Word from the Department Head

I am ecstatic to report that our undergraduate enrollment this semester, Fall 2014, is the highest that it has ever been. We have 32 Poultry Science majors and 59 Avian Biology (previously our Poultry Science/Science Option). Faculty, staff, and students have done an incredible job recruiting. In particular, I want to give Dr. Brian Fairchild special recognition and credit for doing an outstanding job chairing our recruiting committee and instituting several new initiatives that have really had a positive impact on attracting undergrads to our program. Along the same lines, we have 26 graduate students this semester which is near an all-time high enrollment for the department.

The number of students enrolling in our undergraduate courses is also greater than ever before. We continue to generate more credit hours year after year and set a new record again during the 2014 academic year. The faculty continue to do an exemplary job of providing quality learning experiences for our students. A unique new course developed by Dr. Robert Beckstead has added significantly to our credit hours. I encourage you to read more about this interesting new course in the article on it in this newsletter.

I am also pleased to report that we added a new faculty member in August. Dr. Brian Jordan joined our faculty as a result of a special UGA Presidential multidisciplinary hiring initiative. We were extremely pleased and grateful that the President and Provost chose our joint position as one of those to be filled. More about Dr. Jordan can be found in this issue. As I write this article, we are currently in the process of interviewing candidates for two more new faculty positions, Continued on Pg. 2

Awards & Honors

Election to Fellow is one of the highest distinctions a Poultry Science Association member can achieve. The status of Fellow recognizes members of PSA for professional distinction and contributions to the field of poultry science without concern to longevity. Not more than five members may be elected as Fellows at any one annual meeting. A two-thirds majority vote by the Board of Directors is required to elect any nominee as Fellow. Dr. Lacy was one of three poultry science members elected as a 2014 PSA fellow.

Sammy Aggrey was recognized as the recipient of the National Chicken Council Broiler Research Award at the 2014 Poultry Science Association annual meeting held in Corpus Christi, TX. The NGC Broiler Research Award is given for distinctive research that has a strong economic impact on the broiler industry. Dr. Aggrey received the award for his research on mapping genes for growth and development, microRNA predictions, and nutrigenomics. Over the past decade, Aggrey has developed models for predicting feed efficiency in broilers and continues to investigate the molecular basis of feed utilization efficiency.

Manuel Da Costa was awarded the NCC Broiler Research Award. Continued on Pg. 2
a nutrition position with a predominantly extension appointment and a processing position with a research/teaching assignment. We hope to have those positions filled and new faculty onboard within the next few months.  

- Mike Lacy

Dr. Brian Jordan Joins Faculty

Dr. Brian Jordan joined our faculty as a result of a special UGA presidential multidisciplinary hiring initiative. Poultry Science in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences and the Department of Population Health in the College of Veterinary Medicine combined forces for this position designed to work in the area of poultry management and health. Dr. Jordan earned his Ph.D. at UGA in the Department of Poultry Science. He is a former UGA football player and started as the Bulldawgs long snapper from 2003-2005.

Family Weekend

As they do every spring, the faculty and students of the Poultry Science Department lined up in May for a friendly softball game. Most years, students walk away from the game wondering how they lost and joking that the faculty must have fudged the score a bit. This year, students came more prepared and the faculty/student softball game of 2014 will go down as one of the FEW years students brought home a victory. The annual softball game brings more than just bragging rights for the year. It illustrates the fact that the Poultry Science Department is more than just a group of students and faculty working towards graduation; it is a family.

Family Day each spring is an opportunity for students to introduce the family they grew up with to the family they have found in college. They get to introduce moms and dads and siblings to students who helped them through a horrible chemistry or accounting test and professors who lent a hand when they just couldn’t figure out which class to take. This year was no different.

Families from across the state and beyond joined students as they celebrated the end to a great year.  

By: Rachel Harrison

Alumni Travel to Athens to Cheer on the Dawgs!

Poultry Science alumni and students gathered at the poultry farm on the eve of the Vanderbilt game to celebrate homecoming and reminisce with old friends. Attendees enjoyed barbecue and conversation as they watched vintage eight millimeter movies of the poultry farm in the 1960s. Guests enjoyed a “dawg cake” made by Beth Coker.
Avian Adventures

Each year the department hosts a program for Georgia students of varying pre-collegiate ages. This year’s adventure was very exciting and successful. Our students were able to stay on campus in the brand new Rutherford Hall. Although we did not get to sample all of the dining halls on campus, we had lunch at the Joe Frank Harris Dining Commons in East Campus Village. Students also participated in Dr. Mark Compton’s famous Stromboli dinner the first night and a poultry products taste test dinner the second night. In this adventure, the students were able to try a wide assortment of products from chicken fingers to gizzards, to duck, to thousand year eggs and chicken paw soup. All the faculty were very impressed with many of the students daring to test food they’d never seen before.

The first day of Avian Adventures students toured a broiler farm.

The first day the students visited a broiler farm close to Athens. They enjoyed seeing how the chickens we eat are raised and were able to see the area chicks are given to grow. Over the course of the second day, they studied anatomy and embryology and were able to practice candling eggs. The students also performed a short surgical procedure and practice anesthesia techniques on chickens with Dr. Compton. This was one of the favorite activities of the weekend because they were able to apply what they learned in a new, unique situation. We capped the adventure off with a kayaking trip down the Broad River. Everyone was able to kayak and splash with their new friends, teachers, and counselors. Of course, this adventure would not be complete without a barbeque dinner. Parents were invited to meet the faculty and staff who were with their children for the program. Everyone enjoyed talking and eating Butt Hut in the Poultry Research Center.

By: Emily Polur

Nights of Knights

Dr. Navarra taught students reproductive anatomy.

Students entered the Broad River by sliding off the steep river bank.

The waterfalls made for quite a wild ride for both students and faculty.

Night of Knight tickets were generously provided by Hubbard.

By: Emily Polur
Upcoming Events

February 9, 2015
Red Cross Blood Drive

February 17, 2015
Poultry Science Club Meeting

March 31, 2015
Poultry Club Easter Egg Hunt

April 24, 2015
Poultry Science Awards Banquet

April 25, 2015
Poultry Science Family Day

May 8, 2015
Poultry Science Graduate Social

May 8, 2015
Spring Commencement

Alumni Achievements

Clancy Windham (BS Poultry Science, 2012) was selected as one of the US poultry industry’s “30 Leaders Under 30” at the 2014 International Production and Processing Expo. Clancy is currently a Further Processing Production Supervisor with Perdue Farms.

Brandon Boone (BS 2004, Poultry Science) was promoted to Live Production Manager for Mar Jac Poultry in Gainesville, GA.

Claire Stice (BS 2010, Poultry Science) was a recipient of an Outstanding Graduate Student Research Award at the 2014 Poultry Science Association annual meeting. Claire is working on a PhD at Cornell University.

Dr. Randy Mitchell (MS 1992, PhD 1995, Poultry Science) was elected Second Vice President of the Poultry Science Association. Dr. Mitchell is Vice President of Technical Services for Perdue Farms, Salisbury, MD.

Student Internship Experiences

Each summer several students in our department take advantage of internship opportunities with companies around the state. Internships generally run throughout the summer to provide students time to work in each portion of the industry. Students learn their way around the hatchery, feed mill, processing plant and get a chance to make farm calls to meet growers during their time with the company. As the semester concludes students return to the department to give a presentation about their internship and reflect on their experiences. Interns from this summer enjoyed their experiences and learned about what sectors of the industry they would enjoy working in after graduation.

Summer 2014 Student Interns


Annually, the Georgia Poultry Federation put on an event entitled “Night of Knights” as a fundraiser for the organization and a way for companies across Georgia’s poultry industry to network and interact. The event has had many amazing performers to take the stage at the Cobb Galleria in Atlanta including Joe Nichols last year and Neal McCoy at this year’s event. The event also highlights the Federation’s Poultry Roundtable.

Students from the poultry science department were able to attend the event this year thanks to tickets generously donated by Hubbard and Harrison Farms. Our students experienced being able to interact with the industry’s leaders, having a delicious meal, and enjoying the entertainment. The Georgia Poultry Federation and all of Georgia’s Poultry Industry are loyal supporters of the poultry science department and it’s students, and we are very grateful to a continued relationship between them. By: Sarah Harrison

2014 Department Snapshots