



Message from the Dean

As we get ready for the fall semester, there are many changes in the college. We are welcoming several new college leaders, and we thank our faculty for creating new paths with more degree offerings and added online opportunities.

Students will be welcomed by a new associate dean for instruction, Dr. Carmen Agouridis, who along with the talented staff in the Center for Student Success, will continue to ensure that our students get the help and support they need to be successful.

We are committed to being a diverse and inclusive college, where all members feel valued through our programs, policies and services. That commitment is embodied in everything Mia Farrell has done in her career with the college. We are very excited to have her in her new role as assistant dean for diversity.

You will recall that our Cooperative Extension Service also has a new leader, Dr. Laura Stephenson, who is working with a transition team to develop a new organizational structure to ensure proper management and financial oversight. Under her leadership, Cooperative Extension will continue its valuable and relevant services to our communities.



Jeff Young, former director of county operations, is now serving as director of urban extension in Kentucky. In this new role, he will work with Dr. Stephenson to strengthen our impacts in the state's more populous areas. We are very excited to have such a capable person in this new role.

I welcome new faces into new roles and look forward to our students return to campus. It is an exciting time for us. I appreciate the efforts of everyone in the college who works every day to improve lives. After all, it starts with us.

Government Relations

The college's relationships and collaborations with local, state and national leaders are important to the success of our land grant system. We are pleased that two government relations directors are now in place to assist the college in this important area.

Nick Carter has been named county and local government relations director for the college. He serves as a point of contact for county and municipal officials on collegewide issues. Carter holds a bachelor's degree in farm management from Eastern Kentucky University and a master's degree in crop science from UK. He was previously Fayette County agriculture and natural resources extension agent. Nick began his duties July 1.

Chris Crumrine has been named state and federal government relations director. He will serve as the point of contact for state and federal officials on collegewide issues. Crumrine holds a bachelor's degree in mass communications and political science and master's in public administration from UK and is pursuing his doctorate in political science. Crumrine currently serves as deputy chief of staff to President Eli Capilouto. He will begin his duties Aug. 19.

New faculty members

- Makenzie Barr, assistant professor, regular title series, Dietetics and Human Nutrition
- Nicole Breazeale, associate professor, extension title series, Community and Leadership Development
- Zachary DeVries, assistant professor, extension title series, Entomology
- Julian Dupuis, assistant professor, regular title series, Entomology
- Tonja Fisher, lecturer, Entomology
- Yang Hou, assistant professor, regular title series, Family Sciences
- Theodore Kalbfleisch, associate professor, regular title series, Veterinary Science
- Jonathan Larson, assistant professor, extension title series, Entomology
- Courtney Leuking, assistant professor, extension title series, Dietetics and Human Nutrition
- Feng Li, professor, regular title series, Veterinary Science
- Brad Olson, assistant professor, regular title series, Community and Leadership Development
- Scott Stanley, professor, regular title series, Veterinary Science

Awards/Honors

- Kerri Ashurst, senior extension specialist for Family and Consumer Sciences, is a federal coach for USDA's Children, Youth, Families At-Risk Professional Development and Technical Training Assistance Center. In this role, she provides oversight of five to seven CYFAR grants in other states.

The Kentucky Agriculture Experiment Station recently recognized outstanding research projects from the past year.

- Clare Rittschof, assistant professor, Entomology, received the Prestigious Research Paper Award for a paper published in the journal Nature Communications.
- Nicholas Teets, assistant professor, Entomology, received the Bobby Pass Excellence in Grantsmanship, which honors a faculty member who has received the most significant external award or combination of awards.
- Bernhard Hennig, professor, Animal and Food sciences, and Dawn Brewer, assistant professor, Dietetics and Human Nutrition, received the Research-Extension Impact. Hennig and Brewer won for their Superfund Community Engagement project.
- Hongyan Zhu, professor, Plant and Soil sciences, received the Thomas Poe Cooper Research Award, which honors a professor who has made significant scientific contributions throughout their career.

Promotion

- Tyler Mark has been promoted to associate professor with tenure in the Department of Agricultural Economics.
- Marisa Aull has been named director of the Nutrition Education Program. She was previously the program's assistant director.

In the news

- Wayne Long, Jefferson County extension agent for agriculture and natural resources was quoted in multiple outlets on black vultures. [Vultures are eating animals alive on Kentucky farms.](#)
- Alison Davis, Agricultural Economics professor and executive director of the Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky was quoted in multiple outlets regarding a recent USDA grant. [Purdue and UK Partnering to Provide Rural Economic Development Help.](#)
- LaToya Drake, Barren County extension agent for family and consumer sciences, and Andrea Stith, Barren County horticulture agent, were quoted in multiple outlets regarding a community garden program. [Community garden provides fresh produce to those in need.](#)
- Steve Higgins, director of environmental compliance, was quoted in multiple outlets regarding the new composting partnership. [UK Turns Food Waste into Useable Material.](#)
- Bob Coleman, extension equine specialist, was quoted in multiple outlets regarding hay supplies. [Horse owners need to think about hay supplies now.](#)

UK@Work survey

The 2019 UK@Work survey is your opportunity to provide feedback on making UK an

even better place to work. On Sept. 9, you will receive an email from UKatWork@willistowerswatson inviting you to take the survey. The insights gleaned from this survey are critical to the university's efforts to address the needs of faculty and staff.

Your responses are completely confidential. No one within the university will know how you responded, and reports are only provided in an aggregate for areas with at least 10 or more respondents.

Feedback from 2015 and 2017 was used to define goals for improvement at the college level, and within each department or unit. Feedback has led to initiatives designed to improve the job satisfaction of CAFE staff and faculty. Current primary focus areas are employee involvement in decisions that affect their work, and provision of sufficient feedback on employee performance.

Visit the [college work-life website](#) to learn more about the survey, review 2015 and 2017 results, and to see what leadership in your unit currently is doing to enhance employee engagement.

Spotlight

Jonathan Furnish

Associate Director of Alumni Engagement



We asked Jonathan to share a little about his passions, his career path and what led him to us.

Tell us about your background and what led you to your current role at UK?

Growing up on a tobacco farm in Harrison County, I learned the definition of hard work and determination. On that farm, I developed a love for the agriculture industry. It's in my blood and my family's blood. Farming can be traced back in our history for at least eight generations. When I came to the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment just over five years ago, I started as a staff support associate in the Office of Philanthropy and Alumni. It was a great opportunity to learn more about the college and the folks that make up the CAFE family. Two years later, my title changed to assistant director of alumni. Then, two short years after, I was named associate director of alumni engagement. My time with the college has been a whirlwind, but I wouldn't change a thing. I may not farm today, but I get to work with alumni from all walks of life. They are salt-of-the-earth people and I am honored to get to work with them and for them daily.

What is your favorite thing about working in CAFE?

It has to be the people. Not only do we have an outstanding faculty and staff network in our college, but Cooperative Extension and the alumni base make it a winning trifecta. Because of the wide range of departments, the diversity and the scale of our college, every day is different.

What is one thing about yourself that might surprise people?

I am the youngest of eight children and I have a twin brother. My twin actually works here on campus in the Division of Enrollment Management. And no, we are not identical, but look a lot alike. I also co-own a competitive All-Star Cheerleading Program with my wife, Sam. We have more than 70 athletes, ranging from 4 to 18 years old, in our program that make up seven different teams. They are truly athletes and amaze me every time they take the mat. I also have a 2 ½ year old son named Fitz. (Yes, we got that from the ABC show 'Scandal.')

Anyone with the given name Emerson Fitzgerald Furnish should be the future President of the United States. Or, maybe just commissioner of agriculture. High hopes for that kid.

Calendar of Events

August 6

[Western KY Summer Forage Tour - Reclaiming Rundown Farms](#)

August 10

[Central Woodland Owner's Short Course](#)

August 15-25

[Kentucky State Fair](#)

August 17

[Insect Safari at the Arboretum](#)

August 19-23

[See Blue U Orientation](#)

August 21

[Hemp Field Day](#)

August 21-25

[K Week](#)

August 22

[KATS - Disease ID and Management & Late Season Management of Corn and Soybeans](#)

August 24

[KFGC Central KY Field Day](#)

August 24

[East Woodland Owners Short Course](#)

August 26

[First Day of Fall Semester](#)

Helpful Links

[Giving](#)

[College Weekly for Faculty & Staff](#)

[College Weekly for Students](#)

[The Ag Magazine](#)

[The Ambassador](#)

[Contact Us](#)



Click the image above to read the latest issue of The Ag Magazine!

August 30

Last Day to Add a Class

September 2

Labor Day

September 5

Western KY Equine Field Day

September 8

Grandparents Day

September 9

Insect Walk at the Arboretum

September 10

Fall Grazing School

September 11

Staff Appreciation Day

September 14

UK Roundup

September 19

Grain and Forage Center of Excellence

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony



Click the image above to read the latest issue of The Ambassador!

