

2024 SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS DONOR CELEBRATION



PLANT THE SEED



PennState
College of Agricultural Sciences



2024 Scholarships, Awards and Fellowships

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, a total of \$3.89 million was awarded to 954 students in the College of Agricultural Sciences for the 2024–2025 academic year as of September 30, 2024.

Gathering Songs

Savoir Faire

featuring Ag Sciences Student Emmerson Piacine

Welcome

Cheyenne Bastian-Brown

Agricultural and Extension Education

Remarks

Troy L. Ott

Dean, College of Agricultural Sciences

C. Lee Rumberger and Family Chair in Agricultural Sciences

Student Thank Yous

Sophia Zalar	Hannah Burke
Brenna Fitzpatrick	Nina Coolidge
Zev Pasternak	Hannah Arias
Autumn Swain	Elizabeth Bruner
Virginia Kessinger	Mikayla Mezger

Undergraduate Student Keynote Speaker

Chris Little

Plant Science

Undergraduate Student Keynote Speaker

Natalia Brizuela-Wahlin

Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences

Graduate Student Keynote Speaker

Mary Tutuola Akingbasote

Agricultural and Biological Engineering

Closing Remarks

Cheyenne Bastian-Brown

Agricultural and Extension Education

Stay tuned for an Announcement of the Date for the 2025 Scholarships and Awards Donor Celebration.

Information and invitations come via email. Please keep your contact information up to date with the Development and Alumni Relations Office to ensure you receive timely notification.

New Scholarships and Awards for 2024

Corbion Dairy Scholarship in Food Science

Davey Foundation Arbor Grant Scholarship

David E. Frey Memorial Scholarship

Dr. David S. and Deborah M. Ross Graduate Fellowship
in Agricultural and Biological Engineering

Duain B. Shaw Memorial Award in Food Science

Fay B. Strickler Scholarship in the College of Agricultural Sciences

Jack Root and Bob Snetsinger Graduate Award in Entomology

Lyn M. VanTassel Undergraduate Student Scholarship
in the College of Agricultural Sciences

PA Turfgrass Council Turf Program Scholarship

Richard and Donna Clemens Scholarship
in the College of Agricultural Sciences

Robert and Elizabeth Hodge Undergraduate Scholarship
in the College of Agricultural Sciences

T. D. Graduate Fellowship in Agricultural Sciences

Thomas H. Hartzell Scholarship in Food Science

William and Dorothy Hagenbuch Scholarship Fund

Milestones — Continued Support

Five Years

Nelson S. and Brenda Ward Loftus Scholarship
in the Department of Ecosystem Science and Management

Carl and Janet Cranmer Student Award
in Memory of Dr. James Boodley

College of Agricultural Sciences Alumni Society First-Year Scholarship

J. Robert Hummer Turfgrass Scholarship

Kathleen A. and Eugene J. Huttie, Jr. Scholarship

Harold J. Carson Memorial Scholarship
in the College of Agricultural Sciences

George and Tina K. Georges Scholarship
in the College of Agricultural Sciences

James F. and Molly W. Brady Scholarship

Laura Loder Watts Scholarship in Animal Science

Lillian Louise Repsher Memorial Award

Zepp Family Food Safety Endowment

Dr. Norman Altman Scholarship in Agricultural Sciences

Skip and Marilyn Rosskam Graduate Fellowship in Food Science

Ten Years

PA Agronomic Education Society Trustee Scholarship

College of Agricultural Sciences Alumni Society Trustee Scholarship

Barbara Howell Raphael Trustee Scholarship in Agricultural Sciences

Camille DeClementi Trustee Scholarship

Barbara U. and Daniel J. Eichenlaub Trustee Scholarship

Robert E. Macafee Memorial Trustee Scholarship

Martenas Family Trustee Scholarship

McAllister Family Trustee Scholarship

James H. and Sharon Mortensen Trustee Scholarship

H. Duane and Roslyn W. Norman Trustee Scholarship

William D. and Teresa L. Robinson Trustee Scholarship

Samuel and Beverly Minor Trustee Scholarship

Eugene and Carol Schurman Trustee Scholarship

Storer Family Trustee Scholarship in Agricultural Sciences

Milestones — Continued Support

LeRoy C. Smeltz Memorial Trustee Scholarship

Robert and Susan Storch Trustee Scholarship

Ethan J. “Beef” Wolfe Memorial Trustee Scholarship

Diane Cressman Blanton Scholarship

John T. and Paige S. Smith Scholarship

in the College of Agricultural Sciences

John T. and Paige S. Smith Scholarship for Animal Science

in the College of Agricultural Sciences

Minor Family Scholarship

Pauling-Davey Endowed Award in the Department of Animal Science

Rosemarie C. and Howard R. Peiffer Scholarship

in the College of Agricultural Sciences

Dr. James R. Watson, Jr. Memorial Turfgrass Award

Fifteen Years

Sarah Christine Donaldson Memorial Trustee Scholarship

Robert E. Hayes and Mary Brueilly Hayes Trustee Scholarship

in the College of Agricultural Sciences

Keith Horn, Inc. Trustee Scholarship

in the College of Agricultural Sciences

Reddy Family Trustee Scholarship

Dennis and Janet Scanlon Trustee Scholarship

Harold H. “Sandy” Wolfinger Trustee Scholarship

Gerald H. Hess Scholarship in Dairy and Animal Science

Remzi Gurcay and Laura Ehrhart Gurcay Scholarship

E. H. Griffith Turfgrass Management Award

Rosie and Stuart Kahan Scholarship

in Animal Health in Memory of Lawrence Kahan

Howard L. and Elaine H. Steele Award for Agriculture Adventures

Veterinary Founders Academic Scholarship

Milestones — Continued Support

Twenty Years

Alec and Lexi Beliasov Trustee Scholarship
in the College of Agricultural Sciences

Diane C. Blanton Trustee Scholarship
in the College of Agricultural Sciences

John H. and Timothy R. Crouch Trustee Scholarship
in the College of Agricultural Sciences

Trustee Scholarship Fund for the College of Agricultural Sciences

Andrews Family Scholarship

L. Earl and Veronica Casida Scholarship
in the College of Agricultural Sciences

Grant M. Miller Memorial Scholarship

Pennsylvania Dairy Innovation Scholarship for the
Department of Food Science in the College of Agricultural Sciences
Sponsored by the Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Program

John H. Schwartz Memorial Scholarship

Twenty-Five Years

David Curwen Memorial Award in Horticulture

Donald E. and Cheryl K. Evans Family 4-H and FFA Scholarship

Edgar E. and Dorothy W. Fehnel Scholarship

Ferrara Scholarship in Agricultural Sciences (LEP)

Aden H. & Merna I. Francis Scholarship in Horticulture

Rosie and Stuart Kahan Scholarship in Pre-Veterinary Sciences
in Memory of Lawrence Kahan

Kermit Kenyon Birth Memorial Scholarship
in Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology

Barry and Donna Mentzer Scholarship in Agricultural Sciences

Obie and Mary Ann Snider Scholarship in Dairy and Animal Science

John T. and Janet Zerbe Scholarship in Agricultural Sciences

Milestones — Continued Support

Thirty Years

Mark Petty Bush Memorial Scholarship
in Wildlife and Fisheries Science

Thomas C. and Jackie M. Floore Memorial Scholarship
in Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology

Ethel Gerhart Memorial Scholarship in Crop & Soil Sciences

Earl and Kay Harbaugh Scholarship in Agricultural Sciences

Roger M. Latham Memorial Graduate Award

Leidy Family Scholarship

Frederick H. “Fritz” Leuschner Memorial Scholarship
in Agricultural Sciences

J. Lupton and Eva Scott Mecartney Scholarship

Dairy Farmers of America Scholarship

Harry R. and Kathleen E. Ulrich Scholarship in Agricultural Sciences

Thirty-Five Years

Frank Anthony Scholarship
in Agricultural and Extension Education

Albert J. Llewellyn Memorial Scholarship
in the College of Agricultural Sciences

Robert D. and Jeanne L. McCarthy Memorial
Graduate Teaching Award and Graduate Scholarship

Edith and William B. Roskam, II Memorial Scholarship
in Food Science

Alan R. Warehime Faculty Chair in Agribusiness

Forty Years

Lloyd E. Adams Memorial Grant-in-Aid

Penn State Dairymen’s Club Dairy Cattle Judging Team Fund

Fifty Years

Eva B. and G. Weidman Groff Memorial Scholarship Fund

Arthur and Rita Gaspari Memorial Scholarship Fund

Joe S. Taylor Memorial Scholarship Fund

Maurice Weisl Award Fund

Milestones — Continued Support

Fifty-Five Years

School of Forest Resources Scholarship Fund

Ninety-Five Years

Klopp Prize Fund

College of Agricultural Sciences Scholarships and Awards Committee

Ellen A. Rom, M.S.

Assistant Teaching Professor,

Coordinator of Undergraduate Programs and Alumni Relations

Robert Shannon, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Agricultural and Biological Engineering,

Coordinator of Environmental Resource Management Program,

Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Education

Kirsten Lloyd, Ph.D.

Assistant Teaching Professor

Biographies (in order of appearance)



Cheyenne Bastian-Brown

Agricultural and Extension Education

Cheyenne Bastian-Brown, of Ralston, Pennsylvania, is a fourth-year student majoring in Agricultural and Extension Education (AEE) with a minor in International Agriculture. Growing up in Ralston, Bastian-Brown developed a passion for agriculture, dairy cattle, honey bees, and advocacy through FFA and served as a Pennsylvania FFA state officer in 2020–2021. During her time at Penn State, Bastian-Brown has been able to develop these passions participating as president of the Beta Sisterhood and president of the PSU FFA Alumni and Supporters, serving as the College of Agricultural Sciences representative for the University Park Undergraduate Association, and leading as president of Sigma Alpha Pi and as national second vice-president of Alpha Tau Alpha. She is also a member of Ducks Unlimited, Dairy Sciences Club, Coaly Society, Ag Student Council, and Phi Eta Sigma and serves as a Teach Ag! avenger and Ag advocate. In addition to her work at Penn State, Bastian-Brown has interned for the Global Teach! Network, the New York Association of Agricultural Educators, Pennsylvania Friends of Agriculture Foundation, Penn State Orientation and Transition Programs, and the College of Agricultural Sciences. Additionally, Bastian-Brown has served on the College of Agricultural Sciences Dean Search Committee, Student Activities Funding Committee, University Faculty Senate, and the Ag Alumni Society Board all as an undergraduate student member. Additionally, she has advocated at the state level as the 2024 Pennsylvania Honey Queen. After graduating in May 2024, Bastian-Brown plans to serve as the American Honey Queen and, after a year of service, to enter the classroom as a secondary agricultural educator and curriculum coordinator.



Troy L. Ott

Dean, College of Agricultural Sciences

Dr. Troy Ott is professor of Reproductive Biology and C. Lee Rumberger and Family Chair in Agricultural Sciences. For the last year he has served as interim director of the Huck Institutes of the Life Sciences at Penn State. Prior to his current position, he was associate director with Huck. Starting July 1, Ott was appointed dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences at Penn State. Ott is a past president of the Society for the Study of Reproduction, an international society of reproductive biologists. He was also founding board member and first president of

the Board of the Palouse Discovery Science Center in Pullman, Washington. Ott received his B.S. from Penn State, starting his academic training at the Penn State Abington campus. He received a master's degree from Auburn University and a doctoral degree from the University of Florida. Following graduation, he was a research scientist in the Center for Animal Biotechnology at Texas A&M University before joining the faculty at the University of Idaho, Department of Animal and Veterinary Science. Ott returned to Penn State in 2006 and helped form the Center for Reproductive Biology and Health in Huck. Ott's research focuses on issues of animal food production, fertility regulation, immunology, and the physiology of early pregnancy. Ott is an inventor or co-inventor on seven awarded patents related to his research, and he is actively engaged in efforts to commercialize novel diagnostic technologies to aid in managing reproduction and animal health. He has published over 100 scientific papers and review articles, published 10 book chapters, and co-edited the textbook *Reproductive Genomics in Domestic Animals*. His research has been funded by the USDA, the NIH, and industry partners. In 2020, Ott received the Distinguished Service Award from PennAg Industries Association for his efforts in science outreach around issues of agricultural biotechnology and sustainability to stakeholders throughout Pennsylvania. Troy and his wife Colleen live in Boalsburg and are parents to two Penn State graduates, John and Kate, and their youngest daughter, Lauren, is a junior at Penn State.



Chris Little

Plant Science

Chris Little, of Vincentown, New Jersey, is a senior majoring in Plant Science with a focus on crop production. Growing up on a family farm, Little has been involved in production agriculture his entire life. Coming from a grain, forage, and turf background, he uses his time at Penn State to deepen his knowledge in these subjects while also broadening his horizons into areas such as livestock production. At the heart of all his interests will always be production agriculture, and he uses his free time on campus to pursue this passion. Little holds many leadership positions across the agricultural organizations he is involved with, including being the president of

Agronomy Club; vice president, treasurer, rush chair, athletic chair, and house manager of Alpha Zeta Fraternity; and the athletic chair and Spring Dairy Expo chair of the Dairy Science Club. He is also a member of the Block and Bridle Club. After graduation this May, Little plans to return home to farm full time with a focus on expanding and diversifying the operation with the knowledge and skills he learned at Penn State.



Natalia Brizuela-Wahlin

Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences

Natalia Brizuela-Wahlin, of Loveland, Colorado, is a junior majoring in Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences with a minor in Animal Science. Growing up in Colorado, Brizuela-Wahlin developed a passion for wildlife, conservation, music, and agriculture. During her time at Penn State, Brizuela-Wahlin has spent time honing skills in leadership conferences, volunteering locally, and creating a Strings Club on the Penn State Erie campus. She also participates as a member of the Swine Research team and as an undergraduate research ambassador. In addition to her work at Penn State, Brizuela-Wahlin has worked for the Erie Zoological Society and the Northwest PA Pet

Emergency Center and shadowed professional veterinarians. Additionally, Brizuela-Wahlin has studied abroad in Kenya focusing on elephant population research and has worked as a research assistant at Penn State focusing on habitat fragmentation of local salamanders. After graduating next May, Brizuela-Wahlin plans to begin a career in the zoo industry, assisting conservation efforts while operating on exotic animals.



Mary Tutuola Akingbasote

Agricultural and Biological Engineering

Mary Akingbasote hails from the southwest region of Nigeria, Idanre, in Ondo State. She is pursuing a dual-title master's degree in Agricultural and Biological Engineering and International Agriculture. Akingbasote's upbringing on a farm, where she witnessed her father's concerns about managing chicken litter, ignited her passion for finding innovative uses for this waste.

This dedication led to her undergraduate research on developing a biogas scrubber to purify biogas produced from organic matter, such as animal waste and plants, as a sustainable energy source at the Federal University

of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Nigeria. She is currently conducting a techno-economic analysis of biogas upgrading techniques, a testament to her unwavering commitment to her field. Besides her research, Akingbasote is an assistant at Penn State Extension, developing educational programs for extension professionals. She also serves as the secretary of the Graduate Student Council in Agricultural and Biological Engineering. She is an active member of the Graduate Women in Engineering and the Pan-African Professional Alliance. Akingbasote's future is filled with ambition as she intends to advance her education further and, upon graduation, pursue a career in the renewable natural gas industry. Her focus will be developing biogas upgrading methods for small-scale farmers, a testament to her potential and ambition in her field.

For more information about supporting the Penn State
College of Agricultural Sciences, please contact

Lauren Steinberg

Senior Director of Development,
at 814-865-0158 or lxs229@psu.edu,
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