

# WALSAA EXPRESS

➔ YOUR CALS CONNECTION FOR LIFE

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## 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Fire-Up and Silent Auction Raises More Than \$25,000 to Support CALS Students

Alumni, friends, and family of the University of Wisconsin-Madison College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS) came together to network and raise funds as part of the annual Wisconsin Agricultural and Life Sciences Alumni Association (WALSAA) Football Fire-Up Event. The 45<sup>th</sup> Annual WALSAA Football Fire-Up was held in the University of Wisconsin Foundation parking lot prior to the Wisconsin versus Eastern Michigan football game on Saturday, September 11. Kate VandenBosch, CALS Dean and Director, and Pierce Dopp, WALSAA President, welcomed all in attendance. CALS administration and faculty were also present. This year's silent auction and donations raised more than \$22,000 for CALS scholarships, awards, and student activities. A big thank you to the sponsors, donors, bidders, and volunteers, and a special thank you to CALS for the \$10,000 matching grant gift.

WALSAA presented its fifth annual WALSAA Daluge Red Jacket Award to the late Bob Kaczmarek for his dedication and support of WALSAA for many years. It was an honor to have his wife, Vickie and daughter, Lizzie in attendance to receive the award on behalf of Bob. Kaczmarek was named this year's recipient because of his dedication and service to WALSAA for many years. He served on the WALSAA Board for nine years and was president of the organization in 1997-98.

*More about Kaczmarek and Fire-Up on page 3*



### **Kaczmarek presented with 5<sup>th</sup> annual WALSAA Daluge Red Jacket Award**

*Pictured left to right: 2016 Daluge Red Jacket Award recipient, Jack Kaltenberg; Lizzie Kaczmarek; Peggy Daluge; Vickie Kaczmarek; Rick Daluge; 2019 Daluge Red Jacket Award recipient, Marjorie Stieve; and 2018 Daluge Red Jacket Award recipient, Liz Henry*

### **New Lifetime Members**

Michael Murphy '87  
Siwei Qian '23

### **In Memoriam**

Clyde Nehls, BS '58, '78

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## Resolve to Give Back in Ways Big and Small in 2022



*Taylor Fritsch, WALSAA President*

I've never been a big fan of New Year's resolutions.

Of course, I understand the allure. The turning of the calendar serves as a helpful reminder to take stock of what the prior year has brought and to set goals for the year to come. But truth is that January 1 doesn't come with any special powers. What we accomplish—individually and collectively—over the next year will be dictated much more by what we do on the other 364 days of the year than what we do on January 1, 2022.

Whatever my misgivings are about New Year's resolutions, I'm incredibly excited to see what WALSAA can accomplish in 2022—its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year. Over the past year, your WALSAA Board of Directors has been discussing how to best position WALSAA to serve CALS alumni and students over the next several years. Through this process, I was reminded that WALSAA's strength is building community and connection—bringing together CALS alumni and friends to support students and engage fellow alumni.

So how can WALSAA grow its impact in 2022 and beyond? We are truly a grassroots organization that accomplishes nearly everything we do through support and involvement of loyal members. As we look forward, I hope you all will resolve to give back to WALSAA and CALS in ways big and small in 2022. Here are just a few ideas:

- **Get involved with a WALSAA committee.** Much of WALSAA's work is accomplished through five standing committees: Events, Student Outreach (new), Scholarship, Marketing & Development, Farm & Industry Short Course, and Finance. We're always looking for new committee members to get involved. All committees meet virtually, facilitating participation from just about anywhere.
- **Volunteer.** Consider sharing your time and talent with CALS students through the WALSAA Speaker's Bureau or mentorship program pilot. (More information on these initiatives is available at [WALSAA.org](http://WALSAA.org).)

- **Make a gift in our Annual Appeal.** No matter whether big or small, every dollar helps us advance our efforts in support of CALS students. Contributions can be mailed or made at [WALSAA.org](http://WALSAA.org).

The end of the year is also an important time for giving thanks, and WALSAA owes plenty of individuals thanks this year. First, thank you to Pierce Dopp for his service as president this year. Pierce is a passionate advocate for WALSAA and CALS, and we thank him for his leadership. Second, I want to thank our WALSAA committee chairs (Scott Rasch, David Cooper, Julie Larson, Cory Brown, and Sherryl Pertzborn) for all of their hard work over the past year. Third, I would like to thank retiring Board members Sherryl Pertzborn, Cory Brown, Shawn Conley, and Adam Gaspar. Each of these individuals has made significant contributions to WALSAA, and they will be greatly missed on the board.

And finally, thank you to our members. WALSAA is fortunate to have a strong base of committed members and supporters. This was never more evident than over the past couple of years, when the COVID-19 pandemic forced us to cancel or modify our signature events and find new ways to raise scholarship funds to support students. WALSAA members stepped up in a big way—helping us meet and exceed our fundraising goals in each of the past two years.

In closing, I'm honored to have been selected to serve as your next WALSAA President. While I won't be making any formal New Year's resolutions (see prior comments), I'm certainly resolved to do everything in my power to advance WALSAA and its mission in 2022. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me at [tfritsch@uwalumni.com](mailto:tfritsch@uwalumni.com) with any suggestions or feedback—I look forward to hearing from you.

Taylor Fritsch (B.S. 2014)



*2 - WALSAA Express, January 2022*

## 2022 Scholarship Applications Available

Applications for 2022 FISC Scholarships, Outstanding Sophomore and Senior Impact Awards are now available at [WALSAA.org/students/walsaa-scholarships/](http://WALSAA.org/students/walsaa-scholarships/). Application deadlines are February 1, 2022, for FISC and February 14, 2022, for Outstanding Sophomore and Senior Impact Awards. As a part of the WALSAA Speaker's Bureau webinar series, a video on resume building tips is available at [WALSAA.org/students/speakers-bureau/](http://WALSAA.org/students/speakers-bureau/).

# CALS MESSAGE

## Looking Back, Moving On



Kate VandenBosch, CALS Dean and Director

This coming March marks 10 years since I joined CALS as dean. I look back now with pride in everything the CALS community has accomplished — together — during the last decade. Not only did we continue to pursue our mission through significant financial challenges and a world-stopping pandemic, but we also completed many critical strategic efforts.

We launched the Wisconsin Crop Innovation Center, which uses the latest plant biotechnology to improve crop species. We leveraged a \$7.8 million annual investment from the state to form the Dairy Innovation Hub, a collaborative program that supports the Wisconsin's dairy industry through research conducted at UW–Madison, UW–Platteville, and UW–River Falls. We opened the \$57.1 million Meat Sciences and Animal Biologics Discovery building a year ago, and the \$72.6 million Babcock Hall addition and remodeling project is scheduled for completion in 2022. And we're nearing the end of our major fundraising campaign, All Ways Forward, through which we have surpassed our \$150M goal by more than 16%!

Those are some big successes. But there are many others. You can read more about what we have achieved at [go.wisc.edu/cals-dean-2022](http://go.wisc.edu/cals-dean-2022).

It has been a privilege and a joy to serve this college. I will always be amazed by the extraordinary efforts of our faculty

and staff as they advance knowledge, provide opportunities for students, and improve the wider world. Likewise, I will always be wowed by the exceptional achievements of our students and alumni.

As much as I've enjoyed my time leading CALS and collaborating with the incredible people it gathers, I have decided to move on from my position as dean. In September, I announced that I will be stepping down in summer 2022. I made this decision well in advance to give the university ample time to do a rigorous national search and help us work toward a smooth transition for my successor. The Office of the Provost has hired an experienced search firm to direct the effort and has named a search and screen committee. The committee is chaired by biological systems engineering professor Troy Runge and includes students, staff, faculty, a dean, and off-campus individuals. Read more about the committee at [go.wisc.edu/cals-dean-committee](http://go.wisc.edu/cals-dean-committee).

For updates on this search, stay tuned to our various CALS channels — the CALS News page ([news.cals.wisc.edu](http://news.cals.wisc.edu)); Twitter and Instagram ([@UWMadisonCALs](https://twitter.com/UWMadisonCALs)); and our alumni e-newsletter, CALS Connection ([go.wisc.edu/cals-connection](http://go.wisc.edu/cals-connection)). We will keep you posted as the process continues.

Meanwhile, I am as committed as ever to CALS and its mission. There's still work to be done.

## WALSAA Football Fire-Up

*Continued from page 1*

Kaczmarek served the organization as the WALSAA treasurer during WALSAA's transition from Ag Hall to a self-sufficient organization. He maintained the relationships with Ag Hall and the UW Foundation ensuring that all scholarships continued to be awarded as designated. Before his sudden health challenges, he worked behind the scenes to set up the WALSAA Scholarship fund, a place where members and supporters could donate to continue to support the Outstanding Sophomore Awards. There are few that have done more for WALSAA's history, present and future. His work still secures WALSAA's foundation.

The third WALSAA Red Apron Award for Dedicated Service was presented to the Williams Family. They have been behind the scenes coordinating and preparing the delicious potatoes ole for Fire-Up guests for many years, and have also been a generous sponsor to the Fire-Up Silent.

Let's not forget those that make this event possible – our

volunteers! WALSAA would like to extend our sincere gratitude to all of our volunteers for sharing their time and talents. A special thank you to the CALS Ambassadors and student organizations for their service at Fire-Up. We look forward to seeing you in 2022 on **Saturday, September 10** for another WALSAA Football Fire-Up versus Washington State! On Wisconsin!



2021 Red Apron Award recipients, the Williams family with 2018 Red Apron Award recipient, Scott Johnson; and 2019 Red Apron Award recipient, Mike Marr

# PAST PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## Stay Engaged



*Pierce Dopp, WALSAA Past President*

My fellow alumni and friends of the University of Wisconsin, As I reflect on the end of 2021, I finished my year the way I started, feeling blessed and honored to have served you as President of the Wisconsin Agricultural and Life Sciences Alumni Association. I can safely say it was not the year anyone imagined when I began my tenure in November 2020. Since March 2020, the COVID pandemic has challenged us all to take stock and examine the impact of our actions. Amidst these challenges, though, I find myself with a newfound respect and admiration for this institution and the volunteers that support it. The University of Wisconsin is a family — and when we are hurting, we care for each other.

As President, my goal was to encourage us all to be advocates and ambassadors for our University; to encourage donations, volunteer efforts, and participation. In the midst of the chaos caused by the pandemic, this call took on a newfound urgency — and I was proud to witness Badgers around the world reaching out to support both our students and our mission.

The strength of any organization is taking the time to look inward, embrace change and set strategy to catapult it to the next level. In 2021 your WALSAA Board began identifying areas for growth and the long-term plans and solutions it will take to reach Alumni Association goals. A strategic plan is being put in place to carry out the Association's mission and serve our alumni and students worldwide better than ever. It is indeed an exciting and transformative time for WALSAA.

WALSAA also increased the use of digital platforms to stay connected with our alumni and students. Like many organizations in 2021, Zoom became our boardroom and a

critical tool for conducting meetings across the organization. Board meetings, committee meetings as well as the Outstanding Sophomore and FISC scholarship interviews and awards banquet, were done virtually and successfully. WALSAA is the bridge that connects our graduates to beautiful memories and each other. I invite you to stay engaged and explore ways to participate in volunteer programs. Get involved by becoming a WALSAA member, supporting scholarships, or participating in our newly established mentoring program and other initiatives and events that will be posted on our 2022 calendar.

I would like to thank my fellow Board members, who have been so instrumental in reaching out and encouraging participation - both in their own local communities, and through social media. While this was a goal from the beginning of our tenure, the importance of outreach, particularly online, helped pave the way for our calls to action in 2021. A special shout out goes to Stephanie Hammerly, the keeper of the Microsoft Outlook calendar and the glue that keeps us organized and energized.

This past year, many of our experiences have included disruption, heartbreak, loss, but hopefully blessed gains as well. I pray that we all seek gratitude and never give up on hope for better days. I am deeply grateful to have been chosen to blaze a new trail in alumni leadership and look forward to being of service for many years to come. Please join me in welcoming our friend Taylor Fritsch (CALs 2014) as he leads us into a new chapter.

*"Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth."* - Muhammad Ali

Pierce Dopp (B.S. 1981)

## WALSAA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2021-2022

**Taylor Fritsch '14 - 2024**  
President  
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**Brittney Muenster FISC '11 - 2024**  
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**Paul Patterson '86 - 2022**  
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**Scott Rasch '93, '97 - 2023**  
Racine, WI

**Brooke Trustem '20 - 2023**  
Evansville, WI

# WELCOME TO THE WALSAA BOARD

## Demmer, Kawleski and Muenster Join the WALSAA Board of Directors



### Alison Demmer

Alison Demmer is a UW-Madison CALS graduate in Agricultural Communications and Journalism and is the Marketing Specialist for Culver's. At UW-Madison, she was involved with Collegiate Farm Bureau, Association of Women in Agriculture and National Agri-Marketing Association. She currently serves on the WALSAA Marketing and Development

Committee as the lead of the WALSAA Express newsletter. Alison resides in Peosta, Iowa with her husband Royce.

### Mike Kawleski

Mike Kawleski is the Public Affairs Manager for Georgia-Pacific in Green Bay, Wisconsin. He earned a bachelor's degree in agricultural journalism from UW-Madison. At UW-Madison, he was a member of the Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity and Alpha Zeta. Kawleski was also a UW CALS lecturer for Agricultural Journalism Publicity and Farm and Industry Short Course Business Communications.



He resides in Sobieski, Wisconsin with Jeanne, his wife of 37 years. They have three children, Daniel (married to Karen), Laura and Amy. Mike enjoys woodworking, music, reading, cooking and playing guitar.

### Brittney Muenster

Brittney Muenster is an insurance agent with Family Insurance Center in Freedom, Wisconsin, specializing in farm and agribusiness accounts. She is also a dairy and beef producer on her family's 200 acre farm in Seymour, Wisconsin, managing 110 dairy cows in addition to a growing beef herd to supply their on farm store.

As a graduate of UW-Madison's Farm and Industry Short Course, she uses the experience and resources gained to share her farm story with their store clientele in addition to anyone who will listen. She's made it her life's mission to enhance the consumer-producer relationship and help other farmers do the same. She (along with her boyfriend Matt Van Wychen and Blue Heeler McCoy) is an avid hiker, road tripper, and supper club enthusiast.



# walsaa THANK YOU FIRE-UP SPONSORS

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# 2021

# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

## Life Sciences Start, Leads to Personal Success



Logan Wells

*One of the factors that lead to the success of CALS and WALSAA is that we have students and alumni who come from a wide variety of backgrounds and in various career fields. Life Sciences Start, Leads to Personal Success features some of our members that have taken their degrees, skills or passions learned from Life Sciences into new careers, community or personal development. Read on to learn how their degree in a Life Sciences major led to success.*

### Meet Logan Wells

Forest Science and Certificate in Business, Spring 2016  
Wood Science Instructor at Northcentral Technical College

### What brought you to your current career?

I accepted the position as the Wood Science Instructor at NTC because of my love for sharing information and the importance of the forest products industry with others.

### It's rewarding to see CALS grads being sought after and utilizing their degree and skills outside of their major. How have you adapted to your career area and how did your CALS degree support you or help you navigate the change?

I have always really enjoyed forestry and specifically the products end of things. My faculty advisor, shout out to Wood Products Extension Specialist Dr. Scott Bowe, had a huge impact on my life and reaffirmed my desire to have a career with extension and education. My time at UW-Madison helped my confidence grow and my ability to learn how to learn difficult subjects in different ways.

### How did you come to be involved with WALSAA?

I was a CALS Ambassador at UW and had the opportunity to be the student representative on the WALSAA board. I am incredibly grateful for all of their support with scholarships and mentorship to students.

### What was the biggest influence UW-Madison and/or WALSAA had on you?

By far, networking with other peers, professors and other leaders that I have met through WALSAA and UW-Madison has been the biggest impact on me and my career.

### What message would you give to current and potential members?

Thank you for your support and efforts to help students grow. No matter where CALS/UW-Madison students end up, they will be leaders for our industry going forward. WALSAA and their network and support are a huge part of that!

## walsaa THANK YOU SILENT AUCTION DONORS

### WALSAA Society

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### Ag Hall Club

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Taylor Fritsch & Emily Selner  
J Henry & Sons/Liz & Joe Henry  
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Wisconsin FFA Foundation

### Henry Mall Club

David & Cindy Cooper  
Ron & Sandy Curran  
Vern & Judy Dougherty  
World Dairy Expo

### Red & White Club

Bob Behnke  
CALS  
Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin  
Marjorie Stieve  
Tietz Family Farms Popcorn

## PROCEEDS TO CALS SCHOLARSHIPS

# CALS AMBASSADORS

## Student Recruitment



*Siwei Qian, WALSAA Student Representative*

Fall semester went well! CALS ambassadors held nine information sessions and open houses for prospective students and their families. To give prospective students more options, our information sessions are held in both in-person and online format. We also have actively participated in WALSAA Football Fire-Up, “Thank a Badger” Day and CALS Study Abroad information session. We are planning “Your UW” Days which will be held every month

from February to April. Our CALS Admitted Students Day will be April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Both admitted students and their families will be invited to attend. During these events, admitted students can participate in a variety of student panels about CALS majors, life in Madison, undergraduate research, and how to study and pick classes in college. There will also be a closing Q&A session for students to get their questions answered about CALS and academic opportunities.

# FISC UPDATE

## FISC Ambassadors



*Leo Ehlen, WALSAA Student Representative*

We have had an amazing first semester! For the first time in almost two years, we have had in-person classes which were really important for our students to gain hands-on learning. Each week we also had guest speakers. Those included Pierce Dopp’s presentation on SMART goals, DATCP sharing the Farm Center and Nutrient Management Plan/Snap Plus, TUGS providing resources for mental health, and Julie Larson presented on building a resume.

We have also held many fun activities from bowling, ice skating, and even a Packer party for the Packers vs. Bears

game. We are planning more workshops for this next semester such as hoof trimming, AI certification and the pesticide application license test for private, public and turfgrass.

I am excited to share that we have added two more members to our FISC Ambassador Team. Halei Heinzl and Tyler Bramstedt are great contributions to our team and are helping bring new ideas for the program as we move forward going into the spring semester.

# OSA LOOK BACK

## Celebrating 25 Years of Outstanding Sophomore Awards



*Sara Griswold*

Last year, WALSAA celebrated 25 years of Outstanding Sophomore Awards. We continue to share a look back to previous recipients.

Sara Griswold of Green Bay, Wisconsin was a recipient of WALSAA’s Outstanding Sophomore Award. Griswold is a Marketing Supervisor at Agropur and is currently the communications lead of WALSAA’s marketing and development committee.

We asked how WALSAA had an impact on their lives and what advice they would offer current students. Griswold shared, “Receiving the scholarship meant I was seen as a

leader and that my hard work and involvement in various student organizations was seen and appreciated.

WALSAA is a great organization to network with fellow Badgers, both students and alumni. The more you put into different groups and organizations, the more you will get in return. Say ‘yes’ to opportunities; you never know who you will meet or what you will learn and how that could have a long-term impact on you personally or professionally.”

*Watch for more Outstanding Sophomore Award look backs in future issues. 2022 application is available at [WALSAA.org](http://WALSAA.org). Deadline to apply is February 14, 2022.*



Your CALS Connection For Life

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## NEW DIGITAL EXPRESS!

Have you not yet received the digital version of the WALSAA Express newsletter? Scan the QR code and share your email with us to opt-in to the newsletter or sign-up at [www.WALSAA.org](http://www.WALSAA.org).



Share Your Email With WALSAA

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- March 12 ♦ FISC Graduation
- April 1 ♦ WALSAA Awards Ceremony
- May 14 ♦ CALS Commencement
- July 12 ♦ WALSAA Summer Picnic/FISC Reunion
- Sept. 10 ♦ WALSAA Football Fire-Up  
*Celebrating 50 Years of WALSAA!*

*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.*