



# In the MARGINS

## Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics

A newsletter for alumni and friends of the UW Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics.

## Distinguished Alumnus: Gary Darnall

In Nebraska and Wyoming, alumnus Gary Darnall and his family's historic Darnall Feedlot are nothing short of legendary. Located near Harrisburg, Neb., the property was homesteaded by the Darnalls in 1889. Gary Darnall used his University of Wyoming bachelor's ('60) and master's ('62) degrees in agricultural economics to take the ranch and feedlot to the next level of innovation. The ranch participated in trials, tests and studies—including natural resource sustainability and water conservation—and became one of the first feedlots to adopt integrated pest management and no-till farming. Starting with 150 Hereford cows and 1,400 acres of pasture and dryland, the ranch has grown to several thousand acres of grassland, dryland and irrigated cropland, a commercial Angus cow herd, a yearling grazing operation and a 22,500-head commercial American Angus Association-certified feedlot.

"Only 5 percent of all feedlots in the U.S. have a capacity of 1,000 head or more," said UW College of Agriculture and Natural Resources Dean Barbara Rasco. "This places Mr. Darnall's operation in the top ranks of his industry. His operation feeds cattle from seven Western states. This alone is a testament to his success."

Darnall has dedicated his life not only to growing his operation but also to sharing his knowledge to further the industry. He helped start the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Panhandle Research Feedlot; served on the external advisory board for UW College of Agriculture and Natural Resources and many other boards and commissions; gives workshops and hires college interns; and is a staunch supporter of UW athletics, including the Steer-A-Year scholarship program. Darnall and his ranch have earned many state and national honors, prompting the governor of Nebraska, Pete Ricketts, to write a recommendation letter for Darnall's UW Distinguished Alumni Award.

"Gary has done what many only hope to do—growing Darnall ranch into an expansive agricultural opera-

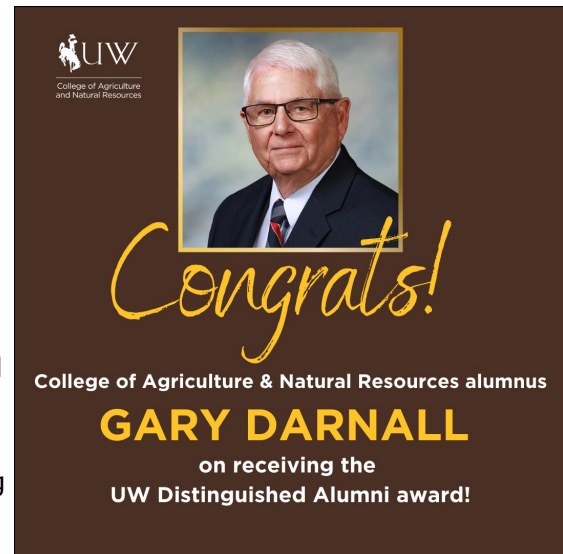
tion," Ricketts writes. "His innovation, standard of excellence and service to his community set a strong example of hard work. Gary has spent his life committed to the continued education of students in both Wyoming and Nebraska."

"I am very honored and humbled to have received the Distinguished Alumni Award from UW," Darnall says. "The formal education I received at UW gave me a strong foundation to pursue my goals in life."

UW holds a special place for the Darnall family, with three generations of graduates, including Gary, his wife Emilie, their son and daughter—Lane and Lisa—and now three of their grandchildren.

"Some of my fondest memories at UW are from the classes and professors of the College of Agriculture as well as the athletic programming," says Darnall, who was a track and field athlete. He appreciated the dedicated and knowledgeable professors and the camaraderie of his teammates and coaches. This motivated Darnall to stay involved.

"By supporting the College of Agriculture, serving on the advisory board and supporting UW athletics, I hope to give a little back and show my gratitude toward UW," he says. "The future of our country and industry is in our youth." ■



## Outstanding Article Selected

The 2021 Outstanding Article Award for the *Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics* was for an article developed by several UW AgEcon staff. Chian Jones Ritten, Chris Bastian and Selena Gerace worked with Owen Phillips and Amy Nagler to write "An Experimental Inquiry of Gender Differences in Negotiation Strategy and Outcomes: Agricultural Market Implications." Congratulations!



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Department Head: Ben Rashford  
Editor: Cole Ehmke

# Profile: Anders Van Sandt

Our profile this issue is of Anders Van Sandt, a new assistant professor who covers regional economics. ~The Editor.

## 1. What projects are you involved in at the moment?

Being in both Extension and Agricultural and Applied Economics, I get to wear a lot of hats. I am currently working on The UCHAT Project (Unlocking Community Health Access Together), one of the UW President's Grand Challenge initiatives to improve rural healthcare access and outcomes in Wyoming, as well as projects and programs centered around economic diversity and resilience, water management, and rural-urban industry linkages.

## 2. Have you always wanted to be a professional teacher/educator/researcher?

I have wanted to be an educator since high school but did not consider higher education and research until graduate school. Prior to that, my passion for unique experiences led me to jobs in wineries, a plant nursery, farming, and even as a squire for a professional knight.

## 3. How did you get into economics?

I accidentally did not sign up for enough credits freshman-year, so I haphazardly added *Principles of Microeconomics*. I soon realized that my brain was wired to think like an economist, so I kept taking more classes, including *Environmental Economics* and *Economics of Sports*, until I finally made it my major.

## 4. What is the best part of being an economist?

Being able to use economic theory and methods to thoughtfully answer any question in the world. I love being an applied economist and having the potential to influence communities' well-being through Extension programs. I enjoyed growing up in a small town (pop. 1,630) but it had its fair share of challenges, so I have always had a passion for supporting and improving rural lifestyles.

## 5. What have been some of your favorite projects?

My favorite project is probably whatever I am currently working on. My true passion is problem solving, so until I find an acceptable result, I am completely engrossed in solving that problem. One past project I am proud of is my dissertation work on adopting agritourism as a means of farm/ranch diversification and rural economic development.

## 6. What has been the most satisfying part of your work?

I love getting off campus and out into Wyoming communities. It grounds me and keeps me focused on our communities' needs and goals. It is easy to get distracted by projects or disillusioned by the politics in academia, so I need these experiences to refuel and stay focused. The best feeling is when community members or leaders tell me my research and programs are important to their communities.

## 7. What do you love to do other than economics?

I grew up building fences, a barn, a chicken coop, and other structures with my dad and brother. Although I do not have acreage now, I love wood working and completing home projects with my wife. She has become a skilled amateur electrician and

plumber, so there are few home projects we cannot handle together. Other than that, we both love to cross country ski, backpack, eat, and play ultimate frisbee.

## 8. What advice would you give to new graduates?

Do not be afraid to try new things or move to new places. After I graduated undergrad, I had some unfortunate setbacks that forced me to take a year off before grad school. In that time, I expanded my perspectives by taking multiple jobs and traveling to Japan for a month. After graduate school, I wanted to stay in the Rockies but instead followed jobs in Texas and Kentucky. I never planned on these experiences, but they ultimately led me to the life I love and the love of my life.

## 9. What issues do you see shaping the agriculture/Wyoming of the future?

In addition to global competition and emerging markets, our changing climate will be a key challenge for us to overcome or adapt to. Particularly, the availability and quality of water. As these challenges intensify, producers will have to adopt new technologies, practices, and marketing strategies including diversification, value-added products, and niche markets.

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## Departures and Exits

Matt Andersen  
Mariah Ehmke  
Janet Marsh (1958—2021)  
Carl Olson (1937—2021)

## Recent Master's Candidate Thesis Presentations

Elli Trader  
Modeling Climate Effects on Wine Exports: A Time Series Analysis of the French Market  
Meri Hambaryan  
An Empirical Analysis of the Demand for Honey and Other Sweeteners in the United States



# Student Profiles

## Brett Wildman, recipient of the Gordon Kearn Scholarship

**What is your background? Where are you from?** I grew up on a family farm near the small town of Manderson, Wyoming.

**Why did you choose AgBusiness at UW?** I chose to study Ag business at UW because I enjoy agriculture and can see the degree being useful in my future as well as being close to home with a nice hometown feel.

**What would you like to do with your life?** In my future I would like to eventually take over the family farm using those concepts I've learned during my time at UW to progress.

**What is your best college memory so far?** As for my college memories, COVID has made it more difficult to do so, though I have had good memories. If I were to decide, during school I would say connecting with other students and getting to know professors. Outside of the classroom, going swing dancing on Wednesday nights with friends.



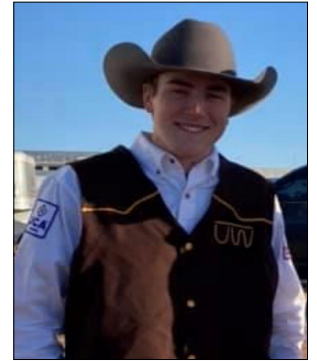
## Josh Stevens, recipient of the Thorvaldson Clark Scholarship

**I am an ag business major and a UW rodeo athlete** — I have been doing rodeo and team roping for a little over three years now. I grew up in Cheyenne playing baseball my whole life and started to lose the love for the game my freshman year of high school. Then I tried basketball for a couple years before losing love for that game the summer before my junior year of high school. One day I decided to buy a horse and try to learn to ride and rope.

**I chose ag business at the UW** because the university was close to home and I always had a dream of getting a degree from UW. I found a passion in rodeo and then began to realize that I love everything about agriculture, so I decided to become an agricultural business major. It all really came together when I decided one day to call the rodeo coach and ask if I could come and check practices out and try to rodeo for the team. I couldn't be happier with where I am.

**One day I would like to own a business.** I love running machinery and doing any kind of work outside. The dream job for me would be to own and operate a ranch, but I have a long ways to go for that, and believe I need to start a business before I will be able to do that. So I plan on owning and operating a heavy equipment excavation company and maybe a concrete company when I get out of school to one day hopefully achieve my big goal of owning and operating a ranch.

**My best college memory so far** would be going to my first college rodeo and experiencing the life on the road with my fellow teammates and actually walking out of my first college rodeo placing 8<sup>th</sup> out of about 60 teams in the team roping in Gillette.



## John Corson, recipient of the Petz Scholarship

**I grew up on a cattle ranch near Laramie Peak.** The ranch has been in our family for five generations, so it is rich with family ties. I went to Little Snake River Valley high school in Baggs, Wyoming. I loved playing sports growing up as well as working on the ranch. I also served a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in Salvador, Brazil, and when the COVID-19 pandemic happened I finished serving in Colville, Washington! I would say these experiences have made me grow to love agriculture!

**I knew from a very young age that I wanted to go to school at UW.** I liked that it is close to home, it is affordable, and offers a great education! My decision to choose Ag Business was much tougher to decide. I first thought about becoming a veterinarian, but it didn't feel right. A few of my neighbors near the ranch also told me it was smarter to get a general business degree, but it didn't feel right to me. I ended up meeting a man who also grew up on a ranch and got an Ag Business degree from UW and now lives in Idaho, and he explained that his experience in agriculture and his degree made him much more valuable in the work force than were he to just have a business degree. Meeting him and hearing his point of view really resonated with me and that is why I have decided to pursue to receive an Ag Business degree!

**I would really like to stay on the family ranch and with my siblings take over one day and continue the long-held family tradition.** I would like to raise a family and be an active participant in my community. I feel I have been greatly blessed in my life and I hope to be able to give back to youth in my community as well as help influence important decisions that may need to be made!

I only am a sophomore, and I have only two semesters under my belt, one of them was during the pandemic where lots of activities were shut down. However, **one of my favorite college memories was this summer when I went to a UW ranch camp** hosted by UW and UW Extension agents. It was a fantastic experience and I truly enjoyed the people I met as well as a great week of learning!

## Department Head Column

Friends, I hope this issue finds you well. The months since the last newsletter have continued to be busy on campus: Covid, budget challenges, and campus-wide reorganization have kept our faculty, staff and students in a constant state of flux. We also saw the departure of two dedicated faculty this fall – Dr. Matt Anderson and Dr. Mariah Ehmke – who left UW with to pursue other opportunities. Despite the challenging times, AGECE remains strong.

We continue to support over 200 undergraduate majors, minors and MS students, and our faculty continue to serve science and the state with award winning research and outreach. Recently, for example, lead author Dr. Chian Jones Ritten and colleagues received the 2021 outstanding article award from the *Journal of Agricultural and Resource*

*Economics* for their work on gender differences in negotiation and its effect on ag markets – fantastic work!

Also, as you know, UW is currently undertaking a major reorganization. One early strategy proposed included consolidating AGECE and Economics within the College of Business. This proposal has officially been tabled. Whether you loved or hated the idea, the outpouring of concern and support from our stakeholders and alumni around the globe was overwhelming. There will still be changes on campus that affect us (stay tuned!), but we will do everything we can to continue earning and inspiring the amazing passion and commitment you all have for AGECE. Thank you!

Stay in touch, Ben Rashford, Department Head  
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# *In the Margins*

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Permit #75

## **Selected AgEcon Publications**

- Bakhtavoryan, R., V. Hovhannisyan, S. Devadoss, and J. Lopez. (2021). "Welfare Implications of Japan's Egg Tariff Reductions for the US Consumers," *Journal of Agricultural and Applied Economics*, 53 (2):280-300.
- Bastian, C., C. Jones Ritten, A. Nagler.** "Chapter 3 - How Market Institutions, Risks, and Agent Incentives Affect Price Discovery: Fed Cattle Market Implications," in *The U. S. Beef Supply Chain: Issues and Challenges*. Fischer, Outlaw & Anderson, Eds. Proceedings of a workshop on cattle markets sponsored by Office of the Chief Economist, US Department of Agriculture, and The Agricultural and Food Policy Center, Texas A&M University. 2021. pp.65-80. (Also appeared in a report to the House Committee on Agriculture September 1, 2021).
- Bastian, C., C. Keske, D. Hoag & D. McLeod.** 'Comment on Eaton *et al.*'s Reconceptualization of Economic Dependence in "Trouble with Sense of Place in Working Landscapes",' *Society and Natural Resources: An International Journal*. 34,9(2021): 1286-92.
- Bastian, C., C. Jones Ritten, L. Smutko & J. Hewlett.** (2021). *Bargaining for a Better Market Outcome*, Negotiation in Agriculture series, Published by the Western Extension Committee.
- Dyer, H., A. Maher, J. Ritten, J. Tanaka, and K. Maczko.** (2021.) "Ranch Profitability of Improving Soil Health on Rangelands," *Rangeland Ecology Management* (77):66-74.
- Ehmke, C., & Waggener, R.** (2021). *Wyoming Specialty Crop Directory*: Laramie, Wyoming, University of Wyoming Extension, MP-150-21, 189 p. ISBN 978-0-578-93253-8.
- Jones Ritten, C., C. Bastian, & O. Phillips.** "The Relative Effectiveness of Law Enforcement Policies Aimed at Reducing Illegal Trade: Evidence from Laboratory Markets," *PLoS ONE*. 16,11(2021): 1-20. eo25924.
- Thunstrom, L., **C. Jones Ritten, C. Bastian**, E. Minton & D. Zhappassova. "Trust and Trustworthiness of Christians, Muslims and Atheists/

Agnostics in the United States," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*. 60,1(2021):147-179.

- Thunstrom, L., **C. Jones Ritten, C. Bastian** & E. Minton. "A Reply to Cragun and Speed on 'Trust and Trustworthiness of Christians, Muslims and Atheists/Agnostics in the U. S.'," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*. 60,1(2021):183-188.

## **Selected Grant Projects**

- Bastian, C., R. Coupal, A. Nagler & D. Taylor.** *The Comprehensive Survey of Snowmobile and Off-Road Recreational Vehicle (ORV) Use Trends and Economic Impacts of the Wyoming State Trails System*. Wyoming Dept. of Commerce, Division of State Parks and Historic Sites, Cheyenne, Wyoming, \$114,000.
- Ehmke, Cole & Mary Martin.** *Money Talk online course development*. John P. Ellbogen Foundation Wyoming Communities, Agriculture, & Rural Living Project Fund: Phase I. 2021 to 2022. \$6,640.
- Hewlett, J.P.** *Growing Beginning Farmers and Ranchers in Wyoming*. United States Department of Agriculture, National Institute of Food and Agriculture. 2021 to 2024. \$750,000.
- Mealor, B., **J. Ritten.** *Current and Potential Future Economic Impacts of Invasive Weeds in Wyoming – A Pilot Study*. Wyoming Weed and Pest Council. \$30,000.
- Ehmke, Cole; Meuli, Mindy & LeRoy Jons.** *Local Food Promotion: Planning and Piloting Wyoming Food Coalition*. John P. Ellbogen Foundation Wyoming Communities, Agriculture, & Rural Living Project Fund: Phase I. 2020 to 2021. \$8,450.
- Thunstrom, Linda, **Chian Jones Ritten, Christopher Bastian.** *Examining Wage Negotiation*. UW College of Business One-Time Funding. (Augmented with Lowham Research Funds). 2020 to 2021. \$50,000.