UW Extension specialist receives career achievement award

A professor in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences and director of Wyoming AgrAbility has received the Career Achievement Award from the National Family Life Specialists’ Awards Committee.

“I was extremely honored and humbled,” says Randy Weigel, UW Extension human development specialist. “In my 37-year extension career, I’ve had the privilege of working with most of the past recipients.”

The Career Achievement Award honors an extension state specialist in family life and human development who has made significant contributions with impacts at the national level on extension program development, delivery, and evaluation.

Weigel will be honored at 11 a.m. Thursday, November 15, during the National Update and Family Life Specialists’ Awards Presentation webinar hosted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Login information for the webinar will be available at http://www.nifa.usda.gov/.

“Throughout his two decades of service, he has made significant contributions in developing, teaching, and evaluating extension programs,” says Brian Higginbotham, family life extension specialist at Utah State University. “His contributions, including presentations and publications, have had multiple impacts outside his home state.”

Weigel will speak for 15 minutes during the webinar on topics including the age-paced parenting newsletters he worked on during his time at Iowa State Extension; the Farm Crisis of the ’80s; Wyoming Extension homemakers; Western Integrated Resource Education – Agriculture Help Wanted; the animal care project at the Wyoming Girls School; and Wyoming AgrAbility.

“I am proud of the proactive, integrated and comprehensive response of extension human development and family life specialists to the emotional needs of farm families facing the farm crisis of the ’80s, and the inclusion of behavioral (mental) health into extension agricultural management education and the National AgrAbility project,” says Weigel.
Latchininsky selected for Faculty Senate Speaker Series

Extension entomologist Alex Latchininsky is the Fall 2012 Award Recipient for the Faculty Senate Speaker Series and will present at 4:10 p.m. Thursday, November 29, in room 133 Classroom Building.

Latchininsky will discuss “The Aral Sea catastrophe: Is one of the world’s greatest environmental disasters reversible?”

Latchininsky received his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in entomology at St. Petersburg State University, Russia. In 1995, he came to UW to pursue his Ph.D. in entomology. He joined the faculty of the Department of Ecosystem Science and Management in 2003 and was promoted to associate professor in 2008.

He has published 33 peer-reviewed articles and 14 monographs and book chapters in five languages. He has served as president of the U.S. National Grasshopper Management Board and received the International Integrated Pest Management Award of Excellence in 2012 for developing and delivering rangeland grasshopper management strategies in the West.

He has also served as an international consultant for the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization. Latchininsky has traveled to 40-plus countries including Argentina, Australia, Mexico, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Senegal, China and Central Asian countries, and he has been featured on the Discovery Channel and History Channel television programs about locusts.

UW scientist, state’s veterinarian lauded for animal health efforts

A University of Wyoming professor and the Wyoming state veterinarian have received awards from national animal health organizations.

Professor Donal O’Toole in the Department of Veterinary Sciences received the Distinguished Career Service Award from the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD) at the association’s annual meeting October 18-24 in Greensboro, North Carolina.

State veterinarian Jim Logan received the National Assembly Award from the U.S. Animal Health Association (USAHA), which met jointly with the AAVLD. The National Assembly is the collaborative body of all U.S. state animal health officials, according to the USAHA. Logan was recognized by all state veterinarians for his contributions to advance animal health programs nationally.

O’Toole, in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, was honored for his long-term service to veterinary diagnostic medicine in the United States, including peer-reviewed papers, teaching related to diagnostic medicine, service on the association’s executive board, including as president 2005-2006, and as chair of its pathology committee.

He joined the Department of Veterinary Sciences in 1990 as an associate professor and diagnostic pathologist and served as department head and as director of the Wyoming State Veterinary Laboratory for five years. He teaches undergraduate courses in diseases of livestock, equine health and disease, and mammalian pathobiology. His research focus is spontaneous diseases of food and companion animals and fatal viral disease of bison.
Franc remembered for service to Rocky Mountain ag producers

Gary Franc, 56, professor of plant pathology in the Department of Plant Sciences, died Wednesday, October 17, from health complications.

"Professor Franc was a constant and steady presence in the Department of Plant Sciences and will be missed," says Steve Herbert, associate professor and head of the department. "He was a dedicated scientist who was nonetheless powerfully devoted to his family and a strong believer in academic principles. Gary was always a serious and experienced member of faculty committees and took his votes very seriously, whether on graduate student progress or on faculty governance procedures."

Gary joined the Department of Plant Sciences in 1991 as an associate professor of plant pathology and became a professor of plant pathology in 2001. Gary had worked as an area extension agent for Colorado State University Extension from 1986-1991, and was a research associate and general faculty member in the Department of Plant Pathology at CSU from 1980-1986.

He received his bachelor’s degree from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, in 1978, his master’s degree from the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis-St. Paul, in 1982, and his Ph.D. in plant pathology from CSU in 1988.

Herbert says two priorities drove Gary’s long hours in his office and laboratory.

The first was service to agricultural producers in the Rocky Mountain region.

"Gary’s research group continuously monitored crop plant samples from Wyoming, Colorado, and elsewhere for signs of plant disease so that nascent epidemics could be identified and stopped," notes Herbert. "His disease monitoring and prevention work included development of methods to identify resistance of pathogenic fungi to the pesticides that are used to control them."

His other research interest was more global and more esoteric, though still applicable, notes Herbert.

Gary had a long-term interest in how bacteria and other microbes are distributed around the Earth by weather. He sampled water from clouds or mountain snow to find evidence of microbes that had been carried there from great distances.

"In very recent years, Gary’s cloud bacteria work was supported by the National Science Foundation and brought scientists from Australia, Ireland, and Germany to Wyoming for research in his laboratory," says Herbert. "The Franc lab was always a hub of activity on the fourth floor of the agriculture building but especially in the last years of his life. These colleagues now continue Gary’s work, and it will go forward for years to come with the energy he created for it."

Herbert says Gary was also deeply devoted to his family.

"No visitor to his office could fail to be distracted by the extraordinary artwork, posters, and family pictures that were plastered on every wall," he notes. "When Gary Franc was not at work, he was often engaged in adventures with his loved ones in the Colorado mountains. Before her recent death, Gary took time from work to escort his mother to the Hawaiian Islands for a long-imagined vacation. Telling stories of his adventures with family to colleagues at work was one of Gary’s greatest pleasures."

Herbert says Gary’s work at UW will continue to be supported by his current grants and by renewal proposals that are already being drafted by his colleagues.

"The future is always unknown and the Franc group will change over time, but his vision and ideas will propel it forward for years to come," notes Herbert.
Cameron president-elect of national family and consumer sciences national honor society

Associate Professor Bruce Cameron in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences was elected president-elect for Phi Upsilon Omicron, the national honor society for family and consumer sciences, in August. Cameron was officially installed during Conclave in October and is the first UW faculty member to serve as president.

“It is quite an honor to be the first UW faculty member to be selected as president-elect of Phi Upsilon Omicron,” says Cameron. “The Delta chapter of Phi U was the fourth chapter established in this national honor society.”

Cameron will serve as president-elect for 2012-2014 and assume the role of president in 2014. His primary responsibility as president-elect will be to serve as chairman of the National Professional Project committee. The professional project is undertaken by each of the honor societies chapters that encompass the current theme – the theme for 2012-2014 is “Building Traditions, Developing Legacy.”

Cameron will also be a member of the National Council, responsible for conducting the affairs of the honor society, and the Education Foundation Board, responsible for the scholarships, fellowships, and awards provided by the honor society.

Founded in 1910, Phi Upsilon Omicron is a collegiate-focused honor society that nurtures student leaders to carry on the legacy of family and consumer sciences. Chapters are established via a petitioning process at accredited institutions across the country offering bachelor’s degrees in family and consumer sciences.

The Delta Chapter at UW – in Region 4 – was the fourth chapter and was approved in 1916-17. All collegiate chapters are assigned to geographic districts or regions. The regions have been adjusted over the years as changes have occurred within the honor society.

Cameron notes three important purposes of Phi Upsilon Omicron:
- Recognize and promote academic excellence
- Enhance qualities of leadership by providing opportunities for service
- Encourage lifelong learning and commitment to advance family and consumer sciences and related areas

The organization provides collegiate members as well as alumni networking and mentoring opportunities. Delta chapter has about 20 student members representing all of the areas of family and consumer sciences.

In addition to the professional project, the chapter is involved in numerous community service activities. The Delta chapter at UW has contributed to the Alzheimer’s walk, donated time, supplies and/or money to the Laramie Soup Kitchen and Interfaith Good Samaritan, provided educational materials and tie blankets to the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program, and participated in Adopt-a-Family during the holiday period. Chapter members also volunteer and help game nights at Laramie Senior Housing and conduct canned food and coat drives in the community.

Calendar

**November 1:** Financial Literacy Webinar Series: Consumer Fraud, 12:10 p.m., online webinar

**November 5-8:** UW Extension In-depth Training, Laramie

**November 14:** High Plains Ranch Practicum, James C. Hageman Sustainable Agriculture Research and Extension Center, Lingle

**November 15:** High Plains Ranch Practicum, Casper

**November 22-23:** Thanksgiving holiday, offices closed

For a statewide calendar, please access the ag collegeWeb site at [www.uwyo.edu/UWAG/](http://www.uwyo.edu/UWAG/)
University of Wyoming Extension has received a $13,000 grant from Encana Oil & Gas (USA) Inc. to convert a 2012 Ford F-150 to a bi-fuel vehicle, which uses compressed natural gas (CNG) or gasoline.

“Natural gas used for transportation is clean – producing less emissions than gasoline – is safe and reliable, is largely abundant and at current prices CNG costs up to $2 less per gallon than gasoline,” says Randy Teeuwen, Encana USA community relations advisor. “And, they have the same mileage and power as gas vehicles.”

He says Encana has converted 14 percent of its Wyoming fleet to CNG, with plans to convert it entirely within about three years.

“We are focused on supporting natural gas as a transportation fuel of choice, and we are happy to provide this conversion for UW Extension,” he notes.

The vehicle, owned by extension, will be used by an associate director and be visible statewide but will spend the most time around Laramie, along the I-80 corridor, in western Wyoming such as Sweetwater, Fremont, Big Horn counties, and areas east of the Idaho/Utah border, said Glen Whipple, director of UW Extension.

“Natural gas is a plentiful fuel with great potential to reduce the nation’s reliance on imported oil,” says Whipple. “It makes sense that Wyoming, a state where natural gas production is a critical economic contributor, would be a leader in the use of CNG as a motor fuel.”

UW Extension has offices staffed with educators and specialists on the UW campus, in all 23 Wyoming counties, and the Wind River Indian Reservation, all who do a significant amount of travel, notes Whipple.

Extension maintains a fleet of 31 trucks, SUVs, and sedans.

“The conversion will allow us to test and evaluate the possible cost savings and efficiencies for CNG-capable vehicles in our fleet,” says Whipple. “With CNG fueling stations either in service or planned throughout Wyoming in the near future, the time is right to put a CNG-capable vehicle in service.”

Recently, Encana USA opened a CNG station in Riverton at the Pit Stop on South Federal Boulevard and the Pinedale station is in use with a grand opening slated for early this month, according to Encana. Fueling stations were also planned to open in Rock Springs in October, and the Wyoming Legislature approved a station for Laramie to open in 2013.

“UW Extension is pleased to have a CNG-powered vehicle in its fleet to travel the state,” adds Whipple. “We appreciate the support of Encana for this project, and given the importance of natural gas to Wyoming, look forward to more CNG-powered vehicles in our extension fleet.”
Agricultural students win, finalists in Wyoming Farm Bureau Collegiate Discussion Meet

Kaitlynn Glover of Casper, an agricultural communications major with a minor in international agricultural economics, won the Wyoming Farm Bureau Young Farmer & Rancher Collegiate Discussion Meet at the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

In addition, three other college of agriculture students were finalists.

Glover received $300 and will represent the Wyoming Farm Bureau in the American Farm Bureau Federation Collegiate Discussion Meet February 8-11 in Phoenix, Arizona.

She also received a $50 gift certificate from the Office of Academic and Student Programs.

“T am humbled to have won this competition, but I am more excited that discussions of this type are occurring around the nation with young individuals,” Glover says. “The current collegiate generation has the ability to shape agricultural policy for the next 50 years, and I hope that when we begin to do so we are able to work efficiently and collaboratively to the most desirable end.”

The competition simulates a committee meeting in which discussion and active participation are expected from each committee member. The competition was open to all Wyoming college agricultural students.

Participants competed in two rounds of competition. In the first, they discussed how to encourage young farmers and ranchers to return home to the farm or ranch when living in a rural area does not provide the same amenities as a metropolitan community.

The second round focused on the Farm Bureau’s role in ensuring the viability of quality agricultural education programs within schools.

Contestants are given pre-determined topics and judged on their knowledge, speaking ability, ability to participate in a committee meeting, and listen to others and air all points of view.

“One of the facets of agricultural education lacking in today’s collegiate system is that of agricultural advocacy,” Glover continued. “Many young agriculturalists know their issues well, but they struggle with discussing issues with those who are not familiar with the industry. Discussions of this nature force participants to utilize their experience and attempt to troubleshoot issues while considering the perspective of policymakers and the general public.”

Glover plans to attend graduate school in Ireland to prepare herself to be an effective advocate of agriculture in an increasingly globalized market.

Tyler Harran, from North Carolina, was named runner-up and was awarded a $150 cash prize. Harran is a junior majoring in agroecology. He wants to work on improving crop systems.

The other finalists were Kailey Barlow of Big Piney and Kassandra Ford of Gillette. Barlow is a UW senior majoring in agricultural business, and Ford is a senior majoring in pre-veterinary/animal science. Each received a $25 cash award.

“I’d like to thank the Wyoming Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee for working so closely with the collegiate youth,” Glover says. “When students have the opportunity to learn from someone other than professors, their education becomes cohesive, and that prepares them to think critically about issues they routinely face.”

Proposals Submitted

Levy, Daniel: $1,727,250 to National Institutes of Health (NIH) and $723,053 to American Cancer Society for “Regulation of Nuclear Size in Xenopus Embryos and Cancer Cells.”

Liberles, David: $50,000 to University of California for “In Silico and In Vitro Investigation of Non-conserved Interaction Characteristics in Homologous Proteins.”

Meyer, Allison, Joel Caton, and Larry Reynolds: $250,000 to NIH for “Nutrition and Arginine Impacts on Key Fetal/Neonatal Nutrient Transferring Tissues.”

Monies Awarded

**Baumgartner, Robert**: $17,327 from Agrigenetics, Inc. for “Evaluation of Experimental Corn Seed.”

**Crawford, Warren, and Kimberly Reaman**: $184,070 from Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs for “American Youth Leadership Program Samoa: Enhancing Global Perspectives in Youth.”

**Feuz, Bridger**: $21,000 from Washington State University for “Wyoming Master Cattleman – Ranch Management Institute.”

**Fox, Jonathan**: $310,721 from NIH for “Defining the Role of Brain Iron Dysregulation in Huntington’s Disease.”

**Franc, Gary**: $24,000 from Kansas State University for “Great Plains Network – Wyoming Component 2012-2013.”

**Hewlett, John**: $293,000 from U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Risk Management Agency for “Education on Federal Programs, Risk Scenario Planning, Management Succession, Crop Marketing, and Other Risk Topics for Beginning, Retiring/Transitioning Farmers/Ranchers/Others in Wyoming 2012-13.”

**Kniss, Andrew**: $27,000 from Monsanto Company for “Weed Management Research and Education.”

**Mealor, Brian**: $10,000 from USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) for “Pesticide Safety Education Program.”


**Stahl, Peter**: $82,080 from Cameco, Inc. for “Phytoremediation of Selenium Contaminated Soil at Smith Ranch – Highland In-situ Uranium Mine.”

**Stahl, Peter, Michael Curran, and Caley Gasch-Salava**: $1,151 from Artech, Inc. for “Actosol Humic Organic Product: Impacts on Plant Establishment and Soil Development.”

**Tanaka, John**, Rachael Frost, Beth Burritt, and Brad Schultz: $40,000 from USDA NIFA for “Rangeland Stewardship and Health Community of Practice.”

**Wardlaw, Mary Kay**: $2,666,715 from Wyoming Department of Family Services for “Wyoming Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education 2012-2015.”

Presentations