

Agricultural and Applied Economics

The University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

AEAG professor receives grant from Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation



In 2017 the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the UK Department for International Development announced a competitive call for proposals addressing critical gaps in the evidence base linking agriculture with nutrition. AEAG professor Ellen McCullough began brainstorming proposals to submit and came to develop a project with fellow faculty member Chen Zhen that joined Zhen’s expertise in modeling food demand systems with McCullough’s interest in leveraging agricultural research and development investments for improved food security in developing countries.

McCullough pursued this project because

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of her interest in how agriculture can lead to reduced poverty and hunger, such as through lower food prices for consumers. “However,” she added, “it is also true that food demand patterns are incredibly complex, with consumers responding to many different price signals and budget constraints. I’ve been curious about whether it might be possible to magnify the impacts of crop and livestock productivity investments if we incorporated a better understanding of consumer demand into the priority setting process.”

What makes the project unique is that, to McCullough and Zhen’s knowledge, no large micronutrient demand system model has been paired with crop and livestock supply systems to



Greetings from the Department Head

Dear friends:

You are cordially invited to attend our 17th annual Conner Connects banquet on April 24th at 6:30 p.m. in the Garden Club Terrace Room at the State Botanical Gardens in Athens, GA. We will be recognizing and presenting awards to a number of students and faculty and staff members while enjoying a delicious meal together. Please take advantage of this opportunity to meet our brightest students and visit with faculty, staff and other alumni.

If you are interested in attending this event, please contact Emily Clance at eclance@uga.edu or use the form included in this newsletter.

I would also like to highlight some of our faculty members. Levi Russell received the 2017 Southern Risk Management Education Center Outstanding Outreach Award. Additionally, I would like to warmly welcome new faculty member to the department, Yangxuan Liu. She is our Extension Specialist in Cotton Economics and

will be based on our Tifton campus. Her interests include agricultural risk management, finance, big data and precision agriculture and production agriculture.

Once 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 we can include them in this newsletter.

As well, if it is within your means, I hope that you will consider donating to one of the departmental scholarship funds listed at the end of this newsletter. Scholarships are more important than ever, given the rising cost of a college education. All the donations to these funds are tax-deductible and are used to provide scholarships to deserving students.

Sincerely,

Octavio Ramirez

Gates Foundation Grant (cont.)

prioritize the products whose productivity enhancement would have the greatest impact on diet quality.

“We hope to develop a new tool that will help policymakers and the agricultural R&D community to consider a food systems demand perspective in their priority setting,” McCullough said. “Our hope is that this will guide decision makers towards interventions that improve the quality of consumers’ diets.”

About a month after their initial submission, the foundation invited McCullough and

Zhen to submit a full proposal and, after revisions, their proposal was selected to receive a grant. McCullough, Zhen and their Ph.D. students will be working with collaborators at the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) and the University of California at Davis to pursue the project’s goals.

“With funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the UK Department for International Development, the *Harnessing Demand Systems* project will address a gap in holistic and systematic understanding of food demand,” McCullough said.

Faculty Spotlight

Adam Rabinowitz



Dr. Adam Rabinowitz comes to UGA from the University of Connecticut, where he was an Assistant Research Professor and taught undergraduate courses in Marketing and Policy. Additionally, he also had an active research and extension program that focused on the dairy industry and food security.

At UGA, he is once again teaching an undergraduate course, this one in farm management, as well as advising undergraduate and graduate students. In his role as state specialist focused on the economics of peanuts and small grains, Rabinowitz will be developing an extension program that includes outreach to county agents and stakeholders as well as

engaging in applied research. Primarily, his research interests lie in marketing, policy and producer and consumer behavior, and he takes a holistic approach to considering all aspects of the supply chain.

Rabinowitz is excited to be working at the flagship land grant university in Georgia and with faculty so dedicated to research with real-world implications. “I was also particularly impressed by the commitment the state has shown in backing CAES and the college administration has shown in the recent hiring’s within the Department of Agriculture and Applied Economics,” he added. “I was also drawn to the opportunity to work with the peanut industry that means so much to the State of Georgia and our nation.”

Rabinowitz prides himself on returning to college and completing his undergraduate degree after having taken a few years off. “From there,” he said, “I continued through graduate school to get my Masters and Ph.D.” He also takes great pride in his ability to offer unbiased scientific applied research that is relevant to the needs of stakeholders in the community or industry where he is focused.

Rabinowitz has been in the Agricultural and Applied Economics Department at UGA since Fall 2016.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Lizzy Isgar, FIMA Major
Class of 2018

When she decided to attend UGA in 2014, Lizzy Isgar became the first in her family to venture to the southeastern United States for college. In fact, the first time she ever visited the state of Georgia was to tour UGA, but she knew immediately it would be her home. Thanks to earning an academic scholarship, she was able to move from Los Angeles to Athens, where she's become an active participant in the Ag Econ department and across campus.

Isgar has served as the president of the Georgia Recruitment Team in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, a member of both the UGA Club Tennis Team and of the Gamma Phi Beta sorority and a student liaison for UGA Food Services. She also has several internships under her belt, including a corporate marketing internship for Wolfgang Puck Catering and



her current internship in merchandising for US Foods. With her degree in Food Marketing and Administration, she aims to revolutionize the way people consume food through innovation in agricultural procurement, supply chains and marketing.

In pursuit of her goals, Isgar will be attending graduate school at Duke University's Fuqua School of Business to earn her master's degree in management studies. She already has experience as an entrepreneur with her business, Fresco Restaurant Reservations, which she started with Computer Science major Antonio Rodriguez as part of the 2017 FABricate competition. Fresco, an iPhone app, finds restaurants with current seating available to accommodate the user's party based on their GPS location, reserves a table for them and gives them 20 minutes to arrive at the restaurant before the reservation expires. The app won the competition in its category as well as the People's Choice category.

Isgar's FABricate team was sponsored by AAE professor Dr. Joshua Berning, whom she also names as the most influential professor she's had during her time at UGA. In her First-Year Odyssey Seminar, he introduced her to the field of food business and to her major. Berning also served as her advisor for experiential learning opportunities such as a trip to the New York Produce Show and Conference in New York City.

Isgar moved cross-country to attend UGA and she firmly believes it was the best decision she ever made. She loves Athens and its food and music, and UGA has provided her with the skill set she needs to pursue her dreams.



Conner Connects

The members of the Agricultural and Environmental Economics Club and the AEC Graduate Student Association cordially invite you to join us for our 17th annual Conner Connects banquet.

**Tuesday April 24, 2018
6:30 p.m.
Garden Club Terrace Room
The State Botanical Gardens of Georgia
Athens, GA**

The cost is \$17 for students and \$20 for non-students. Please RSVP by April 13. If you have any questions about the banquet, please call 706-542-0763 or email eclance@uga.edu.



Conner Connects Registration

Due by April 13

Student tickets (\$17): _____ Non-student tickets (\$20): _____

Contribution to help defray the department's contribution for student tickets: _____

Guests' names:

Will any guests require a vegetarian meal? Yes (number): _____ No: _____

Please make checks payable to the Ag Econ Club. Mail to: Conner Connects Registration, 303 Conner Hall, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602-7509. Call: 706-542-0763. Email: eclance@uga.edu.

Department Publications

Angioloni, Simone, Zarylbeck Kudabaev, **Glenn C. W. Ames**, and Michael Wetzstein, "Household Allocation of Microfinance Credit in Kyrgyzstan," *Post-Communist Economies*, Published online October 25, 2017. Available online at: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14631377.2017.1361691?scroll=top&needAccess=true>

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Isengildina-Massa, O., **B. Karali**, and S.H. Irwin, "Do Markets Correct for Smoothing in USDA Crop Production Forecasts? Evidence from Private Analysts and Futures Prices," *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*, 39:559-583 (2017).

Sathya Gopalakrishnan, **Craig E. Landry**, and Martin Smith. 2017. "Climate Change Adaptation in Coastal Environments: Modeling Challenges for Resource and Environmental Economists" *Review of Environmental Economics and Policy*. doi.org/10.1093/reep/rex020

Travis J. Lybbert, **Nicholas Magnan**, David J. Spielman, Anil K. Bhargava, and Kajal Gulati, "Targeting Technology to Increase Smallholder Profits and Conserve Resources: Experimental Provision of Laser Land-Leveling Services to Indian Farmers," *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 66, no. 2 (January 2018): 265-306. <https://doi.org/10.1086/695284>

Adam Rabinowitz. "Peanuts", *2018 Georgia Ag Forecast*. Feb. 2018. pp. 12-13.

Adam Rabinowitz. "Corn, Wheat and Soybeans", *2018 Georgia Ag Forecast*. Feb. 2018. pp. 25-26.

Adam Rabinowitz, **Amanda Smith** and Don Shurley. "Estimated Comparative Row Crop Net Returns for 2018", *2018 Georgia Ag Forecast*. Feb. 2018. pp. 14-16.

Levi A. Russell, Brian C. Briggeman, Allen M. Featherstone, (2017) "Financial leverage and agency costs in agricultural cooperatives", *Agricultural Finance Review*, Vol. 77 Issue: 2, pp.312-323, <https://doi.org/10.1108/AFR-09-2016-0074>

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Department Scholarships

Now more than ever, scholarships are vital to our students in the face of rising education costs. If you have the means, please consider donating to our scholarship fund by clicking the button below or visiting <https://gail.uga.edu/commit?des=71948003>. All donations will go to one of our five scholarships:

- **Georgia Farm Credit Associations Scholarship**

Georgia Farm Credit Scholarships were established to recognize and assist four outstanding undergraduates enrolled in the department, on the basis of academic merit, leadership potential and character with consideration given to financial need for meritorious candidates.



[Click here
to donate!](https://gail.uga.edu/commit?des=71948003)

- **John William Firor, Sr. Scholarship**

Professor John William Firor's leadership essentially developed the Department of Agricultural Economics at UGA in the 1920s. A number of years ago, the children of the late J. William Firor, with a great deal of assistance from former students and associates of Professor Firor, established a scholarship in his name. The scholarship is awarded to deserving students in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics.

- **Roy Estes Proctor Scholarship**

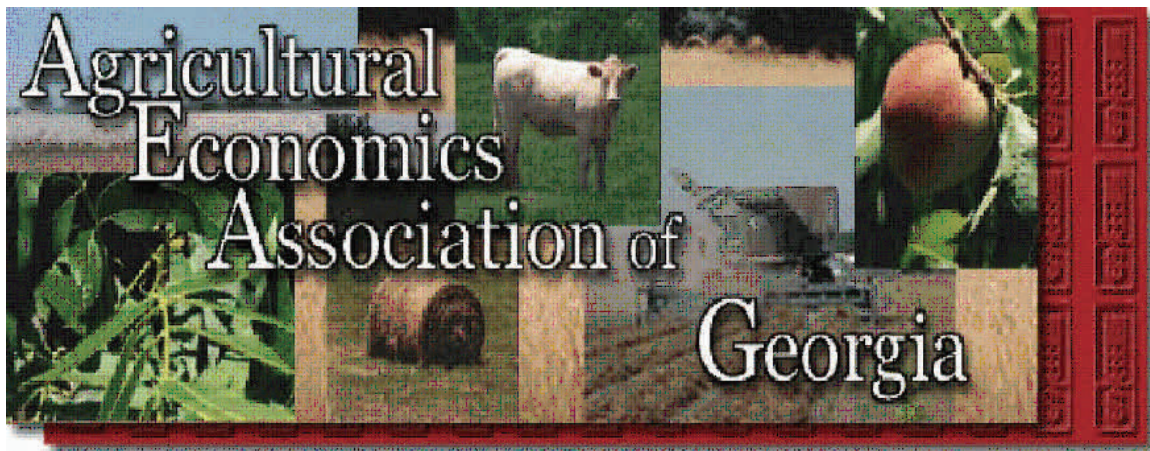
Dr. Roy E. Proctor was Head of the Agricultural Economics Department from 1951-1956. He was also regarded as an outstanding teacher. The purpose of the Roy E. Proctor Scholarship is to honor Dr. Proctor's dedication to teaching and his contributions to agricultural economics by providing a scholarship to worthy undergraduates in the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics. The scholarship provides encouragement to an academically successful student who needs some financial assistance to enhance the educational process.

- **Thomas L. Frazier Scholarship**

Professor Tom Frazier received his undergraduate and Master's Degrees in agricultural economics at UGA. He joined the department in 1953 and excelled in the classroom, but gave up teaching to become Assistant Director of Resident Instruction for the College of Agriculture until he retired in 1981. The Thomas L. Frazier Fund provides at least one deserving student per year a scholarship based on financial need, scholarship and extracurricular activities.

- **Tate Brookins Memorial Endowment**

The Tate Brookins Scholarship Fund was established by Frank and Ann Brookins to honor their son Tate, who passed away in 1998. Tate was a 1994 graduate with a BSA in agricultural economics. The scholarship is awarded based on financial need, scholarship and extracurricular activities.



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

(continued)

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://www.caes.uga.edu/departments/ag-econ/about/agricultural-economics-association-of-georgia.html>.

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, visit <http://www.caes.uga.edu/departments/ag-econ/about/agricultural-economics-association-of-georgia.html>.