

Poultry Science Connections

Summer 2021

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

A Note From the Department Head

Dr. Todd Applegate
Department Head and Professor

Dear Friends:

I hope this newsletter finds you well. Our Fall semester is nearly upon us, and we are truly excited for students' return, and the re-building of culture on campus. While we're not completely away from what COVID has brought us, we certainly are ready to get back to our "why" each of us chose this career path and reconnect with our students and our poultry clientele. I especially am eager for welcoming our new freshman, transfers, and sophomores who didn't have the most connected experience last year. Additionally, we'll begin orienting our largest new grad student cohort of 17 to the department, collectively growing that group to 66 in the department.

This summer, a few of our faces have changed in the department. At the end of June, JoAnn Mosko retired from the department. Last academic year, Dr. Manpreet Singh from our faculty was serving as interim department head for Food Science and Technology, and recently became the acting head; presenting a great opportunity to build stronger bridges with their department. We'll also soon wish Jeniece Vinson well, as she'll be joining the 4H group on Jekyll Island. Stay tuned, as we welcome new folks to the department this Fall.

As I had written in the spring newsletter, our capital campaign and design for the new Poultry Science Building has rapidly progressed over the summer. I am truly humbled by the support of this once in a generation project. We are now awaiting schematic design approval from UGA administration and Board of Regents for the external design and floor plans. This is an exciting phase of the project while we sort through the details of the building with construction documents to be completed by the end of 2021. We remain on track to break ground in March 2022 and to move into the new building Fall semester of 2023. To keep up on progress, please see the latest: <https://poultrybuilding.caes.uga.edu/>.

We're so proud of the breadth of science accomplished by our faculty, staff, and graduate students. This summer, we were well represented at the annual meetings of Poultry Science Association (PSA) and International Association for Food Protection (IAFP) with 33 talks and posters between the two. A special congratulations to Dr. Drew Benson – PSA's Novus Intl. Inc. Teaching Award, Jessica Fife – PSA Student Recruitment Award, Dr. Lorraine Fuller – PSA Tyson Support Staff Personnel Award, Po-Yun Teng – PSA Student of the Year, and for those students that received presentation Certificates of Excellence at the PSA meeting: Milan Sharma, Kelly Sweeny, Yuguo Tompkins, and Lauren Vaccaro.

Congratulations also to Dr. Sammy Aggrey for his recent honors. From the World's Poultry Science Association – the Paul Siegel Research Award, a true honor as this is only given to one individual every four years. Dr. Aggrey was also recently nominated to join the Working Group on Anima Seed of the African Seed and Biotechnology Partnership Platform, a strategic group of the African Union.

To stay connected to the department, please do so through one of our social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn – with links through our website), or better yet, reach out to Jessica Fife (jfife@uga.edu; 706-542-9153). To our alum and industry friends, please reach out if you'd like to connect with our students, as we always are looking for opportunities to have them engage on career opportunities and real-world perspectives. We hope to see you at our Homecoming event on Friday, October 15th.



Department of Poultry Science
College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

UGA faculty host Avian Academy for Georgia educators embarking on new Poultry Science Pathway

Claire Marie Coleman for CAES News

Agriculture and science educators from around the state participated in the University of Georgia's 2021 Avian Academy program to learn about the state's No. 1 industry through hands-on labs led by teaching faculty in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES).

Hosted by the Department of Poultry Science in late June, the free, three-day program allowed participants to explore various areas of poultry science and the poultry industry through lessons on internal anatomy, embryology, processing, poultry judging and more.

"The approval for the Poultry Science Pathway elevates our connection to agricultural education and STEM teachers and their students. Both the curriculum and our Avian Academy program provide tangible and hands-on ways of learning life science concepts through practical applications," said Todd Applegate, professor and head of the Department of Poultry Science.

"Bridges such as these between our faculty, college and university resources, and our educators throughout the state are key to helping students envision career pathways and opportunities, especially in the approximately 170,000 Georgia jobs that are directly or indirectly connected to the poultry sector," Applegate added.

The labs and lessons are designed to be easily replicated by participants in their own classrooms with the goal of introducing



"Avian Academy was such an engaging couple of days that really helped kickstart so many ideas I have for this upcoming year," Samples said. "I am so excited to start the Poultry Science Pathway and see students engage in curriculum that is so relevant to our area of the state. I'm grateful to all those that helped make this new curriculum and pathway happen."

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middle- and high-school students to the vast array of career opportunities within the poultry sector. In addition, teachers are equipped with the knowledge and hands-on experience to feel more comfortable bringing poultry science into their classrooms during the 2021-2022 school year following the approval in June of Georgia's first Poultry Science Pathway by the Georgia Department of Education under the Georgia Standards of Excellence.

Cassidy Samples, a first-time Avian Academy participant, is an agriculture teacher at Pickens County High School, which will be one of the first schools to adopt the Poultry Science Pathway.

The new pathway consists of three courses – "Basic Agriculture," "Poultry Science" and "Avian Science and Biotechnology" — and is designed to prepare students for further education and careers in poultry and avian science industries, food science, professional and graduate school studies and more.

By partnering world-renowned CAES faculty with agricultural educators through programs like Avian Academy and spearheading advancements such as the Poultry Science Pathway, the Department of Poultry Science will continue to broaden the reach and impact of the department's undergraduate recruitment efforts.

AgGeorgia Farm Credit Makes Six-Figure Gift to Support New CAES Poultry Science Building

Maria M. Lameiras for CAES News

With a \$100,000 pledge to the new Poultry Science Building at the University of Georgia's College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES), AgGeorgia Farm Credit is the first six-figure donor to a campaign that will accelerate research, scholarship and applied solutions for the largest sector of Georgia's No. 1 industry.

AgGeorgia Farm Credit is an agricultural lending cooperative owned by nearly 5,000 member-borrowers, with a mission to improve the lives of Georgia's farmers, families and rural communities.

"AgGeorgia Farm Credit is dedicated to advancing the whole of Georgia agriculture, and a huge part of that agricultural pie is poultry," said Dave Neff, AgGeorgia's board chairman. "When we saw plans for the new Poultry Science Building, we immediately knew this was a great fit and opportunity for AgGeorgia to give back. There are so many that stand to benefit from the work that will be done in this cutting-edge facility, including many of the members of our cooperative."

AgGeorgia specializes in ag lending with loan and lease products for farmers and agribusinesses, as well as long-term fixed rate options for land buyers. Approximately a third of AgGeorgia's \$1.1 billion lending portfolio consists of loans to the poultry industry, said Corey W. Cottle, chief marketing officer for AgGeorgia Farm Credit.

"We are truly grateful for the support of AgGeorgia, not only for their history of fostering growth in Georgia's agricultural community, but also for ensuring the next generation of poultry scientists, leaders, and innovators. We're proud to partner with them to collectively make Georgia the epicenter of poultry science," said Todd Applegate, head of the Department of Poultry Science.

The estimated \$54.1 million project will increase the size of the Department of Poultry Science's existing facilities in CAES to more than 70,000 square feet, modernizing instructional and lab space; providing centralized, student-focused facilities; and helping to attract and retain world-class researchers. State-of-the-art learning labs will bolster the traditional classroom experience with production courses, demonstrations and relevant field-learning exercises and contribute to the department's expanding FFA, 4-H and other youth programs, as well as assist with student recruitment efforts. Construction is scheduled to begin in spring 2022 with completion in fall 2023.

AgGeorgia is a member of the nationwide Farm Credit System, established in 1916 to provide a dependable source of credit to farmers and rural America. AgGeorgia serves 79 counties in Georgia with 19 office locations.

For more Information about the new Poultry Science building, visit <https://poultrybuilding.caes.uga.edu>



Student Spotlight

In this issue, we are spotlighting Thomas Stokes for his Summer internship with Peaksview Animal Hospital as a Veterinary Shadow. Thomas is a rising Sophomore majoring in Avian biology. His hometown is Lynchburg, Virginia. While at his internship, he follows various veterinarians around and assists them with their day-to-day activities while also observing their work. So far, he has been most excited to observe surgery as you can see in the photo above. "The Department helped motivate me to find something to do during the Summer of 2021. When my advisor reminded me about the internship course, it provided the extra motivation I needed to secure this opportunity," he said. Congratulations on your internship, Thomas!

USPOULTRY Supports UGA Department of Poultry Science

Maria M. Lameiras for CAES News

Ongoing support from the U.S. Poultry and Egg Association (USPOULTRY) and the USPOULTRY Foundation will help the University of Georgia Department of Poultry Science grow its impact on students and on the poultry industry.

USPOULTRY, which has pledged \$125,000 over five years to student recruitment funds for the department, has contributed approximately more than \$6.5 million in research funding and student recruitment grants since 1994. These special grants provide the department with readily available funds to identify and recruit students pursuing poultry science degrees and conduct research that has helped improve the poultry industry.

"We are pleased to commit these funds to recruit the best and brightest students into poultry science as the department plans its new, modern, state-of-the-art facility at the University of Georgia," said USPOULTRY President John Starkey. CAES is currently in a fundraising campaign for the construction of a new Poultry Science Building that will increase the size of the department's existing facilities to more than 70,000 square feet; modernize instructional and lab space; provide centralized, student-focused facilities; and help to attract and retain world-class researchers. Construction is scheduled to begin in spring 2022 with completion in fall 2023.

"We very much appreciate the USPOULTRY Foundation's support of our recruitment efforts and look forward to continuing to expand our poultry science and avian biology programs," said Todd Applegate, head of the Department of Poultry Science in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. "The outreach and recruiting programs for students entering the poultry and allied sectors are keenly reliant on the generous support of the USPOULTRY Foundation and its supporting donors."

The gift from USPOULTRY will not go toward the construction project, as the organization does not fund brick and mortar projects. USPOULTRY's mission is to progressively serve the poultry industry through research, education, communication and technical assistance. Founded in 1947, USPOULTRY is based in Tucker, Georgia. The USPOULTRY Foundation's mission is to support the recruitment and training of the brightest students, seek and fund scientific research, foster student scientists and promote careers in the poultry and egg industry.

For more Information about the new Poultry Science building, visit <https://poultrybuilding.caes.uga.edu>



Student Spotlight

This issue, we are spotlighting Cory Yarbrough for his internship with a biotechnology startup, called Ancera, located in Connecticut. Cory is a junior Poultry Science major with minors in Agribusiness and Management as well as Avian Biology. He is from Comer, Georgia. Cory has spent the summer collecting samples used to determine oocysts counts for Coccidiosis, met with various industry representatives to market their product, the PIPER, and traveled to the office in Branford, CT to perform data analysis and intelligence engine training. Cory says, "I am most excited about learning how biotechnology can play a role in poultry Coccidiosis health and making new connections throughout the poultry industry." Cory says that The Poultry Science Department has broadened his knowledge of bird health, sparked his interest in Coccidiosis research, and led him to this position after a faculty member encouraged him to apply for this amazing opportunity. Congratulations on your internship Cory!

R. Harold and Patsy Harrison Foundation Pledges \$1M to UGA Poultry Science

Maria M. Lameiras for CAES News

The R. Harold and Patsy Harrison Foundation has pledged \$1 million toward the construction of a new Poultry Science Building on the University of Georgia's Athens campus, expanding the legacy of the Harrison family in Georgia's poultry industry.

The \$1 million commitment is the first seven-figure gift to the Poultry Science building campaign and the foundation's first gift to the University of Georgia.

"My father graduated from the College of Agriculture, and he would tell stories about walking up Ag Hill. UGA and education were very important to him," said Bobbie Ann Harrison Reynolds, who established the R. Harold and Patsy Harrison Foundation in her parents' honor in 2019.

Harold Harrison earned his bachelor's degree in agribusiness from the University of Georgia's College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences in 1941. At graduation, Harrison received a blank piece of paper as he crossed the stage because he could not pay the \$5 required for his diploma, returning later to pay the fee. Today that framed diploma hangs in the Harrison Poultry headquarters, Reynolds said.

"With this generous commitment from the R. Harold and Patsy Harrison Foundation, CAES is able to continue leading the way in poultry research and education. We are excited about the future of our Poultry Science Building, and it would not be possible without support from industry partners like Mrs. Bobbie Ann Harrison Reynolds and the entire Reynolds family," said CAES Dean and Director Nick Place.

The estimated \$54.1 million project will increase the size of the Department of Poultry Science's existing facilities in CAES to more than 70,000 square feet, modernizing instructional and lab space; providing centralized, student-focused facilities; and helping to attract and retain world-class researchers. The new building will be located on what is currently a parking lot between Boyd and Conner Halls.

State-of-the-art learning labs will bolster the traditional classroom experience with production courses, demonstrations and relevant field-learning exercises and contribute to the department's expanding FFA, 4-H and other youth programs, as well as assist with student recruitment efforts. Construction is scheduled to begin in spring 2022 with completion in fall 2023.

After graduating from UGA, Harrison was commissioned into the U.S. Army and served in World War II in Europe as a platoon leader and company commander and was honorably discharged as a captain in 1945.

Returning to his hometown, Harrison built his company from a small operation selling chicks to feed dealers in the area to broiler production and processing and was a pioneer in automation, building a feed mill, hatchery, and the processing facility still operating today.

"Harrison Poultry now contributes approximately \$100 million dollars annually to the local economy and is the largest non-government employer in Barrow County with nearly 1,000 employees and contracts with more than 100 growers in several surrounding counties," said David Bleth, president and CEO of Harrison Poultry. "We are proud to be associated with the continuing innovation that will be a part of the R. Harold Harrison legacy."

During his career, Harrison served as director of the National Broiler Council and was awarded the Agri-Leader of the Year in 1984 by the Atlanta Farmers Club. He was a member of the Barrow County Board of Education for 24 years, serving as chairman for 12 years. As a State Senator, he represented Gwinnett, Barrow, Jackson, and Banks counties. He was inducted into the Georgia Agricultural Hall of Fame in 2001.

"My father was such a community leader — serving as a State Senator, on the bank board, on the school board, on the hospital board, all while building his business at the same time," Reynolds said. "It seemed a perfect fit for the conference center at UGA's Poultry Science Building to be named for him and for my mother. It will be a place where all of the leaders of the industry will come together for the benefit of everyone."

Establishing the R. Harold and Patsy Harrison Foundation was a way to honor her parents. Her mother also attended UGA.

"Knowing how much Daddy valued philanthropy and giving back, this means a lot. Honoring them both in this way and being a donor to this project are important because of the example that they set for me," Reynolds said.

The Poultry Science Building campaign is a public-private partnership. Thus far, the state of Georgia has allocated a total of \$23.9 million for planning and construction of the new building. A final request to equip the building is slated to be included in the University System of Georgia's fiscal year 2023 capital budget request.

Ranked the No. 1 poultry science program in the nation, the CAES Department of Poultry Science has been a major contributor of research and university-trained experts that have led to the exponential growth of the state's industry for many decades. The department and its faculty are well-known for their industry-focused advances.

"We need innovation in the industry and my father was an innovator," Reynolds said. "This is an exciting project for the Poultry Science program. It is all about educating the next generation of leaders for the industry. My family and I are blessed and thrilled to be involved in this investment in infrastructure for the future."

For more information about the new Poultry Science building, visit <https://poultrybuilding.caes.uga.edu>

Poultry Science Faculty, Staff Earn Awards

Claire Marie Coleman for CAES News

Four faculty and staff members in the Department of Poultry Science at the University of Georgia's College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES) have received prestigious awards from national professional organizations.

Andrew Benson, assistant professor in the Department of Poultry Science, received the 2021 Novus International Teaching Award from the Poultry Science Association (PSA). The award is given to recognize that excellence in teaching is integral to the future welfare of the poultry industry, and to support continued professional improvement through travel, study and other means. Benson is an alumnus of the department and now teaches the course that inspired him to pursue a career in poultry science. Benson is an asset to the department as an instructor and continues to inspire his students to pursue degrees in poultry science and avian biology.

Jessica Fife, who serves as the outreach coordinator for the department, received the 2021 PSA Student Recruitment Award from PSA. This biennial award recognizes an individual who, using innovative methods, has significantly improved the recruiting program of a respective department, college or university.

As outreach coordinator, Fife leads the department's recruitment initiatives; student affairs, marketing and communication efforts; alumni relations, and more. Recently, she created Georgia's first poultry science curriculum for high school agriculture education classrooms and is currently pursuing a doctorate in agricultural leadership, education and communication from CAES.

Lorraine Fuller, a research professional in the Department of Poultry Science, was awarded the Tyson Foods Inc. Support Personnel Award through PSA. This award acknowledges the contributions by support personnel and to recognize outstanding support of research, extension or teaching programs in poultry science.

Fuller has helped more than 30 graduate students with their research, is author or co-author on 49 papers, and holds two patents. Recently she has begun developing testing protocols and reagents for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's use in approving active compounds for treatment of ascariasis and helminthiasis in poultry.

In addition, Lilong Chai, assistant professor in the Department of Poultry Science, was awarded the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers' 2021 Sunkist Young Designer Award. This award recognizes and honors members under 40 years of age for outstanding contributions to the advancement of the profession and to stimulate professional achievement. Sponsored by Sunkist Growers, the Sunkist Young Designer Award specifically honors the development of a technical plan that influences agricultural engineering progress, as evidenced by use in the field.

Chai's contributions include being author or co-author of more than 100 publications and principal investigator or co-principal investigator for 20 grants and contracts. Chai also recently initiated a successful inaugural Georgia Precision Poultry Farming Conference with support from department administration, fellow faculty members and researchers.

"UGA's Department of Poultry Science is a pretty amazing place to be, and we owe that to the innovation, creativity, and success in large part to our faculty and staff. This year, we are extremely proud to have the efforts of two of the faculty, Drs. Benson and Chai, recognized by two professional associations. Additionally, we are tremendously delighted to have two of our support staff recognized by the Poultry Science Association for innovation in recruitment, Jessica Fife, and Dr. Lorraine Fuller for career-long efforts in parasitology research and service to the poultry community," said Todd Applegate, head of the Department of Poultry Science.

Georgia is the nation's leading poultry-producing state, and the poultry industry represents more than 50% of the state's agricultural income. To meet the demand for innovation in poultry production, UGA is building a new Poultry Science Building to better equip faculty and students, the nation's poultry industry and Georgia communities.



Using Microchips to Improve Efficiency and Bird Health on Poultry Farms

Claire Marie Coleman For CAES News

As the No. 1 poultry producing state in the U.S., Georgia's poultry industry generates more than \$3.8 billion annually. Part of sustaining this vibrant economic driver for the state is keeping millions of birds healthy and marketable.

A new innovation from University of Georgia poultry researchers may provide a more efficient and effective method of determining how changes in poultry house environment and management affect bird comfort.

Brian Fairchild and Michael Czarick (BSAE – Agricultural Engineering, '83; MS – Agricultural Engineering, '87) — faculty members in the Department of Poultry Science at the UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES) — focus on applied research into physiological management of poultry, poultry house environmental control and energy conservation to try to lower Georgia poultry producers' production costs while improving the performance, health and comfort of birds.

One piece of technology that Czarick and Fairchild's team are investigating is a radio-frequency identification (RFID) chip that is inserted under the birds' skin, similar to those used to help identify a family pet if lost. This technology allows researchers to monitor birds' temperatures in real time to continuously determine their level of thermal comfort.

"We monitor body temperature by inserting an RFID chip under the skin of the birds, then we have an antennae system set up in their pens so anytime they walk by the antenna it reads their body temperature," said Kristin Miles, a graduate student on the research team. "This allows birds to, in a sense, communicate directly with us to let us know if they are getting too warm or cold. We can change different aspects within the birds' environment — temperature, air speed, humidity — and the birds can provide us direct feedback as to whether the change was beneficial or detrimental."

Birds, like mammals, are homeothermic, producing heat to maintain a relatively constant body temperature. A 5-pound broiler chicken will produce more than 50 BTUs of heat per hour. A British thermal unit (BTU) is the amount of heat required to raise the temperature of 1 pound of water by 1 degree. With the typical capacity of a broiler house at 20,000 5-pound birds, that averages out to birds producing 1 million BTUs of heat per hour.

Normally, a chicken's body temperature is 104 to 107 degrees Fahrenheit, but that will fluctuate somewhat depending upon the environmental temperature. In cold weather, a chicken's body temperature can drop as low as 73 degrees before death occurs. However, there is much less flexibility on the high side, with body temperatures of 113 to 117 degrees becoming lethal to birds.

Isabel Luo, a graduate student who is using the technology in her research involving chicks said, "In the past, I would have to pick up the chick and measure its temperature manually, which was time-consuming and potentially stressful for the chick. With the RFID chips, I am able to measure an individual chick's body temperature thousands of times a day, which provides me with incredibly accurate data — and the chick doesn't even know I am doing it."

RFID technology has been used to explore a number of questions commonly asked by poultry producers, including how air movement affects the body temperature of newly hatched chicks, whether cold drinking water reduces the temperature of young chicks, if chicks' temperature varies based on size or the age of the layer hen, how chick temperature varies over the course of the day and how chick temperature varies in the first week of its life.

The team is now developing a portable system to monitor bird temperature in poultry houses and not just in the laboratory.

"This technology has so many real-world applications that we have just begun to explore. We no longer have to guess how the environment or management practices affect the birds' level of thermal comfort — we can measure it directly. This will not only help us to maximize bird performance and health, but improve bird welfare as well," Czarick said.

The system being developed by Fairchild and Czarick's team could prove effective for both young chicks and older birds, as chicks are more sensitive to cold and older broilers are more sensitive to heat.

Fairchild and Czarick have been working together on research and Extension programs in the area of poultry house environmental control for 20 years. Their work over the years has helped maintain poultry house environments while conserving energy and maintaining environments conducive to good bird welfare.

"A lot of the work that we do together is evaluating new equipment and new technology to implement in poultry houses to improve the environment for the birds, while at the same time trying to reduce grower operating costs," Fairchild said.

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UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
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ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Meet Our New Avian Ambassadors

Claire Marie Coleman
Department Communications Intern

The Avian Ambassador Program is a unique opportunity to the Poultry Science Department. Students are selected through an application and interview process each spring semester and go through an orientation and training to prepare them for being the “faces of the department” beginning that summer or fall.

It is an honor to represent our faculty, staff, and students in one of these prestigious positions at recruitment events, tours, conferences, and other various events on and off of campus. Their time is rewarded with excellent resume building opportunities and monetary compensation, as well!

Meet our new Avian Ambassadors starting in August 2021:



Christian Albritton
Avian Biology
Biological Science



Sage Barlow
Poultry Science



Grant Bennett
Avian Biology
Biological Science



Kylie Bruce
Poultry Science



Lydia Connell
Avian Biology
Biological Science



Mary Davis
Poultry Science



Emily Edelman
Poultry Science



Thomas Jones
Avian Biology
Biological Science



Sarah LeVan
Avian Biology
Biological Science



Gray Miller
Poultry Science



Patti Mitchell
Poultry Science



Cayla Morris
Avian Biology
Animal Science



Thomas Stokes
Avian Biology



Cory Yarbrough
Poultry Science



Summer 2021 Graduates

Undergraduates:

BSA Avian Biology:

Angel Olvera

BSA Biological Science:

Mackenzie Brown

Thomas Emmaus Flowers

Chelsea Nana Afrakomah Frimpong

Jordan Henson

Darius Jackson

Kaitlyn Love

Elise Nanista

Akiera Palm

Charles (Hunter) Perry

Taylor Powell

Rodney Raiford

Amanda Ramirez

Katrina Watts

Graduates:

PHD Poultry Science:

Po-Yun Teng

Yi Chen Luo



Save the Date:

August 18th First Day of Class

August 28th Georgia Poultry Federation's "Poultry Strong" Event

September 27th Georgia Layer Conference

September 29th Georgia Broiler Conference

October 15th Department of Poultry Science Alumni + Friends Homecoming Tailgate

October TBD Georgia Poultry Federation Sporting Clays Classic

November 12th Department of Poultry Science Open House Event

November TBD Cold Weather Management Workshop/Webinar