

The Syllabus

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A newsletter for Master of Agribusiness students, alumni & friends

Welcome to the 14th MAB Cohort, Class of 2013

Aaron Bartholomay
Senior Marketing Rep
John Deere Company
West Des Moines, IA

Emily Barwick
Production Development
Specialist
House-Autry Mills
Clayton, NC

Angie Bausch
Financial Officer
B & E Farms
Partnership
Glen Haven, WI

Bill Bodine
Director of External
Relations
Illinois Farm Bureau
DeKalb, IL

Dana Brooks
Sr. Vice President,
Government Relations
National Milk Producers
Federation
Washington, D.C.

Chris Bursiek
Customer and Product
Support
John Deere Company
Ankeny, IA

Mario Cervantes
Director
Tlalli Organics
Bellaire, TX

Nanci Daesch
VP Finance, US & Canada
Monsanto
Webster Groves, MO

Juan Finelli
Owner
Agroindustrias Miller
Alta Gracia, Argentina

Brandon Garrett
Strategic Account
Manager
Pfizer Animal Health
Concord, MI

Grant Good
Sr. Design Engineer
AGCO Corporation
Moundridge, KS

Joe Gyapong
Investment Analyst
Venture Capital Trust Fund,
Ghana
Accra, Ghana

Kevin Harper
Sales/Agronomy
Jimmy Sanders Inc.
Winnsboro, LA

Seth Harrison
Crop Care Product
Support
John Deere Des Moines
Works
Pleasant Hill, IA

Chris Hartwig
Seed Sales Manager
Farmers Cooperative
Lincoln, NE

Beth Holmes
IT Analytics Lead
Monsanto Company
Ballwin, MO

Class of 2013 continued on pg 5

Campus Session Scenes



Left: Dr. Allen Featherstone conducts a lecture on financial management. Middle: Chris Hartwig (left) and Lance Staggengborg collaborate. Right: Grant Good (left), Lydia Mtchotsa and Andrew Russell take advantage of evening work time to complete assignments.

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Alumni Spotlight

Bill Davis

Class of 2010

Senior V.P. & Chief Credit Officer
Farm Credit Services of America

K-State Master of Agribusiness bridges the gap between business and agriculture for Farm Credit employee

by Mary Bowen

Bill Davis, Omaha, Neb., has a strong connection to the agriculture industry. He grew up on a farm in Western Missouri, completed a degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and went to work for the Farm Credit system in Missouri, Illinois and Arkansas. He was looking for a graduate degree with a business focus when he learned of the K-State Master of Agribusiness (MAB) distance program. He found the MAB's combination of agriculture and business an exceptional fit.

"I've always had a desire to get a degree in business. The agribusiness aspect of the MAB program was very attractive—it bridges the gap between an MBA and a Masters in Agricultural Economics," Davis said. "Also, the other students are from a variety of companies in the agribusiness and agriculture industry, so it has really opened up my network beyond agribusiness finance. The program also has an excellent mixture of domestic and international students, allowing me to gain a greater perspective on how the international dimension affects our local producers."

After serving 17 years as a Financial Officer and the Credit Underwriting Team Lead in Missouri, he transitioned to Farm Credit Services of America (FCSAmerica) in Omaha in 1998, as their Credit Scorecard Underwriting Team Lead before accepting the Chief Credit Officer position in 2005. FCSAmerica is a cooperative financial services provider offering real estate, crop insurance, and farm machinery and equipment loans to over 80,000 farmers, ranchers, and rural residents in the states of Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Wyoming. As the Chief Credit Officer, Davis develops credit policy, leads the Loan Committee, and provides support to each of the Underwriting Teams: Retail, AgDirect, Agribusiness



Alumnus Bill Davis at the K-State Commencement Ceremony in May 2010.

Finance and Special Accounts.

The opportunity to complete a master's degree while continuing his career is another factor that attracted Davis to the MAB program. The MAB program combines four one-week campus sessions with distance education to create an exceptional and convenient learning environment.

"The combination of distance and short campus sessions fit my lifestyle. I'd looked at other programs over the years, but did not want to quit work to return to school. The MAB allowed me to continue working and earn a graduate degree. The campus sessions gave me the opportunity to get to know my classmates and faculty and build connections with them," Davis said.

Davis is not the only one who benefited from earning his degree. His thesis, "The Feasibility of Crop Insurance Agency Acquisitions," was designed to help FCSAmerica determine if acquiring crop insurance policies written by other agencies made economic sense.

As federal subsidies to producers decline, crop insurance is becoming an increasingly important risk management tool for crop producers. There are many forms of insurance, including multi-peril, crop revenue coverage, revenue assurance and traditional crop hail insurances. Crop insurance is one of the core products of FCSAmerica.

Crop insurance has displaced commodity program payments as the most important safety net for net farm income. The industry faces uncertainty regarding the future level of federal subsidies and profitability levels for the insurance industry.

"Crop insurance has displaced commodity program payments as the most important safety net for net farm income. The industry faces uncertainty regarding the future level of federal subsidies and profitability levels for the insurance industry," Davis said. "This thesis project examined a wide range of assumptions for future economic and political support scenarios. In spite of the uncertainty, an acquisition strategy can be feasible with reduced commissions, if priced appropriately."

Given the uncertainty surrounding subsidies and insurance profitability, Davis's work has provided guidance in making decisions on whether to make acquisitions. Since completing the thesis project, FCSAmerica has used the

Davis continued on pg 3

KSU and USM sign partnership agreement

Officials from Kansas State University and Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) signed a Memorandum of Understanding agreement on November 15, 2010 to bring K-State's award-winning Master of Agribusiness (MAB) to Southeast Asia. USM Vice-Chancellor and Y. Bhg. Professor Tan Sri Dato' Dzulkifli Abdul Razak, USM School of Management Dean Associate Professor Datuk Ishak Ismail together with Prof. Datin Hasnah Haron, Dean Graduate School of Business, USM and K-State Professor of Agricultural Economics Allen Featherstone were on hand to represent both universities at the ceremony held at USM.

"Interest in the MAB program from those outside the United States continues to grow. Many agribusiness professionals have expressed a desire to obtain a masters degree to increase their business and economic skills and their understanding of the food and agribusiness system on a global scale. They understand the need for quality education and admire the reputation that Kansas State University and the Master of Agribusiness program share. However, many international students have difficulty participating in a U.S. program due to the time needed for traveling to the U.S. for on-campus sessions and to a lesser extent U.S. visa issues. The new Southeast Asia cohort will provide international agribusiness students another option for continuing their education," said Featherstone, who is also the Director of the Master of Agribusiness program.

Members from Kansas State University selected USM as a partner university for the Master of Agribusiness program due to its growing reputation in the Asian business industry. The USM Master of Business Administration program was ranked in the Top 25 in the Asia Pacific region by *Asian Inc.* in 1997 and they have been recognized as the Best School of Business Management and Accounting in Malaysia in 2003. In addition, in 2009, USM was selected for the Accelerated Program for Excellence (APEX).

"The APEX designation will further develop USM's international business reputation and transform them into a



USM Vice-Chancellor and Y. Bhg. Professor Tan Sri Dato' Dzulkifli Abdul Razak and K-State MAB Director Allen Featherstone answer media questions about the partnership agreement between USM and K-State.

world-class business school," Featherstone said. "We believe the partnership between K-State and USM will be beneficial to both schools and the Master of Agribusiness program."

Established in 1998, the Master of Agribusiness program was the first distance degree for professionals working in the food and agriculture industry in the U.S. Currently, students visit K-State during four one-week campus sessions where they meet other students and faculty, receive training on the technology used, interact with industry leaders and give group project presentations. In the new cohort, the "on-campus" portion of the program will be offered at the Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) in Penang, Malaysia, beginning in May 2011. The curriculum will be adapted to Southeast Asia's business environment and students will learn about real business situations through interaction with K-State faculty, industry leaders and classmates.

The MAB program is currently accepting applications for the May 2011 cohort based at USM in Penang, Malaysia. If you would like more information about the Southeast Asian MAB cohort, please call 785.532.4495, email mab@agecon.ksu.edu or visit our website at www.mab.ksu.edu.

Davis continued from pg 2

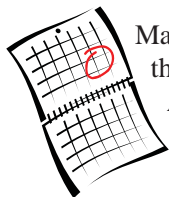
model to assess the economic feasibility of acquiring crop insurance agencies.

"Bill did a nice job building an economic model that has allowed his organization to price acquisition opportunities under different economic and policy scenarios," said Allen Featherstone, Professor of Agricultural Economics and Davis's thesis advisor.

Davis enjoys his work with FCSAmerica, but family is most important to him. He has been married for 30 years

to his wife, Tammy, and they have lived in Omaha, Neb. for the past 13 years. Tammy is also a graduate of the University of Nebraska, and has a Masters in education from Doane College. Tammy teaches chemistry at Millard West High School, in Omaha. They have a daughter, Katie, and a son, Alan. Katie is a senior at Valparaiso University in northwest Indiana, majoring in public relations and business. Alan is a freshman at Millard North High School in Omaha. In his spare time, Davis enjoys attending Alan's sports events, hunting, fishing, and occasionally golf.

4th MAB professional development and alumni reunion event scheduled for September



Mark your calendars and plan on joining us for the fourth MAB Professional Development and Alumni Reunion Event in Manhattan, KS. The event is scheduled for September 22-23 and will be held at the Clarion Hotel. This event is open to current MAB students, alumni, advisory

board members, friends, and agribusiness colleagues interested in hearing from industry experts on hot-button topics affecting the global food and agriculture environment.



Attendees at the 2009 event in Kansas City listen to a presentation on the effects of climate change regulation.

The program will kick-off early afternoon on Thursday, September 22nd. With direct flights into Manhattan from both Dallas and Chicago, the "Little Apple" is more accessible than ever! *Be watching for more details on the MAB website, www.mab.ksu.edu, and the Summer Syllabus!*

All of the programming suggestions on the recent survey will help us put together a timely and interesting program. If you are interested in being on the planning committee to help us choose topics, activities and possible speakers, please contact Mary at mjbowen@ksu.edu.

5th MAB International Tour is being planned for 2012

The votes are in and a destination for the 5th MAB international agribusiness tour has been selected. We will travel to Europe and tour **France and Italy**, possibly with a stop or two in Switzerland. The trip is tentatively scheduled for early August 2012. More information will be available soon.

Parlez-vous francais? Buon giorno!



Students complete thesis projects

To read current or previous thesis projects, go to <http://krex.k-state.edu/dspace/> and search by author, title or keywords (no log-in required). To read a thesis written before 2008 or view thesis defense, log onto K-State On-Line, www.online.ksu.edu, with your eID and password. Go to the MAB Community Page, go to Files & Content and click on Theses.

Nathan Broders, Class of 2006, *Feasibility Study of a 100 Million Gallon Ethanol Plant in Des Moines, Iowa*

Derrick Coleman, Class of 2010, *Determining How to Increase Premium Honey Smoked Turkey's Selling Potential Based on Flavor Reformulations*

Virginia Guardia, Class of 2010, *Fed Cattle Sourcing Methods Assessment for Uruguayan Packers*

Dustin Ploeger, Class of 2010, *Growing the Footprint of Traditional Grain Origination*

Joshua Staley, Class of 2010, *A Business Plan for a 600-Acre Farm and a 300-Head Commercial Cow Herd in South-Central Idaho*

Class of 2013 continued from pg 1

Alexandra Jecrois Madrid
Agritrader
PS International Ltd
Cary, NC

Paul Pommer
Production Supervisor
Cargill Inc.
Salina, KS

Michael Kempke
Location Manager for Crop
Production
Garden City Co-op
Garden City, KS

Ryan Roloff
RTK Product Specialist
John Deere
Ankeny, IA

This is the largest MAB class with 33 students, including three from Zambia, one from Ghana, and one from Argentina!

Sage Kim
Veterinary Food
Inspector
U.S. Army
Fayetteville, NC

Andrew Russell
Data Center Operator
Trade Station
Lauderhill, FL

Sally Long
Assistant Manager
Long Cattle Co.
Guymon, OK

Lance Staggenborg
Quality Production
Supervisor
Land O'Lakes/Purina
Feed
Lubbock, TX

Tene Mouphtaou
Substitute Teacher
Prince George's Public
Schools
Laurel, MD

Ron Vargas
Assistant Farm
Manager
Dole Berry Company
Bonsall, CA

Lydia Mtchotsa
Agribusiness Officer
PLARD
Mansa, Zambia

Chris Wagner
Grain Accounting &
Merchandising
Garden City Co-op
Garden City, KS

Sosthenes Mwansa
Programs Officer
PELUM Zambia
Lusaka, Zambia

Zach Waite
Investigator
Minneapolis Grain
Exchange
Bloomington, MN

Martin Mwansa
Investment Analyst
Zambia Agribusiness
Technical Advisory Centre
Lusaka, Zambia

Bob Weyrich
Agriculture Development
Specialist
South Dakota Dept. of
Agriculture
Pierre, SD

Nathan Perry
Financial Services
Officer
Farm Credit Services of
Mid-America
Spring Hill, TN

Campus Session Scenes



Top to bottom: Tene Mouphtaou, Alexandra Jecrois and Angie Bausch concentrate on homework.

MAB Alumna Laura Roessler gives a presentation to first and second year students on Capital Markets in Agriculture.

Ryan Roloff and Seth Harrison take a break from studying.

Class of 2012 (second year students) working hard.

Bottom: Fernando Rodriguez, Christy Pepple and Kristen Greer give a presentation on China during an International Agribusiness and Policy Analysis class session.

in the NEWS...

Chris Simms, class of 2009, and his wife Jennie, won the Virginia Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmers Excellence in Agriculture Award and were later named the winners for the award at the national level. They will receive a 2011 Dodge Ram pickup as winners of the American Farm Bureau Federation award.

Mark Seitz, class of 2003, accepted the position of Cooperative Extension Director for Pender County, North Carolina.

Nate Smith, class of 2011, recently accepted the position of Manager, Parts and Service Sales with John Deere Company.

Nik Haas, class of 2011, is moving to Ogden, Utah where he will be working as the Head Miller for Cargill.

Leanne Hoagland, class of 2007, brought home five 1st place titles for her shire horses at the 2010 U.S. Shire Nationals in September. She has also been appointed to the Board of Directors for the American Shire Horse Association.

Paula Prindiville, class of 2008, now works as District Manager for Catherine's in St. Louis.

Leslie Shuler Svacina, class of 2009, had a paper from her thesis published in the NACTA Journal in December 2010.

Matt Smith, class of 2012, and his wife are expecting the birth of their first baby on May 1st.

Sarah Velasquez, class of 2007, finished a Master's of Science in Technical Writing at Utah State University and is a co-author on an article published in January.

Jeff Bennett, class of 2007, accepted a position with John Deere Intelligent Solutions Group as a Test Engineer.

Christy Pepple, class of 2012, was recently promoted to Assistant Facility Manager for Cargill's Horizon Milling in Ogden, Utah.

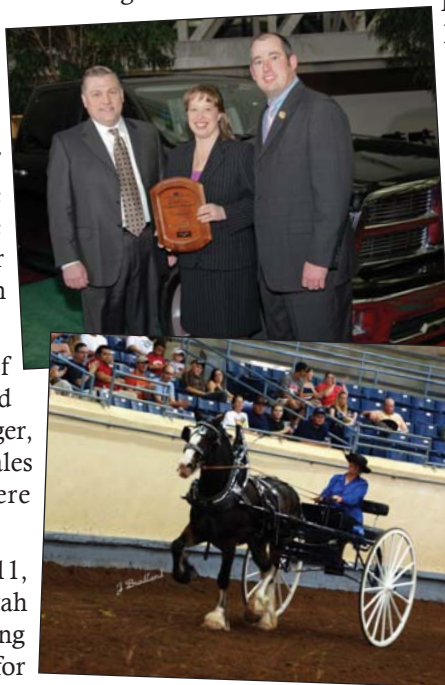
Brandon Garrett, class of 2013, started a new job within Pfizer and will be moving to North Carolina. His new position is as a Strategic Account Manager.

Earl Biggers, class of 2009, was promoted to Manager, Price Risk Management for Dairy Risk Management Services with Dairy Farmers of America. He and his wife will be relocating to Kansas City this spring.

Walden Hodges, class of 2002,

a long time employee of CSM Bakery Products, NA has been promoted to the newly created position of Product Marketing Manager for Mixes, Fillings, and Toppings (crisps & streusels). Walden has widespread sales, service and R&D experience in the industrial baking and food service channels. He and his wife, Ronda, will be relocating to Atlanta, GA in 2011.

Kevin Newkirk, class of 2011, and Star A Inc., have been awarded the 2010 Riley County Banker Association Soil Conservation Award. The award is given annually to agricultural producers who maintain and implement soil conservation practices to protect topsoil and water quality.



Top: Chris and Jennie Simms accept the AFBF Young Farmers's Excellence in Agriculture Award in Atlanta.

Bottom: Leanne Hoagland driving their 2-year old, Big Sky All That Jazz, at the 2010 U.S. Shire Nationals.

MAB Calendar

March 20-25
Campus Session

April 11
AGEC 710, Comparative Food and Agriculture Systems begins

May 1-6
Southeast Asia Campus Session at USM in Penang, Malaysia

May 2
Deadline to attend spring commencement - Approval to schedule final examination and diploma information forms due

May 6
Final electronic copy of thesis due to graduate school to be spring grad

May 13
K-State spring commencement

May 20
Final electronic copy of thesis due to graduate school to be August grad

June 12-14
Institute of Food Technologists Expo in New Orleans

July 11-15
Southeast Asia Campus Session at USM in Penang, Malaysia

September 22-23
Professional Development and Alumni Reunion event at the Clarion Hotel in Manhattan, KS

Martin Mwansa, class of 2013, has taken a new position as an Investment Analyst with the Zambia Agribusiness Technical Advisory Centre (ZATAC). He will be relocating to Lusaka.

Jared Brown, class of 2008, has taken a position with Foley Equipment on the executive team.

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Get updates, join a discussion, see photos and connect with classmates.