

Forage professor teaches two generations

When College of Agricultural

Sciences and Natural Resources Professor Lowell Moser sees familiar faces these days, he's often seeing children of the students taught in his range and forage management classes since 1970.

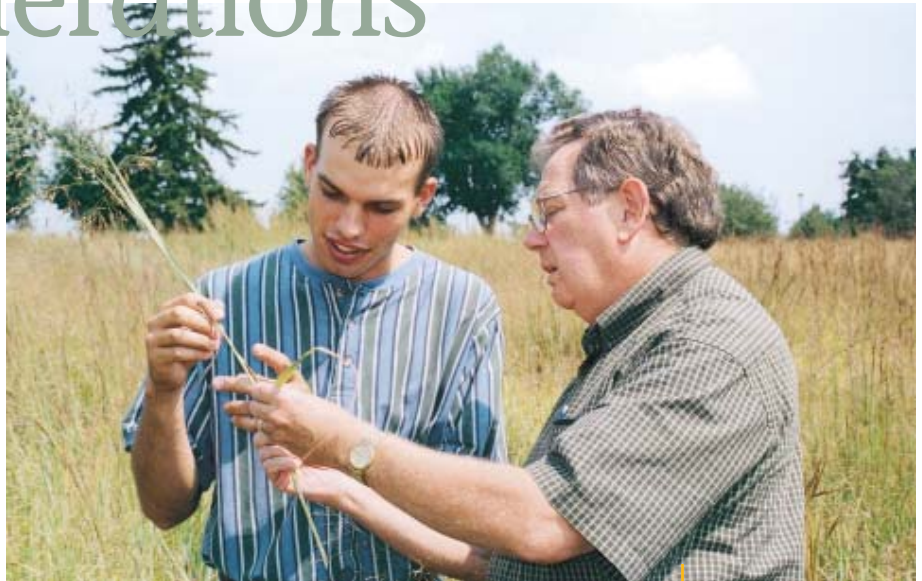
"It's enjoyable for me now to know the sons and daughters — where they start, where they end up," said Moser, who admits he has occasionally called a student by his father's name. Moser has taught 20 or so children of former students, including father-son, father-daughter and mother-son combinations.

One family of former students is Elwyn Fitzke, Glenvil, a 1975 agronomy graduate, and sons Brent and Tyler.

"His class wasn't easy," Elwyn Fitzke recalled. "It was hard work but you also learned a lot. He really cared about his students."

Fitzke and his wife Linda, a 1975 home economics graduate, have returned to campus to attend Agronomy Club banquets and other functions with their sons.

Brent Fitzke, a 2000 agronomy graduate now working for Cargill North America Sweeteners at Blair, also recalled Moser as a dedicated professor who answered questions related to an intensive



Cheryl Alberts

cattle grazing system Fitzke's family implemented while he was in school.

"He was willing to take the time and help out, even if it wasn't related to coursework. You could take his information and use it," Brent said.

Tyler Fitzke, a diversified agricultural studies major who plans to graduate in 2004, agreed, saying Moser's forage class is one of the top two classes he has taken at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

"It's not an easy A — or an easy B, either — you have to work to get your grade," Tyler said. He added he plans to manage the family's intensive grazing system next summer, and believes he can go back to Moser whenever he has questions.

For the most part, student concerns have not changed over the years, Moser said, in that many

students are uncertain about charting their life's course. The Sunkist Fiesta Bowl professor and recipient of Gamma Sigma Delta's Distinguished Achievement in Agriculture award added that in the past 32 years he has most enjoyed watching students develop into young professionals.

Over the decades technology has changed the way information is presented to students, but education is more than technology, Moser said.

"The basic student-teacher interaction has not changed," Moser said. "That's what drives the education. We must not lose sight of the fact that interaction is the key — not just the passing of information."

— Cheryl Alberts

CASNR Professor Lowell Moser reviews parts of switchgrass with Tyler Fitzke, a diversified agricultural studies major from Glenvil and the son of one of Moser's former students.

Check out CASNR's Web site at
<http://casnr.unl.edu>

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The Dean Says:

We know our students are good. In fact, here in CASNR, students are our pride and joy. Their youthful enthusiasm, optimistic outlook and intellectual curiosity enrich our days.

It is a tremendous privilege and responsibility when students and their parents trust us to help build students' futures through our teaching and mentoring. It is a privilege and responsibility we do not take lightly. We rejoice in each student's personal and professional success.

Because we are so enthusiastic about the quality of our students, it pleases us greatly to see others share our enthusiasm. Signs of shared commitment to our students' success are abundant.

We see it in the CASNR students found on the membership rolls of prestigious honoraries, serving communities through service learning projects and providing leadership in student government. Our faculty members are passionate about helping our students *become what they will be*. Our faculty-advisee relationships transcend the traditional teacher-student relationship and reflect the caring environment of a family. Last spring 25 of our faculty and staff were recognized by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Parents Association for making significant contributions to students.

Parents and prospective students share in our optimism for the future. Even during challenging economic times and in the midst of a significant drought, CASNR's first-year student enrollments increased over 18 percent this year.

Donors have increased scholarship support by 39 percent, and

37 percent of all CASNR students were awarded scholarships last year. Giving to our annual fund increased four-fold during this past year.

Despite the economy, our career fair this fall was tremendously successful; employers continue to seek our students, even when jobs are limited. Industry is anxious to



Steve Waller

partner with us in the classroom, through internship opportunities and in support of student organizations. These are exciting testimonials to the quality of our programs and our students.

CASN has a unique academic environment that values individuals and nurtures success one student at a time. How proud I am to be part of it!

Steve Waller
 Dean,
 College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources

College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources

Calendar of Events

November

- 23 CASNR-wide open house
- 27-Dec. 1 Thanksgiving break

December

- 6 Red Letter Day
- 14 Classes end
- 16-20 Final exams
- 21 Graduation breakfast and graduation

Student questions

expand text knowledge

Jim Partridge wants his 300-level Introduction to Plant Pathology students to know more than what's in the textbook. So, the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources professor lets his students tell him what they want to learn.

"My classes are not built on lectures," Partridge said. "My

classes are built on questions, answers, expositions and discussions. It's the same way Socrates taught. There's no reason for students to go to class and have the professor read a textbook to them."

At the beginning of each semester, Partridge gives 100 blue index cards to each of his 50 to 60

University of Nebraska-Lincoln students. As students read their assignments, they write questions on the cards regarding subjects they wish to know more about. The question writing is voluntary and ungraded. Partridge said the questions go beyond the basic textbook material, often delving deep into the topic at hand.

"That's when you know you've won — when they ask for more information than the textbook is giving them," said Partridge, who won a Holling Family Award for Teaching Excellence for innovation in the classroom in spring 2002.

"I've never taught the same class twice," Partridge added, explaining that while the material is the same, the way it is presented is different depending on the questions. Sometimes, to encourage more participation, Partridge allows students to try answering each other's questions.

Partridge said he finds the quality of the questions reflect students' understanding of the textbook material. He keeps the questions to determine if students

show increased understanding as the semester progresses. He finds that they do.

Lindsey Otto, a horticulture/plant pathology senior from Sioux Falls, S.D., said she grew to appreciate Partridge's teaching method after taking the course two years ago.

"Looking back, it was real helpful," Otto said. Writing questions on the blue cards helped her better understand the subject matter, she said, and is one reason she added plant pathology to her major.

Partridge believes his question-and-answer method of teaching helps students to better process and remember information. He often sees students come to class 30 to 40 minutes early to talk about their questions.

"It's a tremendous way of having students communicate with the faculty without being threatened by them because it's not graded," Partridge said.

— Lori McGinnis



Lori McGinnis

CASNR Professor Jim Partridge looks through blue index cards on which his Introduction to Plant Pathology students have written questions, which helps them delve deeper into the subject.

January

- 13 Classes begin
- 20 Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 24 Red Letter Day

February

- 7, 17 Red Letter Days

March

- 16-23 Spring break

April

- 6-12 CASNR Week

Career Fair



Cheryl Alberts

Kristi Boswell, right, an agricultural economics sophomore from Shickley, visits with Elizabeth Carmean, an Excel account manager from Dallas, during the CASNR Career Fair Oct. 3. This year's fair attracted 527 students and more than 100 representatives from 50 companies.

CASNR grads well-grounded for a wide variety

Medical school.
Environmental science.
Teaching. Farming.

Recent graduates of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln are involved in so many careers. CASNR's 15 majors in agricultural sciences, six in environmental sciences and three pre-professional programs offer many options. For instance:

Jeremiah Blake said he never dreamed of becoming a congressional staff assistant in Washing-

Applied Rural Innovation, which he credits with helping him get the Washington job.

Blake said he chose to attend CASNR because he was impressed with the faculty and with faculty advisers.

"I put a lot of faith in that," he said.

Kate Hutchens, a second-year medical student at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, earned a biochemistry degree from UNL in 2001. Although she assumed she would start her major in another college, Hutchens said she decided on CASNR because of scholarship availability and faculty advisers.

"It was one of the best options for me," the Lincoln native said, noting the diversity in CASNR classes and people she met, plus being a CASNR ambassador, all helped in being accepted to medical school.

Chad Babcock, an environmental scientist for Burns and McDonnell Engineering Co. Inc. in Kansas City, Mo., explores options to limit environmental impacts for projects such as fiber optic lines and coal-fired power plants.

"Every course I took at CASNR has some bearing on what I do now," said Babcock, a 1997 environmental studies graduate from Lincoln.

Babcock said working in the CASNR dean's office as a student taught him to be open to many viewpoints, which has helped him



Brett Hampton

Mike Hodges is a 1999 CASNR animal science graduate who farms and raises Berkshire hogs near Julian.

understand the diverse opinions that can surround a project.

Jenny Fler of Hoskins is a UNL biological sciences graduate student with an assistantship in plant pathology that provides experience in teaching, research and extension. Fler credits her CASNR advisers and Dean Steve Waller with helping her with the assistantship.

"That showed me how much the faculty as well as the dean cared about their students," said Fler, a May 2002 graduate in agronomy and crop protection.

Always intrigued with water and aquatic life, May 2002 water sciences graduate Mark Meyer is a water resource technician in UNL's School of Natural Resource Sciences. The Pierce native said CASNR's specialized classes, such as limnology — the study of lakes — and studies in wetlands, fisheries and buffer strips, have increased his awareness that certain agricultural practices can protect natural resources. The classes also gave him hands-on experience, which he said made the transition to his



Bill O'Neill

Kate Hutchens, a second-year medical student from Lincoln, earned a biochemistry degree from CASNR in 2001.

ton, D.C., yet four weeks after his May 2002 graduation the agricultural economics major from Madison, S.D., began working for Rep. Tom Osborne.

As a student his interest in rural development led Blake to an internship within UNL's Center for

of career choices

current job of gathering and analyzing water samples of Nebraska lakes, much easier.

Kristyn Harms teaches vocational agriculture at Norris High School in Firth. Harms said she has a “whole broad picture of what agriculture is,” thanks to CASNR classes that included crops, soils and leadership.

The Dodge native earned her B.S. in agricultural education in 2001 and her M.S. in leadership education in August.

Harms said that as a CASNR ambassador she discovered a rapport with visiting high school students, which led to her decision to teach. Her master’s thesis on *Character Counts!*, a 4-H character development program, has helped her be a better teacher, she added.

Interested in farming, Mike Hodges attended CASNR to explore career options. CASNR’s state-of-the-art animal science facility impressed him, he said, and while in college he worked in swine nutrition research and was on the



Cheryl Alberts

Jenny Fler is a biological sciences graduate student from Hoskins and a 2002 CASNR agronomy and crop protection major.

livestock judging team.

Hodges and his wife, Christy, also a CASNR graduate, farm near Julian and sell Berkshire hogs to clients as far away as Japan. The 1999 animal science graduate credits his experience as a CASNR ambassador for strengthening his interpersonal skills.

“That always helps, no matter what you do,” Hodges said.

— Cheryl Alberts



Cheryl Alberts

Mark Meyer is a UNL water resource technician and a 2002 CASNR water sciences graduate from Pierce.

A passion for student leadership

Leadership is a passion for Steve Waller, College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources dean. So much so, he’s working to instill that same passion in students as soon as they step foot on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus.

“I want freshmen to feel they can make contributions to the college now,” Waller said.

This fall Waller started the Dean’s Scholars in Experiential Leadership program. Now, 43 freshmen meet weekly with Waller and Sue Voss, CASNR student development and events director, to learn how to improve their leadership skills.

Participants learn about volunteerism, internships, mentoring, shadowing, professional development, multicultural communication and research opportunities.

“One of my goals has been to empower our students early in their college career to maintain a passion

for leadership and carry it on through graduation,” Waller said.

Waller invited all incoming CASNR students to apply for the non-credit program. Participants began by taking the Gallup StrengthQuest survey to determine their strengths and build upon them.

Most participants have had leadership experience in high school, including Renee Domeier, a food science and technology major from Geneva.

“I wanted to express my leadership skills and show people a positive attitude,” Domeier said.

Eli Powell, a food science major from Omaha, said he joined the group to meet people.

“I had a little bit of leadership experience in the past and I really liked it,” he said. “I wanted it to continue.”

Waller wants participants to continue in the leadership program throughout their college career, meeting perhaps twice a year, and mentor incoming members.

— Lori McGinnis

A brief glimpse

Animal Science Professor Steve Jones has achieved something not seen at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for 30 years: he has won the 2002 American Meat Science Association's Distinguished Teaching Award.



Lori McGinnis

Award-winning Professor Steve Jones stays in touch with many of his former students.

Charles Adams was the last UNL recipient, three decades ago.

Jones was nominated for the award by Department of Animal Science head Donald Beermann, partly for his computer-based instruction. Jones created two Web sites for porcine and bovine myology.

The award is one of many on Jones' wall. He also has won the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources Distinguished Teaching award for 2001-2002 and the Gamma Sigma Delta Teaching Award of Merit in 1998.

Jones said he is grateful for the national recognition from his peers last July, and hopes his efforts in developing relationships with students contributed to his honors. He said he still keeps in touch with many of his former students.

"Obviously it's a confidence-builder and helps me realize my ideas are accepted not only by my students but by my peers. I pride myself for developing a relationship with students that goes beyond the classroom and into their careers."

— Lori McGinnis

Listen to CASNR students at <http://grow.unl.edu>

Personal accomplishments: honorary societies

Students from the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources are making their presence known in University of Nebraska-Lincoln honoraries.

Four CASNR seniors are Mortar Board members this year; two seniors are in Innocents Society and one recent graduate is a Phi Beta Kappa.

"Having our students recognized by such prestigious honoraries is a significant personal accomplishment for each student," said CASNR Dean Steve Waller. "Furthermore, it highlights the quality of our CASNR students and redefines the breadth and depth of our academic programs."

Members apply for Mortar Board and Innocents Society, with membership based on scholarship, leadership and community activities. Phi Beta Kappa members, in the top 10 percent of their graduating class, are nominated.

Nationally, many agriculture and natural resources programs don't foster the breadth of liberal arts education required to be considered for Phi Beta Kappa, the nation's oldest honorary society for liberal arts and sciences, Waller said, adding he's proud CASNR's program does.

Dana Novak, a 2002 biochemistry graduate from Bellevue, was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa's Alpha of Nebraska chapter last spring. "I'm honored to be a part of it," she said.

Novak is a graduate student in biomolecular science at the University of California-Santa



Dana Novak, a 2002 CASNR graduate, was inducted last spring into Phi Beta Kappa.

Lori McGinnis

Barbara. She said her goal is to do biochemical research into problems affecting developing countries.

Emily Buescher, an animal science senior from Deweese, is president of UNL's 23-member Black Masque Chapter of Mortar Board. She is one of four CASNR seniors tapped for the honorary last spring. Others are John Burks, Charles Frost and Jill Kruger.

"It's an extreme honor," said Kruger, an agricultural journalism major from Arlington.

Burks, an agribusiness and agricultural economics major from Lexington, said, "It was something I wanted, strived for and got," while Frost, an agricultural economics major from Lemont, Ill., said he has been active in service work and wanted to be part of Mortar Board



Lisa Pfeiffer and Zach Bauman represent CASNR in Innocents Society.

Lori McGinnis

and CASNR students

because of its emphasis on service.

Innocents Society, unique to Nebraska, is the chancellor's senior honorary. CASNR seniors Lisa Pfeiffer and Zach Bauman are among the 13 members selected last spring to serve the community, promote school spirit and advance the university's interests.

Pfeiffer, an agricultural economics senior from Seward, said, "I think it's one of the greatest honors you could receive," while Bauman, a bio-chemistry major from Sioux City,

Iowa, noted "it was very exciting" to be selected.

— Lori McGinnis



CASNR students representing Mortar Board are, clockwise from left, John Burks, Emily Buescher, Charles Frost and Jill Kruger.

Lori McGinnis

New scholarships support undergraduate research

New scholarships supporting undergraduate research soon will be available to College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources sophomores and juniors.

Several scholarships funded by a permanent endowment in memory of Lorena B. Fleming, C. Brooks Schofield and Hazel Rollins Schofield, will be awarded in 2003. Actual funding will begin in the fall, said Jack Schinstock, CASNR associate dean.

CASNR students with faculty-approved agricultural or natural resource research projects may apply by April 30, Schinstock said. Most applicants will be juniors wishing to fund research in their

senior year, he said, but sophomores with approved research projects also are welcome to apply.

Funding for the scholarships comes from sale proceeds of land in Richardson and Cass counties that was originally owned by Fleming, who attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in the 1930s. Her nephew, C. Brooks Schofield, donated the land to UNL through his will.

Scholarship funding and undergraduate research are two of CASNR Dean Steve Waller's objectives, Schinstock said, adding, "We see this as increased support for undergraduate research. These scholarship dollars will allow us to do that."

— Barbara Rixstine

A brief glimpse



Dennis McCallister, left, advises Keith Tighe, an agronomy freshman from Homer.

Lori McGinnis

Dennis McCallister says he's here to help students succeed. And, having advised more than 135 students in 22 years, he believes he has.

McCallister's advising skills earned him the 2002 L.K. Crowe Award for Outstanding Undergraduate Student Adviser this fall. He is the fifth consecutive agronomy professor in the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources to earn the honor, named for a dairy professor who taught at UNL from 1925-1968.

Advising is an acquired skill, McCallister said, as is teaching. Caring about students isn't enough, he said, adding a good adviser must effectively deal with students having differing needs, depending on such situations as their year at UNL or their support network. A good adviser also is knowledgeable, listens well, is empathetic and — when needed — directional, he said.

"One of the biggest things I do is help students find solutions quickly that they might have been able to find slowly. Or maybe find solutions to problems that really aren't all that difficult objectively, but could be to them in the here and now. Student success is really what I'm here for."

— Barbara Rixstine

Mini-course to teach many aspects of sales

A new sales mini-course is being designed to better prepare College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources graduates for the workplace. It will be partially developed and taught by industry professionals, said Jana Hafer, course coordinator and CASNR career specialist at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

The seven-week, one-hour credit course will be first offered in the spring, Hafer said.

More than 50 percent of CASNR graduates go into positions requiring some knowledge of sales or marketing, Hafer said. Many companies start new graduates in sales, she said, even if that isn't part of their career plans. So knowing how to sell can be important, she added.

Bill Smith of Columbus, a Syngenta Seeds Inc. field sales manager who helped develop the mini-course, agrees.

"Everybody sells something, either a product or an idea at every level," he said. "The individuals that can master this art will be very valuable to an organization."

Students may learn elements of sales in other classes, Hafer said, but this optional course will provide a systematic sales approach.

"Students need actual industry involvement to see how it works on a day-to-day basis," she said. "What we're hoping to do with this class is help give them the insight on how to develop a sales plan ... and develop management of all aspects of that."

The mini-course will cover making contacts, business and proposal writing, honing interpersonal skills, developing a sales plan and completing a sale, as well as learning a whole different feel for time management in setting schedules, Hafer said.

Mini-course participants also will meet the public, do needs assessments for clients, and be able to better manage challenges that pop up, she said, as many situations on the job won't have textbook answers.

Students "have to have the savvy to get the resources for those answers," Hafer said. "They have to have flexibility. Sometimes answers will only come through trial and error. They'll have to trust their own judgment to get through those times and find the answers that work best. We hope this course will help them do that."

— Barbara Rixstine



Cheryl Alberts

Bill Smith, Syngenta field sales manager of Columbus, and Jana Hafer, CASNR career specialist, plan a one-hour sales mini-course to begin in January.

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