Congratulations Graduates 2015!
We have been rapidly moving to fill our vacant positions. We have advertisement out for soil fertility/chemistry and are developing adds for turf molecular work at Dallas and a position to cover the responsibilities previously held by Dr. Redmon as he transitioned to Associate Department Head for our Texas A&M AgriLife Extension activities. Welcome to Dr. Seth Byrd, as he joined our program this week as Cotton Extention Specialist in Lubbock. We bid farewell to Dr. Frank Hons (farewell celebration to be announced), Linda Carpenter and Mark Kelly who are all retiring from their current roles as we return from the Holidays. We wish them the very best in their future endeavors.

This is always a special time of year as we celebrate the accomplishments of the year. It was great to see the list of departmental awardees for the year. Join us in honoring them at our faculty/staff award celebration on January 12 at 2:00 Heep, room 101. Our accomplishments will be further recognized at the Vice-Chancellor’s Awards program on January 14th, 1:30pm-2:30pm in the AgriLife Center.

Our big opportunity to recognize our efforts is Friday at 9:00 am when this year’s graduates cross the stage at graduation. We continue to have great students completing their programs in Crop and Environmental Soil Science (emphasis on crops or soils) and Turf Grass Science, as well as our graduate programs. A big Whoop! To this year’s graduates. We wish you the best as you take on your role in using your skills to be the best at providing the world with sustainable food, feed, fiber and fuel in a safe and aesthetically pleasing environment through discovery, education and application.

We have several companies visiting campus regarding ongoing and future opportunities during the next month. This week provided a big opportunity to explore future collaborations with Grupa-Azoty in nutrients, seeds and soil security. Thanks to all of you for your efforts to increase our interaction with these major industry partners. These include opportunities for the production of Feverfew as part of a cancer treatment grant which passed the first round of review with CIPRIT.

I participated in the Council of Scientific Presidents in Washington D.C. in early December. Dr. Sony Ramaswamy was our guest to discuss ag issues. Larry Redmon and I also participated in several commodity meetings in west Texas around the Amarillo Farm and Ranch Show and the Texas Plant Protection Conference and Texas Turfgrass Association.

A special shout out to our work groups to prepare our review materials and to Dr. Terry Gentry for keeping us moving. We still have lots of details to work out along with classes, grants to write, numerous meetings and travel, but thanks to our great staff and hard work it is moving forward in a very exciting way. Our vision of priorities for positions, infrastructure and program is really coming together.

Wishing you all a very special holiday season!
Our Graduates

“To be the best at providing the world with sustainable food, feed, fiber and fuel in a safe and aesthetically pleasing environment through discovery, education and application.”

Daniel Hargey
MS, AGRO

Bharath Reddy
PhD, PLBR

Alexandria Igwe
MS, SOSC

Murilo Maeda
PhD, AGRO

Eric Nystrom
MS, SOSC

Brandon Gerrish
MS, PLBR

Jordanna Tadlock
MS, PLBR

Gregory Rouze
MS, SOSC

Charlie Dowling
PhD, PLBR

Kari Hugie
PhD, PLBR

Ana Velazquez
PhD, SOSC

Charles Fontanier,
PhD, WMHS
Our Graduates (continued)

PSSC-Plant and Environmental Soil Science
- Madison Taylor Belcher
- Jacqueline Canales
- Tiffany Mae Garner
- Daniel A. Hillin-Double Major Animal Science
- Joshua Aaron Martin
- Miles George Mikeska
- Kimberly Leanne Nutter
- Marguax Paylim
- Danielle Lynne Young
- David Landon Lancaster
- James Charles Lenart
- Charles Cory Patterson
- Kevin Chang

Turfgrass Science
- Jacob Klay Blalock
- Jacob Andrew Boelsche
- Christopher Ryan Brennan
- Nathan Ryan Dixon
- Jacob Micah Doucet
- Garrett Gist Parker
- Jordan Holmes
National Honors

Dr. Frank Hons, a professor and Texas A&M AgriLife Research Faculty Fellow in the department of soil and crop sciences at Texas A&M, will receive the Soil Science Education Award. (Texas A&M AgriLife Communications photo)

Writer: Kay Ledbetter

COLLEGE STATION – Individuals from Texas A&M University will receive recognition during the upcoming “Synergy in Science: Partnering for Solutions” meeting of the American Society of Agronomy, Crop Science Society of America and Soil Science Society of America.

The annual meeting of the three societies will be held Nov. 15-18 in Minneapolis, in conjunction with the Entomological Society of America.

The Soil Science Society of America announced Dr. Frank Hons, a professor and Texas A&M AgriLife Research Faculty Fellow in the department of soil and crop sciences at Texas A&M, will receive the Soil Science Education Award.

Dr. Frank Hons, a professor and Texas A&M AgriLife Research Faculty Fellow in the department of soil and crop sciences at Texas A&M, will receive the Soil Science Education Award.

Dr. Frank Hons, a professor and Texas A&M AgriLife Research Faculty Fellow in the department of soil and crop sciences at Texas A&M, will receive the Soil Science Education Award. (Texas A&M AgriLife Communications photo)

The annual awards are presented for outstanding contributions to soil science through education, national and international service, and research.

“Dr. Hons has truly made a difference for soil science around the world through his teaching and graduate student mentoring, as demonstrated by the large number of former students who point out his influence on their education and subsequent careers,” said Dr. David Baltensperger, soil and crop sciences department head in College Station.

Hons is a Fellow of both the American Society of Agronomy and the Soil Science Society of America. He earned his bachelor’s degree in chemistry from the University of Dallas and master’s and doctorate degrees in soil chemistry and soil science from Texas A&M. He has taught soil science classes for 37 years and has mentored 42 graduate students.

Hons previously received teaching awards at departmental and college levels and the Agronomic Resident Education Award from the American Society of Agronomy. He is internationally recognized for his research involving soil biogeochemistry, carbon sequestration and nitrogen dynamics, and he has authored 116 peer-reviewed publications, according to the association.
The Crop Science Society of America has elected **Dr. Bill Rooney**, an AgriLife Research plant breeder and soil and crop sciences professor in College Station, as a Fellow. Members of the society are elected as a Fellow based on their professional achievements and meritorious service.

“Bill Rooney has become one of the impact scientists in sorghum research and through his germplasm impacted the lives of many around the world,” Baltensperger said.

Rooney has develop improved parental lines of sorghum to create grain sorghum hybrids for feed and food uses, as well as forage sorghum hybrids for grazing, silage and hay production. His research has led to sorghum germplasm with enhanced resistance to disease and abiotic stresses for use in sorghum breeding programs.

As a professor, he provides graduate training in plant breeding and genetics with specific emphasis on sorghum breeding and genetics. He emphasizes applied science with significant interaction with molecular genetics and its application to breeding programs.

Rooney earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from Texas A&M in agronomy and plant breeding, respectively, and his doctorate in plant breeding and genetics from the University of Minnesota.
Dr. Wayne Smith, associate soil and crop sciences department head in College Station, has been named as the Crop Science Society of America editor-in-chief, effective Jan. 1. As such, he will be responsible for coordinating the society's publications and implementing editorial policies established by the board of directors.

The editor-in-chief also serves on the various society committees providing oversight of the journal and book publications and input and leadership in the implementation of appropriate policies.

Scientific journals published by Crop Science Society of America are: Crop Science; Crop, Forage and Turfgrass Management; Journal of Environmental Quality; Natural Science Education; The Plant Genome; and Journal of Plant Registrations.

Omar Elhassan, a Texas A&M student, will be recognized by the Golden Opportunity Scholars Institute through the Agronomic Science Foundation. This scholars program matches undergraduates with scientist mentors. The program encourages students to pursue careers in the agronomic, crop and soil sciences.

“The Golden Scholars program has developed a reputation of identifying undergraduates with potential to be leaders of science in the future and helping them chart a course to achieve that success,” Baltensperger said. “It is always a special time for a department to have one of their current students recognized with this potential.”
**2015**

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 24 - Jan. 1</td>
<td>CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS</td>
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**2016**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 5-7</td>
<td>2016 Beltwide Cotton Conference</td>
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<td>Jan. 9-14</td>
<td>Plant Genome Meeting - San Diego, CA</td>
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<td>Jan. 12</td>
<td>TPT Annual Conference - Bay City</td>
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<td>Jan. 12-14</td>
<td>AgriLife Conference</td>
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<td>Jan. 14</td>
<td>AgriLife Vice Chancellor Awards Ceremony</td>
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<td>Jan. 12</td>
<td>Departmental Awards Meeting - 2:00pm</td>
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<td>Jan. 2021</td>
<td>Red River Crops Conference in Altus, OK</td>
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<td>Jan 25</td>
<td>Departmental Review with Dean</td>
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<td>Jan. 26-28</td>
<td>2016 TX/OK Cotton Physiology Meeting - San Angelo</td>
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<td>Jan. 31-Feb.4</td>
<td>Society for Range Management</td>
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<td>Feb. 7 - 9</td>
<td>Southern Regional Branch of ASA - San Antonio</td>
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<td>March 6-9</td>
<td>APR Review</td>
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**2017**

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<tr>
<td>Feb. 9-13</td>
<td>SAVE THE DATE: 2017 AG Conference</td>
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From the Department of Soil and Crop Sciences