

## First Rick and Peggy Daluge Scholarship Recognition Award Winners Named



### CALS Students Received First Rick and Peggy Daluge Recognition Awards

Pictured left to right: WALSAA President John Brunnquell, 2024 recipients Amanda Bender and Jelena Lee, CALS Interim Associate Dean for Academic Affairs Paul Mitchell (not pictured 2024 recipients Kelly Herness and Danika Wanish)



### New Legacy Members

Tyler Schroepfer, B.S. '24  
Elizabeth Schultz, B.S. '13

### In Memoriam

Roland Manthe, B.S. '58 M.S. '65  
PhD '76

The Wisconsin Agricultural and Life Sciences Alumni Association (WALSAA), the organization that supports the connection of students, faculty and alumni to the University of Wisconsin-Madison's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALs), is pleased to announce the first recipients of the **Rick and Peggy Daluge Recognition Award**. This new scholarship award goes to sophomore students at CALs who demonstrate excellence in academics, leadership and service to the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences community.

Rick and Peggy Daluge of Madison, Wisconsin, are proud and enthusiastic UW-Madison CALs



Rick and Peggy Daluge

graduates. Rick earned his Bachelor of Science (1971), Master's in Science (1975), and PhD (1982) degrees at the UW, while Peggy, the first woman to achieve a Dairy Science degree at the UW, received her Bachelor of Science in 1970. Rick joined the CALs administration in 1972 as an Assistant Dean where he was Director of Career Services, Student Recruitment, and Secretary-Treasurer of the newly formed WALSAA. Rick and Peggy were charter members of WALSAA. Rick retired in 2008 after 36 years with the UW and 25 years as Director of the Farm and Industry Short Course. He worked with WALSAA during this entire time and helped to grow this vibrant alumni group from 300 to over 2000 members. During Peggy's busy career she worked with the Brown Swiss Association, Farm Credit of Madison, as a Dane County 4-H agent, and then spent 15 years as Director of Wisconsin Business World, a financial literacy program for high school students. In 2002, Peggy and Rick's love of travel led them to establish a group international tour business, Daluge Travel. The couple have two children, Tracy and Mark, who are also CALs graduates. Rick and Peggy Daluge have been ardent and dedicated supporters of WALSAA and many other UW and community groups throughout their lives. This new Daluge award reflects the couple's continued commitment and joy in giving back to CALs and its students.

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## Congratulations CALS Graduates!



*John Brunnquell, WALSAA President*

Many years ago a majority of people were engaged in production agriculture. Hard to believe that now we represent less than 2% of the population. With a large production agricultural population, a practical decision was made about how children were going to receive education. They simply were needed during the summer months to help with the chores around livestock and crops and simply could not spend time in school during the summer. Hence the setting of the school calendar to offset the annual calendar, i.e. the year starts in fall and ends in spring, as opposed to January to December. While we represent a smaller percent of the population, that need has not really changed. Agriculture, especially crop agriculture, is still very seasonal.

Another academic year has been completed. Degrees, scholarships and awards have been bestowed, and the next generation of young professionals have entered the work force. Congratulations to all the graduating seniors and

well wishes on your career. For the students who have not graduated, their education never really ends. Now we are in the season of summer professional jobs, internships and/or returning to the farm to help the family for the summer with newfound knowledge. Hard to believe, but it is also time to start planning for the next academic year. Your Board remains very active at this time of the year planning for the return of students in the fall. CALS Welcome Week and WALSAA Football Fire-Up have been scheduled and we are now soliciting new members to join our board in fall to replace the wealth of experience that will retire from the Board. If interested, reach out to us.

So, this column is about the continuous cycle of life. My message is take time to savor the cycles and don't get so busy you lose touch with friends, family, and fellow alumni.

Enjoy your summer and see you at Fire-Up! On Wisconsin!

John Brunnquell (B.S. 1985)

# CALS AMBASSADORS

## Student Recruitment



*Caitlin Hanley, WALSAA Student Representative*

It was a whirlwind of a semester for the CALS Ambassadors! We have made some big changes to make us more available to prospective students. We held 24 sessions for prospective students, 23 sessions for admitted students, and weekly drop-ins for families that could not make the other sessions.

Additionally, we welcomed students as a part of the university's "Your UW Days." Students attended general university sessions in the morning, which I was able to be a part of as a Wisconsin Admissions Volunteer for their "Ask a Badger" panel. I enjoyed being able to share some of my great CALS experiences with all future Badgers. CALS admitted students joined us in the afternoon for tours, advising sessions (including pre-med, genetics,

and exploring, among others), and an ice cream social afterwards sponsored by WALSAA. At the social, students were able to explore different majors and clubs. Throughout these four afternoons, we welcomed about 240 students!

As the ambassadors gear up for the next recruitment season, we've been able to welcome 4 more for next year. We will begin training in the summer to have another successful year! We're also saying good-bye to our graduating seniors, Sofia Fernandez and Maezy Beams. They will be greatly missed, but we know they'll do amazing things in the future!

# CALS MESSAGE

## 'Major' Changes at CALS



Glenda Gillaspy, CALS Dean and Director

The world is changing rapidly. As it shifts, the challenges our stakeholders face — and what they require to tackle them — continue to evolve. So CALS is evolving too.

Through ongoing conversations with alumni and industry representatives, several of our academic departments have recognized a need for adjustments in how we prepare our graduates. These adjustments have now arrived in the form of new undergraduate majors and certificates, designed to improve how we develop and send problem-solvers out into the world.

The Department of Animal and Dairy Sciences recently launched a new major in dairy and food animal management. The new major comes in response to the needs of the dairy industry as well

as the livestock, poultry, and meat processing industries. It encompasses a range of food animal species and meat science, but it's also designed to provide stronger training in economics, business, management, and effective interpersonal skills, all of which are necessary for taking on modern challenges in animal agriculture. With the change, the department is also expanding flexibility and options for students to choose courses that match their interests.

The dairy and food animal management major will replace the current dairy science major, which focuses heavily on dairy cow biology, and is an excellent option for dairy-focused students. Students enrolled in the dairy science major have the option to complete their degree or switch to the new major.

The Department of Plant and Agroecosystem Sciences (PAS), home to the current agronomy and horticulture majors, is also planning to implement a new major (pending approval by the UW Board of Regents in early June). It's called agroecology. This refashioned academic program takes aim at what may be the grandest challenge facing humanity. That challenge is achieving food, feed, fiber, and fuel security and sovereignty for an ever-growing and ever-diversifying population — all while setting up future generations to do the same.

Simple, right?

Maybe not, but agroecology majors will at least leave CALS ready to take this on. Through a suite of coursework and experiences focused on organisms, land, ecosystems, and

people, students will grapple with questions and problems in a holistic way. They will rely on disciplinary academic expertise in PAS, entomology, plant pathology, soil science, and community and environmental sociology, but they will also search for multifaceted solutions involving multiple sectors of society. Transdisciplinary thinking and doing like this require planning and training, which the agroecology major will provide.

**I can't wait to see our students learning and engaging in exciting new ways through these evolved majors and certificates. I know you're curious about it as well, so we'll be sharing their experiences through various CALS outlets.**

These new CALS majors are accompanied by two new certificates. One will be offered by the Department of Soil and Environmental Sciences (the new name for the Department of Soil Science, a change that better reflects the department's courses and programs). With the updated name comes a

new undergraduate certificate focused on the science and environmental implications of soil. Its coursework mirrors the core courses of the soil science major and can be added to complement any existing major, even those outside of CALS, because knowledge of soil science is vital for a variety of academic and career paths. The department will be suspending admissions to the soil science undergraduate major, which has had low enrollment for several years, but its popular environmental sciences major will continue.

And last (but certainly tastiest), the Department of Food Science has launched a fermented foods and beverages certificate, open to all UW–Madison undergraduates. Through hands-on learning, students pursuing this certificate will develop skills and knowledge in the science, development, production, and marketing of everything from beer and wine to kimchi and sauerkraut to cheese and yogurt. They will also learn about non-food applications for fermentation, such as production of renewable materials and biofuels, and will be able to tailor the course selection to suit their career goals.

I can't wait to see our students learning and engaging in exciting new ways through these evolved majors and certificates. I know you're curious about it as well, so we'll be sharing their experiences through various CALS outlets. For now, you can learn more about the latest CALS majors and certificates by searching the college's news site at [news.cals.wisc.edu](http://news.cals.wisc.edu).



# FIRE-UP FEATURE

## Meet the Band

WALSAA is excited to welcome, The Jimmys, a blues band from Madison, Wisconsin to the WALSAA Football Fire-Up this year! Join us Saturday, September 7 and enjoy the sound of an award winning, high energy, seven-piece funky blues band!

Led by singer/songwriter and keyboardist, Jimmy Voegeli, a UW-Madison CALS alum. During the day Jimmy helps out on his family's sixth-generation dairy farm. They till 1,500 acres of crop land, robotically milk 130 purebred Brown Swiss dairy cows, and export embryos, bull semen, and live animals all over the world! They show and exhibit dairy cattle throughout the states. His grandfather, father, and brother are world-renowned dairy geneticists, selling their genetics to hundreds of countries.

Jimmy grew up in a house constantly filled with music and singing – his parents met at one of his father's gigs. He played the piano, yet struggled through piano lessons, then flunked high school band on trumpet. Jimmy made that report card the cover of his first solo album: "F" is for Blues," featuring Grammy-winning bluesman Billy Flynn on guitar, Clyde Stubblefield, James Brown's original funky drummer, and his inspiring tough-love band teacher, Mike Korth, on trombone.

A Hammond Organ Artist, Jimmy's won MAMA (Madison Area Music Award) awards for "Keyboardist of the Year" in 2010, 2012 and 2015, "Organist of the Year" in 2021 and 2022, and MAMA Hall of Fame Class "Piano." Jimmy also received WAMI (Wisconsin Area Music Industry) awards for "Keyboardist of the Year" in 2011 and 2015, and "Organist of the Year" in 2024. Jimmy performs with outstanding industry award winning instrumentalists, Perry Weber - Guitars, Singer/Songwriter; Johnny Wartenweiler - Electric and Upright Bass; Chris Sandoval - Drums; Pete Ross - Tenor and Alto Saxophones, Clarinet; Joe Goltz - Trombone; and Chad Whittinghill - Trumpet.

The Jimmys ([www.thejimmys.net](http://www.thejimmys.net)), founded by Jimmy, in September 2009, have released five critically acclaimed albums of original music and have earned 30+ awards in numerous categories on a highly competitive local, regional, and national level. In 2014-2018 and 2022, The Jimmys won MAMA awards for "Blues Performer of the Year;" in 2014, 2021 and 2023 "Artist of the Year" along with awards for "Blues Album of the Year" in 2016-2017 and 2020; "Blues Song of the Year" 2014, 2016-2017 and in 2020 "Unique Song of the Year." In 2012 and 2016, The Jimmys earned



WAMI for "Best Swing/Big Band Ensemble" and in 2023 "Best Artist Southwest." Awards with Independent Blues include "Local R&B Band," "Local Blues Band," "Blues Band," "Blues Song of the Year," and "Best Contemporary Song," "Write a Hit" with Marcia Ball. Other awards include Downbeat Magazine "Best Album," Isthmus Mad Faves "Madison's Favorite Band," and multiple years with Madison Magazine "Best Blues Band," "Best Blues Gold Winner," "Best Local Band," and MAMA Hall of Fame Class "Best Performer."

Jimmy has played thousands of shows and recorded on nearly 100 albums with the likes of Marcia Ball, The Funkmasters (Clyde Stubblefield and Jabo Starks from The James Brown Band), Dan Baird and Homemade Sin (formerly The Georgia Satellites), Bun E Carlos (Cheap Trick), Bryan Lee, Blues Superstars such as Stephen Hull, Chris O'Leary Band, Reverend Raven & the Chain Smokin' Altar Boys, Perry Weber, Jim Liban, Barstool Bob with guests Lonnie Brooks; along with an 18-year stint in the award-winning Westside Andy/Mel Ford band earning a first round Grammy Award nomination for "Contemporary Blues Album" in 2003. Jimmy has shared the stage with Blues greats like Tinsley Ellis, Buddy Guy, Keb Mo, Marcia Ball, Pinetop Perkins, Hubert Sumlin, Billy Flynn, Tab Benoit, Nick Moss Band, Tommy Castro Band, EC Scott, Shirley King, Guitar Shorty, Greg Koch, Joe Bonamassa along with Jazz greats Tony Monaco and Ben Sidran. The Jimmys have done numerous tours in Europe and Scandinavia, even recorded an award winning LIVE album at the prestigious Sighișoara Blues Fest in Sighișoara, Romania. Jimmy has also been a featured artist on two recent Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruises.

***More about The Jimmys and Jimmy Voegeli in the next issue...and watch for Fire-Up Features on social media!***

***Check out their website: [www.thejimmys.net](http://www.thejimmys.net)***

# 2024 Outstanding Sophomore Award Recipients



**Our College,  
Our Connection**



## Andre Acra • Biology

Andre Acra is a biology major from Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin, who is also pursuing certificates in global health and health policy. He plans to become a doctor.

Acra is the founder/president of Mission Box UW, a community pantry box providing 24/7 access to non-perishable food items and water. He is the community outreach chair for the Food Recovery Network, and this summer will intern with FoodWise helping provide nutrition education to children from underserved communities.

As a member of Partners in Health Engage, the student chapter of Partners in Health, Acra has advocated to both local and national legislators about the need for increased access to healthcare for underserved populations. He also works as a research assistant in Dr. Luke Funk's Lab, as a certified nursing assistant at UW Health's East Madison Hospital, and in an optical store.

Acra credits his CALS advisors and professors for "broadening my horizons and viewing my undergraduate career as more than a step to medical school", all of which will help him become a more "well-rounded, personable and knowledgeable human."



## Faith Baerwolf • Agricultural & Applied Economics and Life Sciences Communication

Faith Baerwolf of DeForest, Wisconsin, is a double major in agricultural and applied economics and life sciences communication. She is currently spending her spring semester in Ireland in the Agricultural and Life Sciences program at the University College Dublin as part of CALS's study abroad program.

When on campus in Madison, Baerwolf is active in the Association of Women in Agriculture (AWA), Badger Dairy Club, the Collegiate Farm Bureau, and Agricultural Business Management Club, in addition to working in the Babcock Dairy Store. Baerwolf was previously an intern for the Wisconsin Farm Bureau's Agriculture in the Classroom program. Growing up, she handled many responsibilities in her family's Sassy Cow Creamery. She has received the Renk Scholar Award and Wisconsin State FFA degree.

"While UW-Madison can be large and intimidating," Baerwolf says, "CALS offers a sense of community and family through smaller class sizes and clubs and organizations for students to join." Upon graduation, she states, "I hope to help develop policies to support urban agricultural education and sustainability in the agricultural industry."

## *Meet the 2024 Outstanding Sophomore Award recipients!*

Each year, WALSAA names 10 second-year CALS students at the University of Wisconsin-Madison as outstanding sophomores. The award focuses on the qualities that truly exemplify an outstanding student, including leadership, service, experience, and academic success. Continue reading to learn more about this year's award winners and why they are truly outstanding.

*Since 1972, WALSAA has been THE alumni association of the UW-Madison College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS) and Farm and Industry Short Course (FISC).*

*WALSAA is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that supports the connection of students, faculty and alumni to the UW-Madison College of Agricultural & Life Sciences.*

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# 2024 Outstanding Sophomore Award Recipients



## Lauren Breunig • Life Sciences Communication

Lauren Breunig of Sauk City, Wisconsin, is a life sciences communication major also pursuing a certificate in business management for agricultural and life sciences.

Breunig is a member of the Association of Women in Agriculture (AWA), National Agri-Marketing Association, Collegiate Farm Bureau and UW dairy cattle judging team. She is outreach chair for Badger Dairy Club. Breunig is the Wisconsin Holstein Association's 2024 Holstein Princess and formerly served on that group's Junior Activities Committee where she was vice-chair. She has held multiple leadership roles in the Dane County Junior Holstein Association. Breunig has been active on her family's dairy farm and in 4-H, where she won the James W. Crowley 4-H Leadership

Award. Last summer, she was an intern at the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. She aspires to a career that will build better understanding between the agricultural community and general public.

As a third generation CALS student, Breunig says, "The combination of diverse opportunities, numerous student organizations, and impressive university personnel makes CALS one of the best colleges of its kind."



## Evelyn Browning • Genetics and Genomics

Evelyn Browning is a genetics and genomics major from Arlington Heights, Illinois. She is pursuing a second major in data science, with plans to become a research geneticist.

As the first person in her immediate family to attend college in the United States, Browning credits CALS's QuickStart Program with making her transition to the UW easier where she now has a 4.0 GPA. Thanks to the CALS Honors in Research Program, she is now an undergraduate researcher at the Schwartz Lab. Browning is the Student Sport Clubs "lead", acting as the liaison between seven college sport clubs and staff.

As academic chair of the Undergraduate Genetics Association, she helps coordinate and deliver presentations on research and academic opportunities to club members. She is also treasurer of the UW's Shorin-Ryu Karate Club.

Browning says, "The unwavering support and sense of community and camaraderie that I've developed thanks to being a CALS student is the biggest reason I believe others should consider the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences at UW-Madison."



## Elizabeth Cahill • Genetics and Genomics

Elizabeth Cahill from Oak Park, Illinois, is a genetics and genomics major with a second major in sociology. She plans to pursue a Master's degree in bioethics.

Cahill found the CALS QuickStart program a "transformative entry point into a reassuring space". On campus, she has been an actor, script writer/director, and production contact for Humorology, an annual UW musical theater mini-skits competition which raises money for philanthropic causes. She is vice-president of programming for Planned Parenthood Generation Action and represents this group on the Reproductive Freedom Coalition Board. She is her Alpha Chi Omega Sorority's Panhellenic Association delegate. Cahill is currently a research assistant in the Reid

Alisch Lab. During high school, she was a math tutor, played lacrosse, and co-founded "Stuff the Truck", an annual diaper drive for a local domestic violence center.

Cahill says, "CALS, though its immersive lectures, invigorating discussions, and life changing research opportunities, possesses the unique ability to expand and transcend students' interests, propelling them into a world they may never have imagined."





### **Patrick Colegrove • Biology**

Patrick Colegrove of Chicago, Illinois, is working towards a degree in biology and certificates in life sciences communication and biocore with plans for a career in viral oncology research. He is in the Honors in Research Program.

Colegrove is a CALS Outreach Ambassador and this past fall served as peer leader for the undergraduate seminar Inter-Ag 155. He is an executive board member on the UW's Bioethics student organization and secretary of the Madison Lake Alliance. He is currently working to establish a new "Queer in STEM" student club. Colegrove was previously on the marketing committee for End Overdose at UW-Madison, and a member of CALS's Health and Research Society (CHARS) and the Wisconsin Union

Directorate Cuisine Committee. He was a student research assistant at the Wisconsin National Primate Research Center and presently works as a research assistant in Xu Labs, all while maintaining a 4.0 GPA.

Colegrove says, "I can now confidently see both my personal and career growth since that first week on campus, and I'm excited for my next CALS adventure."



### **Trista Drew • Biochemistry and Spanish**

Trista Drew of Westfield, Wisconsin, is majoring in biochemistry and Spanish. She plans a career in dentistry, stating, "I aspire to create a future where everyone has the chance to smile brightly and enjoy optimal oral health, regardless of their background."

Drew is community outreach coordinator for the UW's Kick it to Cancer, plus a member of "Letters of Love", which crafts cards for children battling cancer and raises funds to help families with medical expenses. She is also part of "Conversations to Remember", organizing virtual meetings with seniors to alleviate loneliness. Drew is a member of the Pre-Dental Society and a research assistant in the Department

of Dermatology's Ayuso Lab. As a certified nursing assistant, Drew has provided care to an individual with dementia in her hometown area. She is a softball pitching coach, enjoys participating in intramural sports, and is active in her church. All of this, while maintaining a 4.0 GPA.

Drew says of her college experience, "I have found CALS to be enriching and the perfect environment to further cultivate my passion for scientific inquiry."



### **Jenna Gries • Dairy Science**

Jenna Gries is a dairy science major from Manitowoc, Wisconsin, who is also working towards a certificate in agricultural business management. She aspires to a career in dairy genetics and becoming part of her family's 325-head dairy farm.

Gries has been secretary of the Association of Women in Agriculture (AWA) and Collegiate Farm Bureau, as well as outreach chair for Badger Dairy Club. She recently became student recruitment ambassador for the Department of Animal and Dairy Sciences. Gries was a member of the UW's dairy cattle judging team that finished first at the 2023 Vernon County Intercollegiate Dairy Cattle Judging Contest. As a 4-H member, Gries was a member of Wisconsin's winning team at the 2021 National 4-H

Dairy Cattle Judging Contest and also earned the James W. Crowley 4-H Dairy Leadership Award that same year. She is currently serving as the Manitowoc County Dairy Princess.

Gries feels her CALS experience will prepare her "to make a positive impact in the agricultural sector and emerge from college connected, academically prepared, and professionally polished."

*Continued on next page*

## **2024 Outstanding Sophomore Award Recipients**



**Our College,  
Our Connection**

## 2024 Outstanding Sophomore Award Recipients



### Pate Lantz • Biology and Life Sciences Communication

Pate Lantz from Hartland, Wisconsin, is majoring in biology and life sciences communication where he has a 4.0 GPA. He is in the Honors in Research Program and pursuing a certificate in athletic healthcare.

A participant in CALS's QuickStart program, Lantz is currently a STEM immersion peer leader for the Wisconsin Institute for Science Education & Community Engagement (WISCIENCE), and last fall was a peer leader for the undergraduate seminar Inter-Ag 155. The recipient of a sophomore research award, he is a research assistant now in the Department of Human Oncology's PipLab. Lantz hopes to have a career in medicine. He works during school breaks as an emergency medical technician (EMT) for two fire departments in his hometown area. On campus, he is a "responder"

for the Badger SPILL program which responds to anonymous student concerns related to mental health.

Lantz credits his "sense of belonging" at the UW to "the people within CALS". It is that "sense of community", he says, that gives CALS that smaller, more inclusive feeling and is one of its greatest "selling" points.



### Clarissa Ulness • Dairy Science

Clarissa Ulness is a dairy science major from Valders, Wisconsin, working towards certificates in life sciences communication and art studio. Following graduation, she wants to work in agricultural marketing and stay involved with her family's Holstein farm.

Ulness is service coordinator for the Association of Women in Agriculture (AWA), secretary of Badger Dairy Club, and a member of the Collegiate Farm Bureau and UW dairy cattle judging team. She represented the UW at the Purina Dairy Nutrition Experience. She is the electronic communications and marketing intern for the Department of Animal and Dairy Sciences. Ulness was recently honored as Wisconsin Outstanding Holstein Girl for 2023. She is a past member and chair of the Wisconsin Holstein Association's Junior Activities Committee and currently serves

on Holstein USA's National Junior Advisory Committee. She captained five Manitowoc County Junior Holstein Dairy Bowl teams to state titles and was a member of Wisconsin's winning 4-H team at the 2021 National 4-H Dairy Cattle Judging Contest.

"Badger Red" runs in Ulness's blood and for her CALS's countless opportunities and experiences "makes the UW-Madison the perfect place for me."

## **Congratulations to all of our 2024 Outstanding Sophomore Award recipients!**

We are proud of all of our 2024 Outstanding Sophomore Award recipients and look forward to what they will accomplish in the years to come. We would also like to thank all of the applicants for this year's award and wish them good luck as they finish school.

*The ability for WALSAA to provide this type of support is at the core of its mission and solidifies its connection to CALS. Starting with donations and continuing with annual silent auctions, WALSAA has been able to generate continued scholarship support over many years to deserving students of CALS. If you are interested in supporting students and advisors, visit [www.WALSAA.org](http://www.WALSAA.org).*



# NEW SCHOLARSHIP SPOTLIGHT

## First Daluge Recognition Award Winners Announced

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Four CALS sophomores have been chosen to receive the inaugural Rick and Peggy Daluge Recognition Award in 2024:



**Amanda Bender** is a plant pathology major from Walworth, Wisconsin. Active in several campus organizations, she is sentinel for the Association of Women in Agriculture (AWA) and coordinator for the Collegiate Farm Bureau's Agriculture in the Classroom program. As a Badger Dairy Club member, she was the group's World Dairy Expo business chair. She was also president of her FFA chapter while in high school. In the future, Bender plans to work towards a doctorate degree.

**Kelly Herness** of Whitehall, Wisconsin, is pursuing degrees in agricultural and applied economics and life sciences communication, plus a certificate in public policy. She hopes to have a career in agriculture policy development. Harness is a member of the Mercile J. Lee Scholars and Renk Agribusiness Scholars Programs. She is on the communications committee at AWA and a member of the Collegiate Farm Bureau. A past president of her high school FFA chapter, she served on the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Youth Board.



**Jelena Lee** of Maplewood, Minnesota, is majoring in microbiology and nutritional sciences with plans to become a physician. Lee is a member of CALS's Equity and Diversity Committee. She has been an Undergraduate Teaching Fellow (UTF) for CALS's QuickStart program, a peer leader for a biology class, and a scholar in the Undergraduate Research Scholars program. She is a Mercile J. Lee Scholar. She also volunteers in the Hospital Elder Life Program (HELP) at Meriter Hospital and is a member of the Asian American InterVarsity Worship Team.

**Danika Wanish** of Madison, Wisconsin, is an Honors in Research student majoring in biological systems engineering and certificates in the biocore honors program and leadership. Wanish is chair of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee for the UW's RecWell Adventure Learning Program. As part of the UW Service Learning Program, she led an after-school STEM club at a grade school. Wanish has worked as an undergraduate researcher in two laboratories and participated in the Wisconsin Experience Leadership Bus Trip. A member of the American Society for Agricultural and Biological Engineers, she plans to become an environmental engineer.



Congratulations to all of the recipients!

## WALSAA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2023-2024

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# 2024 Senior Impact and Sprecher Award Recipients



## Elise Bleck • Dairy Science

Elise Bleck is from Glenbeulah, Wisconsin, and graduating from the UW with a degree in dairy science and certificates in life sciences communication and global health. She is also one of three Nancy J. Sprecher Enhancement Award recipients this year.

Bleck entered CALS with a very different approach regarding her education. "I wanted to major in dairy science," she says, "but go to medical school. I accomplished this through CALS because of the various physiology classes offered and certificates I could add to my education. I could do it all!" By thinking "outside the box", she is now working towards acceptance at medical school and becoming a doctor in a small rural town where she can have an impact on the community and her patients' lives. She has gained valued experience for her career working as a nursing care partner at UW Health University Hospital. Bleck is a member of the Association of Women in Agriculture (AWA) where as service coordinator she organized several impactful service projects with the Red Cross, Kids Against Hunger, and at Ronald McDonald House where she initiated a new project to address their need for blankets. A Badger Dairy Club member, she has previously served as their outreach chair and on their Platinum Collection Sale Committee. She is a member of the National Agri-Marketing Association and participated in the Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge Academy. Bleck has been a member of the UW Dairy Cattle Judging Team all four years and in 2023 was top individual and member of the winning team at the Southwestern Intercollegiate Dairy Cattle Judging Contest in Texas. She has worked as a research assistant in the UW Lactation Physiology Lab. She previously served two years on the Wisconsin Holstein Association's Junior Activities Committee and in 2021 was one of their Wisconsin Holstein Distinguished Junior Members.

Bleck has juggled multiple jobs and experiences, all while maintaining a high GPA and a spot on the Dean's List every semester in a challenging science-based curriculum. As she says, "CALS has allowed me to forge my educational path, meet fantastic faculty, and take advantage of endless opportunities."



## Ravi Jain • Global Health

Ravi Jain of Plymouth, Minnesota, is graduating this spring with a Bachelor of Science in global health and a certificate in health policy. Her goal is to become a Physician Assistant (PA).

Jain is a member of the CALS Health and Research Society (CHARS) where for the second year in a row she is serving as director of their undergraduate research symposium. She is a member, and mentor, in the Aspiring Physicians Assistant Association, as well as a mentor to freshmen in her global health major. Jain is a member of Alpha Phi Omega, a co-ed professional service fraternity where she is actively involved in a number of service projects. She has worked as an undergraduate researcher in the Gratton Lab for landscape ecology of insects. She presently is gaining valuable experience in the health field as a volunteer in the Hospital Elderly Life Program (HELP) at UnityPoint Health - Meriter Hospital, as a clinical assistant in Urgent Care at UW Health-Madison, and as a student health technician in Primary Care at UW University Health Services. She also works as a certified nursing assistant in her hometown area and previously was a home health aide caregiver for a woman with autism and epilepsy in Madison. Passionate about her Indian culture, and having a love for dance, Jain is a member of Wisconsin Surma, the UW's premier competitive Bollywood dance team where, along with being a dancer in this student organization, she is the group's administrator and part of its executive board.

Ravi's favorite parts of CALS are its "interdisciplinary approach", "hands-on-learning experiences", and ability to be at the "forefront of addressing global challenges". Ravi will have a "gap year" before starting physician assistants' school in 2025. During that year, she plans to broaden her clinical experience in other settings like medical missions or community health clinics in underserved communities around the world. She also hopes to explore more options for community engagement and to network with other healthcare professionals. "Through this journey," Ravi says, "I hope to become a competent PA with a background in working to make healthcare more accessible for populations across the world."

*Continued on next page*



### **Kylie Konyn • Dairy Science**

Kylie Konyn is a dairy science major from Escondido, California, who is also working towards certificates in science communications and agricultural business management. She plans to graduate in December 2024 and then pursue a doctorate in dairy cattle nutrition. Upon completing her education, she wants to return to the dairy industry in either an extension or management consultant role.

Konyn is studied abroad last semester at Wageningen University in the Netherlands where she is taking the opportunity to be involved in several student clubs. Here at the UW, she has been an in-house resident and member of the Association of Women

in Agriculture (AWA) where she has served two stints as house assistant. She was outreach officer for the Badger Dairy Club and in 2023 was selection co-chair for the club's successful Platinum Collection Sale. She has been a communications officer for the Collegiate Farm Bureau. As a member of the UW's Dairy Cattle Judging Team, she was second high individual at the North American International Livestock Exposition's Intercollegiate Judging Contest in 2023 in Kentucky and helped her team to finish first overall. Konyn is a research assistant in Dr. Heather White's dairy nutrition physiology lab and has presented her own research findings in a symposium. Last summer, she worked as a dairy focus intern for Cargill Animal Nutrition in New York, and previously was a global marketing intern for ABS Global. She served on the Dairy Innovation Hub's Dairy Export Research Team which studied barriers and solutions to exporting Wisconsin dairy products. Konyn was active in 4-H and is a past president of both the California Holstein and Jersey Junior Associations. In 2023, she was one of six Distinguished Junior Holstein Members recognized nationally by Holstein Association USA.

Konyn says, "CALS has provided me with a multitude of opportunities in which to explore the dairy industry. They aim to get you involved! Wisconsin has given me a home, family and a lifelong network of people. I have learned invaluable lessons at CALS, both inside the classroom and through experiences, that will allow me to impact the future of the dairy industry."



### **Natalie Roe • Dairy Science and Life Sciences Communication**

Natalie Roe is a dairy science and life sciences communication major at CALS from Monticello, Wisconsin. She is currently studying abroad this semester at Wageningen University in the Netherlands and will graduate from the UW in December 2024.

Roe has been very active on the UW campus. She was student ambassador for the Animal and Dairy Science Department and through her efforts was instrumental in helping the department to recruit and grow its fall 2023 incoming class by over 40 percent. She has been a communications assistant at the Dairy Innovation Hub, a teaching assistant for a dairy herd management lab course and worked in the

Babcock Dairy Store. Roe is a member of Badger Dairy Club, Collegiate Farm Bureau, and the Association of Women in Agriculture (AWA) where she has served as sentinel. A member of the UW Dairy Cattle Judging Team, Roe was first individual overall and helped propel her team to first place at the 2023 North American International Livestock Exposition's Intercollegiate Judging Contest in Kentucky. Roe has worked for the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection as their communication and outreach intern. She has also been a technical services intern at Genex Cooperative and a 4-H intern with UW Extension Green County. Roe is presently the National Brown Swiss Association's youth ambassador. She is a past president of the Wisconsin Brown Swiss Juniors Association. Roe has been a volunteer in many community service projects like Rally to Fight Hunger, the Red Cross and Ronald McDonald House, as well as FFA and Lions Club events.

Roe aspires to a communications role within the agriculture industry, and as part of those plans intends to apply to be Wisconsin's Alice in Dairyland in 2025. She eventually hopes to return home to her family's cash crop farm. Roe is appreciative of the involvement opportunities, mentoring connections, hands-on-learning experiences, and advising resources that CALS offers. As she says, "CALS provides the right resources, majors and student communities to make being a Badger better." Roe is also a recipient of the Nancy J. Sprecher Enhancement Award this year.

*Continued on next page*

## **2024 Senior Impact and Sprecher Award Recipients**



## 2023 Senior Impact and Sprecher Award Recipients



### Sophia Schoenfeld • Biology

Sophia Schoenfeld of Waterford, Wisconsin, will graduate this spring after just three years at CALS with a degree in biology and certificates in health policy and global health, all while maintaining a 4.0 GPA and being part of the CALS Honors in Research program. She is also a recipient of the Nancy J. Sprecher Enhancement Award this year. With plans to become a doctor in underserved rural areas, Schoenfeld's next endeavor is the dual Doctor of Medicine/Master of Public Health (MD/MPH) program from the UW's Wisconsin Academy of Rural Medicine (WARM). She says, "My journey is not just merely about becoming a physician, it is about igniting and inspiring change."

Schoenfeld epitomizes the phrase "above and beyond". She participated in CALS's QuickStart program in 2021 and then became an undergraduate teaching fellow (UTF) for QuickStart the next two years, this last year as lead UTF. She is member of WALSAA's student outreach committee. The recipient of numerous scholarships and fellowships, Schoenfeld has over 1000 hours as an undergraduate research assistant/fellow/laboratory student supervisor in the Hernandez and Wiltbank Labs in the Department of Dairy Science where research focuses on reproductive endocrinology and lactation physiology. She has also presented her own research project results at seminars. Schoenfeld is a peer leader for the CALS Honors in Research program and a physiology lab course. She is a head advising fellow for Matriculate, where she helps low income high school students with college admission, as well as a chemistry tutor. She organizes and leads monthly letter writing meetings for Campus Cursive. She is currently an intern for the National Institute of Health gaining experience within their Office of Research on Women's Health. During school breaks, she works as a medical assistant in a dermatology clinic in her hometown area.

Schoenfeld cites CALS's "interdisciplinary field exploration, research driven institution, professional development, and longitudinal learning" as its greatest assets for students as they "cultivate a path that is not only about earning a degree, but about crafting their future." As she states, "The opportunities and supportive community I have found within CALS are unparalleled".

### **Congratulations to our 2024 Senior Impact and Nancy J. Sprecher Award recipients!**

This year, five Seniors were recognized with Senior Impact Awards from WALSAA and three of these Seniors received the Nancy J. Sprecher Enhancement Awards. This marks the second year for the Sprecher awards given to CALS graduating seniors that have shown outstanding leadership and academic excellence. This exemplifies the qualities the late Nancy J. Sprecher displayed during her career. Sprecher's wish was to have a scholarship fund established at CALS to support Seniors post-graduation.



### **What's Your Favorite CALS Memory?**

Likely not long nights in Steenbock but rather the connections you made ... your lifelong friends and colleagues. WALSAA is proud to support CALS students annually through the Outstanding Sophomore Award scholarships, Farm and Industry Short Course awards, Student Organization Impact Grant awards and Senior Impact Awards. It's time to give back to help students. Can we count on your support?

**Stay connected to CALS by donating today!**

[www.WALSAA.org/alumni/give-back/donate/](http://www.WALSAA.org/alumni/give-back/donate/)

## Sponsorship Opportunities

Sponsorships offer exposure and networking with UW-Madison's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS) students, teachers, alumni and industry enthusiasts. Your sponsorship offers you industry visibility and helps WALSAA support programs and activities that prepare the next generation for leadership. In return, you receive our newsletters, exposure on our website and will be highlighted on our social media platforms, plus an invitation to and recognition at our events.

### Events to Sponsor

#### WALSAA FOOTBALL FIRE-UP

This September 7th event precedes the South Dakota game and is our largest event allowing alumni, faculty and students to network and celebrate the college experience while raising funds for the Outstanding Sophomore Award scholarships. Music, alumni and brats!

#### WALSAA FARM AND INDUSTRY SHORT COURSE (FISC) ALUMNI REUNION

FISC alumni social event to honor students, teachers and industry leaders.



### Sponsorship Levels

#### VARSITY LEVEL Cost \$1,500

Sponsor logo on WALSAA.org and event signage, company mention in news releases, in the WALSAA Connection newsletter and on social media along with additional recognition at the event. Includes six event tickets.

#### Get Maximum Exposure -

Varsity level sponsors who commit to the Football Fire-up and the FISC reunion receive a 1/4 page ad in each issue of the WALSAA Connection newsletter, which is sent quarterly to 1,600 WALSAA members and CALS leaders.

#### BADGER LEVEL Cost \$750

Sponsor logo on WALSAA.org and on event signage, company mention in news releases, in the WALSAA Connection newsletter and on social media along with additional recognition at the event. Includes four event tickets.

#### RED LEVEL Cost \$500

Sponsor logo on event signage, in the WALSAA Connection newsletter and on social media along with additional recognition at the event. Includes two event tickets.

#### WHITE LEVEL Cost \$250

Sponsor logo on program and signage, in the WALSAA Connection newsletters and on social media, plus recognition at the event.

#### ANNUAL DONATION

Help sustain and grow WALSAA for our future. Annual gifts support WALSAA programs and initiatives that benefit CALS and its students.

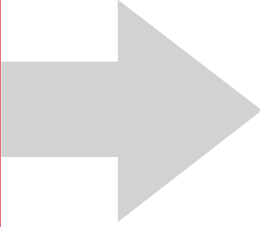
#### WALSAA ANNUAL GIVING LEVELS

- WALSAA Society Club: \$1,000 or greater
- Agricultural Hall Club: \$500 to \$999
- Babcock Hall Club: \$250 to \$499
- Henry Mall Club: \$125 to \$249
- Red & White Club: \$50 to \$124





## Our College, Our Connection

 Your sponsorships give you industry visibility and help WALSAA support multiple programs and events. Please fill out the below information and send it with payment to: WALSAA, PO Box 5177, Madison, WI 53705-5177. For any questions, please contact Stephanie Hammerly at 608-438-1994 or email [admin@walsaa.org](mailto:admin@walsaa.org).

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## I WOULD LIKE TO SPONSOR THE FOLLOWING:

### WALSAA FOOTBALL FIRE-UP

Saturday, September 7, 2024

- ☐ Varsity Level: \$1,500
- ☐ Badger Level: \$750
- ☐ Red Level: \$500
- ☐ White Level: \$250

### WALSAA FARM AND INDUSTRY SHORT COURSE (FISC) ALUMNI REUNION

Friday, January 24, 2025

- ☐ Varsity Level: \$1,500
- ☐ Badger Level: \$750
- ☐ Red Level: \$500
- ☐ White Level: \$250

### ANNUAL DONATION

Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ WALSAA Society Club: \$1,000+
- ☐ Agricultural Hall Club: \$500 to \$999
- ☐ Babcock Hall Club: \$250 to \$499
- ☐ Henry Mall Club: \$125 to 249
- ☐ Red & White Club: \$50 to \$124

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- ☐ Please send invoice 30 days prior to event
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- ☐ Check enclosed (payable to WALSAA)



[WWW.WALSAA.ORG](http://WWW.WALSAA.ORG)



*Save the Date!* Saturday, September 7, 2024

# WALSAA Football Fire-Up at UW Foundation, Madison, WI



## *New Band*

The Jimmys, a 7-piece funky blues band, will be playing this year... more details about the band in the next issue!



## *Tailgate Party & Silent Auction*

The annual WALSAA Football Fire-Up Tailgate Party and Silent Auction raises funds to support CALS student scholarships. This year's event will begin 3 hours prior to kick-off of the UW/South Dakota home game.

*Register at* [www.WALSAA.org](http://www.WALSAA.org)

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## **FIRE-UP SILENT AUCTION**

Looking for a great way to support current Badgers? Consider a donation to our WALSAA Football Fire-Up Silent Auction! Proceeds benefit UW CALS students through the Outstanding Sophomore Award scholarships, WALSAA Impact grants for student organizations and Senior Impact Awards. Contact Stephanie Hammerly, [admin@walsaa.org](mailto:admin@walsaa.org) or 608.438.1994, for more information or to confirm your donation!



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## WALSAA Membership Sponsors

## UPCOMING EVENTS

September 3-7 ♦ CALS Welcome Week

September 7 ♦ WALSAA Football Fire-Up  
UW Foundation, Madison

