a fond farewell: BILL KELLOGG
Wow! Where did the year go? As we come to the end of another successful academic year, it is exciting to reflect on the success accomplished by our students, faculty and staff during the year. Our students continue to excel at all levels of leadership in the university and were very successful in state and national competitions this year. Read about the accomplishments of many of our students in this issue of Reflections.

Our graduates continue to be in very high demand. Earlier this year, we were excited to announce that our agricultural communication program was ranked in the top 10 programs nationally. This speaks very highly of our students and faculty. Our ag communication students continue to get a Learn by Doing experience through the production of three professionally done issues of the Ag Circle magazine each year. Secondary agriculture programs throughout the state continue to be in
desperate need of high-quality agriculture teachers. To address that need, we hired one of our graduates, Bonnie Baxter, to serve as a statewide “Teach Ag coordinator.” Bonnie has done an excellent job helping to recruit future teacher candidates. Our “Teach Ag” recruitment campaign hit the road in full force this year. We made presentations at the World Ag Expo in Tulare, Calif., to recruit industry professionals into teaching and at the State FFA Leadership Conference in Fresno, Calif., to encourage top high school students to consider becoming an agriculture teacher. If you know of excellent agriculture teacher candidates, please send them our way.

This year has presented many of those bittersweet moments for me personally. On Sept. 1, I will be ending my teaching career at Cal Poly and heading into retirement. I joined the Cal Poly team 32 years ago, and it has been an amazing journey. I would like to thank all of the students, staff, alumni and community members for a great tenure at Cal Poly. It has been my absolute delight to have served our students, Cal Poly, the California Agricultural Teachers’ Association, and California’s agricultural industry in such an important role as a teacher educator.

Our department enrollment continues to be about 250 bachelor’s degree students (ag communication and ag science split about equally), approximately 25 post-baccalaureate credential candidates, and our census this fall showed we had 184 students in some phase of completing their master’s degree. We could not serve all of these students without the support of our generous department donors, and for that, we thank you. Please enjoy reading this issue of the Reflections newsletter and feel free to share any comments you have with us.

Best Wishes,

[Signature]

Our agricultural communication program was ranked within the top 10 programs nationally.
SPECIAL AWARD WINNERS

AGED Student Employee Receives Top Honor

Third-year agricultural communications major Kenna Lewis claimed the title of 2015 California Champion at the Young Farmers and Ranchers Collegiate Discussion Meet held in Sacramento in February. Lewis and Ariana Joven competed in the final four of the competition. The Cal Poly team also earned the Outstanding Team award.

Cal Poly Student Wins Public Speaking Contest at National Minorities Conference

Cal Poly agricultural science major Angelica Aldana won the national undergraduate prepared public speaking contest at the Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Science conference in Houston.

Karina Salomon, Mo Tehrani and Aldana, all members of Cal Poly’s Latinos in Agriculture Club, attended the three-day conference in March. Tehrani competed in an impromptu competition and placed in the top 15 nationwide.

The conference marked the 30th anniversary of Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences with the theme “Thirty Years of Triumph: Branching Out and Excelling to Greater Heights.”

Aldana’s winning speech focused on how the past efforts of historical figures such as Cesar Chavez paved the way for minorities in agriculture and how the next generation of agriculturists and professionals must continue that...
endeavor. She competed against five other MANRRS members from universities throughout the nation.

Aldana, 20, who is from Bakersfield, said her past experience with FFA led to her passion for the agriculture industry and for public speaking. She hopes to be an agricultural educator and FFA advisor for high school students.

Alumnus Alex Flores Named Citizen of the Year

Alex Flores graduated from Cal Poly with a bachelor’s degree in agricultural science in 1999 and worked as a student teacher in the fall of that year. After earning his teaching credential, Flores was named director of the Santa Paula High School Agricultural Academy and FFA advisor. He continued his education, earning a Master of Science degree with a specialization in agricultural education in 2005.

Flores has been a teacher at Santa Paula High School for 16 years, guiding many of his students through various projects and programs.

On March 18, at the annual Chamber of Commerce awards luncheon in Santa Paula, Flores was recognized as Citizen of the Year. Previously Flores had been named the Chamber’s Educator of the Year for his willingness to help students succeed. Noting Flores’ dedication and hard work, his students selected him Grand Marshal of their 2012 Homecoming Parade.

Chamber President Fred Robinson said, “Flores is shy, doesn’t like the spotlight. But Alex exemplifies what a teacher should be, including building the character of his students and not just raising their academic skills.”

When he learned he was selected Citizen of the Year, Flores said, “I’m pretty humbled. I couldn’t have done it myself ... it’s the kids, and getting them to work with the community for more of an appreciation of where they live and an appreciation for who lives there.”

Whether Flores is in the classroom, on the school farm, or in the community, he continues to make a difference in the lives around him. He exemplifies what it is to be an agricultural teacher and a contributing community member and will continue to make an impact in all that he does. Flores and his wife, Laura, have two children.
If you’ve ever walked through the second floor hallway of Cal Poly’s Building 10, you’ve undoubtedly seen Professor Bill Kellogg working tirelessly in his office — his desk facing the door, ready to welcome all visitors. Although his time as head of the Agricultural Education & Communication Department is coming to an end, he leaves behind an unrivaled legacy and one of the most successful departments in the College of Agriculture, Food & Environmental Sciences (CAFES).

Kellogg’s dedication and enthusiasm for teaching make him a role model to students and faculty. For the past 32 years, he has taught at Cal Poly. The six years prior to that, he taught high school agriculture. His success as a teacher stems directly from his commitment and loyalty to his students.

“The best part of my job and my favorite memories are of working with students,” Kellogg said. “I am most proud of the students who have graduated from our program and the success that they are experiencing in their lives right now. They are successful in industry; they are leaders in the teaching profession. As a teacher, I like to think that maybe I had a small part in that.”

Many successes of the agricultural education program, its faculty and students are attributable to Kellogg. “Dr. Kellogg is someone you want to strive to be like,” said Jake Odello, a fourth-year agricultural education student. “I genuinely try to make time for people and be there for people, just like he does. Knowing him, I’m just going to be a better, genuine person.”

Kellogg values his relationships with people across campus. He doesn’t just see faces as another student or another co-worker; he remembers people’s names, what they do, even their birthdays. “Dr. Kellogg has been able to establish some really wonderful relationships with people all over campus,” said J. Scott Vernon, an agricultural education & communications professor who has worked with Kellogg for more than 30 years. “The carpenters, the plumbers, the painters — all the people who are important to the success of Cal Poly, but aren’t in the public’s view — Dr. Kellogg has made a strong network with all of them.”

With so many close friendships, Kellogg has built a devoted team within the Agricultural Education & Communication Department and CAFES. It is well known that behind his hard-working, dependable exterior is a dedicated prankster and lover of all things concrete.

“His pranks are the funniest,” said Donetta Rosson, administrative support coordinator for the Agricultural Education & Communication Department and a close friend to Kellogg and his family. “I remember helping him ice a birthday cake for some co-workers that was actually made out of concrete.”

Jerry Clark, a past professor in agricultural education, fondly recalls falling victim to his pranks as well. “When I first came to the department, I found an actual urine test kit in my mailbox accompanied by official paperwork indicating the step-by-step process for acquiring the sample and to what administrative office it was to be delivered,” Clark said. “Good thing I took time to question it, or I would have been quite embarrassed, standing there at some receptionist’s desk in administration, proud that I completed and submitted my ‘assignment’ in a timely fashion.”
Despite his never-ending pranks and sense of humor, Kellogg is diligent and holds himself and others to the highest standards. He is extremely hard working and renowned for his organizational skills, especially his complicated “BK Filing System.”

“Nobody knows what those numbers mean, but he does,” said Robert Flores, agricultural education professor. “He’s very organized. If he does something, it’s going to be planned and designed correctly. He doesn’t cut corners, not just with concrete, but with everything.”

When Kellogg first became a faculty member at Cal Poly, he already had a plan to be successful. “I remember as a student watching certain faculty helping and working alongside the students,” Kellogg said. “They didn’t have to do it, but wow, they’re making that student’s experience at Cal Poly a fun, successful one. When I came back as a faculty member, I was very involved, especially with Poly Royal.”

Kellogg has dedicated the past 10 years to what is now known as Open House. He is the only faculty member to have served as an advisor for the Ag Pavilion Committee for its entire 10-year existence. He is also the designated safety guru for CAFES. He has taught CPR classes for the past 25 years and fire safety for 10. For more than 20 years, Kellogg taught the Advanced Ag Mechanics class in the BioResource & Agricultural Engineering Department. All of these activities are very hands-on and exemplify the Learn by Doing model, which Kellogg is very passionate about.

“I’ve always wanted to instill the Learn by Doing philosophy in my classes because that is the right way to learn, with students experiencing their learning,” Kellogg said. “Cal Poly has most impacted me through the Learn by Doing model and philosophy. I embraced it as a student and as a teacher. Cal Poly is a Learn by Doing institution … and is a wonderful school. We’ve had excellent students who have made a difference in the world.”

Though Kellogg is retiring, he has been a true role model to students and faculty and has prepared the Agricultural Education & Communication Department for future generations of success. “Dr. Kellogg’s impact has reached thousands and thousands of students,” Vernon said. And that legacy will continue, even when students come to campus in the next generation. They may not know exactly who he was, but they’ll benefit from the work that he did.”

Kellogg has worked every day with passion and humility. He has done so much for CAFES, especially behind the scenes, and never asks for anything in return. “I don’t think people know just how much that man does for CAFES,” Rosson said. “He does things that you don’t even realize he does — things just get done. He always goes the extra mile to help people, especially students.”

Kellogg will always hold a special place in CAFES, and students and faculty plan to uphold the legacy he built. All his hard work has prepared the Agricultural Education & Communication Department for future success. Though he hasn’t planned out his retirement yet, he is still planning for the future of the department. He and his wife, Debbie, are retiring together. Debbie teaches reading intervention at the kindergarten and first-grade levels at Monterey Road Elementary School in Atascadero, Calif. They both look forward to spending more time with their children and grandchildren.

“We’re going to miss him quite a bit,” Flores said, but for those of us who continue on here, we should be a living testament to the work he did. If we follow his example, we have nothing to worry about because he has prepared us. We’re going to thrive, there’s no question about that.”

Even those outside CAFES experienced Kellogg’s best attributes. “Dr. Kellogg is a true professional,” said Bob Detweiler, former interim dean of the School of Education. “He is a dependable, experienced stalwart in the school’s administration. Cal Poly’s agricultural education program is strong largely because Bill Kellogg made it strong. I laud him for his accomplishments and thank him for his positive contribution to so many agriculture teachers across the state over many years. Well done, Bill.”
Department Head Bill Kellogg dedicated nearly 40 years to agricultural education. He is known for his characteristic smile and his dedication to Cal Poly’s Learn by Doing philosophy.
Cal Poly President Jeffrey D. Armstrong presented the university’s Latinos in Agriculture (LIA) chapter with the President’s Diversity Award on May 14. The award recognizes a Cal Poly student, faculty member, department and club each year for their “commitment to the value of cultural diversity through leadership, innovation and impact.”

If you are interested in supporting programs like this, please contact the department, 805-756-2803.
Samara Guerra, a senior dairy science major, nominated the chapter based on her involvement with its specialized recruitment program, “26 Hours of Science and Technology Program.” Every year, Cal Poly’s LIA chapter has a committee work together for months to prepare for this event.

“We won, not only the award, but the support of many members of our university who had no idea of the hard work our chapter has been doing for the past 26 years, said Guerra.

The program hosts students from partnering high schools to attend hands-on agricultural- and science-based workshops and to listen to keynote motivational speakers. The students also have an opportunity to ask a panel of LIA members about their college experiences and the application process. Many of the students participating in the 26 Hours of Science and Technology Program come from low-income, underrepresented ethnic groups. They leave the program with the realization that attending a university is within their reach. “The Cal Poly chapter can attest to this, as many of its members and officers are alumni of the program,” Guerra said.

Former chapter president Jacquelynne Garcia said, “Receiving this award was an exciting honor for our entire chapter. We are a small club on campus, but our efforts, and evidently our impact, stretch far throughout our campus and community.”

The chapter continued to reach out to students this year on March 12-13, when they put on the 27th annual “26 Hours of Science and Technology Program.” The program had more than 80 participants, and various speakers and guests put on workshops for the high school students.
Cal Poly hosted the State FFA Judging Finals in May for the 84th year. For many students, the State FFA Judging Finals is the culmination of four years of hard work and dedication. For others, it is their first experience at a state competition. We congratulate all the competitors, especially the winners of this year’s contests. Listed below and shown in the photo above are the faculty, students and staff who helped host this year’s event.

General Chair: Chelsi Faria

Arrangements: Jessica Crawford and Hailey Rose Switzer

Awards: Leo Farias and Marleigh Ostrom

Barbecue: Tim Perry, Gary Potter and Lauren Rothstein

Communications: Kelly Dawkins and Ariana Joven

Contest Liaisons: Jessica Crawford, Hailey Rose Switzer and Jose Vargas

Photography: Jennifer Daniels, Kelsey Fernandez and Breanne Pacheco

Results & Finance: Alyssa Berry and Karina Salomon

Sponsorship: Suzanne Amaral and Kenny Goodman

Tabulations: Stephanie Calestini, Christina Cefalu, Camille Cordisco, Tyler Dickinson and Jenna Forster

Advisors: Clemente Ayon, Ann De Lay, Robert Flores, Erin Gorter, Bill Kellogg, Donetta Rosson, Megan Silcott, Lindsey Stiff, Ben Swan and Scott Vernon
During fall and spring quarters, the Agricultural Education & Communication Department (AGED) recognizes the success of its students during an awards reception organized by students in the AGED 303 course. Students choose the theme, prepare the food, and host the reception. Students and faculty come together in theme-based attire, which this year was “Old Hollywood.” We thank the students in AGED 303 for their hard work and dedication in putting on a wonderful event!

Amanda Meneses: 2015 Outstanding Agricultural Communication Senior Award

Katelyn Montague: 2015 Outstanding Agricultural Science Senior Award

Cal Poly’s Outstanding Staff Member: Donetta Rosson

Lane Santos Karney: 2015 Outstanding Agricultural Communication Senior Award

Jake Odello: 2015 Outstanding Agricultural Science Senior Award

College Based Fee Committee: Chelsi Faria (chair), Beth L. Boss, Jake Odello, Jose Vargas, Lauren Tomasello, Leonel Farias, Jana Colombini

Diana Melero: Ag Circle Photo Contest

Camille Cordisco: Best Brock Blog Post

Jordan Dunn: Brock Award

Joanna Gomes: San Marcos Grange Student Teacher Grant and Rosario Curletti Scholarship

Jennifer Daniels: Casey Family Scholarship and Fred Turner Scholarship

Gary Potter: Larry P. Rathbun Scholarship and Rosario Curletti Scholarship

Breanne Pacheco: Sandra Crabtree Scholarship

Chelsi Faria: Barbara Parker Weber Scholarship, Howard Frace Memorial Scholarship, and Bill and Debbie Kellogg Agricultural Education Scholarship Endowment
Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow

The Cal Poly student-produced Ag Circle magazine earned Best Online Publication for 2014 at the National Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow (ACT) Critique and Contest, held in Indianapolis in conjunction with the Agricultural Media Summit (AMS). Five Cal Poly students were on hand at the event in July 2014 to receive the award.

Many members have already submitted entries for the 2015 Critique and Contest and will be attending AMS in Scottsdale, Ariz., in July.

Every year ACT participates in Cal Poly’s Open House activities. This year, Cal Poly ACT took pictures of parents, students, admitted students and other visitors from the community and photoshopped their faces on the cover of Ag Circle magazine. Once completed, these photos were emailed to the visitors and were further used on personal social media accounts. ACT members
and agricultural communications students had a great day and gained new skills in the area of communication.

Other highlights from the year include volunteering with the Agribusiness Management Club at Growing Grounds in the spring and joining the I Love Farmers organization’s goal to celebrate agriculture and those who produce it by joining the nationwide action day. ACT members wore shirts around campus that said, “WTF; Where’s the food without the farmer” and engaged in conversations with Cal Poly students about agriculture. Additionally, stickers and other information were handed out to help the movement and spark conversations.

Cal Poly’s student chapter of ACT took home Cal Poly’s College of Agriculture, Food & Environmental Sciences’ Small Club of the Year Award for the second year in row.

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**Alpha Tau Alpha**

Alpha Tau Alpha (ATA) is a professional fraternity for all students interested in joining the teaching profession. The fraternity is dedicated to allowing undergraduates to professionally develop their skills by taking agricultural literacy tours, hosting educational forums, and building camaraderie among members.

This year, ATA initiated 13 upper-division agricultural education & communication students into the national organization during the fall departmental awards reception. These new members expressed a desire to enter the teaching profession and continue to develop professionally by becoming actively involved in the organization.

During winter, ATA hosted a panel discussion about balancing relationships and work. The panel consisted of three local couples whose marriages varied in years living together and the number and ages of their children. The panel gave potential teacher candidates an opportunity to hear about the successes and struggles of balancing relationships.

The fall and spring Teacher Candidate Breakfasts were well-attended. The breakfasts allow current teacher candidates to share their student teaching experiences with undergraduates, the Agricultural Education & Communication Department faculty and staff, and special guests from throughout the university.

During spring, a group of ATA members had the opportunity to take an agricultural literacy tour to Sacramento to visit the State Capitol.

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**Collegiate FFA**

Collegiate FFA (CFFA) is known for its dedication in supporting the high school students in the blue jackets! The organization strives to “enhance the collegiate experience through service and engagement to create premier leaders, enable personal growth, and ensure career success.”

CFFA is open to all Cal Poly majors and welcomes students passionate about serving the FFA.
CFFA members serve the FFA by judging local, sectional and regional contests, including opening and closing ceremonies, Parliamentary Procedure Contests, and the South Coast Region Public Speaking Finals.

Another significant contribution the chapter makes to the FFA is through financial support of students. CFFA has funded two $50 South Coast Region Proficiency Awards and distributed $800 to top FFA members in the San Luis Obispo Section for Project Competition. Four years ago the chapter created a scholarship program for outstanding high school seniors in the South Coast Region who plan to pursue a two-year or four-year degree after graduation. This year, the club’s fundraising efforts raised $2,000 in scholarships. CFFA opened one scholarship to the entire California FFA membership. The club raised more than $3,000 this year.

CFFA has been recognized by the College of Agriculture, Food & Environmental Sciences for its hard work. It was named Small Club of the Year for the 2009-10 academic year and has been named Large Club of the Year for 2011-12 and 2012-13. This year our advisor, Jerry Clark, was named Advisor of the Year. This is a huge honor for Mr. Clark, and CFFA members are extremely proud of him and all that he does for the group. CFFA is proud to represent Cal Poly’s Agricultural Education & Communication Department and will continue to provide students with opportunities to support FFA members and network with peers and professionals in agricultural education.

MANRRS-Latinos in Agriculture

The Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS) and the Latinos in Agriculture (LIA) student organizations serve a diverse population of students at Cal Poly. MANRRS-LIA offers opportunities for students to develop their leadership skills. The many activities that focus on community service, academic and career development, and social well-being provide ample Learn by Doing experiences in leadership development. Affiliation with the national MANRRS organization offers many more leadership experiences for members.

LIA participated in numerous activities throughout the year, including Farm City Nights. During that event students had a booth at farmers market offering face painting for children and spoke with individuals about what Latinos in Agriculture does for students at Cal Poly.

Every year during Thanksgiving, the club hosts a Thanksgiving dinner at one of the club meetings.

Angelica Aldana won first in the Prepared Public Speaking event and Mo Tehrani competed in the National Finals.
The dinner includes turkey and all of the traditional Thanksgiving goodies. This year, there was a large turn out and the club was able to provide members and friends with a great meal while reflecting on what it is they are thankful for.

Members of LIA attended the Region VI Cluster in Nevada. Karina Salomon and Mo Tehrani competed in the Impromptu Public Speaking event. Tehrani placed second, earning him a spot at the National Competition. Salomon placed as an alternate for the National Competition.

Three LIA members, Karina Salomon, Mo Tehrani and Angelica Aldana attended the National MANRRS Conference in Houston. Ann DeLay accompanied the LIA members as an advisor for the conference. Aldana won first in the Prepared Public Speaking event and Tehrani competed in the National Finals. The members attended numerous workshops put on by industry professionals, such as Monsanto, Cargill, BASF, and Walt Disney World, allowing them an opportunity to network with industry professionals and members of MANRRS.
Erin Davis  
2002 Agricultural Science Graduate  
Erin Davis has been the owner of Davis Communications Group since 2009. The company specializes in marketing, outreach and brand management, as well as, fundraising and strategic planning for nonprofit organizations.

She said the Learn by Doing philosophy at Cal Poly helped get her to where she is at today. “Having the experience of actually doing the tasks I would one day get paid for was a tremendous leg-up once I was in the working world,” Davis said. “It was almost like having job experience already in my pocket when I entered the workforce. Equally important are the relationships I made while at Cal Poly. They accelerated my ability to move from an employee to a business owner much sooner than maybe I would have otherwise.”

The hands-on experiences and relationships were important to Davis’ career; however, one major skill she wishes she had acquired is how to source and analyze audience and demographics data better. “Certain data, while super boring in my opinion, is very valuable to my work and my clients,” Davis said. “My job is about communicating complex context in a concise and consumable way to my audiences, but you don’t know who you are talking to unless you know who you are talking to. Data will tell you that, among many other useful things! I avoided it for too long. I should have taken the time to discover how to mine data, interpret it, and use it sooner!”

Overall, Davis said, “Cal Poly students need to know it’s all about relationships! Make them, keep them, be a good partner in them, and you will go far. Participate in class, use your professors as resources, and travel to or participate in industry events. Get to know leaders in your industry prior to graduating, so you have some connections when you start to look for work later.”
Salvador Hurtado
2008 Agricultural Science Graduate

Salvador Hurtado works at U.S. Agriseeds, a VoloAgri Group company, as a sales representative for Central/South America and the Caribbean. “Cal Poly and the Agricultural Education & Communication Department emphasized the importance and responsibility of educating our peers regarding the agriculture industry,” Hurtado said. This helped teach him how to become an educator, communicator and leader. Hurtado also said he received a well-rounded understanding of agriculture subjects. “This allows me the opportunity to effectively cover different topics in the course of my day and job,” he said. “Cal Poly has helped me not only to get a job, but to maintain it and to grow in it, as Learn by Doing is part of my everyday education.”

Hurtado’s experiences at Cal Poly were beneficial to his career, but he thinks it would have been beneficial to know what was expected on a daily basis prior to starting at U.S. Agriseeds. “You can only prepare so much for every day,” he said. “It is impossible to know everything before you start any job, so I say expect the unexpected. In the agriculture industry, we are playing with factors that are sometimes beyond our control, and all we can do is adapt.”

Hurtado advises Cal Poly students to “learn how to adapt to the different technologies around the world in order to communicate an idea correctly and educate your audience. Know how to show respect for other cultures, respect for other ideas, and you and your audience will reach a common ground.”

ADVICE TO STUDENTS
Know how to show respect for other cultures, respect for other ideas, and you and your audience will reach a common ground.
The senior project is the capstone experience for every Cal Poly student. The requirements differ from program to program, but they all are student-driven, showcase each student’s passion, and weave together the student’s passion, skills and knowledge into a final product.

The Agricultural Education & Communication Department has a number of stellar examples from such graduates as Quincy Freeman, who developed business plans for her entrepreneurial efforts. Alumnus Jake Diepersloot crafted a solution to a pest problem he experienced in his fruit orchards, and alumna Maddie Dunlap developed a regulatory guide to assist rice growers with the legislative process.

Most recently, two students worked together as a research team to find ways to combat the lack of Latinos who go beyond the local level in high school agriculture programs.

In their third year, agricultural science students Karina Salomon and José Vargas embarked on a study into this lack of Latino representation. They began by identifying a program with strong representation and conducted a focus group interview with students in the program, asking them to share their experiences. Salomon’s and Vargas’ work, titled “Experiences of Hispanic Students Enrolled in Secondary Agricultural Education Programs,” not only allowed them to meet the Cal Poly graduation requirement, it also allowed them to travel across the country. They presented their findings in the research poster division of the Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences’ annual national meeting held in Birmingham, Ala. They also collaborated on a paper that was approved through the peer review process and presented to leaders in Agricultural Education in Snowbird, Utah, at the national research conference of the American Association for Agricultural Education.

Insight gained from the project has helped teachers better reflect on what they can do to increase participation of underrepresented groups beyond the classroom.
In California, the ratio between the number of male to female agriculture teachers has been tipping toward females, while the number of male agriculture teachers has been decreasing year after year.

In 2014, the total percentage of male agriculture teachers in California was 45 percent. This percentage is not far from the percentage of females teaching agriculture; however, in the broader scheme, the number of perspective male agriculture teachers is down.

Many successful, young professional male ag teachers are making a difference in their students’ lives. California has a need for more. Cody Jacobson, Mark Powell and Timothy Reid are great examples of young men in the profession, and they share important tips and reasons to consider teaching agriculture as a career:

Jacobson has taught for two years at Golden Valley High School in Merced. Jacobson has spent his whole life around agricultural education. His father was a teacher for more than 30 years. “Being able to make a difference and sometimes be a father-like figure to students is what it is all about,” Jacobson said. He enjoys being a role model for young male students and having the opportunity to teach in a fun environment. He thinks young males benefit from being able to learn from other male teachers. “You can either be one who just sits back and watches the change around you, or you can step up and be that change,” Jacobson said. “Males are greatly needed in our profession. I suggest talking to mentors who might have inspired you to consider the profession.”

Powell, in his third year at Santa Maria High School in northern Santa Barbara County, previously taught in schools in Salinas and Linden. Powell said his first agriculture class in high school changed his life. He especially loved the showing and judging teams and thought he could use the tools the program offers to “change the lives of young adults who need a male figure.” In addition, he said the profession allows teachers to have multiple careers in one job. “It gives you the opportunity to do things like livestock, construction, agricultural mechanics and welding. It also gives you the opportunity to work on professional development and leadership.” Powell said. “Find something you love to do every day … less money didn’t make me less happy. Do what you still like to do, day in and day out.”

Reid has been teaching at Bear River High School in Nevada County for five years. Reid did not go directly into teaching agriculture, but realized that he wasn’t fulfilled just working in the agricultural industry. He noticed the job satisfaction of many friends who were teaching agriculture and decided that was the career path for him. Teaching and supervising agricultural experience projects and shop class “brought love and passion together,” he said. “We got second place at the State FFA Finals, and it validated what I was doing. Make sure you’re teaching something you love. I only applied for jobs with shop positions because that’s my passion. Be passionate about it. Look at the big picture; look at the long term. In teaching you have longevity. I have friends who have been teaching 30-40 years, and not many industries can say that.”

Being able to make a difference and sometimes be a father-like figure to students is what it is all about.
- Cody Jacobson
COMMUNICATING FOR TOMORROW
The Brock Center for Agricultural Communication is expanding! In 2015, the Brock Center acquired a new room — the Digital Video and Social Media Engagement Lab — to offer students more opportunities with an emphasis on multimedia.

“With the paradigm shift in communication these days, we know we have to involve students in more video production and social media engagement, in addition to the print media we already produce,” said J. Scott Vernon, professor of agricultural communication. “The room will be used as a supplement to in-class activities and outside projects for agricultural communication students.

“We want to stay on the leading edge of what’s happening in the industry,” Vernon continued. “We see the impact of video and how it’s evolving and emerging in agricultural communications. That room will be a focus of new media and the visuals needed to communicate agriculture’s story.”

The Digital Video and Social Media Engagement Lab (Room 232 in Building 10), located across the hallway from the Brock Center’s office, will be furnished with a film studio and Mac desktop computers. The computers will be continually updated with current software to provide students with the newest industry standards.

“We will have a full studio in the back for producing videos,” Vernon said. “In the front, we will have a computer lab for conducting editing and looking at social media campaigns. Students will not just be doing social media, they will gain a deeper understanding and be able to measure the return on engagement.”

The new lab’s professional equipment and programs were chosen based on suggestions from members of the Brock Center Advisory Council about what students should be utilizing in their careers.

“We will be using industry-standard software and equipment,” Vernon said. “The students will learn how to use Adobe Premier. As we visit with professionals all over the nation, they tell us this is becoming the standard on which video editing happens.”

The new lab also comes with a new course — AGC 301: New Media Engagement, so students can take full advantage of the space. The class will teach students how to operate the equipment, use the software to edit videos, and track social media trends.

“New Media Engagement is a class that we wrote to start in fall 2015,” Vernon said. “It’s going to be incorporated into the agricultural communication major.”

The Brock Center was started in 1986 and has been improving ever since. With each new team of “Brock associates” comes new ideas and opportunities for the Brock Center to educate the public and students. The new lab will continue this trend, Vernon explained.

“By next fall we expect to have the Video Editing and Social Media Engagement Lab fully running,” Vernon said.

Megan Silcott, director of the Brock Center, describes the new space as an extension of both the Journalism and Agricultural Education & Communication departments.

“New things are always exciting. We get the chance to offer students new methods of learning and ways of adding to their professional experiences,” Silcott said. “The Digital Video and Social Media Engagement Lab will give agricultural communication students additional skills that will help them be more competitive in the job market. The Brock Center staff looks forward to assisting students in that process.”
Cal Poly’s agricultural communication undergraduate program ranked eighth best in the nation based on a recent study by researchers at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

The top 10 programs include Texas Tech University, University of Florida, Oklahoma State University, Texas A&M University, Kansas State University, The Ohio State University, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, and Purdue University. Cal Poly and Texas Tech are the only two non-land grant universities in the top 10.

“It’s exciting to be ranked among the best,” said Bill Kellogg, head of the Agricultural Education & Communication Department. “Our bachelor’s degree in agricultural communication is just two years old, but we have been working to prepare professional agricultural communicators for many years.”

The study, titled “Characteristics of U.S. Agricultural Communications Undergraduate Programs,” identified 40 programs across the nation. According to the study, the average student enrollment per institution was 66. Cal Poly ranks fourth in student enrollment with approximately 130 students. The largest program is at Texas A&M followed by Texas Tech University and Oklahoma State University. Most of the programs in the country indicate an increase in student enrollment over the past five years.

“Our ranking in the top 10 is a testament to the work we have been doing for many years to build Cal Poly’s reputation in agricultural communications,” said J. Scott Vernon, Cal Poly professor of agricultural communication. “We continue to evolve to meet the changing demands of the communication landscape and look to get better every day. Our students deserve it, our alumni appreciate it, and the agriculture industry expects it.”

The agricultural communication program at Cal Poly prepares students to become professional communicators in agriculture. Working with the College of Liberal Arts and the College of Agriculture, Food & Environmental Sciences, students are enrolled in technical agriculture courses and courses in digital communication, graphic design, journalism and publications. In fall 2015, the department will offer a new course in digital video and social media management to prepare students for emerging careers in online visual communication strategies.
Every year, the Agricultural Education & Communication Department recognizes its outstanding students. Below are the 2014-15 standouts.

Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow — Small Club of the Year

(L-R) Harrison Reilly, Rylin Lindahl, Katie Roberti, Giuliana Marchini, Jordan Dunn and Seth Borges

Jake Odello — Contributions to the College Award

Bill Kellogg — Advisor of the Year with Cal Poly Agriculture Ambassadors
DEPARTMENT HAPPENINGS

a brief recap of 2014-15

Without the generous support of our alumni, industry partners and friends, we would not be able to continue to offer the outstanding Learn by Doing programs Cal Poly and the Agricultural Education & Communication Department are known for. We thank you and honor your commitment and service.