

Wildcat Canter

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UKAg
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UK Equine Initiative
Student Newsletter

Another semester is finished and this one seemed to fly by! This was a significant semester for the equine science and management program. While we had our first graduate complete the program last year, this semester saw a significant number of students walk across the stage at commencement. This has been a long time coming for both faculty and students through the curriculum development to attaining approval for the degree. While getting degree approval was one milestone, having this many graduates at commencement was another milestone.

Now, we need to develop a network to stay in touch with alumni of the program and find out where they go after they leave UK. There are a significant proportion of this year's graduates who will be taking jobs that will jumpstart their careers, and we need to know what's next for them as they participate in the horse industry.

So, where do we go from here? The first two equine science and management capstone classes had a lot of discussions about curriculum and have provided some really good feedback and suggestions. Student feedback on curriculum development is not typically included in program development, and now we need to go a step further and get input from the new alumni as they enter the industry.

As we move forward, I think it's important that we consider how to add value to our students as future leaders in the horse industry. This degree program is unique in its focus on the science of the horse and horse related businesses. Every equine program provides students with the basics in these areas, but UK is different because it's located in Lexington, which is a very horse-friendly city. We also have continued support and engagement from industry contacts thanks to our internship program, and we ask for their help as we move forward with the curriculum. Because of all these elements, I receive about three to five inquiries a month from prospective students interested in visiting the College of Agriculture campus and learning more about Equine Science and Management.

Congratulations again to the graduates of 2010. I look forward to this time next year, when we will have an even larger group of EQSM graduates on the stage at Rupp Arena.

-Dr. Robert Coleman
Associate Director for Undergraduate Education in Equine
Science and Management



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Equine Initiative News

French masters students get a taste of the Bluegrass

By: *Natalie Voss*

The University of Kentucky played host to seven international travelers in May. Students from the Master of Equine Science and Business Program, a partnership between UK and the University of Normandy, spent several weeks learning about the American horse industry in the horse capital of the world.

The program, now in its second year, is designed for individuals with a master's degree in a related field or established professionals seeking to expand their skills. This year's students-- Marie deBeauchesne, Sophie Engerran, Delphine Herbeau, Raja Mahjoob, Emmanuelle Morvillers, Estelle Rewega, and Camille Valette --came from a variety of horse-related backgrounds and career interests, ranging from Arabians to Standardbreds to race and show horses. The group had a diverse educational background with degrees in language, sports management and an array of agricultural focuses.

During the 15-month program, students attend lectures and seminars in addition to two hands-on internship periods, which culminates in a final thesis project related to business, management or science. Learning sessions take place at AgroSup, Bourgogne, L'Université de Caen, Haras du Pin and UK, while internships may be completed anywhere in the world.

So far, this year's students attended the Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event, the Kentucky International Equine Summit and races at Churchill Downs. Their learning segment in Normandy included lectures by Mary Rossano, assistant professor in animal and food sciences in the UK College of Agriculture.

All students agreed their experiences in Lexington gave them perspective on a new type of horse industry. For many years, the French government regulated and funded the equestrian sports in France but recently decided to remove its support. This will include a shutdown of public stud farms unless the farms can raise enough money to cover their own operating expenses. Since the American horse industry is completely privatized, the group was interested to learn how it functioned. Mahjoob observed that the government regulation affected each discipline differently.

Mahjoob said it seemed American horse racing faces more issues stemming from a lack of regulation than French racing, while the sport horse industry in the U.S. thrives without government support, unlike the French sport horse industry.

Program participants were also fascinated with the diversity of the U.S. horse industry. According to Herbeau, there are fewer breed organizations in France and therefore fewer opportunities for involvement and employment.

"[It's easier for] people to succeed here because there are lots of disciplines," Herbeau said. "If we had more disciplines [in France], maybe more people would be attracted to horses."

While racing and the English disciplines have been popular in France for centuries, western horse sports are just beginning to catch on. The students believe this is due in part to the influx of natural horsemanship training methods into Europe in the last 15 years and admits that while the general knowledge of western disciplines is limited, the interest in them stems partly from the costume and culture associated with western riding.

"People are looking for something to have fun [with]," Rewega said.

Many in the group had visited the U.S. before entering the program and have enjoyed the opportunity to learn about American culture, although some things in America -- like the cars and food -- are very different from home.

"American people are very sociable, open to talk to," Herbeau said.

Laurie Lawrence, professor in the UK Department of Animal and Food Sciences, coordinated the Kentucky learning section of the program. She said she is excited to see the university partnership enter its second year.

"When the Dean created the Equine Initiative, one of his goals was to make our program at UK the leading program in the world and commensurate with the status of the horse industry, so I see that this type of exchange where students come here from other places is just a part of that," Lawrence said.



Congratulations to this year's EQSM graduates

Congratulations and best of luck to the 12 students who graduated from the equine science and management degree program this year. Those honored at commencement were:

Kate Benner
Carrie Everett
Reynolds Foster
Christina Lawton
Angie Malone
Ashton Martino
Anne Pennington
Mia Proto
Natalie Voss



Eastern tent caterpillar numbers rising

(Edited press release)

Experts report that eastern tent caterpillar numbers are up for the third consecutive year, although populations vary from location to location. "The tents are easy to see now," said Lee Townsend, University of Kentucky College of Agriculture entomologist. "Many of the small nests out on limbs have been abandoned because caterpillars have moved to larger tents at branch angles on the main trunks."

Entomologists anticipate full-grown larvae by the third week of April. From then through early May, caterpillars will leave the trees where they've been developing and disperse to protected sites to spin a cocoon and pupate.

Once the caterpillars have reached these dispersing stages, controlling them becomes much more difficult, Townsend said.

Controlling eastern tent caterpillars is vital to area horse farms, as UK research has strongly linked the caterpillars with outbreaks of Mare Reproductive Loss Syndrome, which can cause late-term foal losses, early-term fetal losses and weak foals.

During the 2001-2002 MRLS outbreak, an estimated 30 percent of that year's Thoroughbred foal crop was lost, and the state suffered an economic cost of approximately \$336 million due to losses suffered in all breeds of horses.

For more information, visit www.ca.uky.edu/



Rare twin foals delivered safely

The Kentucky Horse Council reported in its weekly newsletter that Jazz's Precious, a Tennessee Walking Horse mare in Farmington, Tennessee, delivered twin foals in March and today all three are doing well. The odds of a mare successfully birthing live twins are about one in 10,000. To read the full story and see more photos of the babies, visit www.kentuckyhorse.org/en/art/1168/.



Jazz's Precious with Artemis (L) and Apollo (R)

Student Spotlight: Christina Lawton

New beginnings: UK student, foals grow their futures at Darby Dan Farm

By Natalie Voss

Spring is a beautiful season in central Kentucky. Pastures become lush again, flowers bloom and foals fill the front paddocks at Lexington's numerous breeding farms. In downtown Lexington, a new group of students graduated from the University of Kentucky with an equine science and management degree.

Appropriately enough, Christina Lawton, who was among that group of graduates, spent her last semester of college delivering and caring for future Thoroughbred racehorses.

Originally from Ohio, Lawton grew up riding jumpers and participated in the internship to learn more about the breeding side of the Thoroughbred industry. She spent her internship during foaling season foaling mares, administering medication to mares and foals, preparing mares for the breeding shed and holding horses for the farm veterinarian. Lawton says she learned about the opportunity from a professor, and was interested in the chance to learn about so many different areas of the business.

"[They were] willing to teach me as much as they could," Lawton said. She had the chance to develop her knowledge of mare cycles, which was an area she had little experience with before her time at Darby Dan.

Farm manager Nate Heiple said that Lawton's positive dedication and quick learning were a real asset

to her during her internship.

"She had a very good attitude, always happy, always a smile on her face. She had enthusiasm to come to work and also to learn," Heiple said.

As a result of her internship experience, Lawton accepted a position as general farm manager at Swifty Farms, the largest Thoroughbred breeding operation in Indiana, beginning this summer.

Elizabeth LaBonty, internship coordinator for the equine science and management program, was happy to see such a positive result come from Lawton's semester of hands-on learning.

"Darby Dan did an excellent job educating Christina and allowing her to gain valuable hands-on experience. I am pleased that this internship went so well," LaBonty said.

The equine science and management program requires students to complete an internship for credit in order to graduate. So far, UK students have worked at vet clinics, breed organizations, farms and many other horse-related business and non-profits. Heiple says he is very comfortable taking on student interns as long as they are willing to learn and have some basic horse experience.

When asked for his advice to future interns, Heiple suggested they "come to work with an open mind, a good attitude and be willing to learn different ways to do certain things."

For more information about the internship program, contact Elizabeth LaBonty at elizabeth.labonty@uky.edu.



Lawton helps move a foal inside



Lawton administers fluids to a foal



Lawton worked with newborn foals at Darby Dan

Internship Section

Mary Rossano, assistant professor in animal and food sciences and the equine and science undergraduate degree program is looking for a summer intern to help her with a project studying the efficacy of a herbal dewormer. The experiment will run for about one month and may include publication credit. Testing will include collecting manure samples and testing for egg counts. Contact her at Mary.Rossano@uky.edu for more information.

Starquine, an online Thoroughbred listing website, is hiring a summer intern to work on a commission-only basis. Make your own hours and broaden your contacts in the industry. E-mail your resume with references to anne@stalioncompany.com.

Maker's Mark Secretariat Center is looking for both summer and fall interns. Summer internship possibilities would focus on training, although farm management interns will be accepted. Summer internships are usually unpaid. Applications will be accepted for summer positions through the end of May. Fall internships (communications, farm management and training) may start as early as Saturday, Aug. 21 in light of the World Equestrian Games. Contact Melissa DeCarlo at 859-246-3080 for more information.

Clubs and Teams

Equestrian Team takes third at nationals

In its third consecutive trip to the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA) Nationals, the UK Equestrian Team's hunt seat team placed third and had several riders receive individual titles. The competition was held May 6-9 at the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington. The Team previously traveled to California and Tennessee to compete in IHSA nationals in 2008 and 2009, respectively. The hunt seat team is coached by Michelle Zimmer at Robert Murphy Stables in Lexington and the stock seat team by Bennie Sargent at High Point Equestrian Center in Georgetown.

"It's exciting to see that in the past three years we've been ranked first, second and third [in the nation]," said team president Lauren Patterson. "Compared to the other schools that usually place in the top three our program is much smaller. It's great to see that our program is really that strong." Competing for the team, Jessica Browne placed third in Novice Equitation On The Flat; Amy Barrett placed fourth in Novice Equitation Over Fences; and Ali Cibon placed first in Open Equitation On The Flat and third in Open Equitation Over Fences.

Competing as individuals, riders Elizabeth King placed sixth in Walk-Trot-Canter Equitation; Katie Kearney placed third in Intermediate Over Fences; and Ali Cibon placed third in Open Equitation Over Fences. Cibon also placed eighth in the competition for Cacchione Cup, which determines the best rider in the nation and includes 31 high-point riders from each region.

Alumni stock seat rider Megan Carter also competed and received fourth in Alumni Western Horsemanship and sixth in Alumni Reining.



Team members pose with their ribbons at 2010 Nationals

Our Equine Clubs and Teams updates section is on vacation for the summer. Congratulations to all our equine groups for their accomplishments this year!

Equine Club Directory

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