



## Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics

College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences  
The University of Georgia

*Alumni Newsletter*

*Summer, 2008*

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### **Agricultural and Applied Economics Welcomes New Department Head**

**Dr. Octavio A. Ramírez** began his work as Head of the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics at the University of Georgia on June 1, 2008. He comes to UGA from New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, New Mexico where he was Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Agricultural Business. Before that, he served as an associate professor of agricultural and applied economics at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas.

The department is hosting a reception to welcome Dr. Ramírez on July 10, 2008 at 3:00 p.m. in the lobby of Conner Hall. Departmental alumni are invited. If you plan to attend, please R.S.V.P. to Audrey Hudson at 706-542-0763 by June 26.



### **Greetings from the Department Head**

Dear Friends:

It is a pleasure to be in touch with you for the first time through this newsletter. I am elated to assume the responsibility of leading the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics (AAEC) here at the University of Georgia (UGA). It is an honor to become a part of this great university and to serve in the administration of the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES). Without a doubt, UGA and CAES enjoy a reputation of academic excellence across the state, as well as nationally and internationally.

I am also glad to report that the AAEC Department is home to outstanding teaching, research and extension programs led by faculty members whose scholarly qualifications are at par with the very best in the nation. Our undergraduate and graduate students are sought by industry at highly competitive salaries. Our research programs address critical state needs with unbending academic rigor. Therefore, the results of this research are often published in prestigious scientific journals which ensure their soundness. Our extension programs are recognized for their responsiveness to the needs of the state's food and agribusiness industry, consumers, policy makers, natural resource and environmental concerns, and the general citizenry.

Yet, we will continue striving to improve the quality, relevance and breadth of our programs. We are determined to serve the state of Georgia by offering the very best agribusiness and resource & environmental economics/policy teaching, research and extension programs in the nation. In future issues of this newsletter, I will keep you updated on our progress in this path to uncompromising excellence.

### **ConnerConnects, 2008**

The annual Conner Connects Banquet was held on April 15, 2008 at the State Botanical Gardens Georgia Visitors Center in Athens, Georgia. The awards ceremony celebrated accomplishments of graduate and undergraduate students and their appreciation of faculty and staff members. The speaker was Ally Barnes, a 2006 graduate who is now the Southeastern Claims Manager for the Crop Division of Great American Insurance Company. The banquet offered a wonderful opportunity for college administration, alumni, students, parents, faculty, staff, and friends to become better acquainted and enjoy a delicious meal together.

### **Student News**

The following awards were presented to students at the ConnerConnects Banquet and Awards Ceremony:

#### ***Graduate Student Awards:***



**Uthra Raghunathan** was presented the 2008 Claudia DePalma Davis Outstanding M.S. Student Award. Uthra is from Austin, Texas, and she received a B.A. in history and economics from the University of Texas at Austin. Before coming to UGA, she spent two years in the Peace Corps working in Kingston, Jamaica.

**Doris Sande** was presented the 2008 Outstanding Ph.D. Student Award. Doris is from Western Province, Kenya. She received a B.S. in agriculture from the University of Nairobi, Kenya and an M.S. in agricultural economics from UGA. She has worked as a high school agriculture teacher and as an extension officer on a United Nations Dairy Project.



**Zibin Zhang** was presented the 2008 Rod Ziemer Outstanding Ph.D. Paper Award for “Mitigating Volatile U.S. Gasoline Prices and Internalizing External Costs: A Win-Win Fuel Portfolio.” Zibin is from Lianyungang, Jiangsu Province, China. He received an M.S. in management science from Hohai University, Nanjing, China.



**Joseph N. Price** was presented the 2008 Outstanding M.S. Paper Award for “Identity Preservation Markets: Estimating Non-GM Soybeans and Organic Wheat Premiums.” Joseph is from St. James, Missouri. He received a B.A. in international studies with a minor in business administration from the University of South Carolina. Before joining the department’s M.S. program, he worked as manager of Round River Farms and as a computer consultant in Columbia, SC.



***Undergraduate Student Awards:***

**Jason Mock** was presented the 2008 Outstanding Senior in Agricultural and Applied Economics Award. Jason is from Dalton, Georgia.



**Bo Faircloth** was presented the 2008 Outstanding Senior in Agribusiness Award. Bo is from Camilla, Georgia.



**Andrew Menaquale** was presented the 2008 Outstanding Senior in Environmental Economics and Management Award. He is from Atlanta, Georgia.



**Betsy MacMillan** was presented the 2008 Outstanding Senior Leadership Award. She is from Stockbridge, Georgia.

***Congressional Agricultural Fellowships Awarded for the Summer of 2008:***



**Ward Black**, a third year agricultural economics major from Commerce, GA, will work in the office of Senator Saxby Chambliss.



**Shannon Yee**, a fourth year environmental economics and management major from Alpharetta, GA, will work in the office of Congressman Jim Marshall.

**Brooke Heinz**, a third year environmental economics and management major from Atlanta, GA, will work in the office of Senator Johnny Isakson

***Scholarship Recipients:***

**Kimberly Darnton**, a fourth year agricultural economics major from Henderson, NV, is the recipient of the \$1500 Ag Georgia Farm Credit Association Scholarship.



**Zachary Taylor Murphy**, a fourth year agribusiness major from Moultrie, GA, is the recipient of the \$1500 Ag Georgia Farm Credit Association Scholarship.



**Matthew O'Meara**, an incoming freshman from Powder Springs, GA majoring in environmental economics and management, is the recipient of the \$1500 Ag Georgia Farm Credit Association Scholarship.

**Katie Ann Williams**, a second year agribusiness major from Madison, GA, is the recipient of the \$1500 Ag Georgia Farm Credit Association Scholarship.



**Mary Alice Jasperse**, a first year environmental economics and management major from Jasper, GA, is the recipient of the \$1500 Firor Memorial Scholarship.



**Shannon Yee**, is the recipient of the \$1500 Firor Memorial Scholarship.



**Preston Cox**, a fourth year environmental economics and management major from Marietta, GA, is the recipient of the \$2000 Proctor Memorial Scholarship.



**Kayla Calhoun**, a second year environmental economics and management major from Colquitt, GA, is the recipient of the \$2000 Tate Brookins Scholarship.

**Ashley Dronenburg**, a third year environmental economics and management major from Lawrenceville, GA, is the recipient of the \$2000 Tate Brookins Scholarship.

**Analise Peters**, a third year environmental economics and management major from Stone Mountain, GA, is the recipient of the \$2000 Tate Brookins Scholarship.

**Ward Black**, a third year agricultural economics major from Commerce, GA, is the recipient of the \$1500 Georgia Cooperative Council Scholarship.

### **Faculty News**



**Dr. Jim Epperson** was presented the 2008 Outstanding Faculty Member Award by the Agricultural and Environmental Economics Club.



**Dr. Michael Wetzstein** was presented the 2008 Outstanding Faculty Member Award by the Graduate Student Association.

**Dr. Greg Fonsah** was promoted to associate professor and awarded tenure.



**Dr. Curtis Lacy** was promoted to associate professor and awarded tenure.



**Dr. Jeffrey Mullen** was promoted to associate professor and awarded tenure.



**Dr. Nathan Smith** was promoted to associate professor and awarded tenure.



### **Staff Awards**

**Jo Anne Norris** was presented the 2008 Outstanding Staff Member Award by the Agricultural and Environmental Economics Club.



**Donna Ross** was presented the 2008 Outstanding Staff Member Award by the Graduate Student Association.



### Alumni News

**Chip Dorminy, III** (BSA in agricultural economics in 1972) was elected to the post of vice-chairman of the CBC holding company, which is the parent corporation of Community Banking Company of Fitzgerald. Chip is a career farmer who is active in local, state, and national farm organizations. He serves on the boards of both ABAC and East Central Technical College. He is director of the Georgia Peanut Producers Association and the Georgia Forestry Association and is a trustee of the Georgia Agrirama.

**Patricia Norris** (BSA in agricultural economics in 1982) was named the first holder of the Guyer-Seevers Chair in Natural Resources Conservation at Michigan State University. The Chair was created to address critical issues in the use and conservation of Michigan's natural resources, with an emphasis on stakeholder involvement and teaching students to take leadership roles in fields involving natural resources.

**Rodney Fowler** (BSA in agribusiness in 1999) joined AgSouth Farm Credit in Statesboro as a commercial lending officer. He is a Georgia AgriLeaders graduate and serves on the board of directors of the Georgia Crop Production Alliance.

**Bo Warren** (BSA in agribusiness in 1995) works in state and local government affairs with the Monsanto Company. He manages all government affairs functions within a 10-state area and works with state and local legislative and regulatory officials on agricultural, chemical, plant biotechnology and manufacturing issues. After being based in

Washington, D.C. for two and a half years, he will relocate back to Georgia in the same position this year.

**Elliott Marsh** (BSA in agricultural and applied economics in 2002) was elected to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia and is also a participant in the 2008 class of Georgia Agri-Leaders Forum. He is the Agribusiness Instructor at Ogeechee Technical College in Statesboro.

### Change in Newsletter Delivery



Due to the high cost of mailing the Alumni Newsletters through the U.S. Postal Service, the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics is phasing out the physical mailing of newsletters. We will begin emailing the newsletters once we have acquired the email addresses of our alumni. We ask that each of you, who have not done so already, send your email address to [aaecnews@uga.edu](mailto:aaecnews@uga.edu) and in the subject line please enter "Newsletter" so that we can add your name to our email list. We will continue to post the newsletters on the web at:

<http://www.caes.uga.edu/departments/agecon/newsletters/newsletters.html>.

If you do not have access to a computer and prefer to have your newsletters mailed to you, please fill out the form below and return it to Audrey Hudson, Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, UGA, 303 Conner Hall, Athens, GA 30602-7509.

**Request to Have Alumni Newsletter Sent Via US Mail**



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Degree \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

**Outstanding Agricultural Economist Awards—Now Accepting Nominations**



The Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia (AEAG) presents yearly awards to agricultural economists who have demonstrated outstanding achievement and leadership on a community, state, national, or international level. Candidacy is limited to agricultural economists operating in Georgia and/or graduates of a degree program offered by the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics at the University of Georgia.

There are two awards which are based on the number of years of experience. The *J. W. Fanning Distinguished Young Professional Award* is presented to those with ten years or less of professional experience. The *J. W. Fanning Distinguished Professional Award* is presented to those with more than ten years of professional experience.

Nominations for the awards are accepted from anyone. AEAG members, faculty, alumni, students and agricultural economists in the state are encouraged to nominate qualified candidates for the awards. Also, agricultural economists should feel free to nominate themselves.

The nomination process is simple. Provide a brief description of the nominee's accomplishments, education, work experience, current position, past recognitions and awards, and contact information. Send nominations to the Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia, 303 Conner Hall, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602-7509. The deadline for award nominations is September 15, 2007. AEAG Board members will select award recipients. Both awards will be presented at the luncheon following the annual J. W. Fanning Lecture in November.

## AEAG – Opportunity for Membership



Membership in the Association is open to people sharing a common interest in agricultural economics, agribusiness, and related fields. Membership is by application or invitation by an Association member.

Individual membership in the Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia is \$25 per year and includes a subscription to the Journal of Agribusiness and the AEAG Newsletter as well as attendance at the JW Fanning Lecture. Membership rates for Students and Associates (individuals within three years of graduation) are \$10 per year. The membership rate for libraries and other institutions is \$35 per year. Corporate membership is \$150 per year. Lifetime memberships for Individuals and Corporate Members are \$250 and \$1000, respectively.

Yes, I would like to Join the Agricultural Association of Georgia!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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

Please Check one:

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

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

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

**For more information, call 706-542-0763**

**Opportunity to Support Department**

Please consider making an investment in future agricultural economics and agribusiness leaders of our state and nation by supporting our educational programs. You may specify which fund you want your contribution to support. To support the Agricultural Economics Fund (which supports general departmental activities), Stephen J. Brannen Student Leadership Fund, or Tom Frazier Scholarship Fund, please make checks payable to the Arch Foundation. To support the Wen Williams Scholarship Fund, Evan Brown International Education Fund, William Firor Scholarship Fund, Roy Proctor Scholarship Fund, or Tate Brookins Scholarship Fund, please make checks payable to the UGA Foundation. Mail all checks to 303 Conner Hall, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602-7509.

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**My Contributions to The University of Georgia  
Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics**

Agricultural Economics Improvement Fund  
     (supports general department activities).....\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Stephen J. Brannen Student Leadership Fund.....\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tom Frazier Scholarship Fund.....\$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Wen Williams Scholarship Fund.....\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Evan Brown International Education Fund.....\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 William Firor Memorial Scholarship Fund.....\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Roy Proctor Memorial Scholarship Fund.....\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tate Brookins Scholarship Fund.....\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for your contributions!*