

WALSAA MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Lauren Brey: WALSAA and CALS Connections Run Deep



Lauren Brey's parents brought her to WALSAA Fire-Up and Association of Women in Agriculture (AWA) events as a child, sparking a connection to UW–Madison that would last a lifetime. When it came time to select a college, Lauren chose UW–Madison because the energy felt familiar.

"The deciding factor in choosing the UW came during a campus tour coordinated by Food Science Professor Dr. Rich Hartel," Lauren said. "He arranged an ice cream-making workshop with graduate students just for me, going out of his way to highlight an area I was interested in pursuing."

A 2013 Life Sciences Communication and Food Science graduate, Lauren may not be making ice cream now, but she has remained connected to campus.

Dr. Hartel regularly invites her back to speak to his Discovering Food Science 201 class about the many paths available to food science students.

"I encourage students to be present. It's so important to not just show up physically but to pay attention and talk with

others. You never know who you are going to meet and what connections they have. I tell the students to spread their wings and try new things."

She credits her mother with introducing her to the power of networking by bringing her to campus events surrounded by

accomplished collegiate women. Lauren often finds herself the youngest person in the room at industry events, but she has learned how valuable it is to build relationships and confidently introduce herself in professional circles.

Lauren works for the Voice of Milk, a collaboration of Edge Dairy Farmer Cooperative, the Dairy Business Association, Minnesota Milk Producers Association, and Farmers for Sustainable Food. As Chief Experience Officer, she focuses on how to support farmers, corporate members, and sponsors while also improving the organization's internal processes and experience.

Her leadership roots trace back to her time in CALS. As a student she participated in WALSAA and CALS workshops on resume building, professional development, and networking. She helped found the Ag Day on Campus event where she stood on Bascom Hill and the campus mall sharing information about agriculture with fellow students. Her leadership

abilities contributed to Lauren receiving a 2011 WALSAA Outstanding Sophomore Scholarship.

"The scholarship allowed me to focus more on being a student and the experiences it offers rather than needing to have a part-time job. There are numerous companies that sponsor scholarships but receiving one from WALSAA, I felt recognized and supported by alumni. The interview process gave me

exposure to influential alumni, as well."

Lauren believes her CALS experience broadened her perspective and gave her the communication skills to thrive in business. Her coursework in a science major plus LSC provided her with the background and the tools to communicate and solve problems in the business world. "I am open-minded to new perspectives because of what I learned in college."

Lauren comes from a long line of UW graduates beginning with her grandfather, Lloyd Holterman who was a FISC graduate, her parents Daphne and Lloyd Holterman, her sister Taylor, and multiple aunts, uncles, and cousins — sixteen, in all, not counting her husband Jacob's family which adds another twelve proud Badgers.

Lauren and Jacob, along with Jacob's brother, Tony, and his wife, Moriah, run Brey Cycle Farm, a registered Holstein dairy farm in northeast Wisconsin, and market their own beef through Brey Family Beef. Lauren and Jacob are raising three young children, ages one to five.

Looking ahead, Lauren hopes to one day bring her children to campus and share with them the same sense of possibility and connection she found at CALS.



**Lauren & Jacob Brey
with their family**