

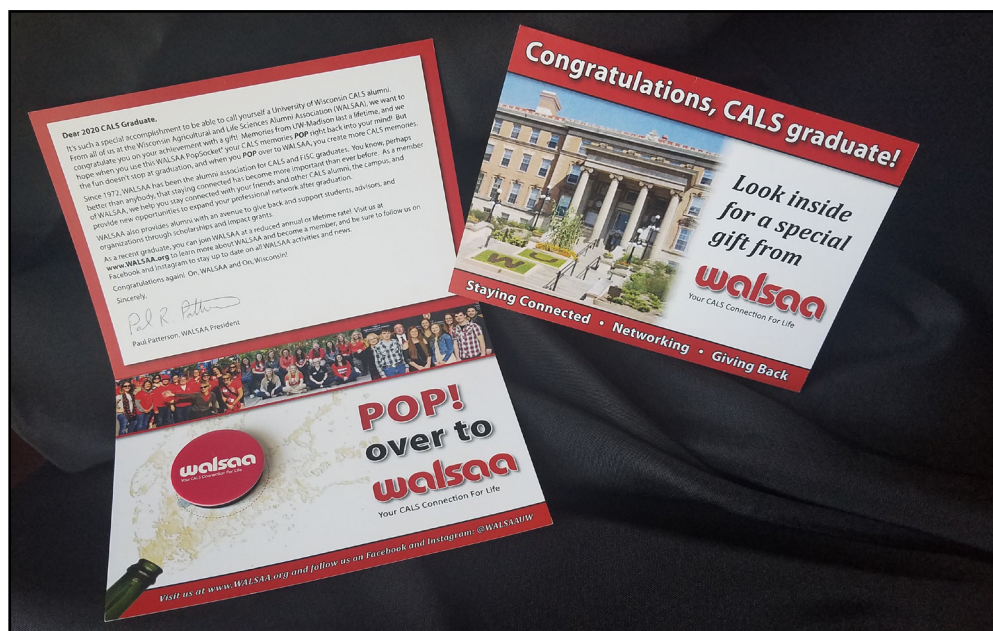
WALSAA EXPRESS

➔ YOUR CALS CONNECTION FOR LIFE

Volume 48 | Issue 2 | August 2020

Congratulations to the 2020 CALS Graduates!

WALSAA was honored to celebrate this year's newest University of Wisconsin-Madison's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS) alumni by sharing a special gift with them. More than 700 new CALS graduates received a WALSAA PopSocket® and a special congratulatory letter from Paul Patterson, WALSAA President, encouraging them to "POP over to WALSAA" and create more CALS memories. WALSAA members, reach out to these new graduates and welcome them as new alumni and share your excitement for WALSAA!



2020 Fire-Up Announcement

We have made the difficult decision to cancel the 2020 WALSAA Football Fire-Up that was scheduled for September 19. Our annual Fire-Up is our largest fundraiser. All of the money we raise goes to scholarships for students in CALS. Please consider a donation to the WALSAA Scholarship Fund to support these awards. WALSAA's Annual Meeting will be held on November 6. Details to follow.

More on pages 2 and 7.

New Lifetime Members

Jared Baudhuin '22
Ronni Brent '22
Madison Castle '22
Asha Jain '22
Caitlin Kestell '22
Nikita Piryani '22
Grace Puc '22
Olivia Pusch '22
Richard E. Ralph '82
Hailey Richardson '20
Mia Roccaro '22
Emma Sanderson '20
Katherine Satori '22
Jeremy Schlies '20
Luke Wavrunek '20

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Contact Us

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Life Sciences Alumni Assoc.
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Madison, WI 53705-5177
Phone: 608.438.1994
Email: admin@walsaa.org

www.WALSAA.org

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Support Student Scholarships



Paul Patterson, WALSAA President

WALSAA members,

I'm not a fan of going to the dentist nor the check-up you endure when you turn 50. We may not like everything in life, but we know we need to do them. Over the next year, we will have a lot more of these tests and practices. We have made it through these challenges before, and we will make it through this one.

WALSAA is also adjusting to these new realities, and, with that in mind, it is my duty to report we have made the difficult decision to cancel the 2020 WALSAA Football Fire-Up that was scheduled for September 19, as well as our social event with the Wausau Woodchucks that was scheduled for July 14.

Again, these were not easy decisions. We looked at every possible option to hold these events while keeping our members' health concerns in mind. Without going into all of the details, under the current Dane County re-opening plan, we would not be able to have a large gathering in September at the UW Foundation parking lot.

Our annual Fire-Up is our largest fundraiser. All of the money we raise goes to scholarships for students in CALS. Among many others, WALSAA funds the Outstanding Sophomore Awards, which are awarded to 10 deserving sophomores. We normally raise more than \$10,000 during the Fire-Up to fund these awards.

I would like to ask all of you who normally attend Fire-Up to consider donating the money you would have spent on meal tickets, the Silent Auction and game tickets to our scholarship fund for these awards. All of the money you

donate will be used for scholarships. These donations are fully tax deductible as WALSAA is a registered 501(c)(3) charitable organization. The form to donate is on page 7 of this newsletter.

As you probably already know, the 2020 Farm Technology Days has been postponed until 2021. The show will be in the Eau Claire area, and we are planning to have the WALSAA Summer Picnic next year in tandem with the show.

We understand the COVID-19 pandemic has challenged many people financially over the last few months and some of you may not be able to donate to our scholarship fund this year. For those of you who are able to help, we hope you can help support the students who will be in need of financial aid more than ever before because of the loss of many part-time jobs and internships. UW funding will also be pinched because of tightened state budgets. We typically grant more than \$25,000 in scholarships to deserving CALS students. More than ever before, you are needed to help us continue the great tradition of presenting scholarship awards to deserving students that WALSAA established more than 48 years ago. If you are planning to support WALSAA again this year, THANK YOU! If you have thought about helping WALSAA before, now is the time.

We will not be defined by our current challenges, we will define ourselves by how we react to them.

Please reach out to me via email at pspatterson@new.rr.com or call me at 920.662.9468.

On Wisconsin!

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Marjorie Stieve '91 - 2020
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CALS MESSAGE

In Unprecedented Times, the Way Forward Is Together

Tom Browne, Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs; Natalia de Leon, Professor of Agronomy; Mark Rickenbach, Senior Associate Dean; Kate VandenBosch, CALS Dean and Director

This year, following the excitement of commencement and before summer was in full swing, a tragic event occurred that prompted sadness, dismay, and upheaval across the country. We write to you, still with heavy hearts, as we continue to reflect on the death of George Floyd, an unarmed African American man, on May 25 in Minneapolis and the public outcry that has followed. George Floyd's death is another despicable example of race-based aggression and violence that have occurred around the country and have no place in what we call "civilized" society. They must be called out.

We empathize with our students, staff, faculty, alumni, and friends from the African American community, and all supporters of people of color in our CALS community who are dealing with another trauma to add to the historic list. We stand with you and support you.

Consider everything that has already happened in 2020 before this tragedy. The backdrop of a global pandemic has touched everyone, but it has disproportionately affected the most vulnerable, many from underserved and marginalized populations. Asian Americans and students and visitors from Asia have experienced harassment by those who feared they were spreading contagion. George Floyd's death has sparked a national conversation about racial justice and better practices to assure public safety. This also serves as a sharp reminder that we still have a long way to go to make our own community truly inclusive for people from all backgrounds to learn, thrive and turn their dreams into futures.

Furthermore, these efforts cannot be the sole responsibility of those most affected. We must all act. Our mission at CALS is to improve the quality and conditions of life through scientific innovation and discovery, and this can only be done if we foster an environment in which everyone can succeed. This is why, in the last two years, with guidance from our Equity and Diversity Committee, we've been incorporating plans for diversity and inclusion into our academic departments' five-year plans. We are also examining our recruiting and hiring practices, and we're exploring structural ways to better support diversity, equity, and inclusion.

We're also asking members of our campus community, as well as you, to consider what can be done as an individual to help put an end to systemic discrimination and create a community that fosters an anti-racist culture. We can

all educate ourselves on the historic and institutionalized systems that have led to today's inequalities and use our voices and actions to create change. We can seek to understand the plights of those afflicted and create a safe space for them to protest or share their feelings unfettered and without judgement. We can all examine our own biases and humbly admit our blind spots to become better. We can all care deeply about our communities and truly recognize its needs.

“Our mission at CALS is to improve the quality and conditions of life through scientific innovation and discovery, and this can only be done if we foster an environment in which everyone can succeed.”

Many CALS alumni are well-positioned in their fields to address inequities experienced by vulnerable populations. This includes increasing access to health care, food, and nutrition; mitigating the impacts of environmental degradation or climate change; and furthering research and education. We are proud of what you have accomplished as students and as professionals. We urge you to consider what you can do within your own spheres of influence to combat racism and inequities. Some scientific and professional organizations are grappling with these issues, and their responses will guide our own. Perhaps you play a role to prompt and guide those conversations. We'd love to hear your stories.

During these unprecedented times, please do everything you can to stay safe and well, but also take the time to reflect on everything going on around you. Listen to and support others in their struggles. We cannot wish for things to return to normal because change is desperately needed, and that change must permeate our entire society. There is a way forward, but it must be together.

Tom Browne and Natalia de Leon are co-chairs of the CALS Equity & Diversity Committee, which advises the dean on equity and diversity issues that affect the college. More at equitydiversity.cals.wisc.edu.

CAMPUS HAPPENINGS

My Life as a College Student During a Pandemic

Jori Skalitzky BS '22

Jori Skalitzky is a sophomore majoring in life sciences communication and environmental sciences. She wrote this perspective in mid-April 2020, several weeks after classes moved to remote delivery at UW–Madison.

It has been a weird time for all of us at UW–Madison. Instead of spending springtime on UW's lovely campus, I've found myself back at my family home in Marshall, Wisconsin. It's only about a 40-minute drive to campus, but it feels like a world away right now.

I've spent the last few weeks floating around various parts of my house — bedroom, kitchen, basement — trying to make sense of the constantly changing information about COVID-19. I knew things were starting to get rough when I heard that K-12 schools were closing. UW wouldn't close, right? Wrong. On March 11, the Wednesday before spring break, I got the email that the university would suspend in-person classes until April 10. Yikes! I should've guessed then that in-person classes would be suspended for the rest of the semester.

I was excited to spend spring break in London and hang out with friends without the worry of schoolwork. Excitement quickly turned into shock, disappointment and sadness. My family decided to cancel our London trip (for good reason), and I decided to stay at my home until further notice. So long, Madison apartment.

It's been a difficult adjustment. I haven't been home with my parents, brother, and sister for this long of a period, but we're making it work. We're all dealing with things in our own way. One of my favorite pastimes has been going outside and taking a walk — sometimes with the family dog, Margo. It is a good way to clear my head and get some fresh air.

Online classes have been, well, odd. It's not the situation anyone hoped for, but I am very thankful I can continue my education, even if it has to be virtually. I know others aren't as lucky.

My professors have done an incredible job with the transition to online learning. Aside from occasional technical difficulties, videos have been easy to access and virtual sessions have worked fairly well. I would much rather be on campus attending lectures and discussion, but virtual classes have been going well enough. Honestly, though, watching multiple videos each day can get a little tiring.



For all three of the classes I'm taking, my professors have uploaded videos every week to go along with the other material. The videos are broken up nicely for the different days of the week. Most of my classes aren't "live," so I watch the assigned videos on their assigned days (a little bit like going to class). The only "live" class I have is my calculus discussion, which takes place on BBCollaborate at 11 a.m. every Tuesday and Thursday. My TA will have the day's worksheet on the screen and talk through problems while answering the questions we type in the chat.

I'm in a chemistry class, which isn't ideal for an online format because lab work is a big part of the curriculum. It's unfortunate, but, thankfully, we have plenty of online resources — videos on Kaltura and programs like WebMO — to use in place of actually doing a lab. On Kaltura, we get to watch our professor demonstrate how to do the lab (even though we won't be in the lab anytime soon). WebMO is a cool program that lets us look at different molecules up-close, which allows us to answer questions about their shape and polarity.

For myself, one thing the transition to online hasn't really affected is how I do homework. Chemistry and calculus have always had online homework through websites, such as Cengage, and my research methods class has always had quizzes online. The switch to online quizzes has been fine for my other two classes.

Honestly, online classes have been pretty smooth, they are just tiring because we're all trapped inside. We don't have much else to do that is productive besides schoolwork. It's an unfortunate situation, but we have to do our part to flatten the COVID-19 curve.

I miss seeing my friends and others that I care about. I talk to them on a daily basis with the help of social media, which is nice, and videochatting has been a fun way to stay connected, but it isn't the same as seeing them in person.

Hopefully, if everyone continues to do their part, things will return to normal sooner than later. I'm looking forward to being back on campus!

WALSAA AWARDS

Outstanding Advisor and FISC Awards

WALSAA has been honoring advisors with the Outstanding Advisor Award since 1979. This year's recipient is Daniel K. Young.

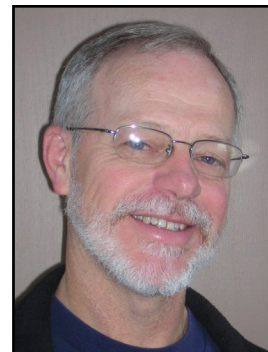
Young is a professor in the department of entomology. From suggesting classes for their schedules each semester to advising them on professional development, Young exceeds expectations when mentoring his students. The dedication to his students is demonstrated through the courses Young teaches and his outreach in the department. Young serves as co-advisor to all entomology undergraduate majors and, because he has all of them in his classes, he gets to know them very well.

Young facilitates professional development through SWARM, which is a Friday social gathering of all the entomology faculty, staff and students. Here students have the opportunity to connect with other professors and graduate students to collaborate on research as well as explore other entomological interests. Young is also the unofficial faculty advisor to the Undergraduate Entomology Society and coach

to the UW Entomology Linnaean Games teams, which participate in a college bowl-like competition at the National Entomology meetings each year.

Young exemplifies a professor going above and beyond to ensure student academic and professional success. Young engages students and builds relationships through the coursework, which includes collection trips, labs, and lectures. After completing Entomology 302, students want to take more classes with him because of his vibrant nature. For these reasons, Young has had an impact on his students' career paths, and that make him deserving of this award.

Congratulations, Daniel!



Congratulations to the 2020 FISC Graduates!



Outstanding FISC Student Awards

Five scholarships were presented to students who displayed excellence in leadership, service, academics and work experience. This year's winners are: \$1,000 to Jenna Breitenfeldt, Wausau, WI; \$500 to Emma Sanderson, Fredonia, WI; \$500 to Luke Wavrunek, Denmark, WI; \$250 to Hailey Richardson, Elkhorn, WI; and \$250 to Jeremy Schlies, Denmark, WI.



Activities and Leadership Awards

Three awards were presented to students actively involved in campus organizations and leadership opportunities. This year's winners are: Jenna Breitenfeldt, Wausau, WI; Leo Ehlen, Elkhorn, WI; and Sawyer Henk, Beldenville, WI.



Academic Excellence Awards

Nine awards were given to students with the highest grade point averages in the FISC program. This year's winners are: Jenna Breitenfeldt, Wausau, WI; Jason Doudlah, Evansville, WI; Michael Kujawski, Riverhead, NY; Kyle Paulson, Columbus, WI; Jacob Roden, Grafton, WI; Emma Sanderson, Fredonia, WI; Lucas Schroeder, Antigo, WI; Benjamin Sherman, Burnsville, MN; and Luke Wavrunek, Denmark, WI.

FISC CORNER

A Different Way to Experience FISC in 2020-2021



Jennifer Blazek, FISC Director

In the last seven months, this year has already been full of unexpected events, difficult times and uncertain futures. I am very thankful that, while we had to make a few unanticipated changes to the end of our 2019/2020 academic year, our students were able to return home safely before COVID-19 could upset campus operations and the rest of the U.S. Unfortunately, with the pandemic still ongoing with no end in sight, our 2020/2021 academic year will have to change to protect and maintain the health and safety of our students, staff, and faculty.

It is evident significant measures and precautions would need to be put in place for residential living and in-person instruction on campus to occur during this pandemic. In light of these challenges, the leaders within the Farm and Industry Short Course (FISC) made the decision in early June to not offer the traditional in-person or residential portions of the FISC program for this upcoming year. Shortly after this decision was made, UW-Madison released its plan for Fall 2020 and the measures they will take to offer a safe learning environment, such as required social distancing and mask use indoors, biweekly mandatory testing of all on-campus residents, no visitors in dining or residential areas, and moving all courses to an online format after Thanksgiving break.

FISC understood these changes would present additional and costly challenges to try and preserve a traditional on-campus FISC experience, which is why we made the decision in advance to help students and families plan for a different year of FISC. This decision was a difficult one and not taken lightly. I know this is not the FISC experience we all know and love; however, we feel this is the best option for FISC given this unique and challenging year. FISC will always be an applied, hands-on, in-person program at its core to preserve the strong values and goals established 137 years ago.

In the wake of the pandemic, online courses will allow us to provide flexible learning opportunities for students to continue their education in FISC in Fall 2020 and Spring 2021. It also gives me the chance to introduce online learning to FISC and expand the education we provide to students and alumni around the world. Online learning is a part of the future, and, while it will never replace the in-person and residential experience essential to FISC, online learning has its place to help increase the audiences FISC can serve with its applied and relevant education.

This year, students will have the ultimate flexibility to choose if they want to take all four of the offered courses, just one, or a combination of courses. The goal is to offer strong foundational skills for students to manage a farm or ag business. Students can make progress by completing the Foundations of Farm and Agribusiness Management Certificate, meet the Farm Service Agency's educational requirement for their Beginning Farmer and Rancher Loan program, or take only one or a couple courses to best fit their educational needs and schedule. For more information about the options and the courses we will offer online, visit our website:

<https://fisc.cals.wisc.edu/what-does-fisc-look-like-in-2020/>

I understand these changes to FISC for the 2020/2021 academic year are most likely disappointing. CALS leadership, along with myself, are deeply disappointed we won't be able to provide full programming for FISC this year. It will be sad not to see our students on campus; I will miss the grill outs, fun programming activities, and especially students coming into our office just to chat. Interacting with our students during their 16 weeks on campus, whether it is during bowling night or in the classroom, is definitely the highlight of my job! These are truly unprecedented times, however, FISC staff and CALS administration remain committed to the future of FISC programming, and we look forward to creating the best possible in-person and residential experiences for all our students in Fall 2021 and for generations to come!

Please reach out to me if you have any questions, ideas, or feedback about how I can continue to improve and expand FISC. I'm always happy to hear from alumni and FISC friends. You can reach me by email at jennifer.blazek@wisc.edu or call me at 608.263.3918.

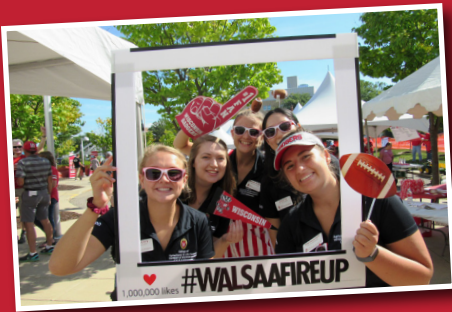
FISC values your support and the passion you have for this program, which has influenced your life and the lives of many others in the agriculture industry. During these tough times, I hope you take comfort in the strong friendships and connections you've made through FISC and know you are not alone. We care and we are here to support you however we can. Be well and I look forward to seeing you again soon!

COMMITMENT FORM

It's Never Been More Important
to STAY CONNECTED



YOUR CALS CONNECTION FOR LIFE: *Staying Connected, Great Networking, Giving Back*



Your name: _____

Your company name (if applicable): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Here is what we want to sponsor/donate:

1. WALSAA Football Fire-Up

**Canceled for 2020, HOWEVER, we still need to raise \$10,000 to support the Outstanding Sophomore Awards (OSA) student scholarships. You can be a WALSAA Football Fire-Up Sponsor knowing your support goes directly to our OSA student scholarships.*

Please consider a special donation to our scholarship fund

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> VARSITY LEVEL: \$1,500 | <input type="checkbox"/> BADGER LEVEL: \$750 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> RED LEVEL: \$500 | <input type="checkbox"/> WHITE LEVEL: \$250 |

2. WALSAA Farm and Industry Short Course (FISC) Alumni Reunion

Saturday, January 30, 2021

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> VARSITY LEVEL: \$1,500 | <input type="checkbox"/> BADGER LEVEL: \$750 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> RED LEVEL: \$500 | <input type="checkbox"/> WHITE LEVEL: \$250 |

3. ANNUAL DONATION Amount: _____

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> RED & WHITE: \$50 TO \$124 | <input type="checkbox"/> HENRY MALL: \$125 TO 249 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BABCOCK HALL: \$250 TO \$499 | <input type="checkbox"/> AG HALL: \$500 TO \$999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> WALSAA SOCIETY: \$1,000+ | |

I want to pay this way:

- Please send invoice now
- Please send invoice 30 days prior to event
- Online credit card payment: www.WALSAA.org/online-donation/
- Check enclosed (payable to WALSAA)

Instructions: Please return to admin@walsaa.org or send with payment to: WALSAA, P.O. Box 5177, Madison, WI 53705-5177.

If you have any questions, contact Stephanie Hammerly at 608.438.1994.



Your CALS Connection For Life

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Learn more about us at:
www.WALSAA.org



2019-20 WALSAA Board of Directors and staff

Share your time and talents with WALSAA

Are you looking to give back to WALSAA, CALS and FISC? We welcome you to serve as a board or committee member. Committees include events, finance, FISC, marketing and development, and scholarship. If this interests you, please reach out to WALSAA at admin@walsaa.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jan. 30 ♦ 2021 FISC Reunion

The WALSAA board continues to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic situation. We will communicate any event changes through our website, newsletter, email and social media channels.

IN MEMORIAM

Gary Wagner, BS '65 MS '73