

Together, We Impact, Empower and Inspire Students *Help us continue to fund student scholarships*



More than 50 years ago, WALSAA embarked on its remarkable journey to provide support to the University of Wisconsin-Madison College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALS). Over the years, WALSAA has connected students, faculty and alumni of CALS and impacted students and student organizations.

During this holiday season, we hope you'll join us in donating to our end-of-year campaign. Your contribution impacts students' lives, empowers them to make major contributions in their chosen fields and inspires leadership development.

Your past donations gave WALSAA the opportunity to present scholarships to students such as:

- Kylie, a senior in dairy science with certificates in agricultural business management and science communications. Her scholarship will help her pursue a master's degree in dairy nutrition.
- Pate, a biology and life science communications major with a certificate in athletic healthcare. His scholarship gives him the opportunity to explore research and leadership development on campus.
- Evelyn, a genetics and genomics major with a double major in data science. Her scholarship allows her to focus on community service and participate in student organizations.

To hear more from these students and other scholarship recipients, view their videos on WALSAA's social media channels or at WALSAA.org.

There are two ways to donate:

1. There is a donation form in this newsletter. Complete the form and mail it to WALSAA.
2. Go to WALSAA.org and click on **"Impact. Empower. Inspire. Make your donation here."** You will be directed to an online contribution form.

All contributions will be directed to students. Our goal is to raise a total of \$30,000 in contributions and pledges by the end of 2024.

Winston Churchill said, *"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."* We are grateful for any donation you can afford to give.

walsaa
Creating Connections for 50 Years

**Our College,
Our Connection**

New Legacy Members

Joanne Slavin, B.S. '81

New Student Members

*Ava Bachhuber, Mae Davidson,
Eihn Doh, Claire Egner,
Olivia Fernandez, Morgan Marks,
Ava Roessler, Pete Rooney,
Isabel Schuettppelz, Noa Shapiro,
Aashi Sinha, Lucia Sundberg,
Aditya Swish, Kaelyn Tam,
Minka Tolsdorf, Grace Wang,
Jacob Warner*

In Memoriam

*Wesley C. Falk, B.S. '60
Dr. David R. Selner, B.S. '73
M.S. '75 PhD '78*

IN THIS ISSUE

New Board Members.....	4
Scholarships.....	4
WALSAA Football Fire-Up.....	6
FISC Reunion.....	8

CONTACT US

Wisconsin Agricultural and Life Sciences Alumni Association
PO Box 5177
Madison, WI 53705-5177
P: 608.438.1994 E: admin@walsaa.org

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Looking Ahead to 2025



June Roush, WALSAA President

Greetings Everyone,

It is a great honor to step into the role of President, and I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to John Brunnquell for his insightful leadership, along with the entire Board of Directors, for their hard work and dedication over the past year. I also extend a warm welcome to our newly appointed Directors—your energy and expertise are invaluable as we move forward. I look forward to working together to build on the strong foundation laid by our founders, members, and sponsors.

I am confident that, together, we will continue to advance our fundraising strategies, utilize members expertise, and student outreach efforts with purpose and seize the opportunities ahead to support CALS.

A special thanks goes to our sponsors, members, CALS, University of Wisconsin Foundation, and friends for their unwavering support of our largest annual fundraiser, the WALSAA Football Fire-Up. This flagship event remains a highlight, and one that I cherished both during my college years and beyond.

As we look ahead to 2025, we will continue to support CALS across all majors. If you have suggestions for activities and sponsors that could better engage our life sciences community, I encourage you to reach out to me.

Additionally, we are excited to explore avenues to support and promote the Farm and Industry Short Course (FISC) AgForward program. I'm particularly thrilled to share the return of the FISC Reunion in January 2025—an excellent opportunity for our hardworking farmers to reconnect, share expertise, and discuss new opportunities during a less demanding season.

Wishing you all a fabulous 2025! I look forward to seeing you soon.

Best Regards,

June Meixelsperger Roush (B.S. 1987)

PAST PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Proud of CALS and Proud of WALSAA



John Brunnquell, WALSAA Past President

As I conclude my year as President of your alumni association it causes me to think back to the last time, I filled this role (2000-2001). Over the twenty-plus years the organization has changed profoundly. Not saying it is better or worse but simply WALSAA has evolved in a healthy way to reflect our current needs. In many ways, this is happening with CALS. New majors are being offered and traditional ones are sometimes wound down. (For example, I no longer get my Poultry Science degree, which is the foundation I built my career on.) Some things remain constant – we remain a leading college for learning and for research to solve the local, state and world issues. At the same time things change like the revamping of the FISC program.

With all of that said I could not be prouder of our college and our alumni association. I am certain both will continue to adapt to meet the ever-evolving needs of our stakeholders. With that, I sign off as president version 2.0 of WALSAA and I turn over the reins to the very capable June Roush. I remain on the Board and will continue to be active in other roles. In closing let us always embrace change to meet new needs and never let go of cherished traditions.

On Wisconsin!

John Brunnquell (B.S. 1985)

CALS MESSAGE

Plans for Faculty Support at CALS



Heather White, Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs

Heather White, a professor in the Department of Animal and Dairy Sciences, assumed the role of associate dean for faculty affairs on Aug. 1. She now oversees faculty personnel issues including hiring, promotion, tenure, post-tenure activities, compensation, retention, and the faculty annual performance evaluation process. The new faculty-focused associate dean position was created through a leadership reorganization led by Dean Glenda Gillaspy. It underscores the college's commitment to investing in its nearly 250 faculty members and ensuring they receive the support they need to thrive throughout their careers.

In this Q&A, White reflects on her first few months in the position and describes next steps to bolster faculty support and development.

What have you been focusing on so far?

I have jumped into the "career progression" processes, including tenure, post-tenure review, and promotion. One special project has been forming and leading the committee for promotion to professor with chair Irwin Goldman. Another major effort has been working closely with Associate Dean Troy Runge on the RISE (Wisconsin Research, Innovation and Scholarly Excellence) campus hiring initiative, which will bring new colleagues to CALS through the RISE-AI, RISE-EARTH, and RISE-THRIVE programs. We are excited about the four RISE faculty searches in progress at CALS.

Can you tell us more about the RISE initiative and related faculty searches at CALS?

RISE aims to strategically boost faculty hiring, improve research infrastructure, foster interdisciplinary collaboration, and create new educational opportunities in important areas. In particular, RISE focuses on areas where the university is uniquely positioned to make a meaningful impact on big, complex challenges that are important to both Wisconsin and the world. RISE-EARTH, for instance, homes in on environmental sustainability. RISE-AI is about data and computer sciences, and RISE-THRIVE addresses healthy aging.

At CALS, we've developed a RISE hiring process that blends traditional and cluster hiring methods, along with some unique RISE-specific elements. We have identified four college-specific themes: AI to advance life sciences; AI to advance agricultural and natural systems; furthering the bioeconomy; and mitigating climate impacts on

agroecosystems and communities. Each theme has a search and screen committee that will lead the recruitment and screening efforts within that theme. I'm chairing the search and screen committee focusing on AI to enhance agricultural and natural systems.

What is the charge of the Promotion to Professor Committee? Is that new?

Yes, over the past few months, I have worked to establish the inaugural committee, which has members from every CALS department. This committee plays a vital role in the promotion process from associate professor to full professor. It ensures that the promotion criteria are met and that the process is fair and transparent. The committee reviews promotion to tenure dossiers and provides recommendations to the dean.

We're also exploring ways to make the whole experience more positive for faculty, like elevating the process to have more of a "feeling" of scholarly review, much like divisional committees add scholarly review to tenure decisions and advise the dean on those cases.

How has your career path — as a faculty member and as inaugural director of the Dairy Innovation Hub — prepared you for this new position?

Serving as the faculty director of the Dairy Innovation Hub gave me a unique opportunity to work across departments in CALS to achieve common goals in faculty hiring, funding innovative research, and recruiting trainees. This perspective allowed me to see the unique approaches and aspects across departments. Working with department chairs to achieve common goals is something that I hope to continue in my current role. I've also had the opportunity within my department and through the hub to recruit and subsequently mentor new faculty, which is a very fulfilling part of academia.

What is your long-term vision for this position?

I would like to become a resource to departments and faculty to further refine the processes and support systems that allow the remarkable talent across the college to effectively and efficiently have impact across our shared missions.

Learn more at rise.wisc.edu.

WALSAA WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Breunig, Koch, McKiernan, Propst and Schultz Join the WALSAA Board of Directors



Nicole Breunig

Nicole Breunig is a 2006 graduate of UW-Madison with a double major in Life Sciences Communication and Dairy Science. She joined as the Marketing Chair for WALSAA in 2023. She received her Master of Science in Integrated Marketing Communications and is a passionate marketing and communications leader with work experience in agriculture,

food production, CPG, event management and media through private enterprises and government entities. She grew up in Green County on a dairy farm in southern Wisconsin. She is married to a fellow alum, together with her husband they have four boys and reside in Manitowoc, Wisconsin on their farmette. She is a volunteer in her community helping with youth sports, PTA, serves as sponsorship chair to the Manitowoc 4-H Dairy Committee for the Manitowoc County Fair Junior Dairy Show, is the advisor for the Manitowoc County Junior Holstein Association and also coaches dairy bowl.

Brian Koch

Brian Koch grew up on a livestock farm near Jefferson, Wisconsin. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Meat and Animal Science, with a Business and Industry option from UW-Madison. He spent the first ten years of his career in production management in the meat industry. He has worked as a financial advisor for the last 25 years; founding Red Barn Advisors in 2015.



He currently serves on the Delta Theta Sigma Alumni Board of Directors and with the Rotary Club of Waupun. Brian is married to Valerie and together they have five children and one grandchild. He enjoys watching his kids participate in high school sports (volleyball, baseball and soccer). He also enjoys getting back to the family farm, sporting clays and other outdoor activities.



Julie McKiernan

Julie McKiernan first became interested in agriculture in 8th grade when she was a member of the Montello FFA junior soils team at Farm Progress Days. Julie became the first female Montello FFA President in her senior year. She attended the UW-Madison majoring in Agricultural Economics and Dairy Science with a Business and Industry Option, graduating in 1987 with a BS-Agriculture degree. She worked at Bou-

Matic Dairy Equipment until 1996, where she managed the customer service department. She obtained her real estate sales license and transitioned into self-employment and co-ownership in a residential building company where she managed the office and was corporate Treasurer. In 2010, she became the Office Manager for a small welding and manufacturing company. The last seven years she worked for Kalscheur Implement Co. Inc. at the parts counter, a Case IH dealership, and recently joined Brooks Tractor Inc., a John Deere construction dealership, also at the parts counter. Julie served a three-year term on the School District of Lodi School Board, has been the past Treasurer and current member of the Lodi FFA Alumni and currently is a Village of Dane Trustee and board member of the Dane-Vienna Fire District. Julie brings a diverse background with her knowledge and past experiences.



2025 Scholarship Applications Available

Applications for 2025 Outstanding Sophomore and Senior Impact Awards are available at WALSAA.org/students/walsaa-scholarships/. Application deadlines are January 28, 2025, for sophomores and January 29, 2025, for seniors. 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/.



Tracy Propst

Tracy Propst grew up on her family's registered Holstein dairy farm, Crescentmead Farm, in Ixonia, Wisconsin, and graduated from CALS at UW-Madison in 1991 with a B.S. degree in Bacteriology. Her early career included roles at Oscar Mayer in product development and food microbiology, as well as a year as a Wienermobile Hotdogger and ultimately in

sales. She spent 22 years at Gehl Foods and served as Vice President of Food Service Sales and later worked with Professional Dairy Producers. Since 2020, Tracy has served as Executive Director of the Beaver Dam Chamber of Commerce, driving economic growth, tourism, business support, and community engagement. Tracy is actively involved in numerous organizations, including the Beaver Dam Rotary, Marshfield Medical Center-Beaver Dam Community Advisory Board, Community Health Committee

and Leadership Wisconsin Board of Directors. She and her husband, Andy, operate a 2,000-acre crop and hog farm in Beaver Dam with Andy's brother and are proud parents of UW-Madison children: Zackary (BBA, 2020) and Lindsay (BS expected 2025, WALSAA Outstanding Sophomore).



Lizzy Schultz

Lizzy Schultz graduated from CALS in 2013 with a Bachelor's degree in animal science. Following her graduation, she has worked in communications, public relations, and marketing for a variety of publications, firms, and agencies, including AgWired, Wisconsin Corn Growers Association, Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, broadhead, and 10Pearls Studio. In 2023, she returned to UW-Madison as a full-

time MBA student at the Wisconsin School of Business. She is receiving her MBA in Marketing and Brand Management and will graduate in the Spring of 2025.

WALSAA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2024-2025

June Roush '87 - 2026
President
Middleton, WI

Jane Hillstrom '80 - 2025
Vice-President
Dodgeville, WI

John Brunnquell '85 - 2025
Past President and Treasurer
Port Washington, WI

Curt Lauderdale
CALS Rep/Ex-Officio
Madison, WI

Andrew Stevens
CALS Faculty Rep/Ex-Officio
Madison, WI

CALS Ambassadors Student Rep
Megan Reimann

CALS Student Reps
Amanda Bender
Nicole Broege

Nicole Breunig '06 - 2027
Manitowoc, WI

Brian Koch '90 - 2027
Waupun, WI

Kay Maas '79, '82 - 2025
Pewaukee, WI

Dawn Manthei '93 - 2026
Hartland, WI

Julie McKiernan '87 - 2027
Dane, WI

Paul Mitchell '92 - 2026
Madison, WI

Michael Murphy '87 - 2026
DeWitt, IA

Tracy Propst '91 - 2027
Beaver Dam, WI

Lindsey Sarbacker '21 - 2026
Sioux Falls, SD

Lizzy Schultz '13 - 2027
Madison, WI

Brooke Trustem '20 - 2027
Evansville, WI

Rachel Zwieg FISC '08 - 2027
Ixonia, WI



Thank You for Your Time and Talents!

Incoming and outgoing WALSAA Board members at the 2024 WALSAA Football Fire-Up.

L-R (front row): Brooke Trustem, Lindsey Sarbacker, Halei Heinzl, June Roush, Lizzy Schultz, Jane Hillstrom, (back) Michael Murphy, Andrew Stevens, Taylor Fritsch, Pierce Dopp, John Brunnquell, Brian Koch, Paul Mitchell, and David Cooper.

WALSAA FOOTBALL FIRE-UP

More Than \$14,000 Raised to Support CALS Students

More than 200 UW-Madison CALS alumni, friends, and family came together to network and raise funds as part of the annual WALSAA Football Fire-Up. This year's Fire-Up was held just before the kickoff of the Badgers vs. South Dakota Coyotes on Saturday, September 7. Glenda Gillaspay, CALS Dean and Director, and John Brunnquell, WALSAA President, welcomed all in attendance. Alice in Dairyland, Bucky Badger, and CALS administration and faculty were also present. This year's silent auction and Fire-Up donations raised more than \$14,000 for CALS scholarships, awards, and student activities. A big thank you to the sponsors, donors, bidders and volunteers!

Congratulations! WALSAA presented its 8th annual **WALSAA Daluge Red Jacket Award** to Pierce Dopp, Wausau, Wisconsin, for his dedication and service to WALSAA for many years. Dopp served on the WALSAA Board for the past six years and was President from 2020-21. He continues to

serve on the Finance and Student Outreach committees. The fifth **WALSAA Red Apron Award** for Dedicated Service was presented to Paul Patterson, Green Bay, Wisconsin. Patterson has been dedicated to working behind the scenes to bring sponsors and donations to the Fire-Up tailgate for several years. Paul and his wife Sarah have also been generous donors to the Fire-Up Silent Auction, as well as a sponsor of the event.

Thank You! Let's not forget those who 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 WALSAA Board and Committee members, CALS Ambassadors and student organizations for their service at Fire-Up.

We look forward to seeing you at next year's Fire-Up!

Thank You Fire-Up Sponsors

Varsity Level Sponsors



**Wisconsin Foundation
& Alumni Association**
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON



Badger Level Sponsors

**In Memory of John L. Dopp
Franz Family Farms, Inc.**

Red Level Sponsors

**Paul & Sarah Patterson
June Roush
Sheldon A. Schieldt**



White Level Sponsors

**Alpha Gamma Rho: Iota Chapter
Bob Behnke
The Conleys
Dreamstone Dairy
Green Bay Packaging
Al & Lynn Herrman
Janisch Creative Cheese Carving
Schreiber Foods
The Williams Family
WI Potato & Vegetable Growers Assoc.**

Thank You Silent Auction Donors

WALSAA SOCIETY

**Pierce Dopp
Al & Lynn Herrman
Kay & Duane Maas
The Wilson Family/
The Manney Place**

AG HALL CLUB

**Coloma Farms
Rick & Peggy Daluge
Taylor Fritsch & Emily Selner
J. Henry & Sons/Liz & Joe Henry
Michael Best & Friedrich, LLP
Partners in Production, LLC/Jack Kaltenberg
Valley View Farms/Michael Marr**

BABCOCK HALL CLUB

**Case IH/Racine Experience Center
Nancy & Jerry Kaufman**

HENRY MALL CLUB

**David & Cindy Cooper
Doctors Choice Supplements
Jill Makovec
UW-Madison CALS**

RED & WHITE CLUB

**Hagenow Family
Hook's Cheese Company, Inc.
Carol Philipps
Lindsey Sarbacker
The Jimmys
Tietz Family Farms Popcorn**

PROCEEDS TO CALS SCHOLARSHIPS

Yes, I/we want to help WALSAA sustain and grow. I understand my gift will support WALSAA programs and initiatives that benefit the UW-Madison College of Agricultural & Life Sciences (CALS) and its students.

WALSAA Annual Giving Levels:

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

☐ Online donation: [WALSAA.org/alumni/give-back/donate/](https://walsaa.org/alumni/give-back/donate/)

☐ Check enclosed (payable to WALSAA)

☐ One-time credit card gift

Visa, MasterCard (circle one) Card Number: _____

Name on card: _____ Exp: _____ CVV code: _____

Amount Authorized: \$ _____

☐ Monthly credit card gift (good for one year)

Visa, MasterCard (circle one) Card Number: _____

Name on card: _____ Exp: _____ CVV code: _____

Amount Authorized per month: \$ _____

Your Name _____
(As you want it listed on the membership recognition lists)

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Double my impact with a matching gift. Employer matching-gift form: ☐ Enclosed ☐ Completed online

The Wisconsin Agricultural and Life Science Alumni Association (WALSAA) is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization and donations are U.S. tax-deductible.

Thank you—please return to:

WALSAA
P.O. Box 5177
Madison, WI 53705-5177

Questions? Contact WALSAA - 608.438.1994 - admin@walsaa.org



Your CALS Connection For Life

P.O. Box 5177, Madison, WI 53705-5177

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit 372
La Crosse, Wisconsin

Follow WALSAA on social media at:



www.facebook.com/WALSAAUW



www.twitter.com/WALSAA



www.linkedin.com/company/WALSAA



www.instagram.com/WALSAAUW

www.WALSAA.org

STAY UP-TO-DATE!

Have you not yet received the digital version of the WALSAA Connection e-newsletter? Scan the QR code and share your email with us to opt-in to the e-newsletter or sign-up at www.WALSAA.org.



Share Your Email With WALSAA

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 15 ♦ CALS Winter Commencement



January 24 ♦ FISC Reunion

Pyle Center Alumni Lounge, Madison
Visit WALSAA.org to register

April 4 ♦ WALSAA Awards Ceremony