

# Agricultural and Applied Economics

The University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences

## Awards abound in Ag Econ department

From the AAEA to the CAES Alumni Awards, the Agricultural and Applied Economics Department has become home to several award winners over the last few months.

First and foremost, Dr. Ellen McCullough received the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association's Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Award for her dissertation titled "Structural Transformation in Sub-Saharan Africa: Agricultural Productivity, Labor Supply, and Occupational Choice."

First-year Ph.D. student Thomas Woldu Assefa was the lead author on one of the top two papers named by the *Journal of Agribusiness in Developing and Emerging Economies*, titled "Urban food retailing and food prices in Africa: the case of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia."

Dr. Greg Colson was selected to receive the 2018 Early Career Teaching Award from the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. His skill in and dedication to teaching was reinforced by his win of the Graduate Student Association's Outstanding Faculty Award at Conner Connects in April.

Alumnus Dr. Krishna Paudel, an Agricultural Economics Ph.D. program graduate in the class of 1999, was selected as a 2018 CAES Award of Excellence honoree.

Dr. Craig Landry was recognized for his 2008 paper published in the *Journal of Risk and Insurance* titled "Flood Hazards, Insurance Rates, and Amenities: Evidence from the Coastal Housing Market". He and his co-authors will be receiving the Mehr Award from the American Risk and Insurance Association (ARIA) for Best Article in the *Journal of Risk and Insurance* that has stood the test of time.

Finally, extension team members Yangxuan Liu, Don Shurley, Adam N Rabinowitz and Levi Russell presented at the Southern Extension Economics Committee in June in Myrtle Beach, SC.

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# Greetings from the Department Head

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Dear friends:

I hope your summer is going well! With most of our undergraduate students gone for the break, things are quiet here in Conner Hall, but the faculty and I are taking the opportunity to work on our research and with our graduate students. We are greatly looking forward to everyone's return at the beginning of the new academic year in August.

As always, our annual Conner Connects awards banquet in April was a great success! I would like to extend heartfelt congratulations to all of our scholarship recipients and to the winners of our Outstanding Student awards and our Outstanding Faculty and Staff Awards. To learn more, please see the Conner Connects section of the newsletter.

Also congratulations to all of our students who received degrees in May 2018. More than twenty-five of our undergraduates and twelve of our graduate students finished their programs last semester and we wish all of them the very best!

It is my pleasure to announce that we will be holding our annual J.W. Fanning Lecture and Luncheon on November 12th in downtown Athens at the Hilton Garden Inn. Our speaker this year is Dr. Alan Ker, Director of the Institute for the Advanced Study of Food and Agricultural Policy at the University of Guelph, and his lecture is titled "**Economics of Trade Wars.**" We hope you will be able to attend and visit with our faculty, staff, students and guest speaker.

Again, it is a privilege for me to report to you the many accomplishments of our students, faculty, staff and alumni through this newsletter. Please consider sharing your updates with us so that we can write about them in the future.

Sincerely,



Octavio Ramirez  
Department Head and Professor

# Conner Connects

The annual Conner Connects banquet and awards ceremony was held in the Garden Terrace Room at the State Botanical Gardens in Athens on April 24, 2018. Faculty, staff, students, parents and friends enjoyed a delicious meal while celebrating the department's accomplishments and award winners.





Jo Anne Norris, center, winner of the Ag Econ Club and Graduate Student Association's Outstanding Staff Award, with Julian Worley and Amanda Harker Steele.

Amanda Harker Steele and Julian Worley present Dr. Greg Colson, center, with the Graduate Student Association's Outstanding Faculty Award.



Dr. Jeff Mullen presents Amanda Harker Steele with the Rod Ziemer Outstanding Ph.D. Paper Award.





Dr. Octavio Ramirez, center, with winner of the Georgia Farm Credit Scholarship Mason Goolsby, left, and Blake Carter, winner of the Ag Econ Endowment.

Phyllicia Thomas and Victoria Wright, winners of the Firor Memorial Scholarship; Elijah Alexander, winner of the Tom Frazier Memorial Scholarship; Jacqueline Kessler, winner of the Proctor Memorial Scholarship; and Mallory Warren and Nicholas Brown, winners of the Wen Williams Scholarship.



Mollie Cromley, Kayla Imler, Hunter Knapp, Hannah Ross and Tristan Smith, winners of the Tate Brookins Memorial Scholarship.



Dr. Octavio Ramirez and Dr. John Bergstrom with Malik Grace, center, winner of the Inspirational Student Award.



Left: Jacqueline Kessler, president of the Ag Econ Club, presenting Jo Anne Norris with the club's Outstanding Staff Award.



Right: Julian Worley and Amanda Harker Steele, of the Graduate Student Association, presenting Jo Anne Norris with the association's Outstanding Staff Award.



Clockwise: Dr. Terence Centner and Dr. Ben Campbell receive the Ag Econ Club's Outstanding Faculty Member Award; Mona Ahmadiani receives the Outstanding Ph.D. Student Award; Alexis Hedges and Julian Worley receive the Outstanding M.S. Student Award.

# Faculty Spotlight

## Yangxuan Liu

Dr. Yangxuan (Serinna) Liu joined the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics at the University of Georgia's Tifton campus in January 2018 with a focus on economic issues related to cotton production. She received her bachelor's degree in Economics with a minor in Business Administration at the University of Macau in China, and her master's degree and Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics at Purdue University. Before coming to UGA, she worked as an assistant professor in agribusiness at Eastern Kentucky University.

Liu decided to come to UGA in large part because of the department's reputation in extension and in the agribusiness program. "I enjoy working with people and conducting applied research to help farmers," she said. "My research philosophy is a bottom-up approach by talking with farmers to identify the research questions which can address their issues. Working in extension gives me the opportunity to do so."

Liu's research interests are related to evaluating alternative agriculture production systems to improve global food security. Most of her research to date has focused on one particular solution for global food security: precision farming technology. Her research has the potential to help manage the spread of the late blight disease and limit potential losses in the production of tomatoes and potatoes.

Additionally, Liu is an active leader of various organizations, having served on the Purdue



University College of Agriculture Graduate Student Advisory Panel, the executive board of Purdue University Graduate Women in the College of Agriculture, the board of University of Macau (United States) Alumni Association, and various other organizations.

Looking forward, she is also interested in extending her research in conducting economic analysis of production alternatives for cotton in Georgia. Ultimately, she hopes to apply her interdisciplinary knowledge to Georgia and global cotton production in order to improve the agricultural productivity for the world's growing population.



# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

**Angela Nemeth, Agricultural Economics**  
*Class of 1983*

*Article and photo originally printed in the Spring 2018 issue of Southscapes Magazine*

On a near-freezing afternoon in January, just outside Seoul, South Korea, Angela (Broder) Nemeth (BSA – Agricultural Economics, '83) ran the Olympic flame 300 meters — about two-tenths of a mile — toward its final destination at the opening ceremony for the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea. She shared her Olympic relay experience with Southscapes.

**Q: How you were chosen to run in the relay?**

A: I work for Dow as the business communications director for the India, Middle East, Africa and Turkey region, which is based in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. I started in Dow's agricultural business just after graduating from the University of Georgia and transitioned to the core Dow businesses of chemicals and plastics a few years later.

Dow is a Worldwide Olympic Partner and the official chemistry company of the Olympic Games. The company has been a sponsor since 2010 and has conducted a program before each Olympics since to select employees to represent Dow in the Olympic torch relay. For the Pyeongchang Winter Games, 10 Dow employees from around the globe were selected to participate in the Olympic torch relay in South Korea.

**Q: Tell us about the Olympic flame and relay.**

A: The tradition of the Olympic flame is quite



Photo credit: Simon Wadley/Alem International

interesting, and the first-hand experience was amazing. I was surprised to learn that the first torch in the Olympic torch relay comes from a special ceremony in Olympia, Greece, home of the ancient Olympics, months before the opening of the games.

As was the case in ancient times, a parabolic

mirror reflecting the sun's rays is used to light the Olympic flame. It's a pure, natural flame passed from runner to runner to eventually light the large flame to start the games at the opening ceremony. There were two lanterns burning this original flame, kept under lock and key, that were transported by plane from Greece to Seoul. To light the torch each morning of the 100-day Olympic torch run, or if a torch unexpectedly went out, it is lit again using the original flame from one of these lanterns.

The torch relay route covered 2,018 kilometers and crisscrossed South Korea. The relay is well-organized, and each of the 7,500 runners was given a date and time for their portion of the run in advance. The distance that each of us covered was not that long — between 200 to 400 meters — but the process took all day, from morning briefing to wrap-up ceremony in the evening.

**Q: What was it like to run in the Olympic relay?**

A: I was in a group with 20 runners on the route that passed near Seoul on the way to Pyeongchang, about 180 km away in the Taebaek Mountains. Some of the other runners in my group included a local TV celebrity, a famous Korean (K-pop) boy band and a former Olympic judo gold medalist. Because the relay never stops once it starts each day, I was briefed extensively on what to expect and how to receive and transfer the flame.

The first morning after I arrived in Seoul, the briefing started at my hotel, first in English by Dow colleagues. I was taken to the assembly point close to my route, joined the other relay runners, and received gear and my own torch! The temperature was near freezing, so I was glad they supplied ski pants, jackets, caps and gloves. The orientation session with the

other runners was delivered in Korean. One of the staff members spoke English and translated a bit. I had to follow the body language closely. When the instructor asked if we recalled the theme for the Pyeongchang torch relay, I shouted, "Let everyone shine." Of the signage around the auditorium, that was the only text in English.

We then loaded up on a special bus equipped with a live video feed of the relay. We were dropped off, one by one, when we reached our assigned part of the route to run. My husband, Peter, joined me in Seoul and was transported separately to the area where I would be running. I was on the bus on my own and enjoyed the excitement the torch relay runners shared in anticipation of our once-in-a-lifetime experience. We were instructed to agree with our partners how we would hand the flame to each other. The guidance we received about the few seconds we had for this maneuver was to do something unique and memorable. Neither of my partners, nor few others on the bus, spoke English, so coordinating this "choreography" was a bit difficult. My judo athlete partner showed me a judo move for the "performance" upon our handoff. With my other partner, the only words we could both understand were "Gangnam Style."

When my turn came, I ran off the bus and was greeted by spectators starting to gather as the relay entourage of buses and camera crews approached with the preceding runner heading my way. An official immediately checked the fuel in my torch and gave me thumbs-up as he left my side, and my partner approached to hand the flame off to me. We did a quick "Gangnam Style" dance and, torch in hand, I was off. Receiving that flame, seeing my torch ignite after months of knowing this moment was to come

and hours of waiting that day, was incredible.

While running and on camera, I was able to give a shoutout to my husband and children, family in the States and work colleagues in Dubai. We were given a special link to view my portion of the run. I knew my work colleagues back in Dubai would probably be watching. The time of my run in Georgia was 3 a.m. local time, so I was not expecting anyone to stay up and watch, particularly with the Georgia-Alabama national championship game the next day!

Afterward, I was thrilled to learn that my brother, Joe, stayed up to catch the relay live. He took a video of his computer screen and shared it with the family. That turned out to be the only footage of my run that I have. There were short portions of my run, along with the full group, provided by the Olympic torch organizers, but not my bit from start to finish.

The entire experience and time in Seoul was magical. Getting to know South Korea, the people, the food, the time spent with Dow colleagues from Asia, discovering Seoul, every second of the torch run, meeting other torchbearers, it's hard to pick the most memorable part of the trip. One particular memory that does stand out was when it began to snow while I was on my torch relay. Dusk had set in, and the flame was beautifully glowing. When I looked up at the flame, I was mesmerized. I could see snowflakes starting to fall and felt them on my face. I didn't want that moment to end. It was an amazing feeling to know that, for few minutes, I was doing something no one else in the world was doing at that time: carrying the Olympic flame on its journey to the opening ceremonies.

**Q: Where in South Korea were you?**

A: I was in Seoul, and my torch run route was

on the outskirts of the city by about 30 minutes. Seoul is a huge city of 10 million people. There are no super-tall skyscrapers, so the city really sprawls out.

**Q: What else can you tell us about your experience?**

A: The next morning, I was still elated about my torch run experience the day before. My husband and I stayed an extra day in Seoul to visit the city, so we enjoyed a long breakfast. When we returned to our room, I remembered that the Georgia-Alabama game was on. Amazingly, I was able to access the game via a sport-viewing app. It was incredible to see the game live from the 11th floor of my hotel in Seoul with my Olympic torch by my side. It was 10 a.m. in Seoul, the evening the day before at the Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta. I was texting with my brother, Peter, throughout the game; shouting and cheering one moment, then yelling and crying the next. It was a gut-wrenching loss, as you know. Despite the bitter cold temperatures outside, my husband and I took in some sights in Seoul to get my mind off the game. Once a Bulldog, always a Bulldog!

*Compiled by Kathryn Schiliro*

# J.W. Fanning Lecture

The 34th annual J.W. Fanning Lecture will take place on Nov. 12, 2017 at the Hilton Garden Inn in downtown Athens. We are honored to have Dr. Alan Ker from the Food, Agricultural & Resource Economics Department at the University of Guelph as our guest speaker this year. His lecture is entitled “**Economics of Trade Wars.**”



Dr. Ker is a professor and the Director of the Institute for the Advanced Study of Food and Agricultural Policy at the University of Guelph. The Institute attracts and supports students in the area of food and agricultural economics, hosts conferences, publishes the FAREShare newsletter and supports the FARETalk podcast. Dr. Ker also served as 2016-17 President of the Canadian Agricultural Economics Society and sits on the editorial boards of the Canadian Journal of Agricultural Economics and the European Review of Agricultural Economics. He has testified before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food, and he has organized both national and provincial conferences on issues of current policy relevance to the Canadian agricultural and food sectors. His current research involves the link between climate change, innovation, and yield volatilities, issues related to risk management and crop insurance, and developing methodologies that borrow information from to increase small sample efficiency of nonparametric estimators.

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**All events will take place at the Hilton Garden Inn, located at 390 E Washington Street in Athens.**

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

**10:00 a.m.** — Registration and Refreshments  
Dogwood/Azalea Room

**10:30 a.m.** — J.W. Fanning Lecture  
Dogwood/Azalea Room

*Welcome*

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

*Lecture:* Dr. Alan Ker

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

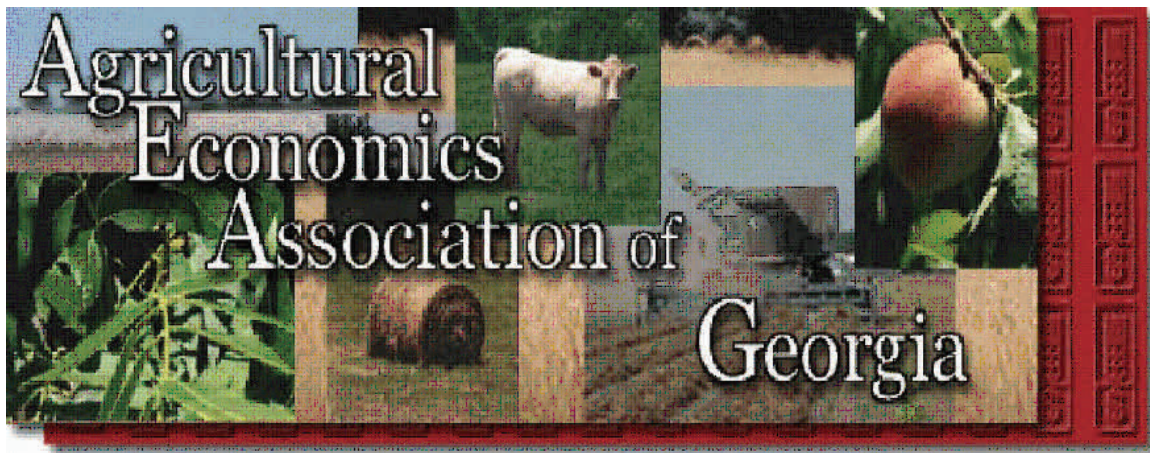
*Presentation of J.W. Fanning Professional Awards:* Farrah Newberry,  
President of Agricultural Economics Association of Georgia

**1:30 p.m.** — Adjourn

**The cost of the luncheon is \$30. There is no cost for attending the lecture only. Please RSVP to [eclance@uga.edu](mailto:eclance@uga.edu) by Oct. 31, 2018.**

# Department Publications

- Li, Yanshu, R.L. Izlar, **B. Campbell**, and **L.A. Russell**. "2018 Current Use Values for Georgia: Conservation Use (CUVA) Land and Forest Land Protection Act (FLPA) Land" University of Georgia Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources. April 10, 2018.
- Khachatryan, H. A. Rihn, B. Behe, C. Hall, **B. Campbell**, J. Dennis, and C. Yue. "Visual Behavior, Buying Impulsiveness, and Consumer Behavior." *Marketing Letters* 29(1):23-35.
- Liu, S., **G. Colson**, N. Hao, and M.E. Wetzstein (2018). "Toward an optimal U.S. Household Solar Subsidy: A Social-technical Approach," *Energy* 147(15):377-387.
- Castillo, M. **J.L. Jordan**, R. Petrie. 2018. Discount Rates of Children and High School Graduation. *The Economic Journal*, doi 10.1111/eoj.12574.
- Munasib, A., **G. Kostandini**, **J.L. Jordan**. 2018. Impact of the Stand Your Ground Law on Gun Deaths: Evidence of a Rural Urban Dichotomy. *European Journal of Law and Economics*. 45 (3): 527-554. Doi. 10.1007/s10657-018-9581-z
- Jingyuan Li\* and **Craig E. Landry**. 2018. "Flood Risk, Local Hazard Mitigation, and the Community Rating System of NFIP" *Land Economics* 94(2): 175-198 doi.org/10.3368/le.94.2.175
- Awondo, S.N., **O.A. Ramirez**, G.S. Datta, **G. Colson**, and **E.G. Fonsah** (2018). "Estimation of Crop Yield and Insurance Premiums Using a Shrinkage Estimator," *North American Actuarial Journal* 22(2):289-308.
- Levi A. Russell**. 2018. Ideology, Electoral Incentives, PAC Contributions, and the Agricultural Act of 2014. *Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics*. 43(2):274-291.  
<http://www.waeaonline.org/UserFiles/file/JARE433.pdf>



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, call 706-542-0763 or visit <http://www.caes.uga.edu/departments/ag-econ/about/agricultural-economics-association-of-georgia.html>.