

MTSU

# MTSU School of Agriculture

## Highlights for 2021-22 Academic Year, by Dr. Jessica Carter, Director

- We hosted the annual Agriculture Awards Banquet IN PERSON this year! We were able to go back to our traditional banquet format and present scholarships and awards to our students. We were pleased that several scholarship donors, alumni, friends, and family members were able to attend.
- Be sure to check our website ([www.mtsu.edu/agriculture](http://www.mtsu.edu/agriculture)) and **Facebook** page for news and events.
- The Plant & Soil Science Club had a successful Spring Plant sale. Thanks to all who supported the sale. Options included baskets and bedding plants, perennials, herbs, vegetables, and fruits/edible perennials.
- Our students excelled in many areas including Division I National Champion Stock Horse Team, National Champion Rider on the Equestrian Team, numerous awards from Alpha Tau Alpha/Collegiate FFA Chapter, National Awards for 2 Block & Bridle members, top 5 awards from several teams competing throughout this year (Horticulture team, Poultry judging, Horse judging, Soils judging). Highlights are included in this newsletter. This could not be possible without dedication from our faculty and staff. Thanks for a great year!

### Agriculture Faculty News

Congratulations to the following faculty members for receiving awards from the College of Basic & Applied Science for the 2021-22 academic year!

Dr. Samuel Haruna —CBAS Teaching Excellence Award

Dr. Seockmo Ku—CBAS Research Award

#### Faculty Promotions:

Dr. Kevin Downs — promoted to Professor

Dr. Iris Gao— tenured and promoted to Professor

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Top left: In advance of the MTSU Spring Plant Sale, Jalya Maxwell is conducting the weekly pest scouting.  
Top right: Farm Laboratory Student workers Seth Falley and Wilson Kelly check on the beef cows. Both of these Agribusiness majors are members of the MTSU Football team.

## Stock Horse Team earns two national champion team titles



*MTSU Stock Horse team (left to right) Jordan Martin, Rachel Petree, Jordan Dillenbeck, Vaughn Coblenz, JoBeth Scarlett, Andrea Rego (coach), Taylor Meek, Cory Elks, Kara Brown, Louann Braunwalder, Savannah*

As evidenced by two national championships during the same week, riders for **Middle Tennessee State University's** stock horse team definitely enjoy competing in Texas. Competing late in the semester at the American Stock Horse Association Collegiate and National Show in Sweetwater, Texas — and for the first time Division 1 — MTSU defeated Texas Tech University to earn the national title. “This championship means a lot,” coach and horse science faculty member **Andrea Rego** said. “It was our first time attempting the Division 1 category ... and we had to step up our game in the non-pro division (six riders competing instead of four). Earlier in the week, MTSU riders earned the Division 2 Reserve Champion national title at the Hughes Ranch Traders National Intercollegiate Ranch and Stock Horse National Championship late in the spring semester in Amarillo, Texas. MTSU also received a \$1,000 marketing

package for its ranch horse program. Eight MTSU students competed in the ASHA event held in the Nolan County Coliseum in Sweetwater, Texas, capturing eight individual national awards and the coveted national title. Events included cow horse, pleasure, reining and trail. “It was hard traveling from one national show to the next, but it felt like the hardest part was already over after Amarillo.” said **Jordan Dillenbeck**, a senior horse science major and team president. “I made sure to take extra care of my horse and make sure she was prepared for another round of competition.” Freshman horse science major **Jordan Martin** of Murfreesboro, Tennessee, won the Don Henneke Trainer’s Award for her accomplishments aboard her personally trained mare, Miss Catnic. A year ago, the Raiders finished fourth overall in Division 2, but earned 10 combined championship and runner-up awards. **Vaughn Coblenz** of Chattanooga, Tennessee, and **Cory Elks** traveled to help work the ASHA national show. “It was a great experience working the show and to see what the judges were looking for in riders and horses,” said Elks, a junior horse science major from Troy, Tennessee. “I also made invaluable connections and will be working two world shows this summer because of those connections.”



*Taylor Meek riding Dunnits Smokin in the Non-Pro reining at ASHA Nationals in Sweetwater, TX.*

## Grant News—Introducing The Digital Agriculture Center

This year the MTSU School of Agriculture was pleased to add the Digital Agriculture Center to our list of accomplishments. The first of its kind in Tennessee! The Digital Agriculture Center is grant supported by the Food and Agriculture Non-Formal Education Program from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Credit is due to Dr. Song Cui and Dr. Chaney Mosley for their incredible hard work and contributions! Over the continuation of the next 2 years the Digital Agriculture Center will conduct several projects for students, non-formal educators, and the community, to broaden the Digital Agriculture and Data Science education in Tennessee youth. This year, in June we hosted our first two events, the Digital Agriculture Summer Camp and the Digital Agriculture Academy. Participants in these two events received completion stipends of up to \$1000.

The Digital Agriculture Summer Camp invited high school students in grades 10-12 to apply for the two-and-a-half-week event. This year we welcomed 11 students to join the fun! The first week of camp featured lessons in Data Science with Alex Murphy and colleagues, where students learned how to read data, and program a virtual racecar. The second week of camp featured unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) trainings with Dr. Kevin Corns and colleagues of the MTSU Aerospace program. Students learned the regulations, how to operate, and how to build their own UAS drone. They were able to conduct flight trainings on the MTSU farm. The third week featured lessons on digital agriculture in modern farming and soil science with Dr. Song Cui, Dr. Samuel Haruna, Dr. Alanna Vaught, Dr. Chaney Mosley and colleagues. Students were able to witness the technology already working for the School of Agriculture, including the MTSU Dairy and the Horse Science Center. Students learned and began building their spreadsheet analysis skills, then at the conclusion of camp presented the data figures they had gathered on Kernza, a perennial grain and its chlorophyll - which had not yet been studied by high school students.

The Digital Agriculture Academy invited non-formal educators to apply for the virtual trainings and day event hosted here on campus. This year we saw 13 participants successfully complete the academy. Module topics included Digital Agriculture, Data Science, Soil-Driven Precision, and Unmanned Aircraft Systems. During their in-person training participants learned how to become certified in unmanned aircraft flight systems, and how to operate them in the skies. They applied their gained knowledge and flew drones on the MTSU farm designated testing space. Participants took an in-depth look at some innovations that have been incorporated into the agriculture industry and learned how to better prepare students for this digital revolution. Upon completion, 14 hours of continuing education credit was given to our participants.

Since kickoff, The Digital Agriculture Center is very pleased with the results we have seen. We received very positive feedback from participants and look forward to the following years! Please check out our website for more information regarding this USDA-funded project and for future camp opportunities and resources:  
<https://www.mtsu.edu/digital-agriculture/>



## 2021-22 Agriculture Scholarship Award Recipients

Adams Family Endowment.....	Alana Hester
Adams Family Endowment.....	Savannah Scott
Adams Family Endowment.....	Rebecca Stone
Adams Family Endowment.....	Mia Kuhnle
Adams Family Endowment.....	Isabella Parrott
Agriculture Dept. Scholarship.....	Elizabeth McQueen
Agriculture Endowment.....	Olivia Roth
Agriculture Endowment.....	Jordan Jungen
Agriculture Endowment.....	Kalyn Rouse
Agriculture Endowment.....	Tabitha Gill
Agriculture Endowment.....	Myia Trotter
Boxwood Farm.....	Logan Labar
Campbell Family Endowment.....	Seth Robinson
Carolyn Gill Endowment.....	Journee Davis
Catherine Ellington.....	Laura Romero
Farm Credit Mid America.....	Charity Evans
Dr. Harley W. Foutch Endowment.....	Zoey Ward
Dr. Robert Garrigus Endowment.....	Madison McDonald
Dr. Robert Garrigus Endowment.....	Abigail McConnell
Dr. Robert Garrigus Endowment.....	Austin Parker
Fowler and Ruth Nickle.....	Katherine Everett
Hayden Memorial.....	Bianca Cain
Heritage Farm.....	Kylie Hunter
Hugh Burrum.....	Louann Braunwalder
Hugh Burrum.....	Brailey McFarlin
Robert Alexander.....	Annie Whitefield
Robert Jarrell Memorial.....	Kacie Leonard
Thomas. F. Rowlett Memorial.....	Abigail Cerna
TN Farmers Coop.....	Luke Alexander
TN Farmers Coop.....	Seth Dearden
TN Farmers Coop.....	Kailee Scott
TN Farmers Coop.....	Zach Snoddy
Theodore Bigger.....	Angayla Maxwell
Thrush-Thompson Scholarship.....	Loren Huling
Joe Jack & Jerry Dement Endowment.....	Anna Collins
Joe Jack & Jerry Dement Endowment.....	Faith Cook
Rehabilitation Corp. of TN.....	Chloe Thomas
Rehabilitation Corp. of TN.....	Dylan Love
Rehabilitation Corp. of TN.....	Rachel Halbert
Rehabilitation Corp. of TN.....	Meagan Sentell
Rehabilitation Corp. of TN.....	Jolie Bell

**Scholarships awarded at the Horse Science Banquet:**

J.W. Cross Scholarship.....	Sadio Barnes
Kitty Adams Scholarship.....	Savannah Glinstra
Kitty Adams Scholarship.....	Cory Elks
Mark Moskovitz.....	Jordan Martin
Tennessee Horse Council.....	Kara Brown
Seve Scholarship.....	Austin Aguilera

### Outstanding Senior Awards

**Robert A. Alexander Outstanding Agribusiness Senior Award** - Andrew Hamblen

**Sam Paschal Award for Outstanding Horse Science Senior**  
Vaughn Coblentz

**Outstanding Fermentation Science Senior**  
Eva Manire

**Outstanding Animal Science Senior Award**  
Alison Blanton



**Theodore C. Bigger Outstanding Plant & Soil Science Senior Award**  
Olivia Peters



**B.B. Gracy, Jr. Outstanding Agriculture Senior Award**  
Erin Coleman



**Senior Honor Students (GPA 3.8 or higher):**

Mary Kathryn Briler  
Erin Coleman  
Journee Davis  
Rachel Foster  
Jantzen Hayes  
Jordan Latham

Fallon Marshall  
Rhiannon Overcast  
Shelby Seamans  
Philip Stensgard  
Jaliah Walker

## Undergraduate Research & Honor's Thesis Projects

Undergraduate Research Experiences and Creative Activity committee (URECA) provides funding opportunities for many undergraduate students to participate in research projects. Several Agriculture majors recently completed research projects funded by URECA and/or Honor's Thesis projects. This list includes students and their mentors:

<u>Student</u>	<u>Mentor</u>
Jessika Benson	Dr. Kevin Downs
Gabby Harder	Dr. Kevin Downs
Ashton Bazzell	Dr. Jessica Carter
Kacie Leonard	Dr. Jessica Carter
Erin Coleman	Dr. Jessica Carter
Alison Blanton	Dr. Jessica Carter
Sydney Scott	Dr. Jessica Carter
Jake Maisano	Dr. Keely O'Brien
Sarah Garris	Dr. Tony Johnston
Elizabeth Clippard	Dr. Samuel Haruna
Olivia Peters	Dr. Samuel Haruna
Angayla Maxwell	Dr. Samuel Haruna
Mary Holley	Dr. Samuel Haruna
Robert Eichas	Drs. Haruna/Phillips
Neil Slone	Dr. Samuel Haruna
Wyatt Peterson	Dr. Samuel Haruna
Julia Nichols	Dr. Samuel Haruna
Devin Lackey	Dr. Samuel Haruna
Jeremiah Lynch	Dr. Samuel Haruna
Perez Brown	Dr. Samuel Haruna
Mackenzie Broyles	Dr. Samuel Haruna
Fallon Marshall	Drs. Hoffman/Haffner
Jordan Jungen	Dr. Seockmo Ku
Katherine Everett	Dr. Seockmo Ku
Eva Manire	Dr. Seockmo Ku
Weston Williams	Dr. Seockmo Ku
Khadijah Alnassari	Dr. Iris Gao
Zaynab Alnassari	Dr. Iris Gao
Ahmed Alnassari	Dr. Iris Gao
Fatimah Alnassari	Dr. Iris Gao
Jordan Latham	Dr. Iris Gao
Kaela Wolkiewicz	Dr. Iris Gao
Chris Halls	Dr. Song Cui
Nick Redford	Dr. Song Cui
David Bobick	Dr. Nate Phillips

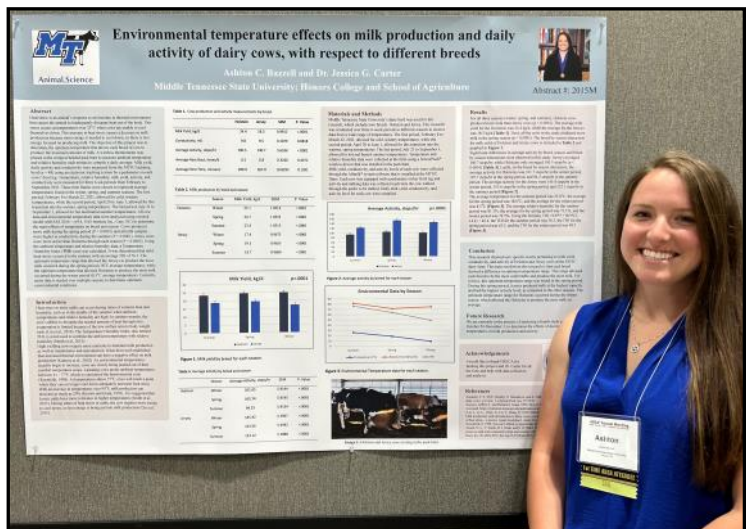
Ag faculty worked with 12 M.S. students and 1 Ph.D. student. Our faculty and students had an extremely productive year publishing **23 manuscripts** in several different discipline specific journals and presenting 38 conference presentations/abstracts which is outstanding!

## Graduate Student Projects

<u>Student</u>	<u>Mentor</u>
Ukti Sheth	Dr. Justin Gardner/ Dr. Ku
Anna Arnold	Dr. Seockmo Ku
Robert Conner	Dr. Song Cui
Thomas Goff	Dr. Song Cui
Carly Altman	Dr. Chaney Mosley/Dr. Cui
Kaylee Hayes	Dr. Rhonda Hoffman
Jenelle Klingman	Dr. Rhonda Hoffman
Alyson Snyder	Dr. Rhonda Hoffman
Braley Gentry	Dr. Keely O'Brien
Sara Holtz	Dr. Holly Spooner

## Tennessee Academy of Science

Congratulations to Ashton Bazzell, who presented an undergraduate research poster at the 2021 Tennessee Academy of Science and at the American Dairy Science Association annual meeting.



Ashton Bazzell presented her research in the undergraduate poster competition at the American Dairy Science Association annual meeting in June 2022.

Our students were well represented during Scholar's Week. Congratulations to all of our students and their faculty mentors on a job well done!!

## MTSU fermentation science major receives \$10K scholarship from brewer Terrapin, story by Randy Weiler

Emily Beavers, a rising junior in the MTSU fermentation science program, is the second recipient of the Brewing Education Scholarship awarded by Athens, Georgia-based Terrapin Brewing Co. Beavers, 20, who is from Dunlap, Tennessee, recently learned she would be the 2022 beneficiary of a \$10,000 award during a Zoom session with Terrapin and MTSU representatives. The Brewing Education Scholarship Fund supports underrepresented undergraduate students seeking an MTSU fermentation science degree. MTSU junior Emily Beavers of Dunlap, Tenn., will be working at Sequatchie Brewing Co., which is co-owned by her father, Eric Beavers, starting in June. She's the second recipient of a Brewing Education Scholarship provided by Terrapin Brewing Co. of Athens, Ga. "We are excited to have Emily as the recipient of our second Brewing Education Scholarship," Terrapin President Dustin Watts said at the May 17 announcement. "This



MTSU fermentation science major Emily Beavers of Dunlap, Tenn., is the second recipient of a Brewing Education Scholarship provided by Terrapin Brewing Co. of Athens, Ga. Beavers received a \$10,000 scholarship. She is recently at Sequatchie Brewing Co. in Dunlap. (Submitted photo by Beth McGowan)

scholarship not only impacts and supports the students as they navigate their education at MTSU, but also creates a community post-graduation of passionate fermentation science majors who are looking to grow, challenge and better the landscape of our industry." The scholarship provides an opportunity for Beavers to intern with Terrapin in Athens during the summer between her junior and senior year of college. The company has a presence at Truist Park in Marietta, Georgia, home of the Major League Baseball Atlanta Braves — a favorite team for the Beavers family. "This will take so much weight off my family," said Beavers, who plans to use the scholarship to go toward tuition. "I feel so fortunate. I have had to pay a little out of pocket. This should get me through the rest of school." Tony Johnston, MTSU Fermentation Science program director, said the Brewing Education Scholarship "is a powerful example of a company putting its money where its mouth is. ... Supporting students in their pursuit of an education that prepares them for a career is taking action. Action creates change. "Emily is the first of what I hope is many women who will pursue a career in the brewing and other fermentation-based industries." Beavers, a 2020 graduate of Sequatchie County High School and first-generation college student, entered MTSU as a biology major her freshman year. "It was not the path for me," she said. "I looked through the list (of other options). I was really into science." As she was re-focusing and changing majors, "my dad developed an interest in fermentation science." It began with home brews. In the process, Beavers discovered there's more to fermentation than making beer. "I didn't know hot sauces were a fermentation product," she said. After MTSU classes ended earlier this month, Beavers took time off. She plans to begin working in June at Sequatchie Brewing Co., a business co-owned by her father, Eric Beavers. Beavers' ambition is to one day own her own brewery. To learn more about MTSU fermentation science opportunities, email Johnston at [Tony.Johnston@mtsu.edu](mailto:Tony.Johnston@mtsu.edu) or call 615-898-2421. Fermentation Science is a program within the MTSU School of Agriculture, one of 11 College of Basic and Applied Sciences departments.

## Stock Horse Team earns two national champion team titles

Action in Amarillo: The Hughes Ranch Trailers-sponsored event featured 115 riders from 14 colleges and universities from seven states. MTSU carried six riders to this event, each competing for individual awards plus national champion and Reserve Champion team honors.

Rego said notable individual all-round awards included: Taylor Meek, a recent graduate and horse science major from Murfreesboro, winning eighth overall in the Limited Non-Pro All-Around Division. JoBeth Scarlett, a junior animal science major from New Market, Tennessee, placed ninth overall in the Limited Non-Pro All-Around Division. "This trip was amazing for me," said Meek. "It was great to see how much each rider and horse had improved together, and also the sportsmanship and support within our team and with other teams. The competition was fierce, but MTSU was well-represented on a national level."

Other team members included: Rachel Petree, a senior horse science major from Maynardville, Tennessee. Louann Braunwalder, a sophomore fermentation science major from Las-cassas, Tennessee. Kara Brown, a junior horse science major, from Murfreesboro. Savannah Glinstra, a senior horse science major from Columbia, Tennessee.



MTSU Stock Horse team (left to right) Jordan Martin, Louann Braunwalder, Jordan Dillenbeck, JoBeth Scarlet, Rachel Petree, Taylor Meek at NIRSHA Collegiate nationals in Amarillo, TX.



JoBeth Scarlett riding Twentyeleventwister in the Non Pro Cowhorse class in Sweetwater, TX

Rego and the team are thankful for its supporters. "We couldn't have done this without the many clinicians, working cattle and Neal Agee's Hurricane Creek Ranch, and the experiences gained at the Tennessee Stock Horse Association shows," Rego said.

All photos are by High Cotton Promotions



## Equestrian Team brings home an individual national championship



*Freshman Jordan Martin winning Individual Open Reining*

The MTSU Equestrian Team had an outstanding year of competition, culminating at the IHSA National Championship in Harrisburg, PA May 4-8th. The team qualified seven riders for the championship. To qualify for this level of competition is an accomplishment in and of itself, and the MTSU crew felt fortunate to finally be able to attend the National Championship for the first time since 2019, due to the pandemic. After the first “normal” season in a few years, the team headed north, anxiously awaiting the competition from across the country. Freshman Jordan Martin walked away with a National Championship in Open Reining, third place in Open Horsemanship, and she finished 5<sup>th</sup> in the two-part High Point Rider competition, including a second place in the Reining portion of the competition. This is an outstanding feat for anyone, but the fact it was Jordan’s first season with the team makes her success even more impressive.

It is always exciting to have the top two from our region both be MTSU students, and it is especially exciting when those two make it all the way to Nationals after another round of qualifying competition. This happened for us in two divisions this year: the Rookie Horsemanship and the Alumni Horsemanship. In the Rookie, senior Shannon Kennedy finished as the Reserve National Champion and sophomore Louann Braunwalder finished in 4<sup>th</sup> place. In the Alumni division, graduate student Lily Germano was the Reserve National Champion and graduate student Kaylee Hayes was 9<sup>th</sup> place in the class.

Senior Jordan Dillenbeck had an excellent ride in the Level II Horsemanship, where she finished in 5<sup>th</sup> place, and junior JoBeth Scarlett finished in 11<sup>th</sup> place with a good ride in the Limit Hunter Seat Equitation on the Flat.

Among their talents as riders, the MTSU Equestrian Team also hauled six of MTSU’s finest horses for the National Show: Harley, Slick, Eddie, Fish, Penny and Slim. All of the horses were excellent for the competition, and the team took exemplary care of them for the trip. Harley proved to be the consistently stellar horse that he is, winning Horse of the Show yet again. This was

Harley’s 12<sup>th</sup> trip to IHSA Nationals and at least his third time winning this award. We are so fortunate to have such excellent horses and riders!



*Top left: Shannon Kennedy earning second place and Louann Braunwalder earning fourth in Rookie Horsemanship.*

*Top right: JoBeth Scarlett was a finalist in Limit Hunter Seat Equitation.*



### 3 Doors Down donates \$15,000 to MTSU Equine Therapy

A \$15,000 donation by rock band 3 Doors Down's Better Life Foundation continues the tradition of benefiting MTSU students and faculty working in equine therapy with veterans from the Murfreesboro-based Veterans Recovery Center.

This marks the fourth donation by the group's foundation to support the MTSU Center of Equine Recovery for Veterans, or CERV. The foundation has given \$50,000 to the program since 2017.

More than 100 veterans have received equine therapy since the start of the program in 2013. Band frontman Brad Arnold and his wife, Jen, presented the check recently at the MTSU Horse Science Center on West Thompson Lane.

Wearing their special red T-shirts, members of the Murfreesboro, Tenn.-based Veteran Recovery Center attended recent check presentation to help fund the MTSU Center of Equine Recovery for Veterans, or CERV, at the MTSU Horse Science Center on West Thompson Lane. Brad Arnold, who is helping to hold the



MTSU horse science instructor Andrea Rego, left, accepts a \$15,000 check from Jen Arnold and her husband, 3 Doors Down frontman Brad Arnold, from the rock band's Better Life Foundation, for MTSU's Center of Equine Recovery for Veterans and far right, is Recreation Therapist, Sarah Howard.

check and frontman for the rock band 3 Doors Down, brought a \$15,000 donation from the band's Better Life Foundation. (photo at bottom)

"We are thankful for their constant support of our program. We are pleased to use this donation for various program improvements," said Andrea Rego, an MTSU horse science instructor and coordinator of the CERV program.



## MTSU bred Tennessee Walking Horses claim international titles

On the week of July 19-24<sup>th</sup>, 2022, the Miller Coliseum hosted the 44th annual International Pleasure & Colt Grand Championship. MTSU Horse Barn Manager Jeremy Carlton and Assistant Manager Kimberly White exhibited several MTSU-Bred horses throughout the week after spending the summer (and year) prepping them for competition.

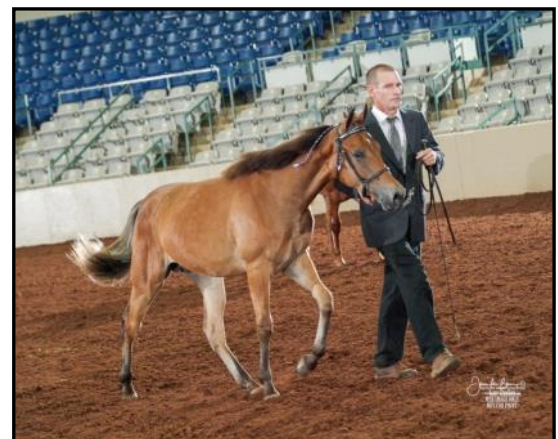
### Individual Show Results:

- ◆ Little Miss Rowdy (1st place, In-hand Mares) & Jeremy Carlton
- ◆ All Rowdied Up (2nd place, In-Hand Mares) & Kim White
- ◆ Sister Rowdy (2nd place, Riders' Cup Yearling Fillies) & Jeremy Carlton
- ◆ Raider Express (3rd place, Riders' Cup Weanling Colts) & Jeremy Carlton
- ◆ Tuscan Raider (4th place, Riders' Cup Weanling Colts) & Kim White

Assistant Horse Barn Manager Kimberly White showed All Rowdied Up (aka "PopTart"), They were the Champion in Model-Adult at the TWHBEA World Versatility Championship, and Reserve Champion and Top 5 placings in other disciplines. Additionally, they won the High Point Versatility Award for the two-day show.



*Jeremy Carlton and Little Miss Rowdy winning In-Hand*



*Jeremy Carlton and Raider Express (pictured above) earning 3rd place in Riders' Cup Weanling Colts.*

*Kim White and All Rowdied up (pictured left) in the Pleasure Driving portion of the Versatility Championship.*

*Photos by Luka Photo and Barr Studios*

## Block & Bridle students win national awards!

Ten MTSU Block & Bridle students and their advisor, Dr. Jessica Carter, travelled to Lincoln, Nebraska to attend the 101<sup>st</sup> National Block & Bridle Convention. The National Block & Bridle organization includes collegiate clubs from all over the United States who are interested in animal agriculture. Students participated in industry tours to learn about all aspects of Nebraska agriculture, listened to keynote speakers and livestock industry leaders, toured the University of Nebraska animal science campus and facilities, and attended an awards banquet. For the first time in school history, an MTSU Block & Bridle member was named 1<sup>st</sup> place Outstanding Senior and 2<sup>nd</sup> place Outstanding Junior from the National Block & Bridle organization. Lindsey Parsley was the recipient of the senior award and Erin Coleman received the junior award. Congratulations to the Block & Bridle club for their outstanding achievements!



Pictured (L to R): Erin Coleman, Dr. Jessica Carter, and Lindsey Parsley.



L to R: Regan Black, Tiffany Ramsey, Kacie Leonard, Savannah Scott, Abigail McConnell, Hensley McCrary, Erin Coleman, Meagan Sentell, and Joshua Wade.



## Poultry Science News

Students interested in the poultry industry have many opportunities at MTSU. They can complete a minor in Poultry Science, participate on the Poultry Judging team, conduct poultry science research, and participate in the College Student Career Program hosted during the annual International Poultry Expo in Atlanta.

Left: Lindsey White, Abigail McConnell and Austin Parker received scholarships during the Tennessee Poultry Association annual convention. Right: Emily Stafford, Abigail McConnell and Calli Gregory competed in the National Poultry Judging Contest hosted by Univ. of Arkansas.



## Agribusiness Management Challenge

If you took Agribusiness Management any time in the last decade you probably remember using the Agribusiness Management Simulation. Students are divided into teams and tasked with managing a simulated farm supply store. This unique experience allows students to practice managerial decision-making in an uncertain environment. Students have to develop a forecast, use that forecast to order inventory, arrange for shipping and storage, and then hire (or fire) employees. Agribusiness Students know that the goal is to always maximize profit. In the fall of 2021 the profit maximizing team was comprised of Abigail Roberts, Chris Boykin, Kerry McAllister, and Ashley Parker.



Pictured L to R: Abigail Roberts, Chris Boykin, Kerry McAllister, and Ashley Parker

## Cooperative Development Challenge

In the Spring of 2022, agribusiness students Leandra Koss and Luke Elrod attend the Tennessee State FFA Convention to judge the Cooperative Development Challenge. This unique contest was developed and sponsored by the Tennessee Council of Cooperatives (TCC). For the last decade the TCC has provided MTSU with a small grant to support student travel to the state convention. According to Dr. Justin Gardner, Professor of Agribusiness, the contest was originally developed about 15 years ago with the assistance of Terry Shartzter, who was the Portland FFA advisor at the time. "Since I teach a class on Agricultural Cooperatives the Council invited me to help judge the contest. I have been heading up to Gatlinburg to help out since at least 2009, maybe earlier." In 2011 the TCC realized that they could not continue to recruit judges ad-hoc, according to Gardner, so they created a grant and issued a call for proposals. MTSU has received the grant every year with the exception of 2020, when the convention was canceled, and 2021, when the contest was virtual.



Caption: Leandra Koss, Luke Elrod, and Dr. Gardner at the 2022 FFA State Convention.

## Excited youngsters experience farm life during MTSU field trip

With assistance from dozens of volunteers, an MTSU School of Agriculture agritourism class planned and executed the return of the Ag Education Spring Fling for nearly 750 local school children. The youngsters enjoyed a small taste of life on a farm — even a sample of MTSU Creamery chocolate milk — during each school’s two-hour field trip to the Tennessee Livestock Center Tuesday, April 12. Because of the pandemic, it was the first time since 2019 for the class to open the event to area schools. The field trip featured learning about tractors, bees producing honey and farmers calling it soil, not dirt. They enjoyed making a craft, running through a maze of hay bales, being in group photos and more.

Children could be heard making sounds like many of the animals: goats, a ewe lamb named Penny Lane and pigs. Also on display were dairy and beef cows, a buckskin quarter horse named Woodrow, Scooter the pony and more. “There has been a lot of planning and execution for this event,” said Savannah Scott, a sophomore animal science major who is pursuing a minor in secondary education. “We do a lot of collaboration with the preparing of the crafts for the students.”

Instructor Dr. Alanna Vaught’s nearly 30-member agritourism class had a test run with the “Little Acres” area of the event, participating in the Adventures in Agriculture April 9 at Lane Agri-Park. Little Acres teaches them about vegetables, fruits and other farm aspects. Tuesday’s event drew 75-plus volunteers, including members of the Woodbury FFA from Cannon County High School. “We have a lot of volunteers here today,” Scott said. “It takes a lot of help to execute this event, and a lot of preparation.” They spent three hours Monday setting up two large areas in the livestock center. Sponsors included Rutherford County Farm Bureau (milk) and Rutherford Farmers Co-Op (300 bales of hay). The MTSU Farm and Dairy and ag faculty provided most of the live animals. By the time they boarded buses to return to their schools, agriculture-related goody bags — full of items provided by many sources for each child — awaited them.

— story by Randy Weiler ([Randy.Weiler@mtsu.edu](mailto:Randy.Weiler@mtsu.edu))

Video of event:

[https://youtu.be/Z4h\\_X1Ut1L4](https://youtu.be/Z4h_X1Ut1L4)



Local elementary school children experience the annual agricultural field trip, Ag Ed Spring Fling, offered for area schools. Photo by J. Intintoli.



Our faculty and students are actively recruiting at various agriculture events throughout the year. If you know of a student who's interested in MTSU Ag please contact the department at 615-898-2523 to schedule a campus visit and tour of our farm laboratories and/or horse science center. We offer scholarships to incoming freshman (application found on our website and due by April 1). We would love to show you around!

### **Make a Gift**

School of Agriculture – [mtsu.edu/supportag](https://www.mtsu.edu/supportag)

If you would like to contribute please check out this link. You can donate to one of several different funds or to the general fund for the School of Agriculture. Thank you for your support!

### **Contact MTSU School of Agriculture:**

Dr. Jessica Carter ([jessica.carter@mtsu.edu](mailto:jessica.carter@mtsu.edu), 615-898-2169).

**Do you know a high school student who may be interested in attending MTSU? If so please feel free to contact me to set up a campus visit or farm tour. Ag Alumni are some of our best recruiters!!**

Be sure to check out our Webpage:

<http://www.mtsu.edu/agriculture/>

Find us on Facebook and Twitter

<https://www.facebook.com/mtsuabas>

<https://twitter.com/MTSUAg>



### **Agriculture Faculty**

Dr. Jessica Carter, Director & Professor of Animal Science  
Dr. Song Cui, Associate Professor of Plant & Soil Science  
Dr. Kevin Downs, Professor of Poultry Science  
Dr. Iris Gao, Professor of Plant & Soil Science  
Dr. Justin Gardner, Associate Professor of Agribusiness  
Dr. John Haffner, Veterinarian, Horse Science  
Dr. Samuel Haruna, Assistant Professor of Soil Science  
Ms. Ariel Herrin, Director of Equestrian Program  
Dr. Rhonda Hoffman, Professor of Horse Science  
Dr. Tony Johnston, Professor of Fermentation Science  
Dr. Seockmo Ku, Assist. Prof. of Fermentation Science  
Dr. Chaney Mosley, Assist. Prof. of Agricultural Education  
Dr. Keely O'Brien, Assistant Prof. of Fermentation Science  
Dr. Nate Phillips, Professor of Horticulture  
Ms. Andrea Rego, Instructor of Horse Science  
Dr. Alanna Vaught, Instructor of Agricultural Education

### **Agriculture Advisor**

Mrs. Jessica Lance

### **Agriculture Staff**

Mr. Matthew Wade, Director, MTSU Farm Laboratories  
Mr. Jason Tanner, Beef & Swine Unit Manager  
Mr. Jeremy Carlton, Horse Barn Manager  
Mr. Steve Dixon, MTSU Creamery Manager  
Mrs. Renee Dunn, Horse Science Secretary  
Mr. Jared Franklin, Dairy Manager  
Mrs. Megan Jones, Coordinator, School of Agriculture  
Ms. Kim White, Assistant Horse Barn Manager



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