



College of Agricultural Sciences

# INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

## Spring 2012 E-Newsletter

### Index of Articles

- [1\) College of Ag Sciences marking 2012 as 'Year of Global Food Security'](#)
- [2\) Marilyn McPheron receives Spirit of Internationalization Award](#)
- [3\) College of Agricultural Sciences, Ukrainian university renew historic partnership](#)
- [4\) Recent Alumni Giving Back!](#)
- [5\) Agriculture students awarded for Milking the Rhino video](#)
- [6\) Penn State hosts Fulbright global food security seminar](#)
- [7\) Office of International Programs welcomes Melanie Miller-Foster](#)

#### 1. College of Ag Sciences marking 2012 as 'Year of Global Food Security'

*Jeff Mulhollem, 814-863-2719*

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*Reprinted from Penn State Live: [live.psu.edu/story/58950](http://live.psu.edu/story/58950)*

When 70 Fulbright scholars -- graduate students from around the world -- came to a food-security workshop at Penn State in late February, the four-day event kicked off a special year for the College of Agricultural Sciences.

The college is marking 2012 as its "Year of Global Food Security." This observance coincides with July's 150th anniversary of the Morrill Act, which led to the creation of land-grant universities, such as Penn State.

The land-grant mission is still critical today, according to Bruce McPheron, dean of the college. And now it is being broadened by a global perspective.

"Hosting the Fulbright students was a good way to bring attention to the College of Agricultural Sciences' Year of Food Security initiative," he said.

"We want to think about the past 150 years and what the investment in the land-grant system has done for the United States, and then expand the land-grant university mission going forward to help address new challenges associated with a global food system."

Signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln on July 2, 1862, the Morrill Act is largely responsible for making Penn State and its College of Agricultural Sciences the vital educational institutions they are today. The act ultimately led to the creation of agricultural colleges in every state.

The bill called for colleges that would, "without excluding other scientific and classical studies, teach branches of learning related to agriculture and the mechanic arts." Under the act, each eligible state received a total of 30,000 acres of federal land to be sold, with proceeds used to help establish and fund the educational institutions described above.

The College of Agricultural Sciences will emphasize a global vision as it launches its Year of Global Food Security and the observance of the 150th anniversary of the Morrill Act and the land-grant university system, noted Deanna Behring, director of international programs for the college.

"The world population is expected to grow to 9 billion by the year 2050, and because most of that growth will occur in underdeveloped countries, there will be a whole new demand on our food system," she said. "Increased food production must be done on the arable land that we have, so we must find a way to sustainably intensify our production."

The world is in need of a green revolution similar to the one that occurred in the 1960s and '70s, but incorporating lessons learned from that era. While technology again can help us with that food-production challenge, Behring explained, production is just one piece of the complex food-security puzzle. Solving it is not necessarily going to entail just transferring technology from the developed world to the developing world; issues of accessibility and usability also must be addressed.

"We have to make sure that the infrastructure is in place and that people have the incomes to access safe and nutritious food," she said "Moreover, this work must take place in the context of sustainability, with sensitivity to sovereignty considerations.

"We need to take advantage of the knowledge in those communities at the local level in a way that does not increase their dependency, but rather builds partnerships with the outside world so they can serve themselves."

As part of its Year of Global Food Security, the College of Agricultural Sciences' Ag2Africa initiative will host its second annual Africa2Ag week Aug. 27-30, with a focus on youth as the next generation charged with bringing an end to food insecurity on the African continent. A new initiative, Ag2Americas, modeled after Ag2Africa, will be launched.

Both initiatives closely involve faculty, staff, extension educators and students to facilitate collaborative partnerships to enhance food security.

Also this year, the College of Agricultural Sciences launched its new dual-title degree program in International Agriculture and Development, also known as INTAD. The only one of its kind in the nation, the program is designed to prepare graduate students with technical and other skills necessary to develop and deliver programs to sustain a healthy planet.

The college also announced a revitalized International Agriculture minor with a new curriculum and an increase in international opportunities for undergraduate students. Interest among students is already at an all-time high, with enrollments tripling since mid-2011.

"That trend looks like it will continue as the college maintains its thrust to train a new generation of global citizens ready to work towards solutions to complex global challenges," Behring said. ([Return to Index](#))

## 2. Marilyn McPheron receives Spirit of Internationalization Award

*Jeff Mulhollem, 814-863-2719*

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*Reprinted from Penn State Live: [live.psu.edu/story/58950](http://live.psu.edu/story/58950)*



Marilyn McPheron, former study abroad coordinator in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences, who is now retired, recently was one of six to receive Spirit of Internationalization Awards from the University's Office of Global Programs.

The annual awards honor women from Penn State and the local community who embody the "spirit of internationalization" through academic achievements, artistic excellence, and volunteerism in

international organizations or dedication to advancing the status of women. The awards ceremony coincides with International Women's Day, officially observed on March, which is celebrated worldwide to bring attention to global women's issues.

McPheron was "literally born for this award," according to Deanna Behring, director of international programs in the College of Agricultural Sciences, who nominated her for the honor. In Behring's remarks at the award breakfast at the Penn State Conference Center, she pointed out that McPheron's birthday is March 8 -- International Women's Day.

"She made a tremendous impact and touched the lives of so many during decades of work at Penn State," Behring said. "Many of you know Marilyn as the first study abroad coordinator for the College of Agricultural Sciences, but few may know that in the early 1990s, she was the director of the International Hospitality Center, which is now known as Global Connections."

In 2000, when McPheron joined the Office of International Programs, just one half of 1 percent of students in the College of Agricultural Sciences studied abroad, Behring noted. Now, 18 percent of agricultural sciences students study abroad before graduating.

"Since 2000, Marilyn has helped more than 1,000 students find out more about themselves by traveling and studying abroad," Behring said. "She also was instrumental in raising \$500,000 in donor funds to help those students realize their dreams."

McPheron took the lead in community outreach programs and in 2004 was recognized with the LaMarr Kopp Award for International Achievement for her work to build awareness of world hunger through several programs, Behring said.

"Every October as part of the United Nations' World Food Day, Marilyn organized events such as dinners at Cafe Laura, panel discussions, key speakers and projects in art classes to design posters on the issue. You still can find some of these posters hanging around campus today!" ([Return to Index](#))

### **3. College of Agricultural Sciences, Ukrainian university renew historic partnership**

*Jeff Mulhollem, 814-863-2719*

Twenty years after the signing of the first cooperative agreement between Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences and the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine, the institutions have renewed their educational partnership.

Recently, in ceremonies continents apart, Bruce McPheron, dean of the college, and Dmytro Melnychuk, president of the Ukrainian university, signed a new agreement on cooperation for the next five years.

Melnychuk signed the original agreement in 1992, shortly after the fall of the Soviet Union. Lamartine Hood, former dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences, who signed the original document 20 years ago, was there to witness McPheron ink the new pact.

Also present during the signing were Alex and Helen Woskob, of State College, whose support through the Woskob Endowment has enabled the universities to conduct their partnership.

McPheron is optimistic that the ongoing collaboration between Penn State and the Ukrainian university will continue to help solve agricultural problems and enhance the food and fiber system.

"It's a delight to recognize 20 years of partnership between Penn State and our colleagues in Ukraine with the signing of this document," he said. "As I reflect on 20 years and the connections of many people who have gone before us, I am re-energized to think about the next 20 years and the future of the relationship we might build."

Much has changed in the last 20 years, McPheron noted, and technological advancements have allowed universities that are geographically far apart to work very closely together. Indeed, technology allowed the two signing ceremonies to be shared via YouTube. (Click [here](#) and [here](#) to watch.)

The partnership between the College of Agricultural Sciences and National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine would not have been so successful without the Woskobs' help, McPheron emphasized.

"Much of what we accomplished in the past 20 years would not have been possible without the contributions of the Woskob family," he said. "I think it only fitting to recognize the tremendous impact that they have had on our ability to build this partnership. They have allowed us to reach out with students, faculty and tangible projects that have brought extension capacity to Ukraine."

According to the agreement, the institutions will continue to collaborate by:

- Exchanging faculty, researchers and scientists.
- Participating in joint seminars and academic meetings.
- Holding cultural exchange activities.
- Participating in joint international training courses, programs and projects.
- Taking advantage of opportunities to conduct joint consultation.
- Providing collaborative education, joint research activities and extension.

[\(Return to Index\)](#)

#### **4. Recent Alumni Giving Back!**

*Ketja Lingenfelter, [Ketja@psu.edu](mailto:Ketja@psu.edu)*

This was another busy year for students in the College of Agricultural Sciences studying abroad. Our office awarded a record number of student applicants funding to help pay for their travel costs. One endowment we steward is the GOTCHA Fund, or Give Others The Chance to Have an Adventure Fund. We ask that any student who receives an award from our office consider donating 10% of their original award back to the GOTCHA Fund within two years of graduating, if they are able.

Last year before retiring, Marilyn McPheron, previous Study Abroad Coordinator, completed the large task of writing to recent alumni to remind them of this request, and the response has been rewarding. To date we have received over \$600 in donations, many of which were accompanied by letters updating us or sending well wishes. We greatly appreciate the timely donations, but love to hear from our past students even more! Thank you to all who contribute to GOTCHA to encourage students to have an international experience in the future. [\(Return to Index\)](#)

#### **5. Agriculture students awarded for Milking the Rhino video**



Three Penn State agriculture students were recognized for their research and design of a short video for the Milking the Rhino: Innovative Solutions Showcase at the University Park campus on November 16, 2011.

Elise Brown, graduate student in agricultural and Extension education, Alex Gren, senior in wildlife and fishery science, and Nicole O'Block, senior in agricultural science with international agriculture and leadership development

minors, won the Best Use of Indigenous Knowledge category with their video outlining a solution to prevent the cattle disease nagana. Their solution involved the cultivation of garlic for the Maasai people to use as an insecticide for their livestock. Brown, Gren and O'Block were recognized for their knowledge of Maasai culture and their solution incorporating aspects of that culture.

The Milking the Rhino competition is inspired by the award-winning documentary of the same name that highlights environmental conservation in Africa. The film tells the stories of the Maasai and Himba communities as they strive to use and protect natural resources to break out of poverty. The phrase "milking the rhino" describes how the communities are working to benefit both themselves and the wildlife that surround them.

The competition invites student teams from across the world to create a video that pitches a solution to a problem faced by the Maasai or Himba peoples regarding wildlife and natural resource management, conservation and sustainability. The three-minute video is rated by an interdisciplinary panel of judges.

The Milking the Rhino: Innovative Solutions Showcase is hosted by the Humanitarian Engineering and Social Entrepreneurship (HESE) Program at Penn State. Sponsors include the National Collegiate Inventors and Innovators Alliance (NCIIA), Interinstitutional Consortium for Indigenous Knowledge (ICIK), Marjorie Grant Whiting Center for Humanity, Arts and the Environment, Farrell Center for Corporate Innovation & Entrepreneurship, Office of Student Activities, Center for Global Studies, School of International Affairs & the Dickinson School of Law, and Johnson and Johnson.

The students completed this activity as part of an assignment in AEE 440 Communication Methods and Media class in the College of Agricultural Sciences. For more information on the competition, visit [mtrsolutions.weebly.com](http://mtrsolutions.weebly.com). [\(Return to Index\)](#)

## 6. Penn State hosts Fulbright global food security seminar

Adapted from Penn State Live: <http://live.psu.edu/story/57695>



Penn State's University Park campus was selected by the U.S. Department of State to host more than 70 Fulbright scholars from 40 developing countries for a four-day seminar Feb. 29 to March 4 on global food security. The Fulbright Global Food Security Seminar brought together international graduate students in a wide variety of disciplines from plant sciences to public health. The seminar was a joint project of the College of Agricultural Sciences and the University Office of Global Programs (UOGP), along with the Global Knowledge Initiatives (GKI), a nonprofit organization that seeks to bridge the gap between developed

and developing countries.



"The College of Agricultural Sciences is honored to have been selected to co-host this prestigious event with the University Office of Global Programs," said Bruce A. McPheron, dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences. "As we enter into the sesquicentennial of the founding of the land grant university system, it is important for universities like Penn State to have a global vision of the food system. We are looking forward to hosting the future leaders of agriculture from around the world here on our campus and in our community to share our knowledge and to learn from them about issues we all face together."

In addition to academic panels and discussions, field trips to local farms and research facilities provided further learning and networking opportunities for the participants.

The event, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), was organized by the Institute of International Education. ECA oversees the Fulbright program, which is designed to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries.

For seminar photos and blog commentary, please visit:

[Fulbright Global Food Security Seminar – Part One](#)

[Fulbright Global Food Security Seminar – Part Two](#)

[Fulbright Global Food Security Seminar – Part Three](#)

[\(Return to Index\)](#)

## **7. Office of International Programs welcomes Melanie Miller-Foster**



The Office of International Programs welcomed Melanie Miller-Foster to the team in July 2011. Melanie will be working with our programs in Latin America and overseeing the administration of the new International Agriculture and Development dual-title degree program. She received her Ph.D. in rural sociology from The Ohio State University, where she worked on several projects as part of an interdisciplinary team of researchers in Costa Rica.

Melanie also enjoys quilting, traveling and the outdoors.

[\(Return to Index\)](#)