FROM THE DEAN:

“Let perseverance be your engine and hope your fuel.”
– H. Jackson Brown, Jr.

My, what a turbulent time March brought to SDSU, South Dakota, our nation and world. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused the university to take unprecedented steps to protect the health and safety of our university community, and to support our commitment to academic excellence and student success. Through many creative and innovative steps implemented with much patience and commitment by our faculty, staff and students, we have been able to continue to keep the many aspects of our complex college functioning during these turbulent times.

I am so very proud of how our faculty and staff stepped up to the plate, with almost no prior notification, and modified our academic, research and outreach programs so that they could continue to operate as effectively as possible under the pandemic conditions. I am equally proud of how our students and other stakeholders worked with these changes and together we have kept our programs moving forward. Even during a pandemic – Together we are still providing for our livestock, sustaining our natural resources and feeding our growing world!

Please stay healthy and well. With Jackrabbit pride,

South Dakota Corn Endowed Dean of the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences

Contact John Killefer at John.Killefer@sdstate.edu

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ON THE COVER:
CAFES students share the message that, despite the pandemic, “Together we are still providing for our livestock, sustaining our natural resources and feeding our growing world!” Photos were taken by CAFES students at their homes once classes were moved online for the remainder of the spring semester due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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"A summary of the past few months can be found in the phrase ‘I was not expecting that’. As an educator, I never thought that when I told my classes to have a great Spring Break the week of March 2nd, it would be the last time we met in person for the rest of the semester. Mid-semester is such a great time to be a college professor; classes are starting to show their personality, students are coming out of their shells in class, and faculty are finally starting to remember student names. Each class or lab has its own vibe, some are quiet and do not like to talk while others want to have a discussion.

Transitioning and adapting from the face-to-face daily grind of lectures and lab to exclusively online was certainly challenging. Personally, I think the most challenging aspect of the switch was going back to PowerPoint for lectures. I have almost exclusively used a white board to lecture the past three years, and I am sure my students did not appreciate the first few PowerPoints I put online for them – information overload to say the least. One of the most disappointing aspects to me was that students didn’t get the hands-on opportunities they learn so much from. Trying to come up with laboratory activities for online classes has always been a challenge. In my Introduction to Meat Science laboratory, the class was scheduled to fabricate pork carcasses right after Spring Break; instead, we could only make videos for the students to watch.

Through all of this, our students have adapted wonderfully! Even though many students have the added responsibilities and stresses of a job, working on the farm, starting an internship early, having their internship cancelled, moving in with friends, moving back in with their parents, slow internet access, along with hundreds of other distractions, they have impressed me. Their desire to seek answers and work toward their goals and aspirations despite the trying circumstances has been fantastic. Many have indicated how important the interactions with their peers are and how nice it is to discuss things with faculty outside of class.

The time we spent together teaching and learning in person has been invaluable to the success of the classes online the last half of the spring semester."

- Dr. Kyle Grubbs, Professor of Animal Science
  2020 CAFES Teacher of the Year

Due to the spread of COVID-19, South Dakota State University discontinued on-campus instruction on March 24 and moved all classes online for the remainder of the spring semester.

Following this drastic change, we asked our students to reflect on how they had to adapt their daily schedules and routines to continue their classes and campus activities from home.
The Move to Online Classes

“The recent turn of events that caused classes to shift online made for some rapid changes and life alterations that were very unforeseen. Since classes were online, I had the opportunity to return home to my family’s ranch in Spearfish, South Dakota, and work part-time while going to class. This change was difficult. I found it hard to stay motivated to get my school work done when the ranch work seemed more prevalent and interesting. The balance between keeping school as my priority over work and wanting to be outside was hard to find. Chasing cows and helping with calving seemed more appealing than writing papers and trying to communicate with professors and groups over the internet.

The loss of personal interaction with professors and other students was also very difficult. The online resources we utilized for classes were efficient and did the job, but in my opinion, face-to-face class was always much better. Not only was this interaction missed, but the inability to participate in school functions and hang out with friends was frustrating as well. I had a lot of plans to go on CAFES ambassador visits to different high schools, take part in Little International and play various intramural sports. I’m hopeful that classes will be on campus in the fall so I can get a more interactive education and participate in some of the activities that I find interesting and beneficial. I also wish to be back with my friends and make more memories that the college years are notorious for making.”

- Carson Sleep, CAFES student
  Agricultural Business
  Spearfish, SD

A Different Kind of Last

“My daily life as a college student would not be complete without my phone calendar alerting me of where I need to be on campus at every hour of the day. However, this past semester did not include these hourly reminders or the need to race across campus to each of my obligations. Suddenly, my calendar began to erase itself, and the busy schedule that I had become accustomed to simply did not exist anymore. While I still have two more years left as an undergraduate, there are other ‘lasts’ that I will never get the chance to experience because of this unique situation.

Over the past year, I have served as the state reporter for the South Dakota FFA Association. Throughout the spring semester, my five teammates and I could often be found in a meeting room preparing for state convention, the culminating event of the FFA year. However, COVID-19 had other plans for the 92nd South Dakota FFA state convention. Along with the cancelation of classes, our convention would no longer convene in Frost Arena as we had imagined. No one could prepare us for the devastation we felt when that final, pivotal event of our state officer experience was suddenly not going to happen as previously planned. Just like the rest of the world, our convention would take a virtual format.

Ever since I decided to run for a state officer position, I dreamed of the day I might present members with their awards on stage, recite opening ceremonies for the final time in Frost Arena and deliver my retiring address to a crowd of over a thousand people at state convention. While creating the first virtual convention in our state’s history held so many new and enriching opportunities, I could not help but be disappointed over the elements that would not be possible through a camera lens.

However, as a state officer team, we made a choice to take advantage of those last memories that we wished could be face-to-face but were instead virtual. As a result, we were able to put together a virtual event that mirrored much of what a regular state convention would have looked like and still provide an experience that our members will hopefully never forget. COVID-19 may have taken away those ‘lasts’ in my blue jacket that I had always dreamed about, but it instead replaced those dreams of what could have been with memories that I will cherish forever.”

- Sadie Vander Wal, South Dakota FFA State Officer
  Agricultural Communications and Animal Science
  Brentford, SD
Forward Thinking

“Transitioning from fast-paced college life to a slower pace every day was an adjustment for me. As a community assistant (CA) on campus, I missed being there for the students living in the residence halls and helping them with everyday problems from what-to-wear-to-interview questions to finding summer housing. Whether students realize it or not, many CAs on campus really do build relationships with their residents and miss them when they leave, so not getting to say goodbye and wish them luck was hard and felt like a door was left open. I did not realize or expect that our spring break goodbyes would be our actual goodbyes until next fall.

When I got the email announcement that classes would be held online for the remainder of the semester, my stomach just sank. One of my first thoughts was ‘Will I really not get to see my staff, residents, and friends until next fall?’ and my second thought was ‘Well, we will just have to make plans to see each other this summer once this is all over hopefully.’

Not only have I missed my residents, but I have missed my CA staff. There were so many jokes and memories already made throughout the year and it all just came to an end with one email – and that was hard. It was difficult not getting to see everyone in person, but having team video calls became the highlight of my week and kept me excited for what is to come next year.

I am looking forward to returning as a CA and planning programs and getting to help a new group of freshmen transition to college life. I am excited to get back and attend football games, Hobo Day, enjoy some SDSU Ice Cream, go on midnight McDonalds runs with friends, and just be back on campus and in an actual classroom again (never thought I would say that last part!). This was definitely an unexpected change, but it taught me to be more grateful for the small things in life and never take anything for granted.”

- Kira Gifford, community assistant
  Agricultural Communications
  Ivanhoe, MN

Blessed in this Mess

“This spring semester I was working on wrapping up my master’s project while I was taking one online class. I finished my lab work a week and a half before the campus closure, and then I was doing computer work cleaning my data. I was blessed to be in an ideal position when campus closed down, as I finished all my lab work before the closure and was able to easily transition to working from home since I was already doing computer work.

Working from home was more distracting, but once I got more used to it and got into a routine, I felt more productive. It helped to take breaks from work by talking to my family, eating, and going on walks outside. I also enjoyed staying connected with other students by attending weekly virtual meetings with Equip Campus Ministries.

One thing I missed about being on campus this spring was seeing everyone outside enjoying the nice weather and graduation activities – spring is an exciting time on campus. However, I was blessed to have a family at home to be with during this time of social distancing. I’m planning to complete my degree this summer and I’m looking forward to starting a new job as a soil conservationist at the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS).”

- Heidi Becker, graduate student
  Biological Sciences, M.S.
  Pierre, SD
**A New Normal for Undergraduate Researchers**

“Going into the spring semester, I was excited to finally start data collection on my project titled, ‘Genetic Variations for The Developmental Proaxis of Switchgrass.’ My project sought to describe the belowground developmental stages of switchgrass to add to biofuel production research. Data collection and observations were made throughout the first half of the semester, and I had about a quarter of the samples left to measure going into spring break. In the weeks that followed, classes were moved online, campus was shut down, and I was left to wonder if I had enough data gathered already to finish my project.

Like a lot of other first-time independent researchers, I ran into a lot of obstacles and challenges, but none could ever compare to the changes that the COVID-19 pandemic brought. I had already been rained out of my original project idea with the flooding of my project site during the summer of 2019 and my research was pushed back farther with an abnormally busy course schedule last fall semester.

Even with all these obstacles, I am proud to say I was able to use the data I collected to complete my undergraduate research with the help of my mentors Dr. Xu Lan and Dr. Arvid Boe. It is unfortunate that my last semester ever as a student at SDSU was cut short, but I am thankful that I was able to persevere and finish my research and receive the whole spectrum of the undergraduate research experience.”

- Cody Kneip, undergraduate researcher
  Ecology & Environmental Science
  Elk Point, SD

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**Hog Wild**

“While everyone had a unique COVID-19 quarantine experience, my day-to-day routine did not have many changes. I serve as the student manager at the SDSU Swine Education and Research Facility, so I remained an essential campus employee in order to take care of the livestock. Since the beginning of spring break, I worked almost every day to help take care of the pigs and keep overall barn operations flowing. Fortunately, the flexibility of online classes made it easier for me to balance my class load while completing chores at the barn. Since most of my lectures were recorded and posted online, I was able to make sure all the pigs were taken care of in the morning before spending the rest of my day focusing on my classes.

As the nation began moving to online learning, my role as a virtual farm tour guide for the National Pork Board’s Operation Main Street program was able to shine. I hosted a Facebook live video for the South Dakota Pork Producers at the beginning of April and provided virtual tours for students in Colorado and North Carolina to help explain pork production while showing them live footage from the farrowing rooms of the barn.

There were plenty of things about the traditional college experience that I missed. I missed being able to talk and interact with the 40 brothers that I lived with in the FarmHouse Fraternity house each day. I was especially looking forward to traveling to Washington D.C., San Diego, Kansas City and Vietnam through different leadership opportunities, which were all cancelled at the snap of a finger. However, I realized that we are all given an option: we can either dwell about the opportunities lost or look at the positives and make the best of our situation.

As we look to return to campus this fall, it will be nice to get back to some kind of normal. I am excited to once again talk to my peers on a daily basis, go to my regular classes, have the opportunity to learn from our professors first-hand, and get back to a healthy balance of my activities across campus. Until then, we can just hope and pray that the situation continues to improve so we are able to live out our plans for the fall.”

- Logan Tesch, Swine Education and Research Facility student manager
  Animal Science and Agricultural Business
  Henderson, MN

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GROWING SOUTH DAKOTA SUMMER 2020
**The One Where a Virus Ruined My Plans**

“Brookings has truly become 'home' throughout the last seven months of being at SDSU. Making the decision to transfer to SDSU to start my sophomore year of college as a Jackrabbit has turned out to be one of my best decisions. I cannot express enough how much I missed all of my college friends. I tell others that I am too social to be stuck at home! I also really missed my classes and the experience of learning in person in a classroom. With all of the spring college rodeos being cancelled due to the pandemic, I missed daily practices with my teammates. The rodeo team at SDSU is known as one of the closest teams in the region, and it is such a true statement. I always get butterflies of nerves and excitement traveling down the road with my crew to another college rodeo, and I have really missed that feeling! I know that we all have realized these simple things about college rodeo that we took for granted and will cherish so much more once we are able to get back out there.

I felt so many emotions at the end of spring break as things became cloudy and the possibility of returning to campus was uncertain. I truly loved every minute at school this year, and the thought of not being somewhere that makes me so happy while being around some of my favorite people was heartbreaking.

I was really looking forward to experiencing the annual Jackrabbit Stampede Rodeo as a Jackrabbit this year along with our Buckles and Bling team fundraiser. As a team member, we are required to get a minimum amount of sponsorships in order to hold our hometown rodeo. We put a lot of work into holding a rodeo and, by not being able to have it this year, our team as a whole took a huge hit.

I cannot wait to be back together with the team, closing down our fall nights at the arena and experiencing every college rodeo together. I have a fun list of classes for the upcoming semester and am very eager to be a part of them. I pray that everything is able to go on as normally planned this coming fall and that we all bounce back better than before!”

- Cheyenne Adams, SDSU Rodeo Team member
  Animal Science
  Dell Rapids, SD

**Leading a New State**

“When the announcement was made for instruction to be online for the remainder of the semester, my schedule looked very different. I remember the initial day of this transition feeling like the first day of classes all over again because the hardest part was truly finding a new normal. I am someone who relies on a structured schedule, therefore this seemed especially challenging. However, after about two weeks, things began picking back up again and I was able to establish a new status quo with a schedule from home.

Regarding major Students’ Association items that needed to be addressed, we still needed to host our general budgeting process where we allocate $2.7 million in General Activity Fee dollars across the university and to student clubs and organizations. In addition, we still had to host the general election. Although both processes looked slightly different this year, we were able to successfully complete the budgeting process and hold the elections. During this time, I was extremely thankful for technology and social media because that is what allowed us to communicate best with our peers.

Typically the Students’ Association transition meeting happens in the middle of April and, although we did our best over Zoom, I missed being able to attend the meeting in person and celebrate the accomplishments from the past year. I am incredibly grateful for the tenacious efforts of faculty, staff, and administration to respond to COVID-19 and to quickly transition to online learning. Although this was a unique experience and will always be remembered, I do not think this chapter of my life was properly closed. Ultimately, what makes SDSU special is the people. I missed interacting with students, faculty, staff, and administration – I have called Brookings home for the past four years, and it is those people that I missed the most. I wish everyone the best, and I am very thankful for the impact everyone at South Dakota State University has had on my life.”

- Corey Berscheit, Students’ Assoc. Vice President
  Animal Science and Agricultural Science
  Becker, MN
Student Teaching in a Global Pandemic

“On January 16th, I unknowingly left campus for the final time as an undergraduate student at SDSU as I was headed to spend my final semester at my student teaching placement where I would spend 13 weeks in a high school classroom. As I traveled four hours away from Brookings to the southeast corner of Minnesota, I thought about what I was looking forward to for the semester – meeting my students, attending State FFA Convention with my FFA members, learning how to be a better teacher and so much more. I also thought about the events that would bring me back to SDSU later in the semester such as the 97th Little International, State-A-Thon, and graduation.

As the weeks of student teaching passed, I loved the profession more and more and grew to love and care for all 120 of my students (over 120 middle and high schoolers). I loved going to school to see their bright faces, hear their stories, and learn more about who they were.

On March 13th, it was announced that Minnesota schools would close and move to distance learning for the remainder of my student teaching experience. Only four short days later, on March 17th, I said goodbye to my students. For the next four weeks, I taught online and my days were filled with faculty meetings, state meetings, Zoom meetings with my students, and planning for online instruction, all while trying to complete my own college classes online.

During my final week of student teaching, I wrote letters to my students wishing them well and saying goodbye for probably the last time. As a student myself, I was grieving my lasts as a senior at SDSU, but I was also grieving for and worrying about the well-being of my students. This is not at all how I expected my final semester of college to play out. The final paragraph of this chapter in my life will never be written but will be replaced by paragraphs on distance learning and COVID-19. I miss my students more than I ever thought was possible and hate that I never got to say goodbye and good luck. Although this is a trying time, I am thankful for my students who have reached out to me, my mentor teacher, my support system, healthcare workers, teachers, food service workers, farmers and ranchers, and all other essential workers who continue to provide for us.”

-Kayla Kutzke, student teacher
Agricultural Education
Lake Lillian, MN

From Dorm Room to Dairy Farm

“When I left for Spring Break on March 6th, I did not have a clue what the weeks ahead would look like. I hopped in my car and headed to my family’s fifth generation dairy farm for a week filled with farm tasks ahead. Much has changed since that day, but my love for South Dakota State University and the close circle I have created there still stands strong.

After returning home, my daily schedule looked much different than it would have if I were still living in my dorm room. While doing college classes online, I had the chance to fully immerse myself in the daily farm tasks. Many days usually went like this: wake up, have coffee filled with real dairy creamer, feed calves with my siblings, do the rather less-than-fun jobs around the farm including the ever-dreaded rock picking, complete all my classwork for that weekday, go back outside to feed calves again, and end the day with a family dinner, almost always accompanied by ice cream.

As a dairy production student, many of my core classes are hands-on, and that’s one of the many reasons I chose to attend SDSU. Prior to leaving campus back in March, I was very excited for the rest of the semester, as there were so many fun events planned. Knowing that the past can’t be changed has ignited a fire inside me, and I am excited to return to campus in the fall full of ideas and a positive attitude. However, my online learning experience has been unique, as I have had the opportunity to learn from the teachers and the same day go outside and see how it works in real life. Although the spring semester surely did not turn out as planned, it has been the challenges I faced that have taught me valuable lessons both in class and on the dairy farm.”

-Elizabeth Krienke, CAFES student
Dairy Production
Lester Prairie, MN
Adapting to Change is Never-Ending

"Adapting to change is a skill that people, especially students, are told to learn. In the last half of the spring semester, I quickly learned how to adapt to change more than I ever thought. When we first started online classes after spring break, I thought I would have so much extra time on my hands. Little did I know how time consuming having all online classes would really be. My days were not scheduled out like a typical day of attending classes, as they varied with virtual meetings on Zoom, doing homework, or helping on the farm.

In January, I enrolled in international experience class where my classmates and I would have the opportunity to study abroad at the end of the semester in Vietnam and Cambodia. The more my class was learning about Vietnam, the more eager I was to go and do what I was reading about. In the beginning of March, I got news that our trip was cancelled due to COVID-19. All of us were quite disappointed, especially the seniors, since this trip was a once-in-a-lifetime experience that we most likely wouldn't get to experience again. I was really looking forward to experiencing Vietnam's culture as well as visiting the Cu Chi war tunnels. Even though I wasn't able to travel to Vietnam this spring, I hope to study abroad in the future.

During this time being off campus, I think it will make returning to Brookings in the fall a little bit sweeter – a little sweeter because I'm even more excited to see my friends and spend quality time with them. I'm also looking forward to visiting with faculty and staff, going to club meetings, campus events, enjoying walks across campus, and more. Although time on campus was cut short for the spring semester, it taught me three things: to cherish my time as a student at SDSU, to have hope in the Lord, and that I can't plan my own life. Only God can do that, even when I don't understand (Phil. 4:6-7). Adapting to change and embracing our "new normal" is something many students, especially myself, are still learning to do today."

- April Hamilton, CAFES student
  Agricultural Leadership
  Hitchcock, SD

My Experience of Canceling Little "I"

"Early in March, I wasn't thinking about the possibility of Little "I" getting canceled, let alone the entire semester moving online. It all came kind of fast and furious, and luckily I had contacts who gave me ideas to take action. I met with administrators to discuss what Little "I" would look like this year. We discussed the possibility of postponing it to late April but concluded that students and faculty didn't need more stress that close to final exams.

Canceling Little "I" was something I never thought I would live to see, yet it happened the year I was serving as manager. I officially made the call to cancel the event, but I was still devastated. It hurt more because I knew I would be letting down so many people who look forward to making that trip to Brookings every year. I missed many aspects of Little "I" – I missed being able to sit on the stage and see the past, present, and future generations of Little "I" packing the stands. I still remember being a spectator as a 10-year-old kid loving every moment of this tradition. I missed the memories that were supposed to be made, as I know we had a lot in store for this year. It will always be difficult knowing that 2020 will leave the only memory of canceling Little "I". I was looking forward to being able to speak on behalf of the staff and speaking about our theme 'Let the Good Times Show.' Lastly, I was mostly looking forward to cherishing another great Little International with some of the greatest people I know, especially enjoying it with students on the executive team.

I had no clue what to expect when I originally was elected for this position. Little "I" changed my life and blessed me with the most stressful, yet joyful two years of my life. It was my mission this year to make everybody in the arena have as much fun as I do. I know Little "I" is in good hands for the next two years with new students leading this historic tradition."

- Collin Vander Wal, 97th Little "I" Manager
  Animal Science
  Volga, SD
CLASS OF 2020

CAFES GRADUATES IN THE CLASS OF 2020 REFLECT ON THEIR TIME AT SDSU
“One of my favorite memories was beating North Dakota State University at a home game.”

- Turner Blasius
1. **TATE KETELHUT**

   Q. What major(s) and minors(s) did you graduate with?
   A. I graduated with a degree in agricultural and biosystems engineering. I chose this field of study because I wanted to stay within the agriculture field and I also wanted to be a part of designing new equipment that can have an impact on the future.

   Q. What is your hometown?
   A. Miller, South Dakota

   Q. What were you involved in during your time at SDSU?
   A. I was involved in the Quarter Scale Tractor Club and the ABE/AST/Precision Ag Club

   Q. What are some of your favorite memories from your time at SDSU?
   A. One of my favorite memories from SDSU is competing in the International Quarter Scale Tractor Competition. I was part of the team that placed first overall in 2018 and I was the leader of the team when we placed second in 2019. I also really enjoyed meeting new friends that I will know for the rest of my life. One of the people I met is now my fiancé.

   Q. What are your plans after graduation?
   A. I will move to Pella, Iowa, and work as a Design Engineer for Vermeer Corporation.

   Q. If you could give one piece of advice to students just starting college at SDSU what would it be?
   A. I would tell them to get involved with clubs or organizations that share your same interests. You will get to meet new friends and learn many new things that you will be able to take into your career someday.

   Photo 1 (pg. 10): Tate Ketelhut (left) with the 2019 SDSU quarter scale tractor. He was the leader of the team that placed second in the 2019 International Quarter Scale Tractor Competition.

2. **TURNER BLASIUS**

   Q. What major(s) and minors(s) did you graduate with?
   A. I graduated with a degree in agricultural business and a minor in land evaluation and agronomy. I am also finishing up my master’s degree in economics this summer.

   Q. What is your hometown?
   A. Kimball, South Dakota

   Q. What were you involved in during your time at SDSU?
   A. I was on the SDSU football team for four and a half years, as well as being a member of the Student Athletic Advisory Council and the Residence Hall Association.

   Q. What are some of your favorite memories from your time at SDSU?
   A. One of my favorite memories was beating North Dakota State University at a home game.

   Q. What are your plans after graduation?
   A. To either attend law school at the University of South Dakota or attain a job in the seed sales area.

   Q. If you could give one piece of advice to students just starting college at SDSU what would it be?
   A. Get on top of your classes early so you have less stress throughout the whole semester. Also don’t be afraid to not know what your future is; simply immerse yourself in all of your classes and figure out which ones you like best.

   Photo 2 (pg. 10): Turner Blasius celebrating graduating from SDSU with his parents, Justin and Kari, who were both SDSU graduates as well.
3. THEODORE CZECH
Q. What major(s) and minors(s) did you graduate with?
A. I graduated with a dairy production degree and a precision agriculture minor.

Q. What is your hometown?
A. I am from a farm located near Watertown, South Dakota

Q. What were you involved in during your time at SDSU?
A. I got involved in intramural sports, which was a fun way to meet new people.

Q. What are some of your favorite memories from your time at SDSU?
A. At SDSU lots of memories were made but I would say some of my favorites were touring a variety of dairy farms for class.

Q. What are your plans after graduation?
A. My goal has always been to return to the family farm, which is what I am doing.

Q. If you could give one piece of advice to students just starting college at SDSU what would it be?
A. I would encourage the younger generations to give college a try, as it is four years you can’t get back and years that hold many lifelong memories.

Photo 3 (pg. 10): Theodore Czech (center) with his parents, Jim and Angela Czech, at the Dairy and Food Science Department Scholarship Banquet.

4. MEGAN KELLEN
Q. What major(s) and minors(s) did you graduate with?
A. I graduated with a degree in animal science and minors in animal health, biology and chemistry. I picked this major after deciding that I wanted to pursue veterinary medicine. While no particular degree is required for vet school, I knew that a degree in animal science would prepare me well for working with producers in the future as a large animal veterinarian. Animal science was the perfect balance of prerequisites needed for vet school with relevant animal science production classes.

Q. What is your hometown?
A. Le Mars, Iowa

Q. What were you involved in during your time at SDSU?
A. During my time at SDSU, I was involved with The Pride of the Dakotas drumline, the Pre-Vet Club, Students’ Association Senate, Pius XII Newman Center, Fishback Honors College and I worked as an Admissions Ambassador.

Q. What are some of your favorite memories from your time at SDSU?
A. My time at SDSU has been full of amazing opportunities, but my top two are participating in the 2017 National Memorial Day Parade with The Pride of the Dakotas and studying abroad in South Africa. The National Memorial Day Parade was a unique opportunity to feature our band on the national level while also getting to experience our nation’s capital. If you had asked me as a freshman if I would study abroad, I’m pretty sure my answer would have been ‘no’. I am so glad that I took the opportunity to travel to South Africa and learn more about global animal agriculture production.

Q. What are your plans after graduation?
A. In the fall I will be starting veterinary school at Iowa State University.

Q. If you could give one piece of advice to students just starting college at SDSU what would it be?
A. Get involved right away! I met some of my best friends by being involved on campus and trying new things. When you get involved with clubs in your academic program area, you can find study groups and mentors. Getting involved with something completely unrelated to your academic program area gives you a chance to take a break from homework. The relationships you build at SDSU will last much longer than your time on campus.

Photo 4 (pg. 10): Megan Kellen (left) received an honorary letter as a four-year member of The Pride. She is pictured with SDSU President Barry Dunn and fellow student MaryEllen Kennedy.
“My time at SDSU has been full of amazing opportunities, but my top two are participating in the 2017 National Memorial Day Parade with The Pride of the Dakotas and studying abroad in South Africa.”

- Megan Kellen
"One of my favorite memories from my time at SDSU was studying with friends at local coffee shops."

- McKenzie Hansen
5. **McKenzie Hansen**

Q. What major(s) and minors(s) did you graduate with?
A. I graduated with a degree in wildlife and fisheries sciences and a minor in journalism with a photography emphasis. I chose this major because of my love of the outdoors. I know that sounds cheesy, but I grew up camping, hiking and exploring in the Black Hills. I truly could not imagine doing anything different for a career.

Q. What is your hometown?
A. Rapid City, South Dakota

Q. What were you involved in during your time at SDSU?
A. During my time at SDSU I was involved in a campus ministry group called the Navigators. I also had the opportunity to take photos of the basketball teams for the Athletics Department. Additionally, I worked in the fish holding room on campus.

Q. What are some of your favorite memories from your time at SDSU?
A. One of my favorite memories from my time at SDSU was studying with friends at local coffee shops. Another great memory I have comes from a tradition my housemates and I started, in which every Saturday we would make waffles for the people in our campus ministry group. Some Saturdays we would have around 40 people in our little house, which was really fun.

Q. What are your plans after graduation?
A. After graduation I am getting married and moving to Oahu, Hawaii, which is where my fiancé currently lives. I will be pursuing a job in my field that includes working with marine life and native Hawaiian species. Hawaii will be a lot different than South Dakota, but I look forward to the challenges and opportunities.

Q. If you could give one piece of advice to students just starting college at SDSU what would it be?
A. My advice to new students would be to know it is okay to change majors or not know what they want to do when they first begin college. It took me two years to figure out that wildlife and fisheries was the right degree for me, but I am doing something now that I am so passionate about. I would encourage new students to really pursue what they love.

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Photo 5 (pg. 10): Classes were canceled as a result of a snowstorm in April 2019, so McKenzie Hansen (upper right) and her housemates decided to pass the time by building a snowman.

6. **Sharon Tritz**

Q. What major(s) and minors(s) did you graduate with?
A. Interested in finding ways to implement my passions for creativity and agriculture into a career, I decided to major in agricultural communications with minors in advertising, marketing and journalism with a photography emphasis.

Q. What is your hometown?
A. Dumont, Minnesota

Q. What were you involved in during your time at SDSU?
A. The Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow Club (ACT)

Q. What are some of your favorite memories from your time at SDSU?
A. Some of my favorite memories as a student include participating in animal science and dairy science labs, as well as having the opportunity to live with my best friends.

Q. What are your plans after graduation?
A. After graduation, I will be moving to the Black Hills where I have accepted a full-time position as a Traffic Manager/Account Assistant at Hot Pink, Ink, an advertising agency in downtown Rapid City.

Q. If you could give one piece of advice to students just starting college at SDSU what would it be?
A. My advice to freshman students is to take advantage of your educational opportunities and time at SDSU! Explore a variety of minors and courses in anything that interests you.

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Photo 6 (pg. 10): Sharon Tritz (right) with her roommate and best friend, Diana, during their freshman year living in Young Hall.
TO PLANT A SEED IS TO BELIEVE IN TOMORROW...

We asked our alumni to share their wisdom with our current students and recent graduates and asked them: What advice would you give the future generation?

“Don’t be afraid to work hard and always learn new things. Look for synergies and efficiencies and be collaborative. Be a team player and find ways to help other people be successful. Get your hands dirty and learn the business of agriculture from the ground up; no job is beneath anyone. Stick up for agriculture; feeding the world is much more complex than people think – but at the same time, identify things that should improve and change them!”

- Collette Schultz Kaster
  1988 Animal Science graduate

“Embrace the challenges and adversity you will face, growth comes from overcoming a struggle. Stay humble and be open to coaching, it’s okay to not know everything. Most of all pray! Jeremiah 29:11”

- Clay Edwards
  2005 Agricultural Education graduate

“As you start the next phase in life and your career, remember all you can do is give it your best each and every day. When your best isn’t enough, work hard to be better, learn and grow. When you stumble, get back up and keep trying. Remember that happiness isn’t a destination and your path will look like yours and yours alone, enjoy the ride!”

- Tori Boomgaardt
  2008 Dairy Manufacturing graduate

“Be willing to take a chance and try something new. You never know what you might discover by taking that chance. Maybe you fail, maybe you succeed. Either way, you will never regret the fact that you didn’t at least try.”

- Jeff Vander Wilt
  1997 Range Science graduate

“Take advantage of every opportunity you can while in college. Sometimes, the different options that may be available to you might seem obscure or may not seem useful at the time. Your path may take you in a direction you are not expecting; make sure you learn all that you can wherever you are because you never know how that may be beneficial in the future.”

- Londa (Vanderwal) Nwadike
  2000 Food Science & Animal Science graduate

“Absorb everything that you can. Take advantage of every opportunity you are given. You never know when something will be beneficial later in life.”

- Heidi Larson
  1999 Agronomy graduate
“It’s okay to be uncomfortable. That’s when you grow farther than you ever thought you would. There’s no comfort in a growth zone and there’s no growth in a comfort zone.”

- Nicole Roth
2018 Agricultural Communications graduate

“You have already seen some of the greatest global crises of the last half-century. Your experience and education position you well. Don’t doubt – move forward. Don’t apologize for what you don’t control – seek change. Above all, strive to be happy.”

- Lyle Mangen
1986 Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering graduate

“Learning does not stop with graduation. You have twice as long to work as you’ve been alive! Prioritize finding a job which gives you a lot of responsibility and chances to learn, and you will be capable of doing far greater things (and earning more money) down the road. You will be the new kid on the block, but don’t let that stop you from speaking up - you have new ideas that need to be shared. Keep trying new things, reading great books, visiting new places, and asking questions.”

- Mark York
2012 Agronomy & Mathematics graduate

“"The people we meet and relationships we make are the most rewarding parts of life – personally and professionally. While we meet important people throughout our lives – the relationships you have developed with friends and faculty in Brookings will likely be among the most important and plentiful. No matter where you go from here, remember to tell people where you’re from – you might just be surprised at who else is a Jackrabbit!"”

- Tyler Melroe
2003 Animal Science graduate
Growing up in rural Wakefield, Nebraska, Wyatt Brown was surrounded by conventional agriculture. As a teen, he worked several jobs in the industry including walking and spraying bean fields and working at a local cattle feed yard, large-scale poultry farm and an egg production operation.

In December 2000, Brown enlisted in the Nebraska Army National Guard. Upon graduating from high school, he attended Basic Training in Fort Sill, Oklahoma, and was just three weeks into his training when 9/11 occurred. After four years of enlisted service, he transferred from Wayne State College in Nebraska and enrolled in the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) at the University of South Dakota where he studied military science and recreation management. He later commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army, graduated from USD in 2006 and returned to Fort Sill to attend the Field Artillery Officer Basic Course.

Brown went on to serve as a fire support officer with the 101st Airborne Division in Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and as a platoon leader with the 1-320th Field Artillery Regiment. He was then deployed to Al Haswah and Baghdad City in Iraq from 2007-2008, and upon his return, completed the Field Artillery Captain’s Career Course and immediately reported to the 4th Infantry Division at Fort Carson, Colorado. Brown was then deployed two more times, serving his second deployment in southern Iraq from 2010-2011, and his third and final deployment in Shah Joy, Afghanistan in 2012.

"After serving three deployments and seven years of active duty military service, I made the difficult decision to leave the military," said Brown. "The Army was my life and I loved it. However, I didn't want my children growing up without a father or my wife without her husband."

Once Brown was out of the military, he struggled to decide how and where to begin his career.

"It was clear to me that I would probably never find a career as fulfilling as the military," said Brown. "Then one day while I was searching for other options, I found a program online called Veterans to Farmers."

Veterans to Farmers

Veterans to Farmers (VTF) is a non-profit organization based in Denver, Colorado, that helps assist veterans to assimilate effectively, productively and permanently into private citizenry through agricultural training and education. Class participants work alongside other veterans, learning new skills and experiencing the grounding effects of the farm through training in agricultural systems, technologies and business operations for a fulfilling and sustainable lifestyle.

"The whole premise of the program is to give veterans a purpose," said Brown. "Farming is mentally, physically and spiritually challenging and there are few occupations out there better suited to fill that role in farming than a combat veteran."

Brown was intrigued by the program and decided to join.
While there, he learned about the many facets of growing vegetable crops through organic farming, hydroponics and aquaponics in addition to bee keeping, canning, composting and basic botany and horticultural skills.

“I received a basic understanding of horticulture through VTF, but it was obvious to me that I needed to refine my skills even more if I wanted to teach the skills I learned to others,” said Brown. “I knew I wanted to bring a program like this to South Dakota, but I still had a knowledge gap in plant science that I wanted to fill, and I wasn’t ready to be farming on my own yet.”

**A New Chapter**

After completing the VTF program in 2016, Brown made the decision to return to college in the fall of 2017 and pursue an undergraduate degree in horticulture at South Dakota State University to further his knowledge. He recently filled his prior knowledge gap and graduated in December of 2019.

During the summer of 2019, Brown completed a horticulture internship with SDSU Extension that allowed him to refine his teaching and plant knowledge skills even further. He published articles for the iGrow Gardens Column, writing about many aspects of organic growing for both vegetable crops and lawn and landscape plants. He also presented to Master Gardener programs, provided composting training to different clubs and community groups and answered consumers’ horticulture questions from across the state.

Throughout his time at SDSU, Brown worked at the SDSU Local Foods Education Center on campus and McCrory Gardens where he managed the sustainable vegetable garden for two summers.

“The Veggie Garden’ grew and produced really well while I was there,” said Brown. “It certainly helped me practice many of the technical skills I learned at VTF and my own self-taught instruction.”

He also served as the president of Pi Alpha Xi Horticultural Honor Society and was a member of the Sigma Lambda Sigma Chapter of the SDSU Mortar Board Honor Society.

“My experience at SDSU was absolutely outstanding,” said Brown. “I was able to receive a topnotch education from some of the best faculty in the Midwest. I was not only enamored by some of the basic plant science and soil classes, but I really enjoyed learning basic chemistry, organic chemistry and physics as well.”

**The Goal**

While working toward his degree, Brown made a very specific goal to start a program similar to VTF in South Dakota after he graduated. He, along with a small group of veterans, have started a nonprofit organization called ReFocus. The group is working to establish an exclusive farming program in South Dakota to teach veterans in the Midwest many of the same disciplines that VTF does in Denver. ReFocus is currently working with local community and university partners to refine their ideas and garner support for the program.

“There are a lot of programs for veterans to take part in across the United States, but none are all encompassing, especially here in South Dakota,” said Brown. “There is an ancient proverb that states ‘If you give a man a fish, he will eat for a day; if you teach a man to fish, he will eat for a lifetime.’ That would be the goal for this program – teach veterans how to feed themselves with the ultimate goal of producing enough food to feed an entire community.”

Brown currently resides in Brookings with his wife, Sara, and their three children Elijah, Emily and Gabriel. After graduating in December, he began planning for ReFocus and recently started graduate school at SDSU to pursue a master’s degree in plant science. Brown continues to serve his community and his country as an active volunteer with local nonprofit organizations and as a field grade officer in the Army Reserves in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

As a highly decorated veteran, Brown’s awards and recognitions include the Bronze Star Medal with 2 oak leaf clusters, a Purple Heart, a Meritorious Service Medal, an Army Commendation Medal, an Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal with 2 oak leaf clusters, a National Defense Service Medal, a NATO Medal, an Army Service Ribbon, an Overseas Service Ribbon 2nd award, a Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, an Afghanistan Campaign Medal, an Iraq Campaign Medal, a Joint Meritorious Unit Award, a Meritorious Unit Citation, a Combat Action Badge and an Air Assault Badge.

“There are many people in the United States to thank for the prosperity that we have in our country, but two of the most important are the farmer, and the American soldier,” said Brown. “I can think of no better way to honor these two professions than to unify these efforts together with veteran farmers helping to feed our communities. It’s a beautiful dream!”
Looking Forward

Following a serious eye injury, former SDSU Rodeo Team member and recent SDSU alum, Jacey Hupp, looks forward to her future.

Rodeo has always been a family affair for recent 2020 agricultural communications graduate Jacey Hupp. At 8 years of age, Hupp started her rodeo career in 4-H where she competed in goat tying, breakaway roping, flag racing, barrel racing, pole bending, team roping and ribbon roping events.

“I grew up in the saddle – so it’s second nature to me,” said Hupp. “My dad competed in rodeos and when my parents bought our place over 20 years ago, the first thing they did was build an arena. It’s something my family and my three siblings and I have always loved to do together.”

Upon graduating high school in 2015, Hupp had her sight set on playing collegiate volleyball. However, her older sister Tarin, who was a member of the SDSU Rodeo Team at the time, had convinced her otherwise.

“I was pretty set on playing volleyball and then my sister talked me into trying college rodeo for a year, and I have no regrets,” said Hupp. “I joined the team when my sister was a senior at SDSU, so she kind of took me under her wing and showed me the ropes.”

Hupp is the third of her siblings to compete on the SDSU Rodeo Team behind her brother, Trevor, who competed from 2009-2014 and her sister, Tarin, who competed from 2012-2016.

“Being on the team with my sister was so special,” said Hupp. “Not a lot of people get to do that.”

For the next four years, Hupp went on to become an integral member of the SDSU Rodeo Team and a five-time College National Finals Rodeo (CNFR) qualifier. She competed in goat tying, breakaway roping and served as the header for team roping.

Hupp has notable finishes in goat tying at the CNFR, finishing third during her freshman year in 2016, winning the round her sophomore year in 2017 and placing fifth during her junior year in 2018.

A Change of Pace

On October 6, 2018, Hupp and a few of her teammates had the weekend off and decided to compete in team roping at a fundraiser jackpot rodeo in McCook, Nebraska, to practice and prepare for their next college rodeo. Hupp was competing in the third round when she went to dally and her rope slid down around the steer’s horn, snapped and hit her right eye.

“People in the arena said it sounded like a gunshot going off,” said Hupp. “I remember looking in the mirror and I wasn’t sure if my eye was even there anymore.”

After visiting a doctor weekly for two months following the accident, it was decided that Hupp would need to undergo surgery. She made the decision to take the remainder of her senior year off from college to heal from her injury and returned to SDSU to finish her degree in fall 2019.

“Because my eye was so swelled up, it took us a while to really know how bad it was,” said Hupp. “Once things started clearing up, the doctors noticed that there were more complications with my eye than they originally had thought. I knew I couldn’t rodeo, but I didn’t know if I should go back to school. I had so many decisions to make.”

Further observation revealed that Hupp was missing parts of
her retina and her pupil was broken, which caused her to have constant migraines and severe light sensitivity.

“I had to wear sunglasses or an eye patch everywhere I went, as the pressure in my eye was much higher than normal eye pressure,” said Hupp.

After rescheduling four different times, Hupp eventually underwent surgery on July 9, 2019. Her right eye is now 70%-80% fake, as they had to replace her iris with an artificial one and implant shunts to help with eye drainage. Hupp is the first person in South Dakota to ever receive an artificial iris, which was handmade in Germany and hand painted to match her left eye.

When describing her recovery from the injury, Hupp said it was not as bad as she originally imagined it would be.

“I had to be really conscious of how much I was practicing and sleep was really important because my eye needed to heal and rest,” said Hupp. “It really made me slow down.”

In August 2019, Hupp was able to get back on her horse and begin to compete again.

Back in the Saddle
Having qualified for the 2019 CNFR and being unable to compete due to her injury, Hupp was granted a medical hardship by the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association which would allow her to make up her senior rodeo season when she returned to campus for the 2019-2020 academic year. Nearly a year later in September 2019, Hupp was able to compete in her first college rodeo since her injury. She went on to qualify for the 2020 CNFR, however that was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“This year was supposed to be my comeback/miracle year, said Hupp. “It really hurt when the CNFR was cancelled – I felt like I had some unfinished business and I never got the chance to redeem myself.”

Although the rodeo season was cut short due to the pandemic, Hupp is grateful for the extra time she was able to spend with her horses, improving their performance and forming a stronger bond with them.

Hupp credits some of her favorite college memories to the time she spent on the SDSU Rodeo Team.

“I was so bummed about the cancellation of my season, but I was able to do something I love, with people I love and for a school I love,” said Hupp. “It’s going to take more than losing an eye to get me out of this sport.”

Throughout her four years on the team, Hupp was named the Reserve Champion Great Plains Region Goat Tier both during her freshman and sophomore years and the Champion Great Plains Region Goat Tier during her junior and senior years. Additionally, she was named the Reserve All-Around Champion during her junior year.

Hupp plans to continue competing in rodeos and hopes to inspire other young rodeo athletes to overcome hardships and continue to rodeo like she has.

“Over the past 11 years of coaching the SDSU Rodeo Team, I have had select few team members with a top level of talent and mental toughness,” said SDSU Rodeo Team Coach Ron Skovly. “Jacey was not only in this category, but she was also very coachable during good or bad times. I know that this will continue to help her be successful in her future in rodeo and her career path. She will be missed here at SDSU!”
Madison Kovarna

Madison Kovarna grew up working on her family’s cow/calf operation near Merrill, Iowa, and although she had a general understanding of the swine industry, it was not until she came to SDSU that she had the opportunity to get involved through swine research.

Kovarna credits her Introduction to Animal Science class for sparking her interest in the swine industry. An AS 101 teaching assistant recognized her success in the classroom and asked her to conduct feed analysis work in the lab, which eventually opened the door for her current research project under Dr. Crystal Levesque, assistant professor in the SDSU Department of Animal Science. The purpose of the research project is to determine the effects of supplemental iron prior to weaning on post-weaning performance. Prior to Kovarna’s research project, she had never stepped foot in a hog barn, “This project is my first dose of the swine industry.” Kovarna said there are a lot more moving parts in the swine industry when compared to cattle, especially when it comes to biosecurity and management.

Kovarna hopes her research project can help improve average daily gain in hogs without incurring major input costs. The use of one iron shot has been the traditional practice, and researchers are hoping a supplemental shot of iron will have a positive impact on performance.

When asked what the future holds after her time at SDSU, Kovarna said, “I want to take a position where I can help producers improve their bottom line. I want to be a person producers can be comfortable coming to with their issues on their operation.”

Kovarna believes SDSU has one of the leading agriculture programs in the area and that she would not have had these opportunities had she gone somewhere else.

Logan Tesch

Logan Tesch’s roots in the swine industry go back to his experiences growing up on his family’s operation near Henderson, Minnesota. His involvement in their diversified livestock operation including hogs and dairy steers led him to continue to build his knowledge studying animal science and agricultural business at SDSU.

After touring SDSU, Tesch knew it was where he wanted to further his education, “I fell in love with campus and toured the farms; the Swine Education and Research Facility was just built as well as the Cow-Calf Education and Research Facility. I knew coming here, I would learn up-to-date technologies from leading faculty and have a quality experience of education, as well as the students that come out of here being recognized and having an impact on the industry.”

Tesch is employed as the student manager at SDSU’s Swine Education and Research Facility where he trains new student employees, ensures herd health and assists with research projects. Tesch’s favorite duty is farrowing checks, “It’s challenging sometimes, but you get to bring new life into the world.” Tesch’s experience working with sows at the unit helped open the door for his internship at Wakefield Pork last summer.

While at Wakefield Pork, Tesch had the opportunity to get involved in all aspects of the swine industry, including the business side of things. He attributes his courses at SDSU with providing the background knowledge he needed to be successful in his internship position.

Tesch also serves as an advocate for the industry through various roles. As a Minnesota Pork Ambassador, he uses his experiences to advocate for the swine industry as well as being a voice for producers.

He has also been involved in Operation Main Street, a Pork Checkoff program designed to develop industry leaders with
the ability to speak on behalf of the pork industry. Tesch is among several SDSU students that conduct virtual tours of the Swine Education and Research Facility to groups such as agricultural students, dietitians, chefs, veterinary colleges and other community leaders. Tesch says the virtual tours are often an eye-opening experience for participants, "A picture is worth a thousand words, and it makes a huge impact if they can actually see what is happening in real time."

Tesch hopes to someday have his own finishing operation as well as continue to be involved in the industry after graduating.

**Marah Steenstra**

Marah Steenstra's path to finding her passion in the swine industry was far from typical. A hog, the Steenstra family concluded was from one of the local barns, showed up on their small acreage in the Pipestone, Minnesota, area. From there, Steenstra got her start raising free range hogs and fell in love with the industry which led her to continue her education at SDSU studying animal science.

While at SDSU, Steenstra worked at the Swine Education and Research Facility where she enjoyed taking care of the pigs, "I call myself a pig nurse. I love taking care of them and being around them."

Her experience working at the Swine Education and Research Facility later landed her an internship during summer 2019 at Pipestone Systems where she was able to gain a better understanding of all aspects of the swine industry. Although she grew up in the Pipestone area, Steenstra says she didn't realize the scope of Pipestone System's work until she got to SDSU. Steenstra was also able to conduct a research project intended to determine the effects of fecal microbiota transfer on the immune system of piglets. She credits her time at the SDSU Swine Education and Research Facility with helping her have an understanding of how a research project should be conducted.

Her work in her internship did not go unnoticed as Pipestone Systems offered Steenstra a full-time job following her graduation in spring 2020 working on one of their sow farms. "With being from Pipestone, swine has been a big part of the community. A lot of what my friends, their families and community members have said has gotten me intrigued and encouraged me to get involved," she says.

**Danielle Stoltz**

Danielle Stoltz grew up showing cattle with her family near Mount Vernon, South Dakota, which led her to pursue her education at SDSU where she currently studies animal science. Although Stoltz had never been involved in the swine industry, when her brother informed her of an opportunity to work with Pipestone Systems, she decided to take action.

For the past four years, Stoltz has spent her summers working at Pipestone Systems, first at the "Jackrabbit Farm" located near Mount Vernon; then for the past three years at the "Kodiak Farm" near Elkton, South Dakota.

After four summers of working at Pipestone Systems, Stoltz was given the ability to work in many different settings, "I started working mainly in farrowing, but over the years I've learned a little bit of everything, so I could just float around wherever they need me that day. I highly enjoy the role I get to play at Kodiak because I'm not glued into one spot every day; my days are always changing."

While working at Pipestone Systems, Stoltz was impressed with the constant improvements the swine industry continues to make in regards to production practices, technology and sustainability, "This industry is always improving and always wanting to get better. I know at Kodiak we are always trying to improve, whether that be improving conception rates, total born, death rate, and our weaning total."

Although Stoltz has enjoyed the challenge of learning about a different industry and how to work with a different species than she grew up with, it has also helped her realize how much she enjoys working with cattle. Stoltz hopes to find a career working with beef cattle in the future, but she is thankful for her experiences at Pipestone Systems and hopes to keep up with the happenings in the swine industry, "Now that I know more about the industry I will stay updated with what's happening locally as well as globally. I would like my children to be in 4-H when they're old enough, and who knows, they may just have a swine project."
“All of the faculty and staff work really hard to ensure my success and that of my fellow classmates during our time at SDSU and after graduation.”

- Margaret
Dairy Production
Corcoran, MN

“SDSU has a lot to offer and has provided me with many great resources right at my fingertips that have helped me to get where I am today.”

- Cody
Wildlife & Fisheries Sciences
Soldotna, AK
“SDSU has made me who I am today, providing me with a passion for agriculture and shaping me into a lifelong learner and leader.”
- Elle
Pre-Veterinary Medicine
Wall, SD

“Success at SDSU is inevitable. There is an unending variety of opportunities to meet new people and grow both professionally and socially.”
- Noah
Ag Business & Ag Science
Palmdale, CA
“I’m thankful that SDSU offers a variety of labs with classes so I am able to gain hands-on experience to supplement what I learn in the classroom.”

- Taylor
Precision Agriculture
Wells, MN

“SDSU has been the right choice for me since day one. The faculty have been nothing short of excellent and my program is second to none.”

- Grady
Animal Science
Flandreau, SD
"Through my involvement in clubs and organizations, I’ve had unique opportunities to expand my connections with peers and people working in the agriculture industry."

- Hannah
Agricultural Education
Monroe, NE

"During my time at SDSU, I have been able to surround myself with so many people that have pushed me to rise above my own expectations in and out of the classroom."

- Aaron
Agronomy
Woonsocket, SD
A
fter serving as the associate dean and director of academic programs for the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (CAFES) since 2002, Dr. Don Marshall has been named the new vice provost for undergraduate education at South Dakota State University.

"Dr. Don Marshall has been a tremendous asset to the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences where he has worn many different hats throughout his career at SDSU," said John Killefer, South Dakota Corn Endowed Dean of the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences.

Throughout his career at SDSU, Marshall has served in many roles and administrative positions. Following graduate school in 1984, he moved to South Dakota to work as a SDSU Extension Beef Cattle Specialist in Rapid City. A few years later, he transitioned into a new teaching and research role with the Department of Animal Science on the SDSU campus in Brookings and eventually assumed the position of curriculum coordinator with the department. During his time as a professor, Marshall taught a variety of undergraduate and graduate courses from introductory animal science and animal breeding, to global food systems, population genetics and statistical analysis.

Marshall then became the associate dean and director of academic programs for the College of Agriculture and Biological Sciences in 2002, which was renamed to the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences in 2018. During his role as associate dean, he concurrently served as interim dean for the college from 2008-2010 and again in 2017. Additionally, he served as the interim department head for the Department of Animal Science in 2012.

"I feel very fortunate and grateful to have worked with many outstanding students, faculty, staff, and stakeholders affiliated with SDSU, CAFES, and the Animal Science Department over the years," said Marshall. "Following graduate school, I was drawn to South Dakota by the relative importance of agriculture to the state and region, as well as the abundance of outdoor recreation opportunities. I was immediately impressed with the high level of expertise of farmers and ranchers, including students, and their intent to be on the leading edge of efficient production methods that sustain natural resources. These observations helped shape my approach to teaching in that I always tried to make sure students were aware of practical applications related to the concepts they were learning."

Marshall says the most gratifying aspect of his time at SDSU has been watching students develop their professional skills and knowledge, and seeing former students excel in successful careers.

Prior to his career at SDSU, Marshall attained his bachelor’s degree in animal husbandry from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1979. He then earned both his master’s degree in animal science in 1981 and Ph.D. in animal breeding and genetics in 1984 from Oklahoma State University-Stillwater. In 1993, he spent a summer on sabbatical leave with the Genome Mapping Lab at the USDA Meat Animal Research Center in Clay Center, Nebraska.

Professional honors and awards of Marshall’s include the SDSU Larson Foundation Award for Excellence in Teaching, the SDSU F.O. Butler Foundation Award for Excellence in Teaching, the SDSU Gamma Sigma Delta Award for Excellence in Teaching and the SDSU Students’ Association Teacher of the Year for the College of Agriculture and Biological Sciences. In addition to these achievements, Marshall has several research publications regarding a variety of topics including meat quality, cattle genetics and breeding.

Other professional activities Marshall has been involved in include serving as a member of the Peer Review Corp of the North Central Association Higher Learning Commission from 2006-2010 and a Food Systems Leadership Institute Fellow from 2007-2009. Additionally, Marshall has been an executive board member of the Agricultural Interactive Distance Education Alliance (AG*IDEA) from 2011 to present, serving as chair for two years.

"Don will be greatly missed in CAFES, but we are fortunate that he will be just a few steps away where he will utilize his extensive academic experience at the campus level in his new role as vice provost in the Office of Academic Affairs," said Killefer. Marshall assumed his role as vice provost June 22.

“I’m excited to have this opportunity to serve SDSU in a new role,” said Marshall. “I want to ensure that SDSU continues to provide outstanding educational opportunities that prepare students for career success and to be productive citizens and community leaders.”

David A. Thompson Endowed Head and Professor of the Department of Dairy and Food Science, Dr. Vikram Mistry will serve as the interim associate dean of CAFES Academic Programs. In the meantime, Dr. Joe Cassady will serve as the interim head of the Department of Dairy and Food Science while continuing to serve in his role as head of the Department of Animal Science.

“I am honored to have been asked to serve in the role of Interim Associate Dean for CAFES Academic Programs,” said Mistry. “Over the past 18 years under the leadership of Dr. Don Marshall, the college has developed strong programs and I look forward to working with the college and students. CAFES has exciting opportunities ahead for our current students as well as for those that are looking to develop careers.”
Due to packing plant shutdowns across the country, many pork producers have been struggling to find places to harvest their animals, which is having a dramatic impact on South Dakota’s pork producers. SDSU Extension swine specialists and meat science faculty, staff and students from the Department of Animal Science, have worked with the South Dakota Pork Producers Council to aid the swine industry during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The SDSU Meat Lab is working with the South Dakota Pork Producers Council to harvest animals and provide state-inspected pork sides for further processing to help support South Dakota pork producers. The Meat Lab’s goal is to harvest and process 90 pigs per week through August 14, 2020.

On May 22, the South Dakota Pork Producers Council gave away 13,000 pounds of pork in Aberdeen. The pork had been donated by pork producers in the state. A second giveaway was held in Yankton.

“This project demonstrates the cooperative efforts between multiple facets of the pork chain to respond to the needs of our producers and to feed South Dakotans,” said John Killefer, South Dakota Corn Endowed Dean of the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences.

The South Dakota Pork Producers Council is working to connect processors and producers as the project moves forward. The processors will purchase pigs from producers and the producers will deliver the pigs to SDSU for slaughter. The processor who owns the pigs will then pick-up the carcasses and pay SDSU for the slaughter costs.

“South Dakota pork producers are very concerned about the shortage of protein in the retail meat counters while they are struggling and unable to find a market for the animals they are raising due to limited packer capacity,” said Glenn Muller, executive director of the South Dakota Pork Producers Council. “This event allows our local producers to give back to communities and directly to consumers in need during these unusual times.”

Additionally, SDSU Extension specialists are providing guidance to producers facing processing shutdowns and consumers looking to purchase and process hogs at home.

For more information, contact the South Dakota Pork Producers Council at (605) 332-1600.
Last September, three South Dakota State University College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences graduates competed in an Australian crops judging competition, something no SDSU student has done before.

Matthew Wordes of Sacred Heart, Minnesota, Rebecca Van Regenmorter of Inwood, Iowa, Jennifer LaVoy of Tracy, Minnesota, and coach Brent Turnipseed traveled to South Australia to compete in the GrainGrowers Crops Competition held at the University of Adalade. The SDSU team was accompanied by six other student competitors and a coach from Kansas State University, making the nine students the only U.S. competitors at the contest. In addition to competing in a three-day-long competition, they traveled across the country, seeing several agricultural and other tourist attractions during their 11 days abroad.

For the past six years, the American Society of Agronomy has awarded travel stipends to students placing in the top six at the U.S. Collegiate Crops Judging competitions held in Kansas City, Missouri, and Chicago, Illinois. These stipends enable U.S. students to compete at the Australian competition the following year. Wordes placed sixth at both contests in November 2018, earning him one of the travel scholarships to Australia. After other top placing students passed on the opportunity to attend the competition, Van Regenmorter and LaVoy were each offered the option to compete, completing the team of three from SDSU.

The team competed well considering the unique contest components that differed from typical U.S. collegiate competitions. In the U.S., collegiate crops competitions consist of three parts: grain grading, seed and plant identification and seed analysis. These components require students to grade grain samples, identify 200 seed and plant samples and analyze seed samples for contaminants, which they also must identify and classify. The Australian contest also consisted of three main sections, but each was very different in comparison to the U.S. counterpart. These sections included seed identification, three field and business management exams and a live evaluation of a wheat and lentil field, with each field including a crops and weeds identification, yield estimates and management plan recommendations portion.

In addition to the competition, the group traveled across Australia to see various agricultural farms and other tourist attractions. These included tours of banana, sugarcane, coffee and avocado plantations, a specialty hay farm, cherry and apple orchards, a grape vineyard, grain operations, a sheep farm and a wheat breeding facility. Snorkeling on Great Barrier Reef, exploring the city of Sydney and its infamous Opera House and touring Kangaroo Island’s agricultural operations, a wildlife sanctuary and the Remarkable Rocks at Flinders Chase National Park also existed as highlights of the group’s excursion. By the end of the entire trip, the Kansas-South Dakota group had traveled from Queensland to New South Wales to South Australia before heading back to the U.S.

All three team members graduated from CAHES in 2019, with Wordes obtaining his bachelor’s degree in agricultural science and LaVoy and Van Regenmorter completing their degrees in agronomy. Since they graduated last year, each team member now lives and works in a different state. LaVoy is currently employed by Farmers Elevator Company in Humboldt, South Dakota, as a sales agronomist, and Van Regenmorter is a head brewer for Phat Fish Brewing in Dickinson, North Dakota. Wordes works as an agronomy applicator at a cooperative in Redwood Falls, Minnesota, while also farming corn and soybeans.

“Crops judging helped me in my career by giving me a thorough understanding of many different species of weeds and crops,” Wordes said. “I would recommend crops judging to anyone with a strong interest in agronomy who is willing to put in the work, learn a lot of material, and be competitive.”

Turnipseed has coached crops judging teams at SDSU for almost 30 years. While he has trained several national award-winning teams and individuals, he finds it especially important for students to simply take the opportunity to judge during college and to gain the real-world experiences it provides.

“Just by participating in these judging teams, you learn a lot more than what we are going to teach you in the classroom with just the typical courses because you’re getting to see and actually do a lot more on the judging team than you ever do in the class,” Turnipseed said.

While competing at the Australian competition for the first time has proven monumental for SDSU, the crops judging team has continually showcased the great amount of skill and expertise that lies within the university’s Department of Agronomy, Horticulture and Plant Science on the national level. With less than 20 collegiate crops judging programs in the nation, SDSU continues to showcase its bright students and investment in undergraduate education year after year through these contests.

“Our department is very supportive of judging teams, and the administration realizes the importance of them too,” Turnipseed said. Not every university is like that.”
Above: The group prepares for their first snorkeling lesson at Great Barrier Reef.

Top left: Van Regenmorter, LaVoy and Wordes at a beach on Kangaroo Island.

Top right: The SDSU team at the Remarkable Rocks at Flinders Chase National Park.
Mike Brown will always cherish the day he hooded his first Ph.D. student or shared in any of his students’ successes. After over 26 years at South Dakota State University, Brown recently retired from his career in undergraduate and graduate education, advising and research in wildlife and fisheries and natural resource management.
Mike Brown has been a member of SDSU faculty since January 1994, serving as assistant, associate and professor in the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences before becoming a professor and distinguished professor in the Department of Natural Resource Management, in addition to serving as the program leader and major advisor in the department.

“Dr. Brown has been an actively engaged and valued faculty member owing to his many contributions in teaching, advising, research and service/outreach throughout his entire career at SDSU,” said Natural Resource Management Department Head Michele R. Dudash.

Originally from Ft. Smith, Arkansas, Brown received his bachelor’s degree from Arkansas Tech University and master’s and doctoral degrees from Texas A & M in wildlife and fisheries sciences with a fisheries specialization.

“Recognizing that the wildlife and fisheries sciences program at SDSU was one of the elite programs in the U.S. led me to jump at the first opportunity for a tenure-track faculty position,” Brown said.

Brown’s involvement with the university did not stop at his professional and teaching roles; his belief in being involved with advising and mentoring students inside and outside the classroom has driven him to mentor students in their professional goals as well. In 2019, Brown received the J. Walters McCarty award for his excellence in advising students.

“An educator’s role does not end outside of the classroom,” Brown said.

The J. Walters McCarty award is given in recognition of outstanding advisors of undergraduate students in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences. This award is made possible by alumnus David B. Anderson in tribute to his former academic advisor, J. Walters McCarty, a professor of Animal and Range Sciences at SDSU from 1948 to 1986.

“I believe that one of our most important obligations as educators is to ensure, through thoughtful advising and mentoring, that students develop into socially responsible citizens and effective professionals,” Brown said. “Following course registration consultations, I truly enjoy discussing current objectives and long-term career goals, and how best to achieve them while at SDSU.”

Prior to his academic training, Brown completed a five-year tour with the United States Coast Guard and spent much of that time along the coastlines of the Gulf of Mexico, Alaska and Oregon. The work he dedicated to protecting natural resources during that time paralleled his lifelong interest in natural resources, particularly in fish and wildlife, therefore stimulating his desire to pursue further education in fisheries.

Since coming to SDSU, Brown’s teaching roles have included seven undergraduate, three dual-listed and three graduate courses, in addition to coordinating numerous undergraduate and graduate seminars and mentoring several independent studies, internships and thesis and dissertation courses. This past year, Brown taught quantitative fisheries science, biometry, ichthyology and natural resource statistics.

Brown also advised the American Fisheries Society (AFS) Student Subunit on campus, a society in which he has been a member of the parent organization since 1986. Through his 34 years of involvement with the organization, Brown has served as president of the north central division and two chapters, as a member of the Board of Professional Certification and serves as chair of the education committee. Brown’s involvement with organizations does not stop there; he has been involved as a chair or member in several regional and national review panels, committees, elected positions and boards that further show his dedication to the profession and industry.

One of Brown’s biggest career milestones has included his efforts in the background research that ultimately led to the formation of Prairie AquaTech, an aquaculture protein production company with a technology center in Brookings, SD, and a manufacturing plant in Volga, SD. His expertise in fisheries enabled him to collaborate with colleague Bill Gibbons, Director of the South Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station and distinguished professor of biology and microbiology, to improve protein content and reduce antinutritional components of plant feedstuffs at the bench level.

“I had previously been working with distillers grains and other cereal and oilseeds, but when I started working with Bill, I was looking for ways of modifying those basic feedstuffs to improve the nutritional quality,” Brown said. “It basically grew legs from there.”

After years of research, their developments in both the aquaculture research and manufacturing sectors allowed for the integration into the commercial production space it exists in today. Both Brown and Gibbons currently serve as chief science officers for the company.

For his efforts in fisheries science, Brown serves as Elected Fellow of the American Institute of Fisheries Research Biologists. He has also received the Canon Intellectual Property Commercialization Award and the F.O. Butler Award for Excellence in Research while at SDSU. In addition, through his professional career, Brown has received two Distinguished Service Awards from the American Fisheries Society. However, his achievements as a professor, mentor and advisor are further proven through his students, who have received 49 awards, including 10 Best Student Paper and 12 Best Student Poster awards.

While he officially retired in May 2020, Brown will continue to oversee his two Ph.D. candidates and one post-doctoral researcher. As a professor emeritus of fisheries science, he will also proceed with researching and working with companies on further developments of alternative plant-based ingredients for aquatic and terrestrial animal feeds.
South Dakota State University College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences students Maddie Weninger and Cara Teigum have been selected to serve in leadership roles for the Agriculture Future of America (AFA) organization. Maddie Weninger, a senior agricultural education student from Howard Lake, Minnesota, is a member of the AFA Student Advisory Team. Cara Teigum, a junior agricultural leadership student from Madelia, Minnesota, was chosen to serve as an ambassador for the organization.

AFA is a leader and professional development organization for collegiate leaders and young professionals. Providing leader development, intern support and scholarships, AFA seeks to be a catalyst in the preparation of a new generation of agriculture leaders.

As a Student Advisory Team member, Weninger serves as AFA’s student voice, providing direction to the organization and its programming.

“I have seen countless college students go through AFA leader development programs and they have grown into incredible young professionals,” Weninger said. “This organization has proven its worth to its participants and every year raises the bar to provide refreshing and unique experiences most college students couldn’t even dream of having.”

Weninger and nine other Student Advisory Team members were selected through a competitive application process. A major component of the Student Advisory Team’s responsibilities is the planning and delivery of the 2020 AFA Leader Development Program, specifically AFA Leaders Conference. This event is AFA’s core leader development program and over 800 delegates from across the nation are selected to attend.

“I love building relationships with others and learning about their stories. Through AFA I am able to capitalize on those relationships by connecting students to potential opportunities based on their passions, as well as interact with professionals,” Weninger said.

Weninger’s entrance into the AFA leader development programs began in 2017 when she was selected for AFA Leaders Conference. Since then, she has attended two additional AFA Leaders Conference Tracks. In addition to her involvement with AFA, she is also active in National Teach Ag, LeadState, Dairy Club and Little International.

As an Agriculture Future of America Ambassador, Teigum and her fellow team members interact with agribusiness leaders, campus faculty and fellow students as they represent AFA during their year of service.

“AFA has provided me with invaluable relationships and industry connections,” Teigum said. “I am excited to welcome students and make certain they know that they have a place in this organization and industry.”

Teigum and the other 24 ambassadors were selected through a competitive application process to increase awareness of AFA programs on their campuses and in their regions. Ambassadors will also interact with industry professionals at various events and meetings on behalf of AFA.

Teigum’s entrance into the AFA leader development programs began in 2018 when she was selected as an AFA Leader and Academic Scholar by the St. James, Minnesota, community and attended AFA Leaders Conference. She was also selected to represent AFA at National Ag Day.

“The career development trainings I have received through AFA are second to none and will set me apart in my future career,” Teigum said.

In addition to her involvement with AFA, she is also active in Sigma Alpha and Little International.

The South Dakota State University College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences continues a strong tradition of training student leaders through the AFA program. Forty-nine CAFES students attended the 2019 AFA Conference, representing the fourth largest contingent attending from any U.S. university.

About AFA

AFA builds bridges for young leaders to foster engagement and innovation in food and agriculture. With program participation increasing 28% in the last five years, AFA has provided 21,000 leader development experiences to college leaders and young professionals from more than 200 colleges and universities throughout 43 states since its inception in 1996. AFA has awarded more than $10 million in academic and leader development scholarships. For more information about AFA, visit www.agfuture.org.
Three students majoring in agricultural education from South Dakota State University were given the opportunity to participate in National Teach Ag Campaign initiatives during the 2019-2020 academic year. The Teach Ag Campaign is a national effort focused on recruiting and retaining agriculture teachers while celebrating the positive impact those teachers make on their communities and students.

Madeline Weninger, senior agricultural education major from Howard Lake, Minnesota, served as a 2019-2020 National Teach Ag Ambassador. She served alongside 13 agricultural education students from across the nation. The National Teach Ag Ambassador Program, part of the National Teach Ag Campaign, was created in an effort to address the current shortage for agriculture teachers across the United States. As a Teach Ag ambassador, Weninger used her story and passion for agricultural education to encourage others to consider pursuing a career in agricultural education.

As part of her responsibilities as a Teach Ag Ambassador, Weninger promoted Teach Ag at events including the National FFA Convention and by participating in virtual seminars. At the National FFA Convention, she took part in developing curriculum for workshops and presenting the content to local high school students. Weninger also spoke with Teach Ag sponsors and was able to attend several professional development workshops.

Weninger’s duties included working with agricultural education leaders within South Dakota to promote the National Teach Ag Campaign to high school and postsecondary students through the use of social media, email, workshops, booths and presentations. She had the opportunity to participate in an agricultural education road show where she was able to visit several agricultural education programs. “Seeing the teachers’ passion for their students and programs made me confident that agricultural education is what I really want to do,” Weninger said.

2019 was the third consecutive year an SDSU agricultural education student was selected to serve as a National Teach Ag Ambassador.

Amie Carter, 2020 agricultural education graduate from Platteville, Wisconsin, and MaQuelah Schueler, 2020 agricultural education graduate from Willmar, Minnesota, were selected to participate at the 2019 Future Agriscience Teachers Symposium. The three-day symposium was held in Raleigh, North Carolina, September 17-19, 2019. Carter and Schueler were selected from a pool of national applicants based on their leadership abilities, previous volunteer and advocacy work and their passion for agricultural education. The symposium provided Carter and Schueler with professional development, networking and mentoring opportunities.

“FFA is where I grew up and was able to develop my skills as a leader,” shared Weninger. “I am excited to create relationships with my future students and help them become the best leader they can be.”
or junior precision agriculture student Josh Ihnen, agriculture was not exactly where he thought he would find a career for himself. However, the combination of being drawn to the industry through his cousin’s family farm and his love for understanding how things work helped the nontraditional student from Tulare, South Dakota, realize that precision agriculture was the perfect path for him.

Gaining hands-on experience as a research agronomy intern for Precision Planting this summer has further confirmed that the career field is the right fit for him. "Prior to this experience, I was undecided on what area was right for me to focus on," Ihnen said. "I have been able to centralize what area of agriculture I am most interested in for the future."

As a leading provider of precision agriculture technology, Precision Planting provides cutting edge planter parts for a variety of planter platforms and is driven on improving the grower’s bottom line. Precision Planting is a subsidiary of AGCO Corporation with operations based out of Tremont, Illinois, where Ihnen has been able to jump into the various aspects of precision agriculture. His internship experience has enabled him to work in a research and development department installing, troubleshooting and testing planter accessories that have not yet been released to the public. In addition, he has assessed stand counts for corn and soybeans across central Illinois, compiled data to determine if the tested products are performing properly and even traveled to Tennessee, Alabama and Mississippi to work with regional dealers on cotton stand counts with various planter configurations. These unique travel opportunities have further enhanced Ihnen’s experiences with different soil and crop types and how equipment operates in various conditions, which have led him to directly contribute to the compilation of data that ultimately drives product development and...
Ihnen recognizes that without SDSU and its precision agriculture program, he would not have been equipped to understand the technology he works with every day during his internship. He credits courses such as Introduction to Precision Agriculture and Precision Ag Data Mapping for his ability to understand how GPS technology can improve growers’ bottom lines. The hands-on experiences in his classes helped prepare him to work with Global Information System mapping on local farms. Applying this information gained in the classroom in a real-world experience is something that Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering Department Head Van Kelley finds incredibly important to student education.

“We have to get students to see how classroom theory connects with how they will use those skills on the job,” Kelley said. “After a student has done an internship, they have a lot more focus on what they want to learn back on campus, and it certainly gives them more context on what they still need to learn.”

Ihnen's internship experience has also enabled him to gain critical connections with industry professionals. Two Precision Planting employees, Cory Muhlbauer and Aaron Hermann, have served as his research agronomy mentors over the summer. As agronomists, they have provided Ihnen with opportunities to learn while in the field and have helped him in understanding current agricultural trends and practices across the country.

“I have been very fortunate to see where the industry is going in the future and what areas cause the most issues when it comes to precision technology,” Ihnen said.

The Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering Department requires undergraduate students pursuing degrees in agricultural and biosystems engineering, agricultural systems technology and precision agriculture, a shared major with the Agronomy, Horticulture and Plant Science Department, to complete two internship credits before graduation. A summer internship such as Ihnen’s can fulfill this credit requirement. Over 40 students in the department were able to intern with companies in Canada, Montana, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Illinois and Nebraska this summer. With agriculture being deemed an essential industry, many companies, such as Precision Planting, maintained their summer internship programs while employing more safety protocols to ensure interns and employees remained healthy amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, which also meant that SDSU students could still fulfill their internship credit requirement this summer rather than delaying the requirement.

Stephanie Bebensee, academic advisor and program coordinator for the department, oversees the student internships.

“Internships are where students get to explore their career options,” Bebensee said. “The internship experience provides students an opportunity to further develop soft skills like communication, teamwork, problem solving, adaptability and leadership and to build their professional network.”

A unique part of the department’s internship requirement includes the implementation of faculty supervisors into the students’ summer experiences. There are currently nine faculty members supervising summer interns, one of which includes Douglas Prairie, an instructor who is advising nine students this summer, including Ihnen.

As a faculty supervisor, Prairie’s main role is to establish a relationship with both the student and their site supervisor. During a typical summer, Prairie would visit the student’s internship location to check in with them. However, due to COVID-19, he has scheduled three video calls with the students and their site supervisors to ensure both the student and supervisor know what the department expects from the student in terms of completing the internship credit, which oftentimes means developing a project for the student to complete sometime during their internship. Their project is later showcased through a poster event in the fall.

Prairie has observed many students obtain full-time positions with the same company the students interned with.

“Having not had internships with those companies, our students might not have been hired,” Prairie said. “Many of the companies we place students at utilize their internship programs to recruit high quality talent. If they already have experience with our students, they often want to maintain a relationship with them once they graduate.”

As Ihnen’s faculty supervisor, Prairie has connected with Ihnen and his Precision Planting supervisor throughout the summer and has noted the great amount of hands-on experiences Ihnen is receiving with planter technology.

“I think it’s a testament to our program and what we are doing for them to hire one of our students considering how far away we are from them,” Prairie said.

This is not the first time SDSU has received recognition for its precision agriculture program. Having the first bachelor of science degree in precision agriculture in the nation, the university continues to prepare students to lead the evolution of technology needed to ensure farm profitability and ecosystem sustainability. Soon, undergraduate students’ learning experiences will be further enhanced at SDSU through the Raven Precision Agriculture Center, a 129,000-square-foot building on the northwest edge of campus that will provide new opportunities for laboratory and classroom capabilities.

“I’m really excited about the space we will have,” Kelley said. “This will be the first time in many generations we will be able to have hands-on laboratory experiences with full-sized equipment every month of the year.”

With construction on the Raven Precision Agriculture Center scheduled to conclude in summer 2021, the department welcome students to the new facility in time for fall 2021 classes.

While the new building will open the door for many more opportunities, students continue to prove the importance of internship experiences in addition to their knowledge built in SDSU classrooms.

“My summer internship has been a very important part of my education,” Ihnen said. “Now I am certain that the precision agriculture degree path is the right one for me.”
Kyle Hartmann, junior horticulture student from Potomac Falls, Virginia, was the student speaker at the 2019 Agronomy, Horticulture and Plant Sciences 36th Annual Scholarship Recognition Event. Hartmann received the Clarence, Ethel and Henry Dybvig Memorial Scholarship in Horticulture, Minnehaha County Master Gardeners Scholarship in Horticulture and the Paul Collins/Paul Bunyan Scholarship Endowment at the event.

Hartmann's interest in horticulture began early on in life growing up next to one of the largest remaining forests in Virginia and gardening with his parents and grandparents. Growing up near the forest allowed him to hike, fish and explore nature. Though his original intention was to study marine biology, after a trip to the west coast, Hartmann realized his passion was horticulture. His realization brought him to SDSU where he is now studying horticulture.

"With a horticulture degree, I can more easily grow what is meaningful to me and share the knowledge with those around me," said Hartmann. "I have come to realize throughout the last year that no matter whom I am talking to, I can make a connection with them through the love of plants."

Hartmann spent a summer working for the United States Botanical Gardens in Washington D.C. While at the Botanical Gardens, Hartmann cared for economically important plants and also helped with the summer seasonal display. He cared for plants including pineapple lilies, firecracker flowers, anthurium and golden shrimp plants. He recently had the opportunity to travel to Peru with the U.S. Botanical Gardens on a plant expedition. Hartmann traveled around northern Peru, visiting rain forest, desert, alpine and savanna ecosystems studying the plant life in each ecosystem.

As part of his experience at SDSU, Hartmann has been caring for the conservatory on the SDSU campus. His role at the conservatory allows him to take what he is learning in his courses and apply it to real plants. His is able to learn how to care for plants from around world through his role at the conservatory. Hartmann has been also given the responsibility of reviving plants that were struggling by repotting and trimming them. Additionally, he has arranged the plants based on the type of care they require to make caring for the plant easier.

"Scholarships have enabled someone like me living 1,300 miles from home to study what I am most passionate about without comprising on the most important part of it all: enjoyment and appreciation for what I love," shared Hartmann.
Three South Dakota State University dairy science students are recipients of prestigious 2020 National Dairy Herd Improvement Association (DHIA) scholarships.

Sanne de Bruijn, a dairy production and dairy manufacturing student from Vicksburg, Michigan; Calissa Lubben, a dairy production student from Edgerton, Minnesota; and Shelby Kuechle, a dairy production student from Eden Valley, Minnesota; are among only 14 recipients selected nationwide to be awarded the $1,000 scholarships.

Students were chosen based on scholastic achievements, leadership in school and community activities and responses to DHIA and career-related questions. To be eligible for a National DHIA scholarship, applicants must be a family member or employee of a herd on DHIA test, a family member of a DHIA employee or an employee of a DHIA affiliate. The DHIA affiliate for the herd or affiliate employee must be a National DHIA member.

"Receiving a scholarship like this makes me push myself harder as a student to succeed in my studies because I know I have my friends and family, along with supporters like DHIA," Lubben said.

At SDSU, Lubben has been involved with undergraduate research studying calf growth at the SDSU Dairy Research and Training Facility. She is also active in the Dairy Club, serving as the 2020 Vice President and Dairy Camp Co-Coordinator. She also currently serves as a South Dakota Dairy Ambassador through Midwest Dairy. After graduating, Lubben hopes to find a career working with the National Dairy FARM (Farmers Assuring Responsible Management) program.

de Bruijn was awarded a scholarship in memory of Joe Drexler, who worked for NorthStar Cooperative DHI Services (now known as CentralStar Cooperative Inc. – DHI Services). “I am honored and incredibly thankful to receive so much support,” she said. “I truly appreciate the DHIA organization for their generous contribution to my current and continuing education in dairy.”

At SDSU, she has worked at the SDSU Davis Dairy Plant, served as a mentor for the freshman dairy seminar class, and been involved in dairy products judging, dairy challenge, dairy cattle judging and Dairy Club.

After graduating from SDSU in May, de Bruijn is planning to continue her education through a master’s project and apprenticeship with Lactalis in France and then come back to the U.S. to work for Lactalis American Group upon successful completion of her dairy engineering degree.

Kuechle has been involved in undergraduate research at SDSU, evaluating the effects of different feedstuffs on glucose levels of transition dairy cows. She is also a member of the Dairy Club and is currently serving as a South Dakota Dairy Ambassador through Midwest Dairy.

After completing her education at SDSU, Kuechle hopes to find a career working with the National Dairy FARM (Farmers Assuring Responsible Management) program.

Three South Dakota State University students receive National Dairy Scholarships

BY SYDNEY MEYER

Three South Dakota State University dairy science students are recipients of prestigious 2020 National Dairy Herd Improvement Association (DHIA) scholarships.

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"Receiving this scholarship is a huge honor," Kuechle said. “These companies are choosing to invest in the future of the agricultural industry and I just want to be a good investment for them. It motivates me to keep working hard.”

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National Dairy Herd Improvement Association, a trade association for the dairy records industry, serves the best interests of its members and the dairy industry by maintaining the integrity of dairy records and advancing dairy information systems.
Prexy Council is the student-led governing body of all College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences clubs and organizations. Following the abrupt end to the spring semester, the CAFES Prexy Council created a senior awards program to recognize those May 2020 graduates who have exemplified significant achievement, leadership and dedication to the college throughout their undergraduate education. Sanne de Bruijn, Kylee Kohls and Corey Berscheit were selected to receive the 2020 CAFES Senior Award.

Graduating seniors completed an application to be considered for the CAFES Senior Award, which is new this year. A committee of CAFES students and faculty members then selected three outstanding award recipients from the pool of applicants. Recipients were selected based on academic achievement, leadership, community service, extra-curricular activities and extraordinary contribution to SDSU and CAFES.

Kylee Kohls

Graduating with a degree in agricultural communications and minors in food safety and meat science in just three years, Kylee Kohls has demonstrated her dedication to the agriculture industry by partaking in educational and leadership opportunities, both on and off the SDSU campus. Not only has she played an active role in collegiate student organizations such as Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow (ACT), National Agri-Marketing Association, Block and Bridle, Little International and CAFES student ambassadors, but she has also served in state and national leadership capacities during her college career by serving as a Minnesota FFA state officer from 2017-2018 and an Agriculture Future of America (AFA) student advisory team member in 2019. Representing the college as the CAFES Advocate this year, Kohls and her Prexy Council team members created a more cohesive and collaborative platform for CAFES organizations to support each other and planned and carried out the 10th Annual SDSU Ag Day celebration, an event that the team moved to a virtual format due to the transition to online classes this spring.

Kohls’ active involvement in a variety of organizations has enabled her to seek many opportunities beyond campus and state lines. In fact, she traveled to Kansas City six times in the first three months of the 2019 fall semester to plan and execute the AFA Leader’s Conference with her student advisory teammates and attend both the National ACT Professional Development Conference and the National Association of Farm Broadcasting (NAFB) Convention.

“The new friends, reuniting relationships, professional development and career opportunities gained from those experiences will impact the rest of my life,” Kohls said. “And none of them would have been possible without the encouragement, support and trust of SDSU faculty and fellow Jackrabbits.”

Originally from Litchfield, Minnesota, Kohls will relocate to Wooster, Ohio, soon as she begins her position as a brand communications specialist for Certified Angus Beef LLC.
Corey Berscheit

Corey Berscheit’s impact on South Dakota State University reaches far beyond CAFES alone. While pursuing degrees in agricultural science and animal science over the past four years, The Becker, Minnesota, native has found service as an important aspect of his education. In addition to his involvement with campus clubs such as Barnyard Cadets and Little International, Berscheit has volunteered with other organizations in the Brookings community, including Habitat for Humanity and Rotary International. However, he has proven his dedication to serving SDSU students even more through his recruiting efforts as an admissions ambassador and time as a senator and vice president of the SDSU Students’ Association.

“When I began my journey serving on Students’ Association, I never would have guessed the impact that students’ voices could have on South Dakota State University and the state of South Dakota,” Berscheit said.

Prior to becoming vice president for the student government organization, Berscheit served as a CAFES senator, drafting a variety of legislation and speaking on behalf of the college and its students, including supporting the collaborative Professional Program in Veterinary Medicine in conjunction with the University of Minnesota. In his role as vice president this year, Berscheit allocated $2.7 million, managed senator committee appointments and represented SDSU to the South Dakota Board of Regents. He has also spoken on behalf of the entire SDSU student body in Pierre as a registered lobbyist advocating for students in higher education, including testifying on establishing a needs-based scholarship in the state.

After completing a dairy feed sales internship with Purina Animal Nutrition last summer and discovering a passion for animal nutrition, Berscheit plans to become a dairy feed salesman with a long-term goal of specializing in young animal nutrition.

Sanne de Bruijn

Growing up, Sanne de Bruijn immersed herself in several aspects of the dairy industry. When she found out that the SDSU Dairy and Food Science Department would allow her to major in both dairy production and dairy manufacturing, complete both degrees in four years and explore hands-on learning experiences ranging from working with cows to selling the finished product, she knew exactly where she wanted to pursue her post-secondary education.

After graduating this May with the aforesaid degrees and a minor in food safety, de Bruijn plans to move from her hometown of Vicksburg, Michigan, to France to complete a master’s project on behalf of the dairy processing company, Lactalis. Upon successful completion of her study, she will graduate with a master’s degree in dairy engineering and return to the U.S. to hopefully implement her project into the Lactalis facility in Buffalo, New York, a location that primarily produces mozzarella and ricotta cheese.

Since her freshman year, de Bruijn has taken advantage of every opportunity she has been given, and her list of collegiate leadership experiences can attest that. From serving as the head mentor for the freshman dairy seminar class on campus to recruiting new students for the college as a CAFES student ambassador, her involvement in the Dairy and Food Science Department and the college as a whole has proven her passion for the dairy industry and personal commitment to guiding others in their educational paths. In addition, de Bruijn has competed on numerous judging teams, attended professional development conferences and served as the SDSU dairy club vice president for the past two years. Through this role, de Bruijn has created an impact on more than just SDSU students. In fact, one of de Bruijn’s favorite events within the college included representing the dairy club at Ag Day at the Pavilion in Sioux Falls each year where she helped plan interactive activities for youth to learn more about the agriculture and dairy industries. Overall, de Bruijn credits the organizations and people she has met over the past four years for providing those opportunities that have made an impact on her life.

“I left SDSU as a proud alumnus feeling rich with experiences, skills and a strong support system,” de Bruijn said. “SDSU has left a lasting impact on my life, well beyond just my future career plans.”
Distinguished Alumni Awards

Collette Schultz Kaster and Peter Orwick received Distinguished Alumni Awards Sept. 23, 2019 at South Dakota State University’s annual Department of Animal Science Scholarships and Awards Banquet.

The Distinguished Alumni Award recognizes the accomplishments of alumni of the Animal Science Department who have impacted the agricultural industry, communities and individuals across the state, nation and world. Contributions of Distinguished Alumni include outstanding professional accomplishment, sustained service to agriculture or distinguished leadership. Recipients of this award must be alumni of at least 15 years and may not be a current SDSU employee.

Collette Shultz Kaster graduated with honors from SDSU in 1988. She was a member of the 1987 Meats Judging Team and served as assistant coach for the team in 1988. She was also coach for the Meats Judging Team at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where she received her master’s degree as well as coached the winning 1990 Meat Animal Evaluation Contest team.

One of her letters of support indicated, “Collette has developed the relationships and reputation that put her in demand for specialty business analysis work, and as a trusted resource for anything animal handling, meat quality, and business strategy-related in the food animal production, processing and retailing world.”

The meat and livestock industries across the nation have benefitted from her expertise and leadership. Following her employment as a meat scientist with Pig Improvement Company (PIC), she quickly rose through the ranks at Premium Standard Farms (PSF) to become Vice President of Food Safety and Technical Services. After PSF become part of Farmland and Smithfield, she continued to make her mark in the swine and meat industries as Senior Vice President of Quality Technical Services and Livestock Procurement where she was responsible for quality assurance teams, animal welfare, pork quality, as well as hog procurement across the fresh pork processing division. Following this successful industry career, Kaster led the development and served as executive director of Professional Animal Auditor Certification Organization (PAACO), the leading non-profit organization for the training and certification of animal welfare auditors and audits.

Throughout her career, she has been active in the American Meat Science Association, serving as President and receiving the AMSA Fellow award. Most recently (2019), she was named as the Chief Executive Officer of AMSA.

“Collette Kaster’s numerous leadership contributions have made a lasting impact on our food animal industries,” says Joe Cassady, Head of the SDSU Department of Animal Science. “Kaster’s deep understanding of technical issues, ability to address audiences of all backgrounds, and her global network, combined with her insight, integrity and exceptional support of colleagues have truly left a mark and will continue to impact the livestock and meats industries for many years.”

Peter Orwick graduated from SDSU in 1984 where he was on SDSU’s Wool Judging team. He has remained committed to advancing the sheep industry throughout his entire career, with a unique ability to bridge the gaps from rural sheep production to international markets. For more than 20 years, Orwick has served as Executive Director of the American Sheep Industry Association.

His nominee noted that, “He has been a strong voice for agriculture at all levels, having the ability to adopt new technology to the industry based on sound science while retaining common sense.”

He has developed coalitions of diverse industry participants and advised elected leaders on priority issues to find real solutions to industry problems. Among the national initiatives he has been involved with include providing leadership for development of the Lamb Livestock Risk Protection (LRP) livestock insurance and implementation of USDA mandatory livestock price reporting system for lamb and lamb meat sales that the industry has relied on for 15 years. This system is the only livestock program that also mandates price reporting in imported meat pricing. He created a country of origin labeling for lamb and meat products in the 2008 Farm Bill and importantly maintained this authority in the 2014 Farm Bill, which is currently enforced at the retail level. He established a for-profit subsidiary of the association to provide key services to sheep producers as well as wool and lamb businesses yet protect the tax status of the American Sheep Industry Association.

The National Sheep Industry Improvement Center, which has provided more than $35 million in funding for grants to support infrastructure of the lamb and wool industry, was established under Orwick’s leadership. Other issues he has been involved with include creation of a national fund to support legal defense of the sheep industry in cases involving federal lands grazing and predator control, along with continued work at the U.S. Sheep Experiment Station of USDA. He established a Young Entrepreneur program in the Association to promote efficient sheep production and leadership with younger sheep producers.

He created a national Lamb Industry Adjustment Plan to improve competitiveness of the domestic lamb industry. As County Executive Director of the USDA Agricultural and Stabilization Service, he implemented the conservation programs of the 1985 Farm Bill including the sodbuster/swamp buster provisions as well as converted the office operations to a computerized system.

Educational efforts through university programs, the Sheep Industry Handbook and the Sheep and Goat Research Journal have also been a priority that has grown and excelled with his leadership. Peter has been a true leader of the American sheep industry for more than 30 years.

“Peter Orwick’s leadership has been critical to the viability of the United States sheep industry,” says Cassady.
Richard Wahlstrom Animal Science Award

Dr. George Perry received the Richard Wahlstrom Animal Science Award for Excellence at South Dakota State University’s annual Department of Animal Science’s Scholarship and Awards Banquet.

A monetary award is given each year to recognize outstanding scholarship of Animal Science faculty members in the areas of teaching, research, extension and/or outreach. To be eligible, a faculty member must have significant and meritorious evidence of achievement. This includes: exceptionally effective effort devoted to insuring the advancement of scholarship in the Department of Animal Science, possession of high scholarly standards and available examples of the faculty member’s scholarly outputs. This award is supported by the Dean of the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences.

The 2019 recipient is George Perry. Perry has served as a professor in the Department of Animal Science whose research has built a highly productive research and extension program in reproductive management. Beef and dairy producers adapt technologies into their operations impacting both future animal production and ability to feed the world’s growing population. Many of his research findings have been adopted into producers’ management decisions. The impacts of his program on the beef industry are exemplified by the willingness of producers to allow Perry to conduct research on their operations and show the relevance and importance of his program.

His SDSU Extension activities include being a member of the Bovine Reproductive Task Force, offering numerous artificial insemination (AI) schools as well as beef cattle workshops. His popular AI school has trained more than 600 individuals. With all of his accomplishments, Perry has been highly sought after for cattle reproductive management advice by producers not only in South Dakota but throughout the country as well as the world. His program has received more than $4.2 million in grant funds or gifts. He has published 75 peer-review manuscripts, 13 book chapters, 166 abstracts, 103 non-refereed scientific publications and proceedings and 22 extension articles and videos.

“Dr. Perry is the first two-time winner of this award. It is a testament to the sustained excellence of his research and graduate mentoring programs,” says Dr. Joseph Cassady, Head of the SDSU Department of Animal Science.

Friend of the Department Award

Pipestone Holdings received the Friend of the Department Award at the South Dakota State University’s (SDSU) annual Department of Animal Science Scholarship and Awards Banquet. The Friend of the Department Award honors a person or business who has impacted the students, staff and faculty of the department, as well as the entire agricultural industry across the state, nation and world. Contributions of friends can take many forms, from advisory to providing educational opportunities to financial support. To recognize those individuals who have demonstrated outstanding support of the department, the “Friend of the Animal Science Department” is awarded annually at the departmental awards banquet. Recipients of the award must have provided contributions to the department over a period of at least 10 years, and may not be a current SDSU employee.

Originating in the 1960’s, SDSU and Pipestone Veterinary Services’ relationship began as an endeavor to provide education and innovation to sheep customers across the country. That same drive for independent farmer success continued, albeit with swine, as Pipestone’s mission of “Helping the farmers of today create the farms of tomorrow” evolved through the formation of the Pipestone System in 1990.

That love for independent farmers still fuels Pipestone’s growth and is the foundation of the six Pipestone Veterinary Services locations which include 42 veterinarians across the Midwest today. The Pipestone System has grown into the third largest pork producing system in the U.S., with additional presence in China and Mexico.

That growth requires talent, fueling an even deeper collaboration between Pipestone and SDSU. Helping build the next generation of workforce, Pipestone assists with job preparation skills, adjunct professorships and lectures, as well as internships and facilities for students to gain on-the-job-experience.

Pipestone Veterinary Services and Pipestone System are routinely one of the top employers of SDSU Animal Science graduates. Their financial contributions have been significant and long-standing, providing research assistance, scholarships and internships to students. They contributed $100,000 to SDSU’s recently completed Swine Education and Research Facility, and were also responsible for many other allied industry partners making significant donations to the faculty. Their contributions of time, talent, and resources have made and will continue to make a significant difference to the Animal Science Department.

“Pipestone Holdings has been a strong partner. They are a leading employer of SDSU Animal Science graduates while providing financial support for scholarships, internships, and infrastructure,” says Dr. Joseph Cassady, Head of the SDSU Department of Animal Science.
For Kyla Dendinger, an agronomy career path was not on her radar in high school. The May 2020 agronomy graduate credits her FFA advisor for guiding her to discover her college major and what she wanted to do with her future. “She personally helped me realize my love for plants and passion for solving problems,” Dendinger said. “Little did she know that the advice and knowledge she taught me helped shape me into the person I am today with a career that I would have never dreamed of back in high school.”

Dendinger was chosen as one of the student speakers at the 36th annual Agronomy, Horticulture and Plant Science Department Scholarship Recognition Event held last October. The event recognized 92 student scholarship recipients and honored outstanding seniors, teachers, researchers and supporters in the department. “I was proud and excited to share with the donors present of the amazing experiences that we as students are given at SDSU, but more specifically within the Agronomy, Horticulture and Plant Science Department,” Dendinger said.

Throughout her college career, Dendinger pursued numerous extra-curricular and professional learning opportunities, both in the department, across campus and on the national level. From her leadership with SDSU admissions ambassadors, the Fishback Honors College, agronomy club and Little International to her membership in professional organizations such as Students of Agronomy, Soils and Environment Science, American Society of Agronomy, Crop Science Society of America and Soil Science Society of America, Dendinger has continually focused on her ability to generate an impact in her field. “I wanted to be a part of that solution that makes a difference,” Dendinger said.

Her desire to make a difference stemmed into the field of research during her time at SDSU. As a part of the Fishback Honors College graduation requirements, Dendinger completed an undergraduate research project focusing on germination and dormancy of Verbena hastata and Verbena stricta. Along with the help of Dr. Brent Turnipseed, Dendinger was able to take advantage of the undergraduate research opportunities the university and its faculty provide and continue to make an impact on the industry that motivates her to seek advancements for the growing world.

For her academic success and commitment to career goals, Dendinger was selected as one of five students nationwide to be named a Greenfield Scholar last year. This competitive program, sponsored by the American Society of Agronomy, paired Dendinger with a professional mentor, allowed her to network with professional agronomy members throughout the United States and provided her the opportunity to travel to Texas and Washington, D.C.

Graduating summa cum laude with the Fishback Honors College Distinction in May, Dendinger has accepted a position as a seed corn production agronomist with Corteva Agriscience based in York, Nebraska. “Agriculture is a growing field, and I love being immersed in the new technology and growing improvements to increase the way we produce crops to feed the world one day at a time,” Dendinger said.
During fall 2019, the South Dakota State University Equine Teaching Facility hosted horse handling and riding programs for American Indian students, veterans and current service members.

The programs met once a week for six weeks and participants experienced all aspects of horsemanship, including horse handling, safety, health and riding. The curriculum is put together by Jen Eide, Equine Teaching Facility manager, and Dr. Carmen Paulson, an equine instructor in the Animal Science Department.

“One of the goals of these programs is to provide a stress-free atmosphere where everyone can relax and enjoy the horses,” Paulson said. “Of all the topics covered in these programs, riding is the overwhelming favorite. This means the participants spend a lot of time in the saddle, both in the arena and out on the trail.”

Along with these core components, each program is individually tailored to fit specific needs. The American Indian student program is offered through the SDSU American Indian Student Center and is in its fifth year. It includes cultural components such as horse painting, in which the students paint the horses with historic symbols used by the Lakota people that are personally important to each of them.

“We want to be mindful of the traditional importance of the horse to the Lakota people,” said Morgan Catlett-Ausborn, academic and student success advisor for the SDSU American Indian Student Center.

Horses for Heroes, offered in partnership with the SDSU Veterans Affairs Office, targets the veteran population, which had been strictly for SDSU faculty, staff and students. However, the program was made available to Brookings-area veterans this year as well.

“Another SDSU staff member and I heard a presentation about the benefits of horse riding for veterans and decided we would like to get a program started on campus, so we worked with the Animal Science Department to bring Horses for Heroes to fruition,” said Russ Chavez, SDSU’s director for Veterans Affairs. The program is in its third year at SDSU.

The Office of Veterans Affairs recently received a grant of more than $22,000 from the National VA Adaptive Sports Grant Program to support the Horses for Heroes program. Funds from the grant will be used to purchase a ramp, helmets and a paraplegic saddle, in addition to supporting costs associated with running the program.

“We are really excited about receiving this grant and the opportunities it will provide to veterans and current service members,” Chavez said.

“Everyone at the Equine Teaching Facility enjoys providing groups the opportunity to spend time with the equine residents and our staff. We look forward to working with the campus community in fostering the therapeutic advantages of the horse-human connection,” Eide said.
Kyle Grubbs has been selected for the 2020 Teacher of the Year Award in the South Dakota State University College of Agriculture Food and Environmental Sciences. Each year, clubs and organizations within CAFES have the opportunity to nominate a professor they feel has gone above and beyond in their duties as an educator. Two finalists are chosen and then voted on by CAFES students.

Grubbs, assistant professor in the Department of Animal Science, teaches Introduction to Meat Science and the Advanced Meat Science courses. Those who nominated him for this honor noted that Grubbs is dedicated to ensuring his students understand and retain the information he presents in his courses. He provides students with relevant information about the meat industry throughout his courses and has the ability to relate content to the everyday life of his students.

Many individuals noted they have taken up a meat science minor because of the impact that Grubbs has had on their learning experience. He leads by example, constantly displaying his passion for the meat industry.

“I have never met a teacher as dedicated to the success of their students as Dr. Grubbs,” said Sam Pinchart, Alpha Gamma Rho nominator. "His ability to relate to students, willingness to go above and beyond, and dedication to student success makes him the perfect candidate for teacher of the year.”

Grubbs is known for his constant support of students not only academically, but personally and professionally as well. Grubbs’ open-door policy allows him the ability to foster personal relationships with each of his students. He is deeply committed to the success of each of his students both inside and outside of the classroom.

“Dr. Grubbs has worked hard to establish a reputation for excellence in the classroom at this early stage in his career,” shared Joe Cassady, Animal Science Department Head. "I am pleased that our students have recognized his work.”

CAFES teacher Peter Kovacs, assistant professor in the Department of Agronomy, Horticulture and Plant Science, was also a finalist for this honor.
The College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences has named South Dakota State University’s Block and Bridle chapter the 2020 CAFES Club of the Year. Each year, the CAFES Prexy Council selects one club that has gone above and beyond to provide members with a meaningful experience throughout the school year.

Block and Bridle’s objective is to provide its members with a more complete understanding of the field of animal science. The club provides members an opportunity to grow their passion for agriculture and learn how to be an agricultural advocate. Block and Bridle had 150 members this year spanning twelve different majors. Members are encouraged to become involved in leadership roles starting their freshman year and are continually encouraged to pursue leadership roles throughout their time in the club.

This year Block and Bridle made an effort to increase the number in attendance at club meetings. They were able to increase the average attendance by over sixty members per meeting.

Block and Bridle strives to provide new opportunities to its members every year. This year several club meetings included guest speakers and other networking opportunities. The club made it a priority to provide off-campus experiences for Block and Bridle members as well. Several club members went on a tour of 605 Sires as well as on a trip to the Black Hills Stock Show. Members also helped facilitate the Jackrabbit Memorial Jackpot Show as they do every year.

“With all of the events Block and Bridle is participating in, the club feels like it is in a better place than ever,” said Brooke Hendrickx, Block and Bridle President. “We plan on continuing to grow and get more involved in outside activities.”

CAFES Advocate

Lauralee Eaton, junior agricultural education major from Pine Island, Minnesota, has been selected to serve as the South Dakota State University College of Agriculture Food and Environmental Sciences Student Advocate. As Advocate, Eaton will serve as the voice of the CAFES student body for the 2020-2021 school year.

In her role as Advocate, Eaton hopes to increase communication between CAFES’ clubs. Through increased communication, she anticipates that this will encourage CAFES clubs to co-host events increasing networking and teamwork between the groups. Another goal of Eaton’s is to increase communications with CAFES alumni and future students as well through social media and the CAFES podcast, Feeding the Future SDSU. She hopes to influence the next generation of agriculturalists at SDSU through her role as Advocate.

Eaton has served CAFES in a variety of leadership roles prior to receiving her title of Advocate. She is currently president of the Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow club and is a member of the Agriculture Education/FFA Alumni club. Eaton has served as a CAFES Ambassador as well as an SDSU Teach Agriculture Ambassador. She is also the Fundraising Chair and Assistant Treasurer of the Sigma Alpha Omega Chapter and was part of the 2019 fall Leadstate cohort. Eaton also served as the 2018-2019 Minnesota FFA State Reporter.

Eaton’s donation of her time has prepared her for her role as Advocate. She has represented her clubs at various events such as the CAFES Ice Cream Social, Fall Scholarship Banquet, the CAFES Career Fair, Brookings Harvest Table and SDSU Ag Day. “I am thrilled to serve the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences as the Advocate,” shared Eaton. “I hope we are able to better the students and faculty through tough times with communication and education.”
Three South Dakota State University students are among only 10 college students selected nationwide by the National Pork Producers Council to receive 2020 Lois Britt Memorial Pork Industry Scholarships. The students were chosen as a result of their involvement and dedication to the pork industry, as well as their intention to pursue careers in the industry.

The SDSU students selected to receive the $2,500 scholarships are Dana Edleman, a food science student from Cambridge, Iowa; Molly Kroeger, a microbiology and biotechnology student from Lennox, South Dakota; and Logan Tesch, an animal science and agricultural business student from Henderson, Minnesota. To be eligible for the scholarships, students must be undergraduates in a two-year swine program or a four-year college of agriculture.

The Lois Britt Memorial Pork Industry Scholarship program is sponsored by CME Group and the National Pork Industry Foundation, and managed and administered by the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC). The awards were announced at NPPC’s annual National Pork Industry Forum held March 4-6 in Kansas City, Missouri.

Tesch grew up on a diversified farm with a finishing pig site, cattle and crops. Working in the barns and taking care of pigs with his dad and uncle sparked his interest in the swine industry. “I chose to come to SDSU because of the recently built Swine Education and Research Facility,” Tesch said. “The new technology and practices set it apart. Not even one week after beginning freshman year I was working in the facility.”
Edleman showed pigs in 4-H for eight years. She also fed and marketed pigs to local customers as custom processed pork as part of her FFA supervised agricultural experience (SAE) project in high school. Throughout high school, she volunteered for three summers at the World Pork Expo for Kemin Industries, a global animal nutrition ingredient company, helping the marketing team with duties such as providing swine barn tours to international customers.

Last summer Edleman completed an internship in the research and development lab at Kemin Industries in which she assisted with assessing the antimicrobial properties of different feed ingredients for a new swine gut health product in their new product pipeline.

“My diverse experiences in animal agriculture have fully ignited my desire to work toward a career in research and development or food safety and regulation, hopefully in an industry related to pork,” Edleman said.

On campus, she is involved in the Food Science Club, Dairy Club, Cru, is a lab research assistant for a food science professor, and serves as a peer mentor in the Dairy and Food Science Department.

Kroeger first became interested in swine production from growing up on her family’s farm where they have a small farrow to finish swine operation. She also showed pigs in 4-H. In high school, she became familiar with an emerging swine disease new to the United States called Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea Virus (PEDV) and decided to compete in the PEDV semi-finalist in the national competition.

“This experience in FFA sparked my interest in disease research and compelled me to pursue a career within the swine industry,” Kroeger said.

While in college, she took advantage of opportunities to gain experience in the swine industry, including being a Gene Transfer Center Intern for the Pig improvement Company (PIC) and a Swine Research and Development Intern for Merck Animal Health.

Additionally, Kroeger also gives virtual tours of the SDSU Swine Education and Research Facility to consumer audiences through the Operation Main Street project with the National Pork Board.

“At SDSU, Kroeger worked as a molecular diagnostics undergraduate laboratory research assistant at the South Dakota Animal Disease Research and Diagnostic Laboratory on the campus of SDSU. “I have worked extensively in the production of monoclonal antibodies for multiple diagnostic testing platforms including Porcine Respiratory and Reproductive Syndrome (PRRS), PEDV and Swine Acute Diarrhea Syndrome Coronavirus (SADS-CoV),” Kroeger said.

She has also been involved in the Wool Judging Team, Meat Judging Team, SDSU Fishback Honors College, Little International, and Agriculture Future of America.

After graduating from SDSU in May, Kroeger plans to continue her education by pursuing a Ph.D. with emphasis in infectious disease, immunology and virology.

“I aspire to work at a livestock pharmaceutical company making vaccines for livestock. I’m excited to couple new advances in science with my own passion and ingenuity to provide solutions for swine and livestock producers. Additionally, I hope to continue being an Operation Main Street speaker to educate consumers about the livestock industry and agriculture throughout my career,” Kroeger said.

The Lois Britt Memorial Pork Industry Scholarship program was introduced in 1990 by CME Group and NPPC to celebrate the 25th anniversary of CME hog futures. The scholarship was renamed in 2006 to honor the passing of NPPC board member Lois Britt, a lifetime supporter of agriculture. Britt spent 34 years with the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service and served Smithfield Hog Production in a public and government relations role during the final 15 years of her career. She was inducted into the NPPC Pork Industry Hall of Fame, the North Carolina Pork Council Hall of Fame and awarded the North Carolina 4-H Lifetime Achievement Award.
LYLE MANGEN HONORED AS OUTSTANDING ALUMNUS OF THE AGRICULTURAL AND BIOSYSTEMS ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

BY SYDNEY MEYER

Lyle Mangen, a 1986 graduate of South Dakota State University from Willmar, Minnesota, was honored as the Outstanding Alumnus of the Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering Department at the department’s Banquet of Excellence on Oct. 10.

“Lyle has been a great supporter of our students for many years. He has sponsored numerous senior design projects, mentored student interns and provided excellent advice as a member of our department advisory council. After our most recent advisory council meeting, based on input from Lyle, we changed the way we were teaching engineering design graphics to better prepare students for their first positions as they begin an engineering career,” said Van Kelley, head of the Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering Department.

Mangen graduated from SDSU with a degree in agricultural engineering (now agricultural and biosystems engineering). After graduating, he started working for CNH Industrial, where he has now worked for 29 years. CNH Industrial is a global leader in the capital goods sector. Through its 12 brands, which include Case IH and New Holland, the company designs, produces and sells tractors and agricultural machinery, construction equipment, commercial vehicles, buses and specialty vehicles, trucks and powertrain applications.

Currently, Mangen is a global products specialist for CNH Industrial facilities in the United States and Brazil. Throughout his career with CNH Industrial, he has worked in both product design and product management, working with harvest equipment, sprayers and fertilizer applicators, and construction equipment.

Partway through his career, Mangen went back to school and gained a Master of Business Administration degree from Cardinal Stritch University in Milwaukee, Wis., and earned his Professional Engineering license.

“The education I gained at SDSU set me up for a successful career,” Mangen said. “The classes I took challenged me and taught me how to be a real-world problem solver.”

While at SDSU, he was involved in the Dean’s Advisory Council, in which he worked with the dean of the Jerome J. Lohr College of Engineering to help student voices be heard. He was also a part of the Agricultural Engineering Club.

“My favorite memory at SDSU was driving my old car to Springfield, Massachusetts, to watch SDSU play in the college basketball national finals. There were four of us squished into my old car and we were amazed we made it there and back,” Mangen said.

Mangen has continued his involvement at SDSU by serving on the Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering Department Advisory Council. By serving on the council, he hopes to help the department stay on track with where the industry is going so that students can be successful when they graduate.

He also sponsors a student scholarship and has sponsored several senior design projects in the department.

“I paid my own way through college so I understand it can be a challenge to pay for a college education, however a college education is the best investment I made and I want to help other students have the same opportunity,” Mangen said.
South Dakota State University students in the Animal Science Department presented research and competed in the academic quadrathlon at the American Society of Animal Science Midwest Section meetings in Omaha, Nebraska, on March 2-4, 2020. Madison Kovarna, an animal science student from Merrill, Iowa, won her division in the Undergraduate Research Poster Competition. The academic quadrathlon team placed in the top three in several divisions of the contest.

Kovarna presented a poster about her undergraduate research project titled, "Factors associated with birthing interval and total farrowing duration in sows and gilts within a production setting." Kovarna worked with assistant professor Crystal Levesque on the project.

The purpose of their research was to evaluate the current farrowing protocol of sleeving, or manually checking a sow or gilt in active labor if the time between two piglets being born is longer than 20 minutes and to continue manually checking every 20 minutes until another piglet is born. She started working on the project in August of 2019.

“We collected data about farrowing times of 80 litters from previous sow research projects and took a new spin on analyzing the data that was provided,” Kovarna said. “We analyzed total farrowing duration and birth interval and focused on four factors that could affect those times: feed intake time prior to farrowing, parity of the sow (how many litters she has had), litter size and piglet birth order. We found that of the four factors, the two that had statistical differences were litter size and piglet birth order.”

The litter size and piglet birth order had a significant effect on birth interval. Sows and gilts with larger litters had a shorter average interval between piglets being born. Piglets born first through fourth and after thirteenth had the longest interval between each piglet being born at close to an average of 30 minutes. Common industry assumption is an average of 20 minutes between each piglet being born. The piglets born fifth through twelfth averaged around 20 minutes between each piglet being born.

Their research showed the four factors did not significantly impact farrowing duration, however they found that parity two and three sows were the most efficient during the birthing process, parity four and five sows were the least efficient, and parity zero and one sows and gilts fell between them.

“We concluded that sleeving protocols need to be revised with consideration for piglet birth order in which there is longer time between sleeving events, particularly for the first few piglets and after thirteen piglets,” Kovarna said. Kovarna got involved with undergraduate research when her lab instructor in the Introduction to Animal Science course asked if she wanted to be an undergraduate assistant in the swine nutrition lab.

“From there I started analyzing a feed diet and slowly have become more involved with other projects and have conducted two as an undergraduate researcher,” Kovarna said. “I give undergraduate research credit for challenging me and allowing me to grow into a stronger student as well as a better individual. I have gained close relationships with many of the graduate students, faculty and industry specialists through working on projects and attending conferences. I have learned time management, verbal and written communication skills, and countless other skills.”

**Academic Quadrathlon**

The academic quadrathlon team competed against 12 teams from other universities across the upper Midwest and placed third in two of the four divisions that make up the regional contest. They placed third in the written exam and oral presentation divisions. The contest also included a lab practical and quiz bowl competition.

Team members included animal science students Sam Keating from Winterset, Iowa; Logan Tesch from Henderson, Minnesota; Madison Kovarna from Merrill, Iowa; and Duncan Poindexter from Greensboro, North Carolina.

“Competing in the academic quadrathlon was a great opportunity to talk to and learn from others that are in the same field of study,” Keating said.

The team qualified for the regional event by winning the local competition in which 19 teams participated.

The written exam covers disciplines of animal science including physiology, meat science, nutrition and breeding and genetics, and the team completes the exam together. For the oral presentation, each team is given 40 minutes to prepare a presentation after they select a topic from three possible topics related to animal agriculture. In the lab practical, the team demonstrates its ability to perform physical skills such as measuring heart rate on a horse, weighing and vaccinating a baby pig and identifying meat processing equipment. The final division is a quiz bowl contest with questions on any topic relating to animal agriculture.

The participants were also able to attend presentations on current research in their areas of interest.
VALUE ADDED MEAT PRODUCTS

BY ANDREA SCHUBLOOM

Students in the Value Added Meat Products class were challenged to develop a unique meat product using their own creativity and the skills they acquired throughout the fall 2019 semester. Students, faculty and staff members were invited to taste test the products and provide feedback and a fair market price to the students for each product.

The eight products they created were:
- Ghost Pepper Beef Jerky
- Bloody Mary Beef Sticks
- Leaning Tower of Pizza Brats
- Southwest BBQ Pork
- Chicken Jalapeno Poppers
- Philly Cheesesteak Poppers
- Peanut Butter and Jelly Sausage
- Sweet Chipotle Summer Sausage

STUDENTS ACCEPTED TO VETERINARY SCHOOLS HONORED AT STETHOSCOPE CEREMONY

BY SYDNEY MEYER

Nine South Dakota State University pre-veterinary students who are accepted to veterinary schools for fall 2020 were honored on May 1 at the 9th Annual South Dakota Veterinary Medical Association/SDSU Stethoscope Ceremony. This is the first time the ceremony was held virtually.

“These students are very successful in a competitive pool of students to be accepted into veterinary school,” said John Killefer, South Dakota Corn Endowed Dean of the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences, at the virtual ceremony. “They have chosen an important and impactful career.”

The students accepted to veterinary schools for fall 2020 include:
- Hattie Cramer, an animal science major from Camp Crook, South Dakota, will be attending Iowa State University
- Raela Hines, an animal science major from Granada, Minnesota, will be attending St. George’s University
- Renae Kayser, an animal science major from Delmont, South Dakota, will be attending Iowa State University
- Megan Kellen, an animal science major from Alton, Iowa, will be attending Iowa State University
- Austin Lange, a biology and animal science double major from Hartington, Nebraska, will be attending the University of Nebraska/Iowa State University
- Emma Nelson, an animal science major from South Range, Wisconsin, will be attending the University of Wisconsin
- Miranda Painter, an animal science major from Sioux Falls, South Dakota, will be attending Iowa State University
- Nicole Sterzinger, a biology and animal science double major from Taunton, Minnesota, will be attending Iowa State University
- Jonathan Sumption, an animal science major from Frederick, South Dakota, will be attending Purdue University

“Getting accepted to veterinary school is an accomplishment these students should be very proud of,” said Russ Daly, professor in the Department of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences. “They needed to take years of challenging science courses, gain experience with animals and veterinarians, and show leadership and community service in order to make it into veterinary school.”

The students received stethoscopes engraved with their name and the SDSU emblem. Also, each student honored an individual who made a significant impact on their path to becoming a veterinarian. Each honored individual said a few encouraging words to the student and virtually presented them with their stethoscope.

“These students should be so proud of the profession they’ve chosen,” said Jane Hennings, head of the Department of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences. “Veterinarians contribute to the benefit of society in many ways and they will, too, by choosing this field.”

Beginning in fall 2021, students will have the option to attend veterinary school at SDSU through the new Professional Program in Veterinary Medicine in collaboration with the University of Minnesota. Once students complete the required pre-veterinary curriculum, they can apply to the professional program. The new program is made possible through a formal cooperative agreement, in which SDSU students admitted into the program complete the first two years of their veterinary medical education at South Dakota State University and then transfer to the University of Minnesota’s College of Veterinary Medicine for the final two years of study. To learn more, contact Gary Gackstetter, director of the SDSU Professional Program in Veterinary Medicine, at Gary.Gackstetter@sdstate.edu or visit sdstate.edu/ppvm.
Joshua Longtin, 2020 South Dakota State University graduate from Fergus Falls, Minnesota, received SDSU’s Ness School of Management and Economics CAFES Outstanding Graduating Senior Award. Longtin received this award for his commitment to his education and involvement during his time at SDSU.

Longtin graduated from SDSU with a degree in agricultural business and a minor in agricultural marketing. He was awarded the honors college medallion upon his graduation. Following graduation, Longtin accepted a position as a grain merchandiser at Miller Milling company in Bloomington, Minnesota.

"SDSU gave me the tools and experiences to go out confidently into the workforce," said Longtin. "The knowledge learned and hands on experiences in classes are used every day in the workforce and are vital to future success."

Longtin attributes much of his success to the willingness of his teachers to go out of their way to help students understand content and develop professionally. Longtin said his teachers were eager to take time out of their day to help in any way possible. "Everyone takes the time to help you and wants what is best for you and that is what is the best part about CAFES and SDSU," said Longtin.

While at SDSU, Longtin was involved in Investment Club, Finance Insurance and Real Estate Club and Economics Club. He was a member of Alpha Zeta and Omicron Delta Epsilon. Longtin also served on the Student Union Advisory Committee and Students’ Association Senate. He credits these social experiences with teaching him many valuable lessons and skills that will be valuable to him in his future career. Longtin was able to create lifelong connections through his involvement in student organizations.
Ben Lucas

Major: Precision Agriculture
Hometown: Rock Port, Missouri
Graduation Year: 2022

Q. What extra-curricular activities are you involved with on campus?
A. Besides my classes, I am most involved with Cru Campus Ministries and serve on their leadership team. Additionally, I serve as a student ambassador for the Department of Agricultural & Biosystems Engineering where I interact with prospective students interested in our programs.

Q. What is your favorite flavor of SDSU ice cream?
A. Bumble Berry.

Q. What is the best part about being an SDSU student?
A. Definitely the agriculture community. I have learned so much about different farms just by talking to other students in my residence hall or walking to class.

Q. Describe yourself in one word.
A. Persistent – I will work on a problem until I figure it out.

Q. What is your favorite part about your program?
A. My favorite part about the precision agriculture program is the open-door policy of our instructors. I can walk into my instructor’s office and just talk about farming. I am on a first name basis with most of them and I look forward to class because they are so personal.

Q. If you could meet any person deceased or alive, who would it be and why?
A. My great grandpa Donald passed away when I was 5 years old – he started our farm and left an incredible legacy for my generation of the farm. I would love to ride with him in the combine and just listen to him talk about the first time he farmed our fields.

Q. What is your go-to study spot?
A. Most of the studying I do is with my classmates. Living in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Science Living Learning Community makes it easy to find people from my classes and study together.

Jason Frerichs

Degree: Agricultural Education
Years at SDSU: 2003-2007
Hometown: Wilmot, South Dakota
Current City: Wilmot, South Dakota

Q. What is your current job title and place of employment?
A. I farm and raise cattle with my family. My wife, Ashley, and I have a 2-year-old daughter Elizabeth. Our diversified farm is primarily operated by my brother Aaron, a 2002 SDSU alum, and myself. We are fortunate to have help from our parents Kent, a 1972 alum, and Faye and our brother Ryan. Additionally, I serve on both the United Soybean Board and the South Dakota Soybean Research and Promotion Council. In 2008, I ran for and was elected to the South Dakota House of Representatives. I served two years in the House and eight years in the Senate.

Q. What is your favorite part about your job?
A. Working on the family operation and being able to be outdoors and involved with working the land.

Q. How do you show your Jackrabbit pride?
A. I always enjoy the chance to wear my blue and yellow, follow on the radio and attend Jackrabbit athletic events. Sharing good news of all the positive growth on campus is an easy conversation starter with fellow alumni and supporters.

Q. What do you like to do in your spare time?
A. I enjoy spending time on Big Stone Lake with my family boating and I also like to check cattle on horseback.

Q. If you could be a penny in anyone’s pocket, who would it be and why?
A. Warren Buffett – his wisdom to understand people and business would be very interesting and I know I could learn a lot.

Q. Is there anything else you want to share?
A. I am extremely proud to have been part of the team effort to ensure funding for the new Raven Precision Agriculture Center. Many folks along the way thought it wouldn’t be able to be done with State funding. Following the lead of President Barry Dunn, we all remained optimistic that we could seal the deal. Hard work by the entire SDSU Administration, CAFES, and the SDSU Foundation paid off!
Opportunity has a funny way of presenting itself when you are optimistic. As I look back on the previous months, there have been challenges and changes in our daily lives. Through it all, I’ve seen nuggets of opportunity emerge from the most unusual places.

This spring I lost my grandfather, Lee Sandager. At the age of 94, he led an amazing life. Lee was a high school agriculture teacher in Minnesota where he cultivated and grew lifelong friendships and impacted the communities in profound ways. He always challenged the people around him to be better and had the unique ability to draw the full potential out of those he was around. I am fortunate enough to work in an area of agriculture where I occasionally run into his past students and hear the stories of how my grandfather changed people for the better and pushed them to become something greater. As I read the letters and cards that came from friends and family sharing stories of their time with him, I noticed opportunities in my life where I can implement the lessons I learned from my grandpa Lee to positively impact my friendships and communities.

Opportunity also came this spring when the world was overtaken with a global pandemic, changing almost every facet of our daily lives. I, along with most of the world, did not know what our future would look like in the weeks, months, and years ahead, but opportunity and optimism soon took over as I watched our community come together. I am fortunate enough to work at the South Dakota State University Foundation where I witness firsthand the impact of gifts that fundamentally change the lives of students. Student scholarships provide opportunity to change the trajectory of a student’s life and provide optimism that there is a brighter future.

In the years to come, I am going to look back on the spring of 2020 and recognize that optimism created the opportunity – optimism that there will be better days through better ways. We, as South Dakota State University alumni and friends, can use our optimism to create better opportunities for future generations, and I encourage you to be the positive voice in your communities.

When we encourage others, we create opportunity where we never thought was possible.

Mark Sandager, ’11

For more information on scholarships or to make a contribution, please contact the SDSU Foundation:

605-697-7475 | info@sdstatefoundation.org
www.sdstatefoundation.org/scholarships
815 Medary Avenue, Brookings, SD 57007
One Day for STATE is a 24-hour event for Jackrabbits near and far to come together for one action-packed day to support SDSU, our students and our faculty. Together or apart, we can unite in one cause, one day and one giant celebration!

onedayforstate.sdstatefoundation.org