

# The AEC Department Review

Spring 2007

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## Carter reaches new heights in career

by Megan Gagnon

Although the Wedgworth Leadership Institute is the focus of her job, Hannah Carter, recently promoted to assistant professor in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication, will soon have a bigger role with leadership graduate students.

Carter will now be able to be a member of and chair graduate committees. She will have larger interaction with students.

Current students already appreciate her influence.



"Dr. Carter really offers a down-to-earth, real-world graduate experience," said master's student Elio Chiarelli. "She is somebody who is not far removed from the process and therefore can relate to students in a very real way."

Carter says her promotion from lecturer to assistant professor will open up new doors and allow her leadership background to enhance the graduate

experience.

"[Graduate students] are doing some really great research that I'd like to be a part of," Carter said.

She should have an understanding of such research. Carter was part of the department's first leadership doctoral class in 2004.

She likes to think back to the moment she figured out what she wanted to do when she "grew up."

"When I was a master's student, I was [a teaching assistant for] AEE 3030, Effective Oral Communication," she said. "I realized that I loved teaching, and now that's the best part of my day."

Carter said she has not only gained inspiration from the department, but also hopes to have a similar influence on her students.

"She is a person who frequently goes with us to Chipotle on Fridays, which is a big deal in our office," Chiarelli said. "She is animated, talkative, just as she would be if she were talking to you about your thesis."

Chiarelli says Carter's ease to talk with and caring personality set her apart as an instructor.

"She cares about what she does and that care trickles down to the people she works with," Chiarelli said. "It takes a unique leader for that to happen."

But Carter notes that although her desire was to teach at a university, how she got to that career position was a little unplanned.

"In a way I feel like I don't fit the role of a traditional faculty member," Carter said. "I'm a great example of what can happen when you're sitting in class at the right place, right time not really having a plan, and then think, 'Wow, this worked out really well.'"

# "Practically perfect" secretary retires from department

by Amanda Brumby

A staff member known for being "practically perfect" retired from the Agricultural Education and Communication Department this spring.

Betty Yaretzki, who managed travel arrangements and financial business for graduate students, retired from the department in April. Yaretzki had been employed by the University of Florida for 20 years.

"We joke that she's the Mary Poppins of the AEC Department - practically perfect in every way," said department chair Ed Osborne.

Yaretzki said she enjoyed interacting with the graduate students and the relationships that she formed with them over the years.

"I will miss the students the most, especially the graduate students," Yaretzki said.

The graduate students in the department will also miss her around the office, as well. They have become very fond of her and are sad to see her go.

"Miss Betty is always someone I could count on for a solution to the mystery of graduate school," said Elio Chiarelli, a leadership education graduate student. "She greets everyone with a smile and always seems to know just when to

place a surprise in your mailbox or on your desk."

"She is so sweet and will be missed by all of us," said Katie Chodil, an agricultural communication graduate student. "She was always very helpful when it came to travel arrangements."

The faculty and staff in the department also have many wonderful things to say about her.

"Betty is a joy to interact with on a daily basis. Her stories and life experiences are fascinating," said academic support services coordinator Jodi DeGraw. "Betty will definitely be missed."

"Betty loves working with our students and keeps us on our toes with her great sense of humor," Osborne said. "With Betty, I have complete confidence that she will complete every task, particularly the most complicated ones, in an accurate, thorough, and highly professional way.

Yaretzki was known to bring a positive



Betty Yaretzki retired after working for the University of Florida for 20 years. Yaretzki was dedicated to her work in the Agricultural Education and Communication Department.

attitude and a dedicated work ethic to the department.

"She is very old school. She has a great work ethic and many people could learn a lot from her," said Rachel Harris, a staff member in the department.

After retirement, Yaretzki will spend her time gardening, traveling and visiting family.

"I really enjoy crafts and reading, so I will spend a lot of time doing that and visiting family," Yaretzki said.

## AEC student receives UF grad teaching award



AEC doctoral student Nick Fuhrman received the Graduate Student Teaching Award from the UF Graduate College during the spring 2007 semester. Pictured (l-r) are College of Agricultural and Life Sciences associate dean Elaine Turner, Nick Fuhrman, Roslynn Brain, AEC Academic Support Services coordinator Jodi DeGraw and AEC chair Ed Osborne. Fuhrman also received the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences' Graduate Student Teaching Award.

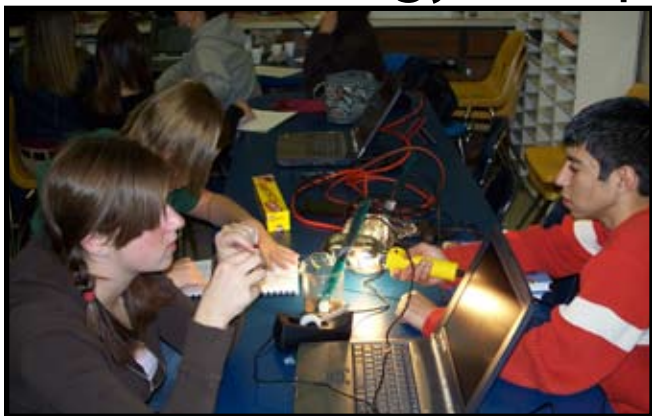
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# New technology incorporated in ag classrooms



Dr. Brian Myers and graduate student Andrew Thoron taught lab-based instruction for a week at Williston High School to 9th and 10th grade students in early March. Myers and Thoron tested new Vernier probe equipment and gathered students' perspectives of utilizing this technology in the agriculture classroom. In June, Thoron and Myers conducted a workshop of Florida agriculture instructors, where they showed instructors how to incorporate the Vernier equipment into their curriculum.

## Scholarship endowed in honor of former AEC chair

by Katelyn Crow

The legacy of the former chair of University of Florida's Agricultural Education and Communication Department will live on in a recently endowed scholarship.

The name and work of Carl E. Beeman will be remembered with the instatement of the student scholarship, named in honor of the former UF faculty member.

"The scholarship is a fitting recognition to a man who has done so much for agriculture and for students at UF," said Jimmy Cheek, senior vice president for agriculture and natural resources.

Beeman dedicated his entire career to the AEC department, Cheek said. The Carl E. Beeman Scholarship and Student Enrichment Fund is available to all undergraduate students in the AEC Department. The \$800 scholarship was established in summer 2006. It is awarded at the end of every fall semester.

"The award is given in recognition of Beeman's service, administration and leadership in the department," said AEC Department chair Edward Osborne.

The criterion for the scholarship mirrors Beeman's philosophies. Recipients must exhibit strong academic performance, leadership ability and professional potential.

"In the early years, the department was very, very small. During Beeman's tenure, he positioned the department to be larger and more comprehensive," Osborne said. "That is due to his leadership and positioning capabilities."

Recipients of the award are chosen by the department's Undergraduate Programs and Scholarships Committee. Funding for the scholarship was a collective effort of former and current

students, teachers and friends who all wished to honor Beeman's service, Osborne said.

Beeman preceded Osborne, the current chair. He retired in July 1996 after 21 years of service at the University of Florida.

The department awarded its first Beeman scholarship in fall 2006 to Extension education student Bonnie Pell.

## Barner receives UF/IFAS award



Janice Barner, executive secretary in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication, was one of this year's recipients of a UF/IFAS Superior Accomplishment Award. Barner has worked with the Wedgworth Leadership Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources for six years. Pictured (l-r) are College of Agricultural and Life Sciences associate dean Elaine Turner, Janice Barner, and UF/IFAS Senior Vice President Jimmy Cheek.

# Department helps Farm Bureau strengthen members' "voice"

by Kelly Aue

The Department of Agricultural Education and Communication is helping the Florida Farm Bureau strengthen the voice of its members.

Farm Bureau's directors decided to proactively enhance the leadership efforts of local members.

The University of Florida's Agricultural Education and Communication Department applied for a grant through Farm Bureau to develop the Strengthening the Voice leadership development program.

"Florida Farm Bureau Federation saw the need to provide leadership direction for county Farm Bureau members," said Hannah Carter, assistant professor in the department of agricultural education and communication.

Strengthening the Voice is a multi-year program that provides members with leadership skills. Departmental faculty and students wrote the material for five areas.

"We developed all of the curriculum," Carter said. "There are five different modules: Farm Bureau foundations, effective meetings, political advocacy and public relations, member recruitment and organization interaction enhancement."

The five areas were identified through



research of Farm Bureau leaders and members. The goal of the program is to provide the volunteer board members with the skills to be an effective board member.

"They have done a lot of research to know the needs of Farm Bureau leaders," said Sorrell Vickers, Farm Bureau field service agent. "The material fits the style of a Farm Bureau member."

FFB is utilizing field service agents to train the board members. The field

service agents learn the material during a "train-the-trainer" workshop.

"As a new staff person this program has been very helpful to me," Vickers said. "We learned the history and basis behind Farm Bureau."

Vickers said the program will help reconnect and educate the county members.

"It's going to get our members to do things they have never done before," Vickers said. "It will also help increase their knowledge base."

Strengthening the Voice has also helped out departmental faculty and students by letting them work with a large agricultural organization.

"This has been great for the department to collaborate with Farm Bureau," Carter said.

The leadership program will help develop the leadership capacity at the local level, she said.

"We hope they will apply these skills to Farm Bureau and their life," Carter said.

# Advisory Council helps department stay relevant

by Christy Windham

Academic and professional development is not only the goal of some college students, but also the priority of one University of Florida academic department.

The agricultural education and communication department has dedicated itself to continuous improvement by establishing the AEC Advisory Council.

"The primary purpose of the AEC Department Advisory Council is to ensure that our programs are relevant and responsive to the needs of our constituents in the state," said AEC department chair Ed Osborne.

"In addition, we look to the council as we identify and consider new ideas and initiatives for advancing the department's teaching, research, and extension programs as a premier academic unit nationally," he said.

Membership in the advisory council is

composed of 16 professionals involved in the agriculture industry, as well as eight students currently enrolled in the department. One undergraduate and one graduate student from each of the department's four specializations are selected for a two-year term on the council.

"Being a part of the advisory council is a unique opportunity, one that allows me to be involved in the decision-making process in both our department and college," said council member and agricultural communication senior Angelina Toomey. "It also provides me with the opportunity to work directly with professors and industry professionals to come up with solutions to different agriculture-related issues."

The council serves as a way to receive the most input possible before the department makes a major decision.

"I feel that this council is a great tool that allows us to avoid thinking within the box and constantly challenge

ourselves to be one step ahead of the rest," said AEC department graduate student Roslynn Brain.

Lisa Hinton, former livestock manager for the Florida State Fair, currently serves on the council and enjoys helping the department gain an industry perspective.

"I gladly contribute my time to serving on the advisory council because it is an important link that helps keep the department in touch with the agriculture industry and its current trends and standards," Hinton said.

In the future the purpose of the council will continue to revolve around meeting the needs of students and receiving guidance from industry partners.

"Our council discussions serve as a form of accountability to our constituents and ensure that our efforts are on target and our programs are designed and delivered in a high quality manner," Osborne said.

## 2006-07 Awards Received by AEC Faculty, Staff, and Students

American Association for Agricultural Education  
Nick Place: Early Career Award  
Ed Osborne: Outstanding Agricultural Educator Award  
Ed Osborne: AAAE Fellow

American Association for Agricultural Education -  
Southern Region  
Anna Ball: Outstanding Young Member Award  
Jim Dyer: Outstanding Teacher Award  
Ed Osborne: Outstanding Agricultural Educator Award

Association of International Agricultural and  
Extension Education  
Pete Vergot, Nick Place, Steffany Dragon: Second Runner-Up,  
Journal Article of the Year  
Pete Vergot: President-elect  
Nick Place: Past President

North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture  
Jim Dyer & Brian Myers: Outstanding Journal Article Award  
Anna Ball: Outstanding Journal Article Award  
Rick Rudd: Teaching Award of Excellence  
David Jones, Nick Fuhrman, & Emily Rhoades: Graduate  
Student Teaching Awards  
Nick Place: NACTA Fellow

Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists,  
Ag Communication Section  
Katie Chodil, Courtney Meyers, Tracy Irani, & Ricky Telg: Best  
Graduate Student Paper Presentation  
Tracy Irani, Courtney Meyers, & Allison Eckhardt: Faculty  
Research Paper Award, 2nd

Association for Communication Excellence in  
Agriculture, Natural Resources and Human Sciences  
Emily Rhoades, Ros Brain, Ricky Telg, & Tracy Irani: Faculty  
Research Paper Presentation Award, First Runner-Up  
Tracy Irani: Web Sites, 1st  
Tracy Irani: Marketing and Communications Campaign  
(publicity campaign), 1st  
Tracy Irani: Marketing and Communications Campaign  
(marketing campaign), 3rd  
Tracy Irani: Electronic Media (Radio Program): 3rd

College of Agricultural and Life Sciences  
Erin Best (alumna): CALS Horizon Award  
Pat Cockrell (alumnus): CALS Alumni and Friends Award of  
Distinction

UF/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences  
Janice Barner: UF/IFAS Superior Accomplishment Award

UF Golden Gator Award  
Liz Felter, Tracy Irani, & others: Web site, 1st

IFAS Image Awards  
Tracy Irani: Gold Award  
Lisa Hightower & Tracy Irani: Silver Image Award, TV or DVD  
Product

Florida Association of County Agriculture Agents  
Tracy Irani & others: Radio Programs, 1st  
Tracy Irani & others: PRIDE Program, 1st

College of Agricultural and Life Sciences' Graduate  
Student Teaching Award  
Nick Fuhrman

UF Graduate Student Teaching Award  
Nick Fuhrman

Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow  
Ginger Larson: People Photo, 1st  
Ginger: Animal Photo, 1st  
Ginger: Scenic Photo, 3rd  
Allison Eckhardt: Public Relations Single Item, 2nd  
Angelina Toomey: Public Relations Campaign, 2nd

American Agricultural Editors' Association  
Ginger Larson: Photography, honorable mention

Livestock Publications Council  
Ginger Larson: Forrest Bassford Scholarship

National Alpha Tau Alpha Conclave  
Melissa Hinton: Essay, 2nd

Norman E. Borlaug International Agricultural Science  
and Technology Fellow Award  
Kibiby Mtenga

Turf and Ornamental Communications Association  
Angelina Toomey: TOCA Scholarship

Florida Fertilizer and Agrichemical Association  
Angelina Toomey: Memorial Scholarship



*connecting people and agriculture*

# ATA Initiation and AEC Departmental Banquet



The annual Alpha Tau Alpha initiation ceremony and AEC Departmental Banquet were held on March 23 at UF's Reitz Union.

1 - AEC students wait to be initiated into Alpha Tau Alpha, AEC honor society.

2 - ATA initiated 30 new members.

3 - The new ATA members.

4 - Sweetwater Special played for attendees of the Spring Banquet.

5 - AEC students socializing before the banquet started.

6 - Students and faculty talk at the Spring Banquet.



# AEC Department Photo Album



1 - Agricultural Education students and faculty headed to Lake Wauburg to tackle the low ropes course as a way of building relationships. Students and faculty tackled such obstacles as "The Web" and Samurai.

2 - Communication and Leadership Development students toured Storter Childs Printing in Gainesville to learn more about the publishing process.

3 - Students and faculty held a baby shower for graduate student Carrie Pedreiro. In this photo, Ag Communication doctoral student Courtney Meyers shows Pedreiro how to open her new baby stroller.

4 - ACLT members visited Discovery Cove and agriculture industries in Orlando.

5 - College of Agricultural and Life Sciences' dean Kirby Barrick presents Dr. Ed Osborne with the Outstanding Agricultural Educator Award for the Southern Region of the American Association of Agricultural Education.

# AEC Department Photo Album



The "Grad Gator Gang" watched the UF Gators beat the Ohio State Buckeyes for the 2006 football national championship.



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