

July 2015

From the Head

The summer provides a time to welcome new students as well as reflect on our recent graduates. A record number of ACE students graduated this year. We are proud of all our graduates and look forward to following the next stage of their careers. Throughout their time at the University, ACE students leave their mark on this department in many different ways.

However, many of our graduates leave distinct impressions that not only affect ACE, but the entire campus. After years of determination, hours of hard work, and going above and beyond the expectations, they have been honored with some of the most prestigious student awards across campus. This newsletter highlights some of the awards of our recent graduates and graduate students. I am especially proud that two of our Bronze Tablet Award winners are from my home of Livingston County.

We also highlight the Map the Meal Gap program as well as welcome our newest faculty, Sandy Dall'erba. Finally, we acknowledge a former colleague, Delmar Wilken. Personally, I am deeply indebted to Delmar. He hired me to my first professional position and was my mentor my entire career. His contributions to Illinois agriculture and the farm records profession were enormous.

Paul Ellinger, Head

Senior Awards

Throughout their time at the University, ACE students leave their mark on this department in many different ways. However, few seniors leave distinct impressions that not only affect ACE, but the entire campus. After years of determination, hours of hard work, and going above and beyond the expectations, they have been honored with some of the most prestigious student awards across campus.

Bronze Tablet Award

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[Extension Homepage \(http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state/\)](http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state/)

[ACES Alumni \(http://www.acesalumni.illinois.edu/\)](http://www.acesalumni.illinois.edu/)

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Research and Outreach

[Consumer & Family Economics \(http://www.ace.illinois.edu/cfe/\)](http://www.ace.illinois.edu/cfe/)

[Farm Analysis Solution Tools \(http://www.farmdoc.illinois.edu/fasttools/index.asp\)](http://www.farmdoc.illinois.edu/fasttools/index.asp)

[Farmdoc \(http://www.farmdoc.illinois.edu/index.html\)](http://www.farmdoc.illinois.edu/index.html)

[Farmdoc Daily \(http://www.farmdocdaily.illinois.edu\)](http://www.farmdocdaily.illinois.edu)

[FBFM \(http://fbfm.ace.uiuc.edu/\)](http://fbfm.ace.uiuc.edu/)

[Illinois Tax School \(http://www.taxschool.illinois.edu/\)](http://www.taxschool.illinois.edu/)

[International Business Immersion Program \(http://ibip.illinois.edu/\)](http://ibip.illinois.edu/)

[International Policy and Development \(http://ipad.ace.illinois.edu/\)](http://ipad.ace.illinois.edu/)

[Market Maker \(http://www.marketmaker.uiuc.edu/\)](http://www.marketmaker.uiuc.edu/)



Five distinguished ACE students will have their names inscribed on the 2015 Bronze Tablet in

the Main Library. These students are:

William Bird, Agribusiness Markets and Management, Morrison, Illinois

Timothy Hartman, Agribusiness Markets and Management, Fairbury, Illinois

Joseph Wabick, Finance in Agribusiness, Palos Park, Illinois

Sihan Wang, Agricultural Accounting, Yuyao, China

Thane Zehr, Farm Management, Fairbury, Illinois

Two Bronze Tablet Recipients hail from same Central Illinois town

Roommates Thane Zehr and Timothy Hartman, both from the small town of Fairbury, Illinois, achieved a milestone only 3 percent of University of Illinois graduates attain: Bronze Tablet status. What's even more interesting is that both graduates are second generation bronze tablet recipients. Both student's fathers also received the honor. Tim will be working for FarmServer, a new Precision Ag company owned by Beck's Hybrids, and Thane will return to his family farm in Fairbury. Tim notes that his ACE experience was a great one. "I've learned a lot of things that will no doubt serve me well in the real world. The applicable knowledge and well-rounded advice from professors and curriculum makes me prepared to face the challenges in my future career."

James Scholar Seniors



The James Scholar program at the University of Illinois integrates coursework with a one-on-one research-based project, conducted by an undergraduate student with a faculty member in their department.

ACE James Scholar students include:

Jonathan Alton, Financial Planning, Macomb, Illinois, "Out of State and International Enrollment at the University of Illinois"

Qi Qi Amanda Ang, Environmental Economics and Policy, Singapore, "Optimal Harvest of White-Tailed Deer in Texas"

Jacqueline Douglas, Public Policy and Law, Homewood, Illinois, "What Factors Influence the Allocation of Chicago's Stormwater Management Spending Amongst Wards"—WINNER ACE Undergraduate Research Award

[Office for Futures & Options Research](http://ofor.ace.illinois.edu/)
(<http://ofor.ace.illinois.edu/>)

[Plan Well Retire Well](http://www.retirewell.uiuc.edu/)
(<http://www.retirewell.uiuc.edu/>)

[Program for Environmental & Resource Economics](http://pere.ace.illinois.edu/)
(<http://pere.ace.illinois.edu/>)

[Rural Health](http://www.ace.illinois.edu/ruralhealth/)
(<http://www.ace.illinois.edu/ruralhealth/>)

Programs

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First Prize

Carly Kenny, Public Policy and Law, Glen Ellyn, Illinois, "Sexual Assault in Higher Education Institutions"

Joseph Wabick, Finance in Agribusiness, Palos Park, Illinois, "Effects of Farmland Investments on a Diversified Portfolio" -- WINNER of the Orville G. Bentley Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research

Slam Dunk Award

The Slam Dunk Award is presented to the ACE student with the highest cumulative GPA of his or her graduating class who signed the basketball as an incoming ACE



student. This year's recipient is *Allison Hirsh* of Tinley Park, who received her degree in Consumer Economics and Finance.

C.J. Elliott Achievement Award Winner:

The C.J. Elliott Achievement Award is selected by a faculty committee to recognize the graduate in the ACE department who excels both academically and in service to the ACE department and the College of ACES.

Lun Ou, Beijing China, Policy, International Trade and Development

Warren K. Wessels Achievement Award:



Two ACE students were among the five finalists for the Warren K. Wessels Achievement Award, a prestigious college-level award that recognizes academic success and great service to the College of ACES and the larger university community.

Winner: *Lucas Frye*, Easton, Illinois, Finance in Agribusiness

Finalist: *Lun Ou*, Beijing China, Policy International Trade and Development

ACE Graduate Student Awards

Outstanding MSc Thesis Award: Margaret Jodlowski

Title: Passing on Dietary Diversity? Livestock Ownership in the Copperbelt Region of Zambia

Current Position: PhD student at Cornell University

Outstanding PhD Dissertation Award: Taro Mieno

Title: Essays in Water Resource Economics

Current Position: Assistant Professor, University of Nebraska

Outstanding Graduate Student Award (MSc): Sean Hennessy

Outstanding Graduate Student Award (PhD): Han Bum Lee

Other honors from 2014-15:

Pallavi Shukla – Dissertation Research Travel Award, UIUC Graduate College

Kashi Kafle – chosen as Association of International Agriculture and Rural Development (AIARD) future leader

Sarah Gradjura – member of the team that won 2nd place in the national 2014 EPA Campus RainWorks Challenge

Competitive fellowships from outside the department of ACE:

Renato Schwambach Vieira - Lemann Graduate Fellowship, Lemann Institute for Brazilian Studies at UIUC

Renato Schwambach Vieira – CAPES Brazil Scholarship

Brett Barkley – FLAS Fellowship

Andres Bautista Chaparro and Mateus Nogueira Meirelles de Souza – Fulbright/LASPAU fellowships

Olesya Savchenko and Fanglin Ye – recipients of two year Clean Energy Fellowships, UIUC

Lokendra Phadera - AYRE International Research and Learning Fellowship for field research in Nepal

Marin Thompson - AYRE International Research and Learning Fellowship for field research in India

Map The Meal Gap

Dr. Craig Gundersen, ACE Professor, Executive Director of the National Soybean Research Lab



and Soybean Industry Endowed Professor in Agricultural Strategy, is working with a team to help food banks across the country to direct their resources where there is the most need.

Map the Meal Gap, a national program that analyzes statistics collected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Census Bureau, and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, provides the only known detailed analysis of food security in the country. Currently, the United States is the only country that has adopted the Map the Meal Gap program in efforts to fight food insecurity; however, it is the hope of Dr. Gundersen and the Map the Meal Gap sponsor, Feeding America, that this plan will be used to reduce hunger around the world.

New Faculty Profile

Dr. Sandy Dall'erba

Dr. Sandy Dall'erba joined the ACE faculty this month. He will teach courses in spatial econometrics and regional and interregional input-output, as well as continue several funded research projects (NSF, USDA, NASA) on understanding a variety of aspects affecting the dynamics of regional and local economic development. For Dr. Dall'erba, coming to Illinois represents an opportunity to collaborate with new colleagues and initiate new research projects. He is most excited to share his passion for regional economics with colleagues and students.



Dr. Dall'erba began his research in regional economics during his master's thesis. At that time, there was a lot of controversy in academia and in the political arena about the future of economic development in most Eastern and Central European countries. The economic dispute sparked Dall'erba's interest and instigated his research on regional inequalities and associated regional development policies. He has written several articles about this topic and has extended his expertise to the United States case with funding from the National Science Foundation.

Dr. Dall'erba was born and raised in the suburbs of Paris, France, in Maisons-Alfort. He graduated from the University of Pau, France in the Department of Economics and spent two years of his doctoral work at Illinois as a visiting scholar of the Regional Economics Applications Laboratory, then returned to campus as a post-

doctoral researcher. He also completed post-doctoral work at the Free University of Amsterdam in the Netherlands, and as an assistant and associate professor at the University of Arizona.

Dr. Dall'erba is incredibly excited about the opportunity to join campus and return to the state of his "intellectual roots". He says, "The Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics has a very good reputation and is composed of brilliant scholars."

Dr. Dall'erba attributes much of his professional accomplishments to interdisciplinarity. He says this was an attribute he was fortunate to acquire during the early stages of his doctoral studies. He was exposed to numerous ways of combining theories, techniques, and developments from different fields. "It allows me to meet and collaborate with brilliant scholars in my field and from outside of my own research area, and to provide new insights on a variety of societal challenges," he says.

Aside from his professional career, Dr. Dall'erba is a devoted father to his girls ages 3 and 7. He loves to spend free time with them in the swimming pool, roller skating, and in the kitchen making dough for their next loaf of crusty bread. As both a tennis player and fan he says he is looking forward to keeping up with Illinois' tennis program.

A Posthumous Tribute To Delmar Wilken



Professor Emeritus Delmar F. Wilken had a highly esteemed career. He was dedicated to the university and to farm practices across Illinois.

Wilken summarized farm business records and

prepared farm comparative analysis reports for Extension. He was known statewide for his numerous publications analyzing Illinois farm business records. He identified agricultural challenges through data and records to further the advancement of farming techniques. Wilken said, "It was a pleasure to coordinate and work with the field staff. It was really the help of the field staff that contributed to much of my success." The most important thing he stressed to his field staff was that "loyalty is everything to farmers, because the relationship between field

staff and a family or farmer can be a great thing, as long as you do everything you can to protect it.”

Wilken served as the state leader for the Farm Business Farm Management (FBFM) field staff and as the liaison between the Illinois FBFM Association and the College of ACES. Wilken worked through times of clarification of the relationship between the originally sponsored Farm Bureau and the Illinois FBFM Association.

Toward the conclusion of his 31 years of employment at the University of Illinois, Wilken trained new faculty to communicate with Extension field staff who worked with farmers across Illinois. He retired from the university in 1985.

Among his collection of career successes, Wilken received the Funk Award in 1983. The Funk Award is an honor presented by the University of Illinois College of ACES to an individual that has illustrated superior service to the college. The following year he received the USDA Distinguished Service Award, the USDA's most prestigious recognition. The program recognizes outstanding Federal employees for their efforts of leadership and innovations within their field of study.

Wilken's passion for leadership and Extension was inspired by his father who served as a 4-H leader for 30 years. Until the age of 13, he worked on his family's dairy farm in Danforth, Illinois, where his focus was to retail the milk they produced. He completed Officer Candidate School and took part in Advanced ROTC, causing him to spend another year on campus before graduating from the University of Illinois with a BS in agriculture in 1947. Later that year, he married Phyllis Anderson Wilken (also deceased), who received a MS in education from the University of Illinois. Wilken's graduate studies were interrupted in 1951 when he was called to active duty for the Korean War. Following his return from war, he was employed by the Pioneer FBFM Association for four years, then became a farm management Extension specialist at U of I. Together, he and his wife had three children, all of whom are U of I graduates and continue to lead successful lives in Oregon, Southwest Chicago Suburbs, and Champaign.

In 1973, Wilken and his wife became part of the International Goodwill People to People Ambassador Program. They guided a group of agricultural leaders to visit their occupational counterparts in 30 different countries, on every continent except Antarctica. Wilken had the opportunity to sightsee in 20 other countries. After retirement, Wilken completed a project that placed many thousands of individual farm

record data sheets on microfilm. He also engaged in some early technology work with the use of computer-assisted data designed to help people make better farm management decisions.

Wilken spent his entire life devoted to being a loving father, husband, and agriculturalist. He touched many lives throughout his career; still, the work he achieved for this department and university stands second to none. He will be greatly missed.

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