Greetings from the Purdue Youth Development and Agricultural Education Department!

As we begin communication with the collective alumni of our department, it is a distinct privilege to be completing my first year as the new Professor and Head of YDAE. First, let me thank Dr. Roger Tormoehlen for his dedication and commitment to our department. He led the transition from the Indiana State 4-H Department to the thriving interdisciplinary social sciences department that it is today. Although much has changed, the department motto continues to be “Empower, Educate, and Enhance.” The department is committed to empowering the leadership capacity and capability of individuals and groups, educating youth and adults through agricultural and life sciences, and enhancing the quality of life for all people.

This newsletter provides a brief glimpse of the current department. We encourage you to go to our website, ag.purdue.edu/ydae, to learn the details and stay electronically connected to your alma mater. You will find many new faces, including Elizabeth Byers, Amy Conrad, Taylor Dunfee, Beth Forbes, Melissa Geiger, Dr. Linda Pfeiffer, Dr. Hui-Hui Wang, and even me, all in 2016! However, much has not changed. Our new mission — “To Educate–Empower–Enhance by building the workforce of today and tomorrow with research-based approaches to education and science communication in Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources within a multicultural society” — has not really changed. Our mission is central to the College of Agriculture’s ability to facilitate informed decision-making to improve economic and social well-being as we help communities and industry develop solutions to increase economic vitality, build human and social capacity, and contribute to important policy debates.

Empowering, Educating, and Enhancing is accomplished by this interdisciplinary department with undergraduate programs in Agricultural Education and Agricultural Communication and a nationally recognized graduate program focused on learning and communication in the context of agriculture. Faculty and staff are committed to carrying on the full range of discovery, learning, and engagement missions of a major land-grant research university. Please keep in contact with us by subscribing to our electronic newsletter, follow @YDAE_Purdue on Twitter, and “like” us on Facebook, let us know what you think, and nominate someone—or even yourself — for our inaugural YDAE Distinguished Agriculture Alumni award, to be presented this fall. This is an exciting time to be associated with a productive and energized department that is developing human capacity of all Purdue Agriculture graduates, engagement programs, and discovery efforts that serve all of our stakeholders.

Best wishes,

Mark Russell, Professor and Head
2015 & 2016 Distinguished Agriculture Alumni

The Distinguished Agriculture Alumni award recognizes Purdue Agriculture alumni who have achieved outstanding accomplishments, made significant contributions to their professions or to society in general, and exhibit high potential for future professional growth.

“Our distinguished alumni are terrific examples of what Purdue Agriculture graduates achieve every year — farmers, scientists, educators, entrepreneurs and business executives who become leaders in their fields,” said Jay Akridge, Glenn W. Sample Dean of Agriculture. “We are very proud of each of them and what they have accomplished to this point in their careers. And we are even more excited about what they will yet accomplish.”

YDAE was represented in 2015 by Dale Griffin (BS 1981 and `83, M.S. `85) of Cutler, Indiana. Mr. Griffin (below, left) has been an agriculture teacher and FFA advisor at Rossville High School in Clinton County since 1986, teaching nearly 3,000 students during his 29-year career.

Dr. Dexter Wakefield (M.S. 1988, Ph.D. 2001) was selected as a 2016 DAA. He is an assistant professor of agricultural education and mechanics at Texas State University in San Marcos, Texas.

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2016 Distinguished YDAE Alumni Award

Criteria for Selection: Nominees will have earned a B.S., M.S. or Ph.D. degree through undergraduate majors or specialized graduate programs offered by Purdue University’s Department of Youth Development and Agricultural Education. Successful nominees will have demonstrated excellence in industry, academia, governmental service, or other career endeavors as exemplified by leadership, community service, and professional accomplishments.

Nominations: Nominations must be submitted by Sept. 1, 2016, and follow these guidelines: The nomination packet must include a completed nomination form, the nominee’s vita or resumé, and a typed, one- or two-page description of the nominee’s accomplishments. This description must include how the nominee contributed significantly to industry, academia, governmental service, or other endeavors as exemplified by leadership, community service and professional accomplishments.

Nominations may be made by any person or group affiliated with Purdue University, the Department of Youth Development and Agricultural Education, or any friend or professional colleague. Self-nominations are accepted.

Presentation of Awards: Awards will be presented annually at the Youth Development and Agricultural Education Distinguished Alumni Awards Program, which this year will be held on Friday, Nov. 18, 2016, during the weekend of the home football game against Wisconsin. Individuals selected must be in attendance to receive the award and are expected to provide a few words at the ceremony. A plaque and gift will be presented. Names of recipients will later be inscribed on the Youth Development and Agricultural Education Distinguished Alumni Award plaque that will be displayed by the Department.

Visit ag.purdue.edu/ydae and click the “alumni” tab to download the application or email ebyers@purdue.edu.

YDAE Student Profile

Agricultural Communication
52 - Undergraduate students
11 - May 2016 graduates
96% job placement rate

Agricultural Education
85 - Undergraduate students
15 - May 2016 graduates
100% job placement rate

YDAE Graduate Students
19 – Graduate students specializing extension education, agricultural education, life science education, and science communication
2 – May 2016 graduates
11 – New students expected in summer and July
New Programs in YDAE

**Indiana Summer Agricultural Education Internship**

The purpose of the Summer Agricultural Education Internship is to spark an interest in current agricultural education students to complete a teacher licensure program and, upon graduation, enter the teaching profession. Many times, undergraduate students complete internships for agricultural businesses and are offered full-time positions before they ever have the opportunity to experience being in the classroom. The intent is that if students receive hands-on experience in the teaching profession during their undergraduate training, they will be retained as future teachers.

These internships were funded by the generous support of YDAE and a STAR (State Teach Ag Results) grant from CHS Foundation, DuPont Pioneer, and Growth Energy. Participating high school agriculture programs and Purdue Agricultural Education students were selected through an application process. Participating schools and their summer interns are: North Decatur High School — Becca McDole; North Miami High School — Haley Verhaeghe; North Montgomery High School — Wyatt Lucas; Southwestern High School (Shelbyville) — Laura Crosby; Sullivan High School — Elizabeth Brown; and Tri-County High School – Lindsey Williams.

**YDAE Ambassadors Program**

A vision by Dr. Mark Russell, Beth Theobald, Amy Conrad, and Elizabeth Byers has been formed into the Youth Development and Agricultural Education Ambassadors program. YDAE Ambassadors were selected from previous Agricultural Education Ambassadors and had applicants from both Agricultural Communication and Agricultural Education. Ambassadors will participate in a variety of events throughout the year, including the College of Agriculture Alumni Fish Fry, Purdue’s For Me days, and Homecoming. Additionally, these students will travel to different Ivy Tech campuses and high schools across the state, promoting the department and majors.

Please join us in congratulating the new YDAE Ambassadors: Brandon Bergdall, Elizabeth Brown, Joanna Claudy, Skylar Clingan, Laura Crosby, Kelly Dressler, Cameron Frazier, Tori Gilbert, Anna Hall, Morgan Hasler, Sheradan Hill, Wyatt Lucas, Jen Miller, Morgan Windeler, Marissa Modglin, Jordan Paine, Kelsey Quinn, and Mikaela Wieland.
2015 - 2016 New YDAE Faculty and Staff

Elizabeth Byers
Student Services Specialist
ebyers@purdue.edu

Amy Conrad
Student Services Specialist
sutton15@purdue.edu

Taylor Dunfee
Graduate Coordinator
tdunfee@purdue.edu

Beth Forbes
Science Comm. Director
forbes@purdue.edu

Melissa Geiger
Undergraduate Coordinator
melissaj@purdue.edu

Dr. Linda Pfeiffer
Assistant Professor
lpfeiffer@purdue.edu

Dr. Mark Russell
Professor and Head
mrussell@purdue.edu

Dr. Hui-Hui Wang
Assistant Professor
huiwang@purdue.edu
Water for Flint

In January, Purdue graduate students Brandon Allen and Amonté Martin started a weeklong water drive campaign. They received more than 250 cases and 30 one-gallon jugs of water donated by the Purdue community. In addition, they received more than $500 in monetary contributions. Brandon and Amonté drove a van five hours to Flint and personally distributed and purchased more water to aid residents there.

While in Flint, they teamed up with local residents who were helping with the distribution efforts and delivered 150 cases of water to Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church, which served as a drop-off location. They later delivered water to be distributed at shopping center parking lots. Amonté and Brandon were elated to be able to provide clean water for some residents. However, they left Flint wishing there was more that they could do. Some organizations across the country continue to provide help to the residents of Flint, yet water contributions are still needed.

Amonté and Brandon started another water drive that ended April 23. This campaign was all monetary via a GoFundMe account, and they raised over $2000. With the proceeds, they rented a 26-foot U-Haul truck in Michigan and brought over 8 pallets of water (over 15,000 bottles) and purchased other sanitary supplies when they arrived in Michigan.