg, PA. Rucks also attended three breed national conventions this year.

"It's difficult for me because I show, and for work we cover all the shows," Rucks said. "So I have to balance being in the ring, taking pictures, taking care of my own animals and covering stuff for work."

Despite the struggle of having to balance the two, Rucks manages to succeed in the workplace and still win blue ribbons in the show ring. One of her favorite achievements this year was when a Brown Swiss heifer out of her own herd won her class at the World Dairy Expo.

"I'm so pleased with what I'm doing right now and where I am at this point in life," Rucks said. "Everything has seemed to fall right into place after I graduated, and for that I couldn't be more thankful."