

# Agricultural and Applied Economics

The University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

## Students take part in case study competition abroad



Lindelly Rajo, Cole Nicholson, Andy Moler and Monica Zavala went to the IFAMA World Conference in June 2016.

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In June, Dr. Brady Brewer and Dr. Cesar Escalante took four students to compete in a case study competition at the International Food and Agribusiness Management Association Annual World Conference.

The students — Andy Moler, Cole Nicholson, Lindelly Rajo and Monica Zavala — traveled to Aarhus, Denmark for the conference and competition, in which they took on the roles of school newspaper staff members writing articles on the positive effects of a new software.

“They give you four hours to put together your presentation, and the time goes by very quickly,” Moler said, “so it was stressful. You had to quickly pick and choose the case study

materials that you thought [were] relevant.”

“Due to the magnitude of the event and the diversity of [the] audience that was presented to the competition (undergrad, masters, and Ph.D.), there is a great pressure to perform well, because we all are solving the same problem with different methods, for a limited time,” Zavala said.

Rajo, who participated in a similar competition before as an undergraduate student, said the main difference was that, as graduate students, the team had the ability to use more information, resources, and more complex tools to solve their case.

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# Greetings from the Department Head

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Dear friends:

It's been a busy start this fall semester, but with almost 300 undergraduates and 70 graduate students, Conner Hall is buzzing with activity. As usual, we have some important information to share with you in this newsletter.

The 32nd annual J.W. Fanning lecture is almost here! This year's speaker is Dr. Jayson Lusk from Oklahoma State University's Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics. His lecture will be titled "Consumer Trends and Impacts on the Future Food System," and we are greatly looking forward to hearing from him. Following the lecture, we will have a luncheon at which we will present the J.W. Fanning Distinguished Professional and Young Professional awards.

Additionally, we would like to extend a warm welcome to three new faculty members: Ellen McCullough, Adam Rabinowitz and Levi Russell. Be sure to learn about them in upcoming newsletters, and be sure to read about the work our current faculty and students are doing in the Faculty Spotlight and Student Spotlight sections.

Again, I would like to encourage all of our alumni to keep in touch with us. Please consider sharing updates about changes in your life or career so that we can print them in the newsletter.

Sincerely,



Octavio Ramirez

## Case study competition (continued)

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Moler said he was interested in the competition because he enjoys doing case studies in class and thinks they're a great way to practice competition in the workplace. "Another great gain was the networking; we met a lot of people that could be important contacts in our professional career."

"It also exposed me to a different country," he said, "and I was able to learn more about their culture. Denmark has to be more efficient with their resources because they don't have as much land area to utilize."

In addition to competing at the conference, the students also got to experience Danish culture when a Danish couple hosted them for dinner one night and college students in Aarhus gave them a tour. Rajo's favorite part of the trip was learning about Danish traditions and culture, as well as meeting people from different universities around the world. Her favorite part of the trip was having the opportunity to meet people from all over the world who are also interested in the development of agribusiness, while also testing the knowledge she has acquired in UGA's master's program.

"It makes me feel more confident about myself in solving real life problems," Rajo said. Though UGA's team didn't win the competition, Zavala said they were satisfied with their performance and their presentation to the judges.

# Faculty Spotlight

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## Dr. Nick Magnan

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2016 has been a busy time for Dr. Nicholas Magnan and his Ph.D. student William Thompson. Both traveled to Nepal to work on a project with Heifer International, an organization dedicated to providing poor households with a path out of poverty. The project is based around productive asset transfers and the role they play in the goals of organizations such as Heifer.

“NGOs devote massive levels of resources to them, and they are very popular with donors. In addition, the theory behind asset transfers and poverty dynamics seems pretty sound on paper,” Thompson said.

“At the center of the conversation was that there is very little rigorous evidence to whether these types of programs work,” Magnan added. “My colleague Sarah Janzen at Montana State [University] and Will wanted to conduct an evaluation to investigate if one such program works and how.”

Their project in Nepal, supported by the United States Agency for International Development Feed the Future BASIS Assets and Markets Innovation Lab, began in early 2014.

Alongside Janzen, research partners in Nepal and NGO partners at Heifer, Magnan and Thompson developed a framework for the project. Within weeks of receiving funding, provided by the United States Agency for International Development Feed the Future BASIS Assets and Markets Innovation Lab,



Nick Magnan in Nepal. (Photo credit: Pranaya Sthapit)

Thompson was headed for Nepal.

The project with Heifer is an evaluation of the organization’s work in Nepal. “Heifer is a huge international NGO, the originator of the livestock transfer model of poverty alleviation,” Thompson said.

“Their belief is that by enhancing a poor household’s bundle of productive assets through a gift of livestock, technical trainings, and improving social capital they can provide just the push needed to get these households on a sustainable pathway out of poverty. Our project applies rigorous experimental methods to precisely identify the overall effects of the Heifer program and the mechanisms by which it

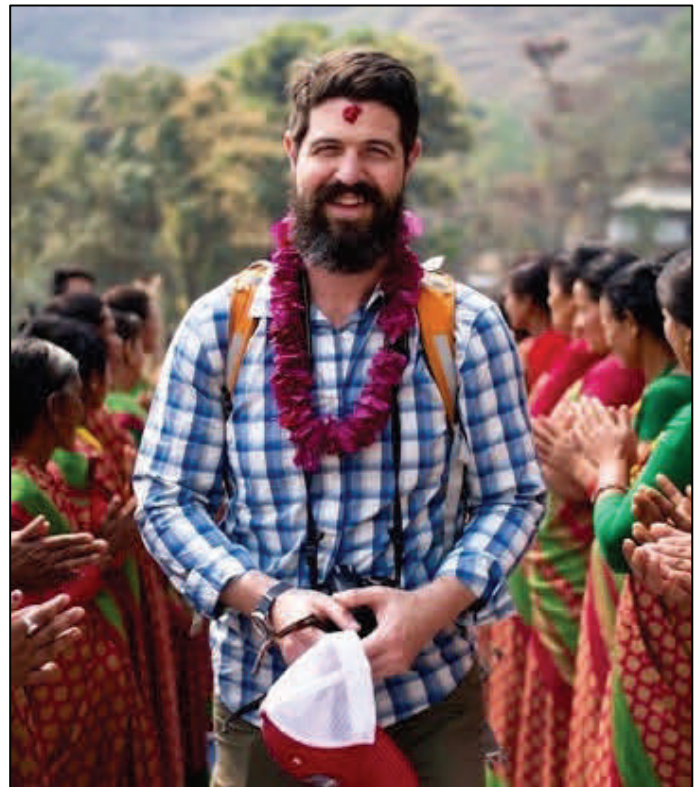
works.”

The crux of Heifer’s program is that the initial beneficiaries “pass on the gift” of livestock and training to another family in need. Magnan and Thompson’s project evaluates not only the program’s effect on those initial beneficiaries, but also on those who receive the gift.

In a related project, the team is working with the International Food Policy Research Institute to develop their Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index by incorporating their surveys into each other. The 2015 earthquake in Nepal also gave them an opportunity to study the effects of natural disasters on a vulnerable population.

Thompson hopes that the final results from the research “contribute to our understanding of the nature of poverty: how households fall into it, how they climb out, and what sorts of policies can help to reduce it.”

Magnan’s goals are similar. “I hope to learn more about if and how livestock transfer



William Thompson in Nepal. Photo credit: Pranaya Sthapit

programs can help generate income, increase women’s empowerment, and improve nutrition for women and children,” he said. “I’m especially interested in the effectiveness of the ‘pass the gift’ model, which makes these types of programs appealing for their self-propagating nature.”

To learn more about Heifer and their work in Nepal, visit [www.heifernepal.org](http://www.heifernepal.org), and to learn more about the BASIS AMA Innovation Lab, visit [basis.ucdavis.edu](http://basis.ucdavis.edu).



Photo credit: Pranaya Sthapit

# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Guy Hancock, AAE Senior  
Class of 2017

Summer 2016 fulfilled a long-time dream for Agricultural and Applied Economics major Guy Hancock. Since middle school, he had been interested in agricultural policy, and thanks to a congressional fellowship, he was finally able to spend twelve weeks immersed in politics in the office of Senator David Perdue.

Early in the spring semester, Hancock submitted an online application with answers to various essay questions, a writing sample and references. A few weeks later, he was notified that he had been selected for an interview by representatives from congressional offices selecting fellows.

“When I was notified that I had been selected to be a fellow, it was a great feeling to know that an opportunity I had hoped to have for years would become reality,” Hancock said.

While the Senate was in session, Hancock kept busy attending hearings and briefings, but the legislative assistant and correspondent he worked with ensured he was able to work on issues relevant to his interests and background. When the Senate was not in session, the office had a slightly slower pace, but still enough to keep him busy with basic office duties and getting to know more of Senator Perdue’s staff.

“My entire fellowship was such a great experience and it would be impossible to declare one experience as my most memorable,” Hancock said. “However, a few of my major highlights were learning about the enormous effort that



Guy Hancock in Washington, D.C.

goes into even the smallest issues, hearing both sides of agricultural issues in hearings and briefings, and meeting with Senator Perdue.”

He added that, through this fellowship, he learned more about agricultural policy than he ever could have imagined, and wholeheartedly endorsed it to any student who was considering applying for one.

“Being selected to be a fellow in Senator David Perdue’s office was one of the most significant professional and educational opportunities I have ever been afforded,” he said. “I would highly recommend any student who has a keen interest in policy and agriculture to apply for the Congressional Fellowship.”

# J.W. Fanning

## Lecture



The 32nd annual J. W. Fanning lecture will be on **November 9, 2016** at the Georgia Center for Continuing Education. We are honored to have **Dr. Jayson Lusk** from the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics at Oklahoma State University as this year's speaker. His lecture is entitled "**Consumer Trends and Impacts on the Future Food System.**"

Dr. Lusk earned his Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from Kansas State University and is currently Regents Professor and Willard Sparks Endowed Chair of the Department of Agricultural Economics at OSU. He has also been an AAEA Fellow and a Samuel Roberts Noble Distinguished Fellow with the Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs since 2013. In 2011, Dr. Lusk worked in Paris as a visiting researcher at the French National Institute for Agricultural Research on a fellowship from the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development. He has been published in *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal* and more.

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**All events will take place at the Georgia Center for Continuing Education.**

**8:30 a.m.** — Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia Board Meeting  
Craig Boardroom

**10:00 a.m.** — Registration and Refreshments  
Pecan Tree Galleria

**10:30 a.m.** — J.W. Fanning Lecture  
Masters Hall

*Welcome*

*Introduction of Speaker:* Octavio Ramirez, Head and Professor,  
Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, UGA

*Lecture:* Dr. Jayson Lusk

**12:00 noon** — Luncheon  
Magnolia Ballroom

*Presentation of J.W. Fanning Professional Awards:* Bryan Tolar,  
President of Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia

**1:30 p.m.** — Adjourn

**The cost of the luncheon is \$30. There is no cost for attending the lecture only.**

# 32nd Annual J.W. Fanning Lecture & Luncheon Registration

November 9, 2015

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**REGISTRATION:** Lecture attendance is free. A registration fee of \$30 is required for the luncheon. Please register no later than October 28, 2016 to reserve your seat at the luncheon. Make check payable to the **Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia** and return with the form below.

I plan to attend the lecture and luncheon \_\_\_\_\_ Number of attendees: \_\_\_\_\_

I plan to attend the lecture only \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

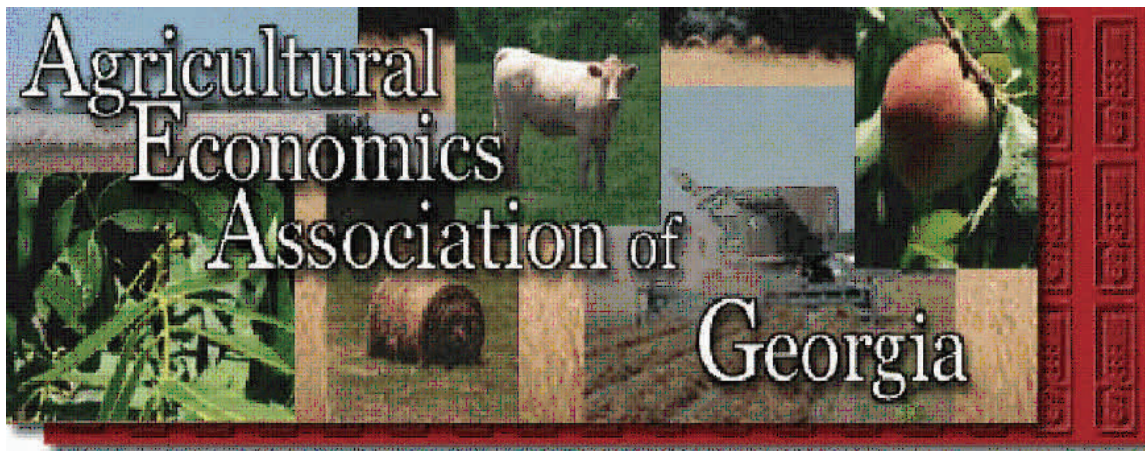
ZIP code: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return all forms to the **Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia, Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, 303 Conner Hall, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602-7509**. You may call Emily Clance at **706-542-0763** (email [eclance@uga.edu](mailto:eclance@uga.edu)) or Jo Anne Norris at **706-542-2481** to confirm your reservation.

# Department Publications

- K. Sardana, **J.C. Bergstrom** and J.M. Bowker. "Valuing Setting-Based Recreation for Selected Visitors to National Forests in the Southern United States". *Journal of Environmental Economics*, 2016 (forthcoming).
- Hanson, J.L., M. McCullough and **J. Berning**. 2016. "New west, brew west: Home brewing an industry in the west," *Journal of the West*
- Zaffou, M. and **B. Campbell**. 2016. "Consumer Preference and Willingness to Pay for Local Labelling and Retail Outlet of Azaleas." *HortScience* 51(8):1026-1030.
- Sheremenko, G., **C.L. Escalante**, and **W. Florkowski**. "Financial Sustainability and Poverty Outreach: The Case of Microfinance Institutions in Eastern Europe and Central Asia." *European Journal of Development Research*, Available online at <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/ejdr.2016.12>; Forthcoming in print in 2016.
- Li, X. and **C.L. Escalante**. "Determinants of Financial and Temporal Endurance of Commercial Banks during the Late 2000s Recession: A Split Population Duration Analysis of Bank Failures." *Journal of Applied Finance and Banking*, 6,4 (2016):
- Escalante, C.L.**, Y. Wu, and X. Li. "Organic Farms' Seasonal Farm Labor Sourcing Strategies in the Pre-"Arizona" Mode of Immigration Control." *Applied Economics Letters*, 23,5 (2016): 341-346.
- Wu, Y., **C.L. Escalante**, and X. Li. "Business Maturity and Technical Efficiency: Evidence from Chinese and Indian Microfinance Institutions". *Enterprise Development and Microfinance*. 27,2 (2016):97-114.
- Ahmadiani, M., C. Li, Y. Liu, **E.G. Fonsah**, C. M. Bliss, B. V. Brodbeck and P. C. Andersen (2016). "Profitability of Organic Vegetable Production via Sod Based Rotation and Conventional Versus Strip Tillage in the Southern Coastal Plain", *Sustainable Agriculture Research*, Vol. 5 (4).
- Boyhan, G., J. Gaskin, E. Little, **E.G. Fonsah**, and S. Stone (2016). "Evaluation of Cool Season Vegetable Rotations in Organic Production". *HORTTECH-03443* (forthcoming)
- Sathya Gopalakrishnan, **Craig E. Landry**, Martin Smith, and John C. Whitehead. 2016. "Economics of Coastal Erosion and Adaptation to Sea Level Rise" *Annual Review of Resource Economics* 8: 13.1-13.21.
- Craig E. Landry**, Alyson R. Lewis, Haiyong Liu, and Hans Vogelsong. 2016. "Economic Value and Economic Impact of Visitation to Cape Hatteras National Seashore: Addressing Onsite Sampling" *Marine Resource Economics* 31(3): 301-22.
- McCullough, Ellen B.** (in press). "Labor Productivity and Employment Gaps in Sub-Saharan Africa", *Food Policy*
- Zheng, Y., **C. Zhen**, D. Dench, and J.M. Nonnemaker. "U.S. Demand for Tobacco Products in a System Framework." *Health Economics* in press.





As fellow graduates from the Agricultural and Applied Economics Department of the University of Georgia, we invite you to join the Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia. The investment is nominal, but the rewards and mission are great. It is our hope that most of you will want to support the organization that promotes our industry and field of education.

The Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia (AEAG) was established in 1976.

The goals of the Association are:

- ◆ To provide opportunities for the professional improvement of people interested in the field of agricultural economics
- ◆ To provide a forum for the discussion of economic problems and issues of mutual interest to people working in agriculture, agribusiness, and related fields
- ◆ To recommend solutions to economic problems facing Georgia's agriculture

Agricultural economics is involved in all sectors of our economy. The opportunities are greater now than ever before. We must recruit more students and better support agricultural economists if we are to meet the challenges for further application of agricultural economics to farm, resource, environmental, and agribusiness problems.

The AEAG board has new goals to support students in agricultural and applied economics as well as high school students who have yet to make decisions about college. We need your support to be able to carry out those goals to assist the future leaders in our field.

- ◆ AEAG membership offers benefits through the following:
- ◆ *Journal of Agribusiness*
- ◆ AEAG newsletter
- ◆ J.W. Fanning lecture
- ◆ Recognition for career accomplishments
- ◆ Enhanced educational opportunities for students in agricultural economics

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In addition, AEAG enjoys an active relationship with the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics at the University of Georgia. The activities of the association provide occasions for interaction among AEAG members, faculty and students. This interaction provides students and professionals important opportunities to network for the purpose of future career connections and the sharing of information and knowledge.

Below you will find an application for membership. Lifetime memberships are also available. If you would like to know more about AEAG, visit the AEAG website at <http://aeag.uga.edu>.

**Yes, I would like to join the Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check one:**

- Student Member (\$10)
- Individual Member (\$25)
- Library/Institutional Member (\$35)
- Corporate Member (\$150)
- Individual Lifetime Member (\$250)
- Corporate Lifetime Member (\$1000)

Please send your membership application and dues to the following address:

Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia  
303 Conner Hall  
University of Georgia  
Athens, GA 30602-7509

For more information, call 706-542-0763 or visit <http://aeag.uga.edu>.