Awards Presented in Agronomy, 2017

**AWARDS**

**M. FRANCESCA COTRUFO**  
**Mentoring Award**  
Francesca Cotrufo is Professor of Soil Ecology at the Department of Soil and Crop Sciences, and Senior Scientist at the Natural Resource Ecology Laboratory, at Colorado State University. She earned a B.Sc. from the University of Naples, Italy, and a Ph.D. from Lancaster University, UK. Dr. Cotrufo is internationally recognized as an author in the field of soil decomposition and soil organic matter dynamics, and in the use of isotopic methodologies in these studies. Her main research interest is in understanding the mechanisms and drivers of formation and persistence of soil organic matter, and its response to global environmental changes and disturbances. She also pursues applied research to propose soil management practices that increase soil health and mitigate climate change, such as application of biochar in soils. She is subject editor of the journal *Global Change Biology*. To date she has published over 90 peer reviewed articles and several book chapters.

**LEE BRIESE**  
**International Certified Crop Advisor of the Year Award**  
Lee Briese is an independent crop consultant for Centrol Ag Consulting in Edgeley, ND. Mr. Briese earned his B.S. degree in crop and weed science and M.S. degree in soil science from North Dakota State University and is currently pursuing his Doctor of Plant Health at the University of Nebraska. He specializes in developing practical on-farm strategies to reduce soil degradation, incorporate cover crops, and to help increase soil health. Lee has developed plans with farmers in three US states and two Canadian provinces. He has also given numerous presentations about creative management strategies to many audiences including farmers, students, colleagues, scientists, and lay people.

**HARDEV SANDHU**  
**ASA Early Career Professional Award**  
Hardev Sandhu is an assistant professor at the University of Florida, Everglades Research and Education Center, Belle Glade, FL. Dr. Sandhu earned B.S. and M.S. degrees from Punjab Agricultural University, India and a Ph.D. from the University of Florida. He is well recognized in national and international sugarcane communities for his research in sugarcane cultivar development and their management. He was also invited internationally to present his research on development of sugarcane for bioenergy purposes. Dr. Sandhu has authored and co-authored 51 refereed publications and 47 extension articles in the last 7 years. He is mentoring two Ph.D. and two M.S. students and serves on committees of eight other graduate students. He is a member of the technical program committee of the agronomy section in the International Society of Sugar Cane Technologists, a regular member of the American Society of Agronomy, International Society of Precision Agriculture, and American Society of Sugar Cane Technologists.

**JIMMY ZUMBA**  
**Congressional Science Fellow**  
Jimmy Zumba was born in Ecuador, attended the Pan-American School of Agriculture, Zamorano University, in Honduras. He then worked for Monsanto Latin-America in Product Development and successfully introduced several herbicides into this market. He earned his M.Sc. and his Ph.D. degrees in agronomy in plant breeding and genetics from Louisiana State University (LSU). His dissertation title was, “Developing Hybrid Cotton (*Gossypium spp.*) using Honey Bees as Pollinators and Roundup Ready Gene as Selection Trait.” At LSU, he was a part-time student and a full-time employee, where he co-developed and released several cotton varieties. He attended business school at Lehigh University, and obtained his MBA in Corporate Finance. While in business school, he taught entrepreneurship classes. Until January 2015, he worked in the investment and finance industry at the Vanguard Group in the Strategy and Finance Division. He then worked as an established scientist at the USDA-ARS in New Orleans, where he did research on cotton fibers and yarn quality until August 2016. Currently, Dr. Zumba is the ASA–CSSA–SSSA S&T Fellow at the Office of U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar.

**JORGE A. DELGADO**  
**Environmental Quality Research Award**  
Jorge A. Delgado is an Acting Research Leader at USDA-ARS and Fellow of ASA, SSSA and SWCS. Dr. Delgado earned his B.S. degree from the University of Puerto Rico, and his M.S. and Ph.D. from LSU. He has been Chair of the Editorial Board of the SWCS and Research Editor of the *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation* since 2001. Jorge received the first SSSA Presidential Citation in 2001. He received the ASA Werner L. Nelson Award, SSSA Soil Science Research Award, SSSA Soil Science Applied Research Award, and ASA and SSSA international awards. He is a national and international leader in N management and has positively impacted N management and environmental quality by developing and transferring best N management practices and software tools to users. His N tools have been downloaded thousands of times and are used across different regions to apply best management practices and increase environmental quality and reduce N losses across different states and countries.

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Available freely online through the open access option
Quirine Ketterings is professor of nutrient management in agricultural systems at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY. She earned her Ingenieurs (B.Sc.) in Tropical and Subtropical Agriculture from the International Agricultural College, Deventer, and her M.Sc. in Soil and Water from Wageningen University and Research Center, both in the Netherlands, and her Ph.D. in Environmental Sciences from the Ohio State University. She focusses her applied and integrated research, extension, and teaching program (Nutrient Management Spear Program; nmsp.cals.cornell.edu) on development and implementation of adaptive management approaches for agriculture and environmental management for cash grain and dairy operations. The work of her team has contributed to science and greatly improved whole farm nutrient management in New York. To date, Quirine has co-authored 111 peer-reviewed publications and over 480 extension articles, and presented at many international, national, and regional conferences.

Rajiv ‘Raj’ Khosla is a Professor of Precision Agriculture at Colorado State University. He also shares administrative responsibilities at the College of Agricultural Sciences as the Assistant Dean of International Programs. In 2012, Dr. Khosla was named the Jefferson Science Fellow by the National Academy of Sciences and was appointed as Sr. Science Advisor to the U.S. Department of State. In 2011, he became member of the US “Presidential Advisory Board on GPS” to shape the US space based policy on GPS. In 2009, he was named the CSU Distinguished Monfort Professor. Dr. Khosla is a Visiting Professor in Beijing, China. He earned his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from Virginia Tech. Dr. Khosla’s research focus has been on “Management of in-field soil and crop spatial variability using innovative technologies for precision nutrient management.” Dr. Khosla has been elected Fellow of ASA, SSA, and SWCS. He is the Founder and Past President of International Society of Precision Agriculture.

Dr. Elmore is Extension Cropping Systems Agronomist at the University of Nebraska. He was raised on a grain and livestock farm near Princeton, IL. He served in Peace Corps—at Colorado State University. He also shares administrative responsibilities at the College of Agricultural Sciences as the Assistant Dean of International Programs. In 2012, Dr. Khosla was named the Jefferson Science Fellow by the National Academy of Sciences and was appointed as Sr. Science Advisor to the U.S. Department of State. In 2011, he became member of the US “Presidential Advisory Board on GPS” to shape the US space based policy on GPS. In 2009, he was named the CSU Distinguished Monfort Professor. Dr. Khosla is a Visiting Professor in Beijing, China. He earned his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from Virginia Tech. Dr. Khosla’s research focus has been on “Management of in-field soil and crop spatial variability using innovative technologies for precision nutrient management.” Dr. Khosla has been elected Fellow of ASA, SSA, and SWCS. He is the Founder and Past President of International Society of Precision Agriculture.

Fred Vocasek is Senior Laboratory Agronomist for ServiTech, Dodge City, southwest Kansas, the nations’ largest crop consulting firm with three laboratory facilities. He provides customer service, technical interpretations, training, and special services to laboratory clients including crop and livestock producers, consultants and crop advisors, agri-businesses, and homeowners in the Central Plains and beyond. He is frequently asked to present to producer and professional groups about utilizing lab analysis for good soil, crop, water, and livestock management. He has served the American Society of Agronomy as University of Nebraska-Lincoln Agronomy Club President, as Kansas Certified Crop Advisor Board Chair, International CCA Board Chair, 2010 CCA of the Year, ASA Board Representative, ASA Science Policy Chair, and numerous related activities. He coordinated the ASA Water Security for Agriculture Task Force, which generated two national symposia and a 2015 series of invited Agronomy Journal papers.

Zhenli He is Research Foundation Professor, Associate Center Director, and Soil Scientist at the Indian River Research and Education Center, University of Florida, and Adjunct Professor at Zhejiang University, China where he received B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. degrees. He is an internationally recognized soil environmental chemist. Dr. He’s research program focuses on soil fertility and environmental biogeochemistry. He conducts research on biogeochemical processes of nutrients and contaminants in sustainable agriculture, and remediation of contaminated soil and water resources. Dr. He has authored or co-authored 3 books, 30 book chapters, and 230 refereed and 220 non-refereed publications. His publications were cited more than 10,000 times by refereed scholarly journals. Dr. He serves editors/editorial board and ad hoc reviewer for refereed journals, national and international funding agencies, and evaluates Ph.D. theses for universities. Dr. He is a Fellow of SSSA and ASA.

Dr. Yanqi Wu is Meibergen family endowed professor in plant breeding at Oklahoma State University. He received a B.S. degree from Ningxia Agricultural College (now Ningxia University), an M.S. degree at Sichuan Agricultural University, and a Ph.D. degree at Oklahoma State University. His program is internationally recognized for breeding new cultivars in bermudagrass and switchgrass. He has been involved in developing six plant cultivars (four in the US and two in China) for agricultural production. Among the releases, turf bermudagrass cultivars ‘Latitude 36’ and ‘NorthBridge’ have been widely embraced by the turf industry. He holds four US plant patents. He has authored 54 peer-reviewed journal articles and 10 book chapters. He has graduated 5 Ph.D. and 11 M.S. students. He has presented his research at national and international conferences and is an active member in the American Society of Agronomy, Crop Science Society of America, and National Association of Plant Breeders.
Charles (Chuck) Rice is a University Distinguished Professor and holds the Mary L. Vanier University Professorship in the Department of Agronomy at Kansas State University. He earned his B.S. at Northern Illinois University and M.S. and Ph.D. at the University of Kentucky. He is internationally recognized as an authority on soil C and N cycling, and climate change. He has research collaborations in more than 12 countries and has over 200 publications. Rice has served in numerous capacities with ASA and SSSA and served as SSA President in 2011. Internationally, he served on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to author the report on Climate Change in 2007 and 2014 and was among scientists recognized when that work won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007. He is a Fellow of SSSA, ASA, and AAAS. Dr. Rice serves on the Board of Trustees for CIAT, the International Tropical Agriculture Research Center and chairs the Board on Agriculture and Natural Resources of the U.S. National Academies.

Clifford S. Snyder
ASA Distinguished Service Award

Clifford S. Snyder (retired) served as Nitrogen Program Director for the International Plant Nutrition Institute (IPNI), and is based in Conway, AR. He was state soils specialist with the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service (1984–1995), then joined the Potash & Phosphate Institute (1995), which became IPNI (2007). He received a Ph.D. in soil science and forestry at North Carolina State University (1984), and a M.S. in agronomy (1980) and B.S. in agriculture (1978), both at the University of Arkansas. He is internationally recognized for coordinated science to improve cropping system N performance, while reducing nitrous oxide and ammonia emissions, and improving water quality. He is active in the American Society of Agronomy, Soil Science Society of America, and the Soil and Water Conservation Society. He is an adjunct faculty member with the Crop, Soil, and Environmental Sciences Department at the University of Arkansas, and is a Certified Crop Adviser.

Women Farmers
ASA Presidential Award

Globally, women comprise 43% of farmers. In addition, the labor burden of women includes many responsibilities related to collecting fuel and water and preparing food. Although women are experts in local agronomic practices, they are often excluded from owning land, securing capital, and making decisions. In the USA, women account for 30% of farm operators and are the fastest growing segment in agriculture. Women tend to farm smaller pieces of land, grow diverse crops, favor sustainable practices, and include educational components in their farms. Ozzie Abaye, a professor at Virginia Tech University, has been actively engaged in international agronomy for many years. Recently, she has focused her efforts in Senegal where she works with Fatou Gueye and Bineta Guisse (USAID) to strengthen women’s capacity in forage conservation and silage making. They have also started the 4-H Positive Youth Development in Agriculture project that now boasts educational programs in several villages.

Taylor B. Berkshire
Agronomic Travel Study Scholarship

Taylor Berkshire is a senior at Iowa State University. Taylor is majoring in agronomy, environmental science, and international agriculture with a focus in soil science and environmental quality. Taylor provides leadership through her positions in ISU’s Agronomy Club, as well as Alpha Zeta Honorary Agricultural Fraternity. Taylor currently works as a lab assistant at the USDA-ARS in Ames and as a student travel consultant for the Global Programs Office for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. In 2015, she was an intern for the USDA-ARS, helping with various experiments pertaining to cover crops. In 2016, she worked as a lab assistant in the Agronomy Department working with organic oats. This past summer, she worked with the UN FAO to develop a research paper regarding food system transformations to enhance human health. After graduating she hopes to work in soil and/or water conservation to ensure that our resources are kept healthy for generations to come.

Katelyn Fritz
Agronomic Travel Study Scholarship

Katelyn Fritz is a student at Iowa State University double majoring in agronomy and global resource systems with focus areas in plant breeding and biotechnology as well as Central America. Katelyn provides leadership to several organizations having served as a SASES vice-president, as well as positions in both ISU’s Agronomy and International Agriculture (IAAS) clubs and serving as an agronomy peer mentor. Katelyn is currently interning at an NGO, Semilla Nueva, in Guatemala City, Guatemala, working with high zinc quality protein maize. In 2015 she was an intern at the International Rice Research Institute in Los Baños, Philippines through the World Food Prize looking at biofortification of zinc in rice. Katelyn worked as a lab assistant in the Plant Pathology and Microbiology Department at ISU in 2016–2017, helping with a project on organic cucurbit production. After graduation she hopes to continue her work with biofortification in search of a cure to micronutrient deficiencies.

Kolby Grint
Agronomic Travel Study Scholarship

Kolby Grint is an undergraduate student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Kolby provides leadership and tries to make a positive impact on fellow students through the time he spends as the secretary of the Agronomy Club, the treasurer of the UNL Soil Judging Team, and as an undergraduate teaching assistant. Following graduation as an undergraduate Kolby plans on continuing his education by joining the Doctor of Plant Health program at UNL and/or getting his masters degree involving the study of crop production practices.

Samantha Teten
Agronomic Travel Study Scholarship

Samantha Teten is a junior agronomy major at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Samantha will be using her Agronomic Travel Undergraduate Scholarship toward a study abroad to New Zealand this winter. She is president of the UNL.
Agronomy Club and is presenting her undergraduate research related to teaching at the National ASA Conference. Samantha also competes on the Crops Judging Team, Soil Judging Team, and Weeds Contest Team. She has interned with Syngenta and Helena Chemical Company over the summers. She has also gained experience through being a teacher’s assistant for Introduction to Plant Science Lab and Soil Resources, an Undergraduate Research Assistant, and an Ambassador for the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

NICK THEISEN
J. Fielding Reed Scholarship

Nick Theisen is currently a student at North Dakota State University in Fargo, ND where he is pursuing a master’s degree in plant science. Nick’s research focuses on evaluating hop production techniques and cultivars that work well in North Dakota. Nick recently graduated from University of Wisconsin-Platteville in May 2017 with a Bachelor’s of Science degree in soil and crop science. While at UW-Platteville, Nick was very involved with the campus SASES chapter holding a variety of leadership positions such as president in 2016. Nick was also a very involved member of the collegiate crops judging team where his team placed 2nd at the National contests in Kansas City, MO, and Chicago, IL, in 2014. This success allowed Nick to travel to Temora, Australia and participate in a student crop contest through the ASA reinvest program in 2015.

MARTIN BATTAGLIA
Nelson Yield-Limiting Factors Graduate Scholarship

Martin Battaglia is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences at Virginia Tech. A native from Argentina, Martin graduated with honors from Buenos Aires University. Martin worked as a visiting scholar in the Agronomy Department at Iowa State University before attending the University of Kentucky for his M.Sc. degree. Martin’s research interests include the agronomic, economic, and environmental impacts of producing first and second generation biofuels, benefits of cover crops, and yield gaps and potential yield of corn. Martin provides leadership to Virginia Tech at the departmental and college level and to several national organizations. During his Ph.D. program, Martin worked for two years with 5th and 12th grade students in underserved communities as a Graduate Extension Scholar. This program gave him opportunity to teach and conduct outreach efforts. Martin is an ASA member and the 2017 vice-chair/2018 chair for the ACS–Graduate Student Committee.

NICHOLAS L. HURDLE
Frank D. Keim Graduate Fellowship

Nicholas Hurdle is a Graduate student at the University of Georgia and is majoring in crop and soil sciences with an emphasis in weed science. With his Masters degree, he hopes to be employed by a major seed company conducting research. He has held research intern positions with companies such as DuPont Pioneer, Bunge North America, and WinField United. He was a participant in the Fellows Research Program at UT-Martin. In this program, Nicholas conducted a personal research experiment with a faculty member. His project involved fall armyworm (Spodoptera frugiperda) infestation rates and their effect on corn yield when applied at the reproductive growth stages. He hopes that this research experience combined with skills acquired through the Golden Opportunity Scholars program will be beneficial to his future in agriculture.

TAYLOR A. YOUNG
Frank D. Keim Graduate Fellowship

Taylor Young is a Graduate Assistant at Missouri State University in Springfield, MO, pursuing a M.S. degree in plant science. She became interested in a career in agronomy in high school while growing strawberries and competing in the FFA agronomy CDE. Taylor completed her undergraduate and accelerated Master’s program at Missouri State University in May 2017. While completing her B.S. in environmental plant science, she interned with the Litton Agri-Science Learning Center and the Missouri Department of Agriculture Grain Inspection and Warehousing Division. Taylor competed in the NACTA crop judging team and served as president of the Agronomy Club for Missouri State University. Her thesis project examines the impacts of soil phosphorus availability on mineral content of annual cereal grasses grown for forage. She plans to complete her masters in December 2018 and pursue a career in research and teaching.

GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARS

S. BRAD DAVIS

Brad Davis is a student in the Department of Applied Plant Science at Brigham Young University-Idaho, majoring in crop and soil sciences. He has participated in several undergraduate research projects emphasized in fertility such as: ammonia volatilization, seed safety with starter fertilizers, alfalfa response to early applied nitrogen, and phosphorus adsorption in calcareous soils with different fertilizer concentrations. Brad presented three times in the undergraduate poster presentations at the ASA, CSSA, SSSA Annual Meetings and placed second twice. He looks forward to continuing with agronomy-related research when he attends graduate school.

KEREN DUERKSEN

Keren Duerksen is a junior at Kansas State University, majoring in agronomy with minors in plant pathology and international agriculture. In 2016, she served as the corresponding secretary for the Students of Agronomy, Soils, and Environmental Sciences (SASES), the undergraduate student program of the tri-societies. Keren is the current treasurer of the Wheat State Agronomy Club, and enjoys competing on the K-State crops, soils, and weeds team. She has been involved in multiple research projects during her time at K-State dealing with root health, herbicide efficacy, and hybrid selection. Upon graduation in May 2019, Keren plans to go to graduate school with an emphasis in soil fertility. After graduate school, Keren hopes to use her education internationally to help growers around the world produce higher yields, using innovative, and sustainable practices.
AUDREY C. GEISE
Audrey Geise is a senior agroecology student at West Virginia University with minors in biology, geography, and conservation ecology. As a Boren Scholar, she completed a research affiliation with the Soil Science and Agricultural Chemistry Department at Banaras Hindu University. She has recently completed an internship at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center where she researched methanogenesis across various soil depths and temperature in a coastal temperate wetland. She is interested in attending graduate school for soil chemistry.

REBECCA S. JOHNSON
Rebecca Johnson is a senior at Iowa State University majoring in Agronomy and Horticulture. She has been an undergraduate assistant in Dr. Kathleen Delate’s lab since 2014, where research is focused on nutrient and pest management in organic systems, including effects of cover crops, compost, and crop rotations on pests, yield, and soil quality. She is also involved in organizations such as Agronomy Club, Alpha Zeta, and Adoption Club, as well as the Iowa Organic Conference. She has co-authored three publications with Dr. Delate. In the spring of 2017, Johnson was invited to present research at Sustainapalooza at Iowa State University, Research in the Capitol in Des Moines, and the Undergraduate Research Symposium at Iowa State University. She also presented research done through an undergraduate research fellowship with Dr. Roger Elmore at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln at the 2016 American Society of Agronomy Meetings in Phoenix, AZ.

HOLLY M. LANE
Holly Lane is a senior studying agricultural biotechnology at Washington State University in Pullman, WA. She currently works in a molecular plant science lab on campus, where she is furthering her independent research project that investigates protein interactions in a gene family in plants. She has worked on this project both on campus in Pullman, as well as abroad in Valencia, Spain. Holly also has experience in field and extension research. She is currently excelling in her academics at WSU and served as a student ambassador last year. Holly is not from an agricultural background, but became interested in the field after becoming curious about where her food came from. With interests that spread from organic agriculture to biotechnology, she one day hopes to help bridge the growing gap between farmers and consumers. Holly sees her future place in the agricultural industry as making connections across the spectrum of growing systems with ultimate goals in sustainable agriculture.

FRANKLIN LINAM
Franklin Linam is a senior soil science major and chemistry minor at Texas A&M University. Franklin has worked in three different labs and has completed an undergraduate thesis project investigating the minerals associated with acid drainage from a former Texas coal mine. Franklin has been on the Dean’s list most semesters and was recently nominated for the college of agriculture’s Undergraduate Research Outstanding Achievement Award. In 2016, Franklin spent the summer in Uganda assisting and advising a sustainable agriculture nonprofit, and learning about the agricultural problems faced in that part of the world. This inspired Franklin to further pursue degrees in soil chemistry to hopefully find sustainable solutions to soil degradation and productivity problems around the world. Franklin is on the Texas A&M Soil Judging Team, is the secretary of the Texas A&M student chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society, and is an active member of the American Society of Agronomy.

VIVIAN C. MAIER
Vivian Maier is an undergraduate student studying plant science at Fresno State in California. She will be completing her B.S. degree in 2018 and then hopes to continue her education into a program focusing on agricultural biosystems engineering. She desires to help create solutions for areas lacking in resources such as land, water, and cultivable land. Vivian is an award-winning public speaker and will soon share her research once more in August at the University of Jonestown in Guyana. Her passion has led her to become the Legislative Director of the local chapter of the California Women for Agriculture, to be selected for the Student Diversity Program and attend the Agricultural Outlook Forum, and she was recently elected as president of the Plant Science Club. She is currently working on numerous research projects, including a hydroponics laboratory on campus, in order to diversify her knowledge in agriculture.

AUTUMN ALYCE MCLAUGHLIN
Autumn McLaughlin is a senior at the University of Tennessee-Martin studying crop and soil science. The past two years she has interned at West Tennessee Research and Education Center where she assisted in research in field crop pathology with Dr. Heather Kelly. This past summer she completed a supply chain internship with Monsanto Hawaii under Agronomy Lead Dr. Krishna Bayareddy. Autumn provides leadership for several organizations, as well as serving as her Sigma Alpha chapter President. Autumn plans to attend graduate school in the field of plant pathology.

GRACE K. OGDEN
Grace Ogden is a student of the Plant and Soil Science Department at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma. She is an undergraduate researcher in Dr. Misha Manuchehri’s weed science lab. She is a Niblack Research Scholar with a project on Italian Ryegrass management systems in winter wheat with preemergent herbicides. Grace is involved in the Oklahoma State Agronomy Club, serving as the 2017–2018 vice president. She is also a SASES national officer, serving as the 2016–2017 corresponding secretary. Grace aspires to earn her Ph.D. and continue her career in research.

CEDRIC EVAN PARK
Evan Park attends the University of Maryland, where he is majoring in environmental science and technology with a concentration in soil and watershed science. He has worked on diverse research projects, including a study of IRIS technology efficacy over a temperature gradient; the identification, analysis, and mapping of Problematic Red Parent Material soils; the impact of urbanization on wetland microbes in the Chesapeake Bay and the Buenos Aires province of Argentina; and stream discharge after storm events in restored freshwater stream
Warren H. Porter is a current undergraduate student at Brigham Young University, in Provo, UT. He has been working in the fields of agronomy and soil science for the past two years, specifically studying the release of polymer coated urea. He is currently studying aquaponics, using the Amazonian fish red-bellied pacu, growing varieties of vegetables, ranging from tomatoes to soybeans. He has had the opportunity to be honored for his work for Sera Prognostics on a new blood assay, which can be used to predict at what week a woman will give birth. Warren is very interested in taking what he has learned in his studies in agronomy and soil science, to help create healthier food production systems.

Lauren Schwarck is a senior at Iowa State University majoring in agronomy and seed science with a minor in agricultural systems technology. During her time at ISU she has been involved with the ISU Crops Team and Agronomy Club. Currently she is serving as a chair on the fundraising committee for the ISU Agronomy Club. Lauren has held positions with the University of Iowa State Hygienic Laboratory, The Andersons, and has also worked as a federal employee for the USDA. For the past two years, she has been working for DuPont Pioneer in agronomy sciences and agronomy sales in north central Iowa. During the school year, she also works as an assistant to Dr. Erik Christian to manage a greenhouse and to prepare materials for the ISU Crops Team. Upon graduation in the spring of 2018, she hopes to pursue graduate studies in crop management systems or soil fertility.

Tyler Searle is student manager at the Research Business Development Center (RBDC) in Rexburg, ID, and is a senior at Brigham Young University-Idaho. Tyler enjoys his studies in applied plant science and works heavily with agricultural businesses to provide research experience for students. He is currently working with 21 different agronomy-related research projects and helping provide 30-plus students with opportunities in research. He recently won National 1st place in Agriculture Sales at the Postsecondary Agriculture Students Organization (PAS) competition in St. Charles, MO. At this same competition he had the opportunity to compete in team events related to agronomy. Tyler has had the opportunity to present research in classes and to the businesses to help grow student research opportunities. He has deep love for agriculture and wants to help others have similar experiences that he has had.

William M. Singer is from Mt. Juliet, TN, a town just east of Nashville. He is currently a student at the University of Tennessee at Martin majoring in agriculture production and minorizing in business. He is president of the University Scholars Program and the Student Ambassador Association. Mr. Singer has a passion for public speaking and advocating for agriculture. He is involved with the Agriculture Future of America, FuSE Campus Connections, and soybean and soil research at his university. He is also a student innovator for the Ned Ray McWherter Institute. Through this institute, he has had the opportunity for personal and professional development as well as international travel to Greece and Italy. Mr. Singer was also the precision agriculture counselor for the Tennessee Governor’s School for the Agricultural Sciences. As a counselor, he assisted university professors in teaching high school students college-level material and promoted hands-on learning.

Matalyn E. Stark is a senior at Cornell University in Ithaca, NY. She will be receiving a B.S. in agricultural sciences in May of 2018. Matalyn is minorin in soil science, crop production and management, and education. At Cornell University, she has served in numerous leadership positions such as president for Agricultural Sciences Ambassadors, second vice-president for Sigma Alpha Agricultural Sorority, and president of Cornell Collegiate Farm Bureau. Matalyn is a soil science student trainee for the USDA–Natural Resource Conservation Service in Kansas.

Carmen J. Swannack is a senior at Washington State University in Pullman, WA. She will graduate in December with a bachelor’s degree in agricultural biotechnology and minors in Spanish and genetics. She plans to go on to graduate school and earn both a master’s and a doctorate degree in crop science related fields. She plans to pursue a career in plant breeding. Carmen has been working in the winter wheat breeding lab in Pullman for three years, where she has had the opportunity to participate in a faculty mentored research project focusing on stripe rust. This summer Carmen had an internship at the WSU Tree Fruit Research and Extension Center in Wenatchee, WA. While there, she worked on a research project aiming to find better crabapple varieties for use as pollinizers in commercial orchards.

Suzette N. Turner is pursuing an agriculture science degree emphasizing land resource management at California State University-Chico. Suzette is a top student with a 4.0 GPA and is an established Dean’s Honor List student. She is also leading undergraduate research investigating the interactions of soil, biochar, and nutrient cycling. She presented her research at the California Chapter ASA conference in January 2017. She is a NRCS Pathways Intern & Soil Conservationist working with producers to promote ecological and soil health practices. She has received recognition for her work through a variety of scholarships and was nominated by CSU-Chico staff for the Student Spotlight as well as Star Student awards. She is also a member of the American Society of Agronomy, Soil Science Society of America, Crop Science Society of America, and the Soil and Water Conservation Society. She plans to attend graduate school in fall 2018.
LIZA VAN DER LAAN
Liza Van der Laan is a senior at Oklahoma State University, where she studies plant and soil science with an emphasis in plant biotechnology and improvement. She plans to graduate in December 2017. Upon graduating, Liza is planning on continuing her education by pursuing a M.S. in plant science with an emphasis on plant breeding, and eventually obtain a Ph.D. Liza has been an active member of the OSU Agronomy Club since her freshmen year, and has served as the Agronomy Club president for the past three semesters. Additionally, she has worked as a student volunteer for her academic college in student outreach and professional development for the past three years. Her time is also spent working for the OSU Wheat Breeding program led by Dr. Brett Carver for the last three years. Liza has been a student member of ASA, CSSA, and SSSA since her freshmen year of college. She has also attended numerous SASES conferences, both the national meetings in the fall, and the spring meetings.

HUNT WALNE
Hunt Walne is a graduate research assistant at the Soil Plant Atmosphere Research (SPAR) facility located at Mississippi State University. Hunt received a B.S. in agronomy from MSU and is currently pursuing a M.S. in plant and soil sciences under the direction of Dr. Raja Reddy. He is currently studying the effect of moisture stress and flooding in corn and various other crops. In addition to his studies, Hunt is also an active leader on campus, serving as president of the Agronomy Club, a mentor to student peers, former Student Body vice president and former Student Senator from the College of Ag. In addition to his passion for Ag science, Hunt has an interest in agricultural economics and public policy. In his free time, Hunt enjoys spending time in the outdoors and cheering on the Mississippi State Bulldogs.

CIERA WARE
Ciera Ware is a junior plant and soil science student at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, TX. Ciera currently works as a research assistant with Dr. Peter Dotray at the Texas A&M AgriLife Research & Extension Center in Lubbock, where she has assisted with trial protocols involving cotton, sorghum, peanut, and sesame herbicide tolerance and weed control. In addition to assisting with research, she is an active member of the tri-societies and has competed in the SASES crops judging and quiz bowl competitions at the past two national conferences. Ciera is a Texas Tech Terry Foundation Scholar, a CASNR Dean’s Scholar, and an active member of the Texas Tech Honors College. She is on track to graduate in May 2019 with highest honors and after graduation, she plans to attend graduate school and pursue a career as a research agronomist. Her research areas of interest include weed management systems and irrigation technology.

ALEC M. WEBER
Alec Weber is an agronomy student from South Dakota State University. He is conducting undergraduate research on grazing diverse cover crop mixtures and their effects on soil properties and farm profitability to fulfill the requirements of the South Dakota State University Honors College. He has held executive positions in the South Dakota State Agronomy & Conservation Club, Jacks for Life, and graduated summa cum laude with his B.A. in agronomy last May. Alec resides in Brookings with his wife, Sierra, and their newborn. They aspire to continue to contribute to their local and scientific communities by working with SARE & NRCS and by managing their family’s corn, soybean, wheat, alfalfa, and cow-calf operation in Lake Andes, SD.

ELIZABETH WIDDER
Elizabeth Widder is a senior in agronomy and animal science. This past summer she was employed by Winfield United as the Agronomy Intern for eastern Iowa. During her time at Iowa State she was involved on campus in several capacities including, Agronomy Peer Mentor, Teaching Assistant, Ambassador for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, and as an active leader in the ISU Agronomy Club, which is associated with the national organization SASES. She served as president and program coordinator. As a member of the Agronomy Club, she thoroughly enjoyed planning several educational activities and events for the community with her team members. She hopes to pursue this passion when she graduates by educating in some capacity about agriculture, whether it is growers, students, or the public.

GREENFIELD SCHOLARS

KEELY OVERMYER
Keeley Overmyer from Burgoon, OH, is a senior at The Ohio State University. She is majoring in sustainable plant systems with a specialization in agronomy and is minoring in agribusiness. On campus, she is involved in Crops and Soils Club, Sigma Alpha Professional Agricultural Sorority, Towers Agricultural Honorary, and she works as a student research assistant. Keeley has completed several agronomy and field sales internships as well. After graduation, she would like to attend graduate school, then pursue a career as an agronomist.

GEORGINA ERANDI REYES SOLORIO
Georgina E. Reyes Solorio is a junior plant science–plant health major at California State University, Fresno. Her activities include FFA, Ag Ambassadors, Plant Science Club, CA Women for Ag, SASES, Sigma Alpha, and CAPCA. She initiated Fresno State’s first Soil Judging Team and placed 2nd overall high individual, team and group in Region 6. She worked as a research technician to gain experience establishing field trials; collecting leaf, fruit, and soil samples; entering information in multiple databases; and even working with pollinator studies. Currently she works as a field scout and randomly samples citrus to detect and identify damage caused by pests. She wants to become a Pest Control Adviser and Certified Crop Adviser. Her studies focus on crops, soil nutrition, irrigation management, pomology, and integrated pest management. Her ultimate goal is to obtain her M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in agronomy, become an agronomist and professor, and make a difference in world agriculture.
NANCY ALEXIS VALDEZ
Nancy Valdez is a senior at California State University, Fresno majoring in plant science with an option in plant health. She graduates May 2018 and her main interests are pomology, plant pathology, and soil/water relations. Most of her work involves working with permanent crops, such as almonds, citrus, and most recently table grapes. More specifically, she has learned the fundamental aspects of farming those crops and has put them into practice through internships. Since her transfer to Fresno State, she has had two internship opportunities. She worked with Wonderful Citrus as a farm management intern where she oversaw how a large company functions from the nursery to the shelves. Most recently, she was a plant fertility/irrigation intern for Grapery Inc. where she led new projects for the company. She has a passion for educating her peers about agriculture and, therefore, plans on obtaining a M.S. degree and work in extension/research within the soil science or tree fruit industry.

SARAH ZERGER
Sarah Zerger is a senior at Kansas State University studying agronomy with an option in consulting and production. She is serving her second term as the president for the Wheat State Agronomy Club. She works with Dr. Kevin Donnelly as an undergraduate teaching assistant for his Crop Science labs in the fall and spring semesters and assists with the Plant and Seed Identification course in the spring. This fall will be the third semester of teaching Crop Science labs and she will be an assistant coach for the crops team. She has competed on the fall crops team, the K-State Australian crops team, the NACTA crops team, and the weeds team. The academic competition teams are such an integral part of learning and have helped in learning applicable agronomic practices for use in her internships and on her family’s farm. Sarah has interned for Mid Kansas Cooperative for two years as a crop scout and crop scout manager. She would like to work as a crop consultant after graduation.