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The Leading Object: July 2009

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NU Vice President and Harlan Vice Chancellor, IANR

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Perspectives

I had been vice chancellor of the Institute for exactly six months when the University faced the first of five rounds of budget cutting earlier this decade.

Now, in the midst of recession, we're cutting budgets again.

The University of Nebraska system is cutting over \$8 million for the fiscal year that began July 1. UNL's share of that cut is a little over \$3.7 million, a 1.1 percent spending reduction. IANR's budget cut is \$1 million, 27 percent of UNL's total as per prior agreement established in 2001.

UNL's Academic Planning Committee (APC) now will review all UNL-proposed budget cuts in light of their probable impact on the University's academic mission. APC has scheduled hearings for July 30 and Sept. 18. The July session is to focus primarily on proposed administrative reductions. The September hearing is to focus on reductions mainly affecting UNL academics.

Those who wish to do so may provide the APC information either in person at the budget hearings, or in writing sent to the APC for consideration. If someone wishes to speak at a hearing, a written notice of intent to appear is requested to help coordinate the hearing schedules.

The APC either will endorse the cuts or suggest alternative ways to meet the budget reduction goal. In the end, the final decision for UNL is the chancellor's.

To reach its \$1 million allocated cut, IANR proposes a \$166,990 cut eliminating an administrative position and restructuring a portion of a position in IANR administration that collectively includes CASNR, ARD, UNL Extension, and Finance and Personnel administrative offices, and the Vice Chancellor's office. And, IANR is taking additional responsibility for UNL payroll activities for IANR and city campus.

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John C. Owens
NU Vice President and
Harlan Vice Chancellor, IANR

The Leading Object

*The Morrill Act of 1862
established a Land Grant University
in each state where
The Leading Object
would be instruction
in agriculture and related fields.*



July 2009

Costa Rican study trip helps insect science students learn biodiversity

To many people, a bug is a bug no matter where it comes from. To entomology students in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, studying diverse insects in different climates is fascinating.

Ten insect science students spent 10 days in Costa Rica earlier this year to study the biodiversity of insects. The spring break trip was the first-ever organized international experience for entomology students.

"We wanted to broaden student experiences and give them a sense of biodiversity in tropical agricultural systems," said professor Fred Baxendale, one of the leaders of the trip.

The trip originated from conversations with Tiffany Heng-Moss, associate entomology professor, and Tom Powers, professor of plant pathology. Powers had conducted research in Costa Rica and suggested that it would be a good place to study insects, Baxendale said.

Powers and entomology professor Lance Meinke also went on the trip.

Heng-Moss said she had wanted to give students an opportunity for international study.

"Insects are so diverse," she said. "I felt it was important for them to study insect diversity in a tropical location."



Entomology students Rachael Fithian, left, and Crystal Ramm learn about tropical diversity during a study trip to Costa Rica.

Fred Baxendale

For students Crystal Ramm of Valentine, a May graduate now working on her master's degree in entomology, and Rachael Fithian, a junior from Elkhorn, the trip provided new perspectives.

"I was very excited to see beetles the size of your fist," Ramm said.

"I had always wanted to go to the rain forest," Fithian said.

Both said they enjoyed studying and photographing new species of insects and watching an anteater. The trip gave them the desire to do more traveling and research.

"I brought home all that knowledge base on insect diversity that I would not have otherwise," Ramm said.

The students visited two research

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Perspectives *(continued from page 1)*

We are proposing reducing technical funding support to ARD scientists by eliminating 25 percent of ARD state funding for research technicians and technologists. Academic units have up to two years to transition this portion of funding to non-state funding sources, such as competitive grants, non-recurring income from crop and animal sales, gifts, etc.

Academic units are developing plans, due Sept. 30, as to how they'll handle this funding. Some already are in and make good sense.

We must, as an Institute, be entrepreneurial in seeking new funding sources as budgets grow ever tighter. In 1988, our University received 21.3 percent of Nebraska's annual state budget. Over the past two

decades that has declined to 14.3 percent.

IANR proposes ending all state support for the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum (NSA), a cut of \$259,858. NSA is integrating with the Nebraska Forest Service and transitioning to become self-supporting. NSA will need to eliminate 2.4 FTE to be sustainable; some temporary funds will be used this fiscal year to allow NSA time for transitioning to alternative funding.

Other IANR-proposed cuts include: 1) assessing the Nebraska Forest Service a proportional state fund budget reduction (\$18,101) equal to the percentage of the state fund budget reduction allocated IANR; 2) eliminating Extended Education and Outreach funding (\$50,080) to IANR's component of the Norfolk Learning Cen-

ter; 3) cutting \$17,056 from a vacant staff writer position in Communications and Information Technology.

There is no easy cut. That was true in five rounds of cutting earlier this decade. With each round it grows increasingly harder.

We will get through this, of course, by working together to deliver the teaching, research, and extension education programs so important to our state. Like our constituents, we are managing our way through tough times.

This, also, is how we are at work for Nebraska.



Berger named head of Department of Animal Science

Larry L. Berger, professor of animal sciences at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, will be IANR's newest department head when he begins his



Larry L. Berger

duties as the Marvel L. Baker Head of the Department of Animal Science Aug. 17.

Berger had taught at Illinois since 1978. His research emphasis is using protein and energy nutrition, as well as management, to improve beef cattle production efficiency.

The northeast Kansas native has earned numerous awards for research and for teaching excellence; advised 37 doctoral and masters students; authored or coauthored more than 330 peer-reviewed journal articles; and generated more than \$4 million from outside the University of Illinois.

Berger was a graduate assistant at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln from 1975-1978 while earning his doctorate in ruminant nutrition. His bachelor's and master's degrees are from Kansas State University.

Berger said he is excited about the challenges and opportunities of his new position.

"I'm excited about working with producers, commodity groups and state agencies for the betterment of Nebraska agriculture," Berger said.

"The fact that Larry's current department is the United States' second-ranked animal science department for faculty scholarly productivity means he will bring a deep appreciation for academic excellence to UNL," said John Owens, NU Vice President and IANR Harlan Vice Chancellor.

Sheila Scheideler has been interim animal science department head since August 2007.

The Marvel L. Baker professorship was created by an endowment from Robert and Ardis James of Chappaqua, N.Y. Ardis James worked for Baker at UNL after graduating from high school.

Baker taught and worked in animal husbandry at the School of Agriculture at Curtis and the North Platte Experiment Station from 1924-1941. He then took charge of the University's beef cattle research in Lincoln. Beginning in 1955 and into the 1960s, Baker played a key role in developing Ataturk University in Turkey, patterned after the U.S. land-grant university system. Baker retired in 1963; in 1969 the Animal Science building was dedicated in his name. He died in 1977.

Need to meet with the

**Vice President/Vice Chancellor?
Drop-ins each Friday from 3-5 p.m.*
John C. Owens**

NU Vice President for
Agriculture and Natural Resources
and Harlan Vice Chancellor of IANR

202 Ag Hall • (402) 472-2871

*Occasionally Dr. Owens will be called away on University business.

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103 ACB, 0918; via e-mail (calberts1@unl.edu) or via fax (402-472-0025).

Milligan stays close to Nebraska agricultural roots

Bob Milligan has served in the federal government in Washington, D.C., and is the founder of a multinational company, but he has never strayed far from his roots in Nebraska agriculture.

Milligan was born and raised on a farm in northeast Nebraska, graduating from Hooper High School. He enjoys a successful international business career, and his interests returned to Nebraska agriculture when he recently took part in a U.S. Chamber of Commerce-sponsored dinner in honor of M.B. Lee, president of South Korea. South Korea is a major importer of Nebraska beef and a major trading partner for the United States.

“My career seems as though it has come full circle,” Milligan said.

Milligan is a 1967 University of Nebraska graduate with a degree in vocational agriculture and a minor in agricultural economics. Influenced by his parents and high school teacher Roland Peterson, Milligan obtained a teaching certificate, although he never taught. Instead he dreamed of starting his own agribusiness company.

After graduating from the University, Milligan married Cynthia Hardin, who later served 11 years as dean of the College of Business Administration. They moved to Washington, D.C., where he attended George Washington University National Law Center. He thought a law degree would provide him a good foundation and training for business.

While in law school, he interned in the White House’s Office of Trade Negotiations. Following his graduation he became a trial attorney in the U.S. Justice Department’s tax division, then served as a regulatory attorney at the Environmental Protection Agency before becoming deputy assistant secretary of commerce at the U.S. Department of Commerce.

“My interest had always been in agribusiness,” Milligan said. “That was my dream after I finished with government service.”

In 1976, he was one of the founders of a biotech start-up business engaged in processing animal blood sera for tissue cultures in support of cancer research. Originally in northern Virginia, Milligan moved the company to Lincoln because the Midwest provided a good raw material base and excellent production facilities. Ultimately, the biotech company expanded into animal protein and meat processing and became known as M.I. Industries.



Bob Milligan

Headquartered in Lincoln, M.I. Industries is best known for its nutritional pet products sold under the brand names of Nature’s Variety, Honey Creek Farms, Happy Pet, and Distinctive Pet Products.

Although the company started with a very small team, it now has more than 250 team members and markets its products in North America, Europe, and Asia.

Milligan credits his University agricultural classes with providing a solid foundation upon which he built his business, as well as leadership training and social skills necessary for business success.

“For example, the meat science courses I took were invaluable and the things I learned we still use in our business every day,” he said.

In June Milligan was elected chair of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce — the world’s largest business advocacy organization with more than 3 million members. It is the first time in the organization’s hundred-year history that a Nebraskan has served in that role.

The position will require extensive traveling, testifying before Congress, public speaking, and working to help open new and expanding global markets for American products and services.

Costa Rican study trip *(continued from page 1)*

stations administered by the Organization of Tropical Studies — a consortium of U.S. and international universities. The La Selva Biological Research Station is a humid lowland rain forest near the Caribbean coast. The Palo Verde station, on the Pacific Ocean coast, has a long dry season.

At each site, students monitored and collected insects for sampling, following the rules of the station requiring the insects be returned to the environment and not killed. They collected night-flying insects, insects from rotting tree logs, and from various specific habitats.

The students learned new collection and sampling techniques, and were required to keep a journal, Baxendale said. Up to three hours of credit were available to students.

Powers said an important aspect of the trip was giving the students the freedom to explore.

“At first everything seems quite exotic, but over the duration of the trip, they start making connections to prior events and observations. They start to put their tropical experience into a broader context,” Baxendale said.

—Lori McGinnis

Awards

Steve Waller, dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, received a Distinguished Educator Award from the North American Colleges of Teachers of Agriculture at a June conference in Oklahoma.

Ron Yoder, head of the Department of Biological Systems Engineering, has been elected president of the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE). He also was named a Fellow of the organization.

Yoder received the recognition at ASABE’s recent annual meeting in Reno, Nev. In addition, several UNL Extension faculty members were recognized with Educational Aids Blue Ribbon awards, Innovative Extension Methods or Impact Assessment awards, and the ASABE presidential citation.

The American Society of Animal Science (ASAS) recognized two IANR faculty members July 13 during the organization’s annual meeting in Montreal.

Terry Klopfenstein, ruminant nutritionist, received the Morrison Award, the society’s most prestigious award given to a member for outstanding livestock production research.

Galen Erickson, feedlot nutritionist, received the Early Career Achievement Award for achievements of a young scholar working toward the organization’s mission.

Ag Builders group gets insights into workings of IANR efforts

A July tour at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in Curtis and the West Central Research and Extension Center at North Platte provided Agriculture Builders of Nebraska (ABN) Inc. insights into the work occurring at both locations.

ABN, dedicated to the continual improvement and prosperity of Nebraska agriculture, was incorporated in 1971. Group members actively support IANR research, teaching, and extension education.

ABN also encourages support of the entire NU budget, realizing that for IANR to be strong the entire University system must be strong.

"ABN is absolutely vital to IANR and the University," said John Owens, NU Vice President and Harlan Vice Chancellor, IANR. "Both for their support and understanding of the value the University brings to our state, and for their advocacy on behalf of agriculture and the Institute. We highly value their commitment, their thoughtful ideas and vision, and their contributions to sustaining and building Nebraska's future."

Jack Maddux of Maddux Cattle Company of Wauneta, an early ABN member, said the founding of the Institute "has been good for us. We think Nebraska agriculture owes a great deal to the University and the land-grant system for bringing the

research along" to boost crop and livestock profitability.

Maddux was one of approximately 40 individuals to participate in ABN's July 9-10 summer tour and meeting. The annual summer meeting allows ABN members and others to get a first-hand look at IANR facilities and current research and education programs.

During the tour ABN 2008-09 president Mike Jacobson talked about the importance of agriculture to Nebraska.

"Of the 241 banks in Nebraska, 90 percent would be classified as agricultural," said Jacobson, president and CEO of Nebraska-Land National Bank at North Platte. "Every community outside of the metro areas has heavy reliance on agriculture. If we want to grow this state, we need to use the natural advantage we already have — and that is agriculture."

According to a 2006 Nebraska Policy Institute report, one in three Nebraska jobs relates in some way to agriculture.

ABN currently has more than 170 members who are involved in production agriculture and agribusiness.

ABN members also hold a January meeting, with a luncheon hosting the Nebraska Legislature and other key state and University officials, as well as a second meeting during the legislative session.

Deaths

Earle Raun, a former chair of the Department of Entomology, died July 6 at age 84.

Raun served as department chair from 1966 to 1970, then became associate director of the Nebraska Cooperative Extension Service, a position he held until 1974. Between 1974 and 1983 he was president of Pest Management Consultants Inc., then became owner and operator of Pest Management Company.

Raun was inducted into the Nebraska Hall of Agricultural Achievement in 2008 and was named a fellow of the Entomological Society of America in 2004. The National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants named Raun consultant of the year in 2005. He received the organization's service award in 2006.

James Emal, professor emeritus, died July 9 at age 61.

Emal began his career with Sarpy County Extension and oversaw the purchase of its first computer in the 1970s. He was one of the first microcomputer specialists at UNL and spent the 1980s computerizing what is now UNL Extension. He traveled the state educating farmers and ranchers

how to use computers in their businesses. In the 1990s Emal helped lead Technologies Across Nebraska, an extension coalition promoting information technology.

Emal retired in 2007 after more than 35 years with the University.

R. Burt Maxcy of Lincoln, professor emeritus in the Department of Food Science and Technology, died June 27 at age 87.

Maxcy, who spent 31 years at UNL, taught and advised students, helped local businesses produce food, and guided irradiation research to preserve food.

Maxcy served as a naval officer for three years during World War II and contributed to the D-Day battle at Omaha Beach.

Paul J. Mattern, professor emeritus, died July 16 at age 87.

Mattern was a cereal chemist in charge of the Wheat Quality Laboratory in the Department of Agronomy for 30 years. His role was essential in the development and release of 30 hard red winter wheat varieties in Nebraska. He had retired in 1988.

Hostetler, Denning receive OEA honors

Judy Hostetler, financial associate in the ASSIST Business Center, and Margaret Denning, office associate in the Department of Plant Pathology, have received Outstanding Employee Awards.

Hostetler received the OEA for managerial/professional staff for July and August. A nominator wrote she is "always eager to accept additional responsibilities or special projects, even when her desk is already overflowing with regular work assignments."

Denning received the OEA for office/service staff for June. A nominator wrote, "I am constantly amazed that she can multitask all the personal interactions with budgets, paperwork, writing memos, and making meeting arrangements in such an efficient and pleasant manner."

Hostetler and Denning received cash awards of \$350, a certificate, and a lapel pin.



Judy Hostetler



Margaret Denning