

WINTER 2025 EDITION

WILDCAT CANTER

**AG EQUINE PROGRAMS
CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF
EQUINE EXCELLENCE**

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HIGHLIGHTS



AG EQUINE PROGRAMS CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF EQUINE EXCELLENCE

It has been 20 years since the formation of UK's Equine Initiative, now UK Ag Equine Programs, an effort to serve the horse and the industry that supports the horse.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR FALL 2024 GRADUATES

UK Ag Equine Programs held its annual Fall Graduation Reception Dec. 19 at the Pirri Pavilion on UK's Maine Chance Farm. Learn more about our fall grads below.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



UK HOSTS SUCCESSFUL PRE-VETERINARY EXPERIENCE DAY

Close to 100 college students from 25 different universities and colleges across the nation with aspirations to become veterinarians attended the University of Kentucky Pre-Veterinary Experience Day Feb. 15 at the Thoroughbred Center in Lexington.

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UPCOMING EVENTS & IMPORTANT DEADLINES

MARCH

3/4

Virtual Experience Equine Day

APRIL

4/12

Equine Alumni 20th Year Reunion

4/13

UK Horsey Hustle 5K

4/22

Equine Experiential Learning Showcase

4/25

Experience Equine Day

4/26

Defender Kentucky Three Day Event Tailgate

MAY

5/8

Graduation Open House

Full event listings and details can be found [here](#).

WELCOME

JAMES MACLEOD, VMD, PHD
DIRECTOR

Twenty Years – So Much to Celebrate and Wonderful Opportunities Ahead

Anniversaries provide the opportunity to reflect on an important incident using a time scale measured in years. The “incident” might be something good or bad, but it is always an event that has historical significance. This year we celebrate the 20th anniversary of UK Ag Equine Programs, which was at the beginning and continues to be the Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment’s historically significant commitment to horses, to the people who value and care about horses and to the signature Kentucky industry of equine agriculture.

It is a fact that most of our current Equine Science and Management students were not even born when this all got started, but there are several of us who had ‘seats at the table’ right from the beginning. I remember the first series of planning committee meetings. For everyone on this committee, there was a strong consensus that an interdepartmental, multidisciplinary effort focused on equine agriculture and embracing the missions of a land grant university (research, extension, teaching) was an exciting idea full of possibilities on multiple levels. These ‘possibilities’ have become the reality, and in several ways have exceeded even the high end of the original predictions.

Conceived and initiated in the aftermath of the major Mare Reproductive Loss Syndrome challenges in 2001-2003, our ability to innovate and develop truly special academic initiatives have come from a combination of existing excellence in equine science combined with everything in Central Kentucky that have earned this region the “Horse Capital of World” title. Specifically, the synergies and collaborations between UK and the unequalled breadth and scope of equine-affiliated industries all within 25 miles of campus. The concept of an equine business cluster with direct and indirect economic benefits for everyone in Kentucky and the world beyond was articulated and enthusiastically embraced.

The mission of UK Ag Equine Programs is easy to understand: “Discover, share and apply new knowledge on the health, performance and management of horses, enhancing the signature status of Kentucky’s equine industry.”

The strategy is to facilitate and support equine-related effort and productivity across the three primary missions assigned to land-grant universities by the Hatch Act of 1877 and the Smith-Lever Act of 1914: “...to teach, to conduct research and to provide service to communities.” We work together, across disciplines and academic units within the university, but



very importantly also with the collaboration of equine-affiliated professionals and businesses outside of the university. It is this collaborative and transdisciplinary approach that continues to be the successful strategy by which we advance equine agriculture and achieve the mission.

Please join us. There is so much to celebrate in this 20th year anniversary of UK Ag Equine Programs, and very importantly future possibilities are brighter and more promising than ever.

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**EQUINE
SCIENCE
REVIEW**

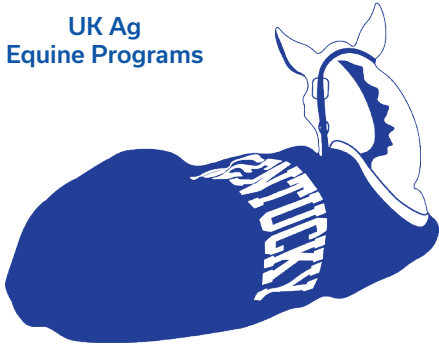
THE GRADUATE
gallop 

**IN ADDITION TO THIS PUBLICATION,
UK AG EQUINE PROGRAMS HAS OTHER
READS IN ITS PUBLICATION STABLE.**

**CHECK OUT THE LATEST ISSUES OF
THE EQUINE SCIENCE REVIEW OR THE
GRADUATE GALLOP OR [SUBSCRIBE HERE.](#)**

AG EQUINE PROGRAMS CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF EQUINE EXCELLENCE

UK Ag
Equine Programs



by Holly Wiemers

Kentucky's horse industry asked, and the University of Kentucky delivered.

It has been 20 years since the formation of UK's Equine Initiative, now UK Ag Equine Programs, an effort to serve the horse and the industry that supports the horse. Formed in March 2005 and formally announced by UK in May 2005, the program began as a partnership between UK's Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment and the horse industry and was established through the efforts of the UK Gluck Equine Research Foundation, the Kentucky Thoroughbred Association/Kentucky Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders and several other prominent Kentucky equine organizations.

It set out to become a world leader in equine in the three land-grant missions of teaching, research and extension, a lofty goal one could argue has been achieved.

"We have seen wonderful examples of the benefits derived from working together across disciplines," said James MacLeod, director of UK Ag Equine Programs. "With active

engagement and the diverse expertise of faculty across eight different academic departments, complex challenges can be addressed and opportunities that require input from multiple disciplines can be pursued. We have really come a long way, as is now clearly evident in the scope and breadth of our contributions to equine agriculture."

A YEAR OF CELEBRATION

UK Ag Equine Programs will celebrate 20 years of equine excellence with several alumni and industry focused events in 2025, including a celebration weekend featuring a double header [alumni reunion event](#) at Keeneland April 12 and the [Horsey Hustle 5K](#) April 13, an annual race that raises funds for the program's Student Experience and Applied Education Fund.



Ag Equine Programs



In the fall, the focus will turn to the industry itself with an evening of gratitude and celebration as it recognizes the support by the equine industry that helped create and grow the program.

A substantive part of UK Ag Equine Programs' year of celebration with broad participation from every

part of the UK equine community is "[Mane Mission](#)," a service drive to give back to the equine industry and the community in general through a year of service efforts. The thought is that each hour served reiterates the program's core mission to serve the horse and collective community. Students, alumni, faculty and staff and friends of the program are invited to track their service hours, both equine and non-equine related, and report those via a form on the [website](#). The goal is 5,000 cumulative hours in a little over a year, retroactively beginning November 2024 for the annual Weekend of Service through that same Weekend of Service event in 2025. In addition to making a difference by giving back, participants will become eligible for prizes and program giveaways.

Throughout 2025, there will also be philanthropic tie-ins to benefit current and future students as well as profiles in excellence from the past 20 years featured prominently on the program's website and social media channels.

PROGRAM FORMATION AND MILESTONES

Since the formation of this interdepartmental effort, UK Ag Equine Programs has added considerably to the size, scope and collaborative approach to equine work being done in the Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment. Its formation enhanced awareness and allowed the public better access to UK's equine-focused programs and resources.

As is often the case, change was born from crisis. In 2001, Mare Reproductive Loss Syndrome caused an estimated 30 percent loss of the Thoroughbred foal crop that spring, and Kentucky's

horse industry suffered economic losses of approximately \$340 million. Scientists from across the Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment worked around the clock to find the cause. By July 2001, less than three months after the disease was discovered, epidemiological and field studies demonstrated that MRLS was associated with unprecedented populations of Eastern Tent Caterpillars.



This backdrop served as a tipping point, highlighting communications and stakeholder relations weaknesses within the college's disparate equine endeavors and identified a crucial need for a central access point to all the college's equine activities. It also underscored the signature status of Kentucky's equine industry and the importance of working together across disciplines on complex multifaceted challenges. The seeds were planted for substantial investments in areas of equine agriculture with far-reaching impact at Kentucky's flagship university.

"The wake-up call for this initiative were the foal losses of MRLS. Since understanding those losses involved the entire environment horses are exposed to, we needed experts in pasture, entomology, nutrition, forestry, disease, water and more," said Nancy Cox, recently retired dean of the Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment who is currently serving in the role as special assistant to UK's president and liaison to the Bill Gatton Foundation and who was instrumental in the formation of the program. "Dean Smith felt that the college had under invested in these areas with horses at the focus, and he set about to right the situation."

As the concept was gaining traction in early 2005, the university underwent statewide listening sessions. These focus group-like sessions sought input from stakeholders within all facets and breeds of the equine industry. These sessions helped define stakeholder priorities and were instrumental in setting the course for the Equine Initiative. Many of the core aspects of the current iteration of UK Ag Equine Programs came from this input.

"The need for the program became evident as Dean Smith initiated strategic planning efforts to support the equine industry with the full force of the land-grant mission areas of teaching, research and extension," Cox said.

Some of the biggest issues and reoccurring themes to emerge from these sessions included the need for a strong undergraduate degree program, increased research on issues directly relevant to the equine industry, better communication and informational resources and an increase in outreach programs specific to the equine industry.



In the initial year, new and redirected faculty and staff positions were created; planning was started for an undergraduate degree program in equine science; new research programs in economics, pastures and forages, disease and reproduction were established; a horse pasture management program was pilot tested to launch in 2006; and new partnerships were developed or explored with other universities and colleges and the equine industry.

What began as the Equine Initiative was renamed UK Ag Equine

Programs in 2012. The name was determined in consultation with internal and external stakeholders to better reflect the breadth of equine offerings at UK and the college's long-term commitment to serving the state's signature equine industry. The name also intentionally cemented the concept of equine being a pillar of Kentucky's ag landscape.

20 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE



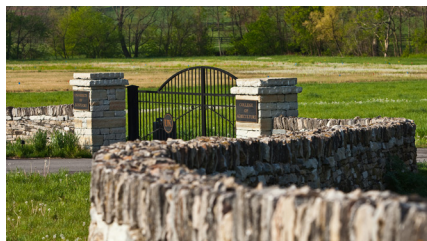
In the past 20 years, much has been accomplished through the efforts of the program across the three land-grant mission areas of teaching, research and extension. But perhaps none of those accomplishments have been as transformative to Kentucky's equine industry and its workforce as UK's development of a standalone four-year equine undergraduate degree program, one of only three standalone four-year equine degree programs at a land-grant institution in the U.S. Its rapid growth and popularity with students from across the country, and increasingly the world, show it was an untapped and important need.

"The phrase, 'Build it and they will come,' was especially true for this program," Cox said. "I would like to complement the leadership and faculty of the program for matching passion for the horse with a best-in-class education. Ag Equine Programs also allows coordination of research that meets the needs of clientele and extension programs that are unique in the horse world. I am immensely proud of this program and will forever be grateful to those who built it."

Enrollment numbers reflect the program's popularity. The

first class in Equine Science and Management numbered 46 in 2007, with the first official graduate of the program walking the stage in 2009, also the year the major was officially approved by the university. Now, the major is the largest in the Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment with a fall 2024 enrollment of 331 students. Three-quarters of those come to UK from out-of-state to live and learn in horse country. There are also now 704 alums of the program, with about 65% of graduates initially remaining in Kentucky to work within the horse industry.

"I came to UK from Virginia in large part because I wanted to take part in a wide range of internships and work experience available in the area. I didn't realize how often I'd use the academic skillsets I gained as part of my degree. I still think back to the basics of equine anatomy and conformation, veterinary science and welfare and ethics that were part of my time there -- and I use those basics in my career daily," said Natalie Voss ('10), editor-in-chief of the *Paulick Report* and three-time Eclipse Award winner.



The career options students have vary as much as the industry itself and the careers alums are currently established in reflect that diversity. The major has evolved and expanded over the years, from offering either equine science or equine business in the first iteration of its curriculum to the current customizable degree program that offers the three different emphasis tracks of equine science; equine management and industry; and communications, leadership and education. Professionalism and career development are heavily emphasized, as is a spirit of community and support. Nearly a

third of graduates go on to enroll in post-secondary education programs, with many pursuing equine veterinary medicine.



The research and outreach work being done at UK impacts all breeds and disciplines, provides answers for operations big and small and is recognized world-wide for its excellence. Since the inception of the program, a greater emphasis on interdepartmental collaborations has occurred in the research solving problems important to the industry. Key extension and outreach programs benefiting horse owners and horse farm managers have also been created, expanding support into additional important areas such as pasture evaluation, facility design, biosecurity, environmental sustainability and business decisions. During the past two decades, the college also undertook the 2012 and 2022 Kentucky Equine Survey, a statewide comprehensive demographic and economic assessment that considers all horse breeds in Kentucky, the first time that work had been done for Kentucky in more than 30 years prior to the 2012 survey.

"As current chair of the program's Advisory Board and member for most of its duration, my reflections are as a volunteer from the equine industry who works alongside the faculty and staff to help make the program the great success it is," said Fred Sarver, Equine Programs Advisory Board chair and owner of Cornerstone Farm, a Saddlebred horse farm in Bourbon County, Kentucky. "Over the past 20 years, this program has showed its commitment to students, and, in turn, they have become important to our greater equine community, working successfully across all

corners of the horse industry."

In the past 20 years, the program has operated under two deans, five different program directors and a project chair at its inception. Importantly, the university has also actively collaborated with equine industry professionals and equine-affiliated organizations and businesses. These collaborations have been bi-directional and substantive, enriching the programmatic initiatives at every level.

"The formation of the program also revealed the continued cultural significance of the horse in Kentucky history, folklore and community life," Garkovich said. "Beyond this, though, those supporting and participating in UK Ag Equine programs - sport horse competitors; trail riders; Thoroughbred and breed owners, breeders, trainers and enthusiasts; 4-H Horse Club and Pony Club kids; show ring participants and backyard one horse owners and those who are simply in awe of the beauty, strength and versatility of our equine companions - all discovered our common bond - we share and cherish the magic of our horses. On top of all the other accomplishments of UK Ag Equine Programs, discovering what unites us is pretty special."

The mission statement of UK Ag Equine Programs reads, "The horse is at the heart of everything we do." Twenty years later, those words still ring true.

"For 20 years, UK Ag Equine Programs has played a vital role in advancing equine education, research and outreach, always keeping the horse at the heart of its work," said Laura Stephenson, vice president for land-grant engagement and dean of Martin-Gatton CAFE. "The program's contributions to the equine industry and its commitment to developing future leaders are truly remarkable. We look forward to seeing it grow and thrive in the years ahead."

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR FALL 2024 GRADUATES!

UK Ag Equine Programs held its annual Fall Graduation Reception Dec. 19 at the Pirri Pavilion on UK's Maine Chance Farm. Learn more about our fall grads below. Photos by Holly Wiemers.

CONGRATULATIONS

Jack Cabelka

Auburn, AL

Jack completed his internship with the National Horseman's Benevolent and Protection Association.

CONGRATULATIONS

Avery Grace Cummings

Torrance, CA

Avery completed her internship with Southwest Show Management.

What are you most proud of as a soon-to-be graduate of the equine programs?

"I am most proud of the events and programs I was a part of. Being a Wildcat Wrangler Student Ambassador really allowed me to grow and develop my public speaking, organizational, and leadership skills."

What is your favorite memory from your undergraduate career?

"My favorite memory from my undergraduate career has to be when we stormed Kroger Field after our football team beat Florida in 2021. It was one of those things you always see on TV and wish you could be a part of, and it was something I'll never forget."

What are your plans for after graduation?

"After graduation I will be managing Athens Woods Farm and Eaton Sales."



WORDS OF WISDOM

“Take advantage of every opportunity that comes your way, even if it is something you're unsure of. You never know where it will lead you.”

CONGRATULATIONS



Richard Daly

Clarksville, TN

Richard completed his internship with BraveHearts Equine Center.

CONGRATULATIONS

Isabella Davis

Alpharetta, GA

Isabella completed her internship at Park Equine Hospital as a Hospital Vet Tech.

What are you most proud of as a soon-to-be graduate of the equine programs?

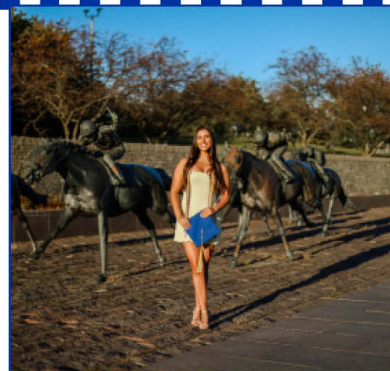
"I am most proud of my equine networking and emersion in the equine industry in Lexington, Kentucky made possible through the equine science program."

What is your favorite memory from your undergraduate career?

"Being a part of the Ag LLP and living on the same floor as all the equine program girls. We loved going to class together and I made life long friends at UK. I loved having classes with my equine girls over the last 4 years. It made college the best experience of my life."

What are your plans for after graduation?

"I will continue working as an equine vet tech fill time until I have to move for vet school. I am currently waiting to hear back about my acceptance."



WORDS OF WISDOM

“ Put yourself out there, even if you don't think you are qualified. ”

CONGRATULATIONS

Vitoria Edwards

Waterloo, IA

Victoria completed her internship with the Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation.

What are you most proud of as a soon-to-be graduate of the equine programs?

"I am proud of my undergraduate research at the Gluck Equine Research Center. I worked under the supervision of Dr. Bruno Carvalho Menarim with his research in Polacrylamide for equine joint therapy. I also worked under the supervision of Dr. Emma Adam studying growth comparisons in Thoroughbreds along with the impact of Equine Rotavirus B on Thoroughbred broodmares."

What is your favorite memory from your undergraduate career?

"My favorite memory while at UK was participating in the Wildcat Marching Band. I loved playing football games and performing the halftime show. I made many friends with the piccolos and it is also where I met my now husband."

What are your plans for after graduation?

"I plan to assist Dr. Emma Adam in the clinical trials for an Equine Rotavirus B vaccine. After the clinical trials, I plan to pursue the Veterinary Science graduate program at UK, if accepted."



WORDS OF WISDOM

“Be open to exploring all aspects of the equine industry.”

CONGRATULATIONS

Alonzo McCoy

Frankfort, KY

Alonzo completed his internship with the Equine Medical Association as a veterinarian technician.

What are you most proud of as a soon-to-be graduate of the equine programs?

"I am most proud of my growth in my horsemanship skills. I have proven myself that I can keep up in the Thoroughbred Industry."

What is your favorite memory from your undergraduate career?

"I enjoyed Dr. Rossano's equine behavior and handling class, it was a great way of getting hands on experience."

What are your plans for after graduation?

"I accepted a position with a local equine veterinarian as a vet assistant at Goose Creek Farms, working the breeding season in January."



WORDS OF WISDOM

“Throw yourself all in and never give up on your goals.”

CONGRATULATIONS

Danielle Northup

Cleveland, OH

Danielle completed her internship with Roiville Run Farm as an assistant barn manager.

What are you most proud of as a soon-to-be graduate of the equine programs?

"I am very proud of the connections this degree has helped me make withing the equine industry. I have met so many wonderful professionals through this degree."

What is your favorite memory from your undergraduate career?

"My favorite memory is meeting a bunch of new friends. This degree helped me meet many new people and I am so happy to have them in my life."

What are your plans for after graduation?

"After graduation I plan to get involved in training and sales."



WORDS OF WISDOM

“Involve yourself as much as possible and take advantage of all this program has to offer.”

CONGRATULATIONS



Courtney Owens

Mt. Vernon, KY

Courtney completed her internship with Wilbers Farrier Service.

She owns and trains at Laurel Oak Farm and will use her degree to grow her program.

Courtney was in the Army for 6 years as a medic.

CONGRATULATIONS



Carolyn Parker

Garrett Parker, MD

Carolyn completed her internship with the UK Horse Pasture Evaluation program.

CONGRATULATIONS

Katerina Pate

Laurel, MD

Katerina completed her internship with SpyCoast Farm as a groom in the young horse development center.

What are you most proud of as a soon-to-be graduate of the equine programs?

"I am proud of the new skills that I have learned such as veterinary skills, identifying diseases, and becoming a better rider and mentor."

What is your favorite memory from your undergraduate career?

"My favorite memory was at SpyCoast Farm where I taught young horses to go through jump chutes and watched the Young Horse Horse Show hosted at SpyCoast in the spring of 2024."

What are your plans for after graduation?

"I am hoping to further my career in training young horses and students, to help them meet their full potential, and create dreams."



WORDS OF WISDOM

“Don't let anyone tell you where you should be, you're exactly where you're supposed to be.”

CONGRATULATIONS

Alana Quirindongo-Baunsoe

West Bloomfield, MI

Alana completed her internship with SpyCoast Farms in the Young Horse Development Center.

What are you most proud of as a soon-to-be graduate of the equine programs?

"I am most proud of the growth I have had both in my education and riding skills through my time at UK. I have gained an incomparable skillset through the courses I have taken that have prepared me to go out into the industry."

What is your favorite memory from your undergraduate career?

"My favorite memory was putting on the 2024 Horsey Hustle with the Wildcat Wranglers. Getting to know everyone throughout the year and then being able to put on such a successful event was so rewarding."

What are your plans for after graduation?

"I will be coming on at SpyCoast Farms as a show groom in January, traveling with the riders to competitions."



WORDS OF WISDOM

“Apply yourself to your coursework and enjoy your undergraduate experience. College flies by and you want to be able to have a positive memory from you time at UK.”

CONGRATULATIONS

Logan Saylor

Los Angeles, CA

Logan completed her internship with Gainesway Farm in their Mares and Foals division.

What are you most proud of as a soon-to-be graduate of the equine programs?

"I am most proud of my professional growth and how much I have learned in the last 4 years working for Gainesway Farm."

What is your favorite memory from your undergraduate career?

"My favorite memory from my undergraduate career was watching a filly I prepped sell for \$1,000,000 at Fasig-Tipton Saratoga."

What are your plans for after graduation?

"Upon graduation, I will continue my career working for Gainiesway as an administrative assistant."



WORDS OF WISDOM

“Network, network, network! You must have a high work ethic to be able to grow in this field. Hard work always pays off.”

CONGRATULATIONS
Logan Stevens

Appleton, WI

Logan completed his internship with Margaux Farm in their training division as a groom.

What are you most proud of as a soon-to-be graduate of the equine programs?

"I am most proud of having a large network of people in the Thoroughbred industry that will help me be successful in whatever I choose to pursue long term."

What is your favorite memory from your undergraduate career?

"My favorite memories are the 2024 Horse Hustle and wearing jorts to Dr. Rossano's labs."

What are your plans for after graduation?

"After graduation I will be prepping yearlings and foaling out mares for a year with Coolmore Australia. Afterwards I will look to work for a trainer on the track and work my way up to being a trainer myself."



WORDS OF WISDOM

“ Don't be afraid to take opportunities to network. People in this industry are willing to help the next generation. ”

CONGRATULATIONS
Jenna Toms

Mission Viejo, CA

Jenna completed her internship with the Kentucky Equine Sports Medicine and Rehabilitation Center.

What are you most proud of as a soon-to-be graduate of the equine programs?

"I am proud that I can say I've learned valuable knowledge from multiple leaders in the industry."

What is your favorite memory from your undergraduate career?

"My favorite memory from my undergraduate career has been going to game days."

What are your plans for after graduation?

"I've officially accepted an administrative role in the ambulatory department at Rood and Riddle Equine Hospital."



WORDS OF WISDOM

“ Dedicate time for yourself outside of school. ”

CONGRATULATIONS
Alexis Willis

Tampa, FL

Alexis completed her internship with the Racing Surfaces Testing Laboratory as an undergraduate researcher.

What are you most proud of as a soon-to-be graduate of the equine programs?

"I am most proud of the research and connections I've been able to make with the Racing Surfaces Testing Laboratory and the equine industry as a whole. I've been able to expand my understanding of the importance of surface management and how that affects equine health on the track."

What is your favorite memory from your undergraduate career?

"My favorite memory from my undergraduate career was when I was able to assist on a graduate project centralized on the unique gait of the Saddlebred. This was done in correlation to the physics behind hoof movement and placement."

What are your plans for after graduation?

"After graduation I will continue to be a Researcher at the Racing Surfaces Testing Laboratory. In the near future, I will also be continuing my education at the University of Kentucky amongst the Animal Science or Veterinary Science department."



WORDS OF WISDOM

“ Create industry connections and explore many internships/careers during your undergraduate degree. ”







You're
Invited!

The Hill at Keeneland
Saturday, April 12
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.



UK EQUINE ALUMNI REUNION

Come celebrate with us as we honor our incredible alumni community.
Enjoy delicious food, drinks and great company!

We're giving away 200 General Admission tickets to alumni—
Priority access goes to those signed up for our Horsey Hustle 5k.
Remaining tickets available on a first-come, first-serve basis.



Ag Equine Programs



[Sign Up Here](#)

www.equine.ca.uky.edu

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO!

Stop by and say hi! Grab a bite and a drink under the UK tent. There is limited seating and space under the tent beyond food and drink, but plenty to see and do on the Hill! Mingle and catch up with your former classmates and UK faculty and staff, visit the wagering tent, listen to live music, watch the races live on the jumbo tron or catch one of the many complimentary shuttles to Shuttle Depot for anyone going to the races.

Register [here](#), as tickets are expected to go quickly.

Alumni, complimentary

Guests over 21, \$30

Guests under 21, \$20

Guests 3 and under, free

Also, alums, check in with UK personnel at the event for small gift, a token of our joy in celebrating YOU during our 20th anniversary celebration!



UK FACULTY HONORED WITH MASTER TEACHER AWARD FOR COMMITMENT TO STUDENT EXCELLENCE

by Christopher Carney

Each year, the University of Kentucky Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment Master Teacher Award recognizes faculty members for their significant dedication to teaching. In a recent ceremony, one of the recipients of this year's award was Savannah Robin, lecturer of career and professional development within UK Ag Equine Programs and faculty within the Department of Agricultural Economics.

The Master Teacher Award nominees are selected by a committee based on how they implement effective classroom techniques, advance student learning outcomes, contribute to student development, service instructional programming and overall commitment to enhancing teaching methodologies.

"This award was a true honor and something I will cherish," Robin said. "Within my classroom, I try to foster community, be human and create a place where my students feel as though they belong, can connect and learn to become learners. I think it all comes back to creating a space and community where students know that when you push them it's because you

care and then in turn they rise to those challenges and pay it forward in their future."

Carmen Agouridis, senior associate dean of student success, presented the Master Teacher Award at the college's faculty meeting ceremony.

"We are a college known for its dedicated instructors and commitment to the success of our students," Agouridis said. "The many nominations we received this year are reflective of our commitment to putting students first and educating the next generation."

Savannah Robin accepting the Master Teacher Award. Photo by Matt Barton.

Robin is long-time member of UK Ag Equine Programs, in which she teaches several courses for Equine Science and Management. Robin also serves as the coordinator for the AFE 100 course, through which she impacts each student in the college. Robin is well recognized throughout the university and state for her leadership, innovation and commitment to agriculture.

One of Robin's nominators wrote, in part, that "her teaching contributions, initiatives and programmatic efforts are so extensive that they cannot be described in a narrative format while staying within the prescribed two-page nomination statement."

Another nominator wrote, "Savannah has high expectations of her students and encourages them to rise to challenges and always be their best. She is committed to an approach that teaches students how to learn through learner-centered instruction. She does not simply convey facts and figures to be memorized for an exam, but truly empowers students with the ability to learn both with regard to course objectives and the rest of their lives."

Robin is also a four-time graduate of UK with dual bachelor's degrees in ag education and ag communications, a master's degree in career, technical and leadership education at Martin-Gatton CAFE and a doctorate from the College of Education.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR FALL 2024 DEAN'S LIST STUDENTS

DEAN'S LIST FALL 2024

EQUINE SCIENCE AND MANAGEMENT


BRIANA ADDINGTON	MORGAN APPEL
MICHEL AGUILUZ	ELENA BAGGETT
SOFIA AIBEL	BRIANNE BAILEYS
NJAE AKLIN	STELLA BAIRD
JAIDA ALEE	KAMRYN BARTH
AVERY ALLGEYER	ALYSSA BARTOSCH
MARY ALOST	MADILYN BLANFORD
CASEY ALWORTH	SYDNEY BORNE'
ALBANY ANASTASIO	CLARE BRADY
MOLLY ANDREWS	EMILY BROOKS

 Martin-Gatton
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment

DEAN'S LIST FALL 2024

EQUINE SCIENCE AND MANAGEMENT

JOHN CABELKA, III	LEA COOPER
JULIANA CAGGIANO	ISABELLE DAVIS
CODIE CAMPBELL	ANNA DAVIS
MADISON CARSON	EMMA DENNO
SUSAN CERULLI	KRISTEN DILLON
EMMA CHANDLER	VICTORIA EDWARDS
CAROLINE CHILDS	RYLEIGH EICHELBERGER
MINAKO CLAY	EMILY FOLEY
GRETA COLLEY	SARA FOUTS
MADELYN CONSIDINE	ANABELLE FRIEND

 Martin-Gatton
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DEAN'S LIST FALL 2024

EQUINE SCIENCE AND MANAGEMENT

CATHERINE FROST	EMMA HYDE
ARIYANA GARZA	ASUNCION AMIRA
SAMANTHA GRIN- NELL-SPILLER	JADUE SANFUENTES
LAUREN HALL	ALYSSA JASTRAM
KENNEDY HARRISON	SELMA KAMIN
BRADEN HEATH	PAYTON KOPP
MORGAN HUBER	KARIS KRACKE-BOCK
SYDNEY HUNDLEY	KENNA KREMER
	MEGHAN KRONHAUS

 Martin-Gatton
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment

DEAN'S LIST FALL 2024

EQUINE SCIENCE AND MANAGEMENT

EMILY LAMFERS	LEXI MCKEE-COLE
KIERSTEN LARSSON	BROOKE MORFIT
JOSIE LAWSON	MAYA NICHOLS
JAYDEN LEACH	MCKENNA NILSSON
AINSLEY LOUAGIE	ELLA O'BRIEN
DELANEY LOY	VIRGINIA OHL
ELLA MALICOTE	JILLIAN OSTROWSKE
ALONZO MCCOY, II	LORALYE PAGE
AUBREE MCINTOSH	CAROLYN PARKER

 Martin-Gatton
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment

DEAN'S LIST FALL 2024

EQUINE SCIENCE AND MANAGEMENT

EMILY POPE	ALEXANDRA SAWINSKI
BROOKE PORTER	SOPHIA SCHLICHT
ALANA QUIRINDONGO- BAUNSOE	GWENYTH SCHMIDT
MORGEN RADER	ZELLA SCHNITZSPAHN
ALARIC RENSHAW	MARGARET SHUMAN
HALEY ROPEL	ANTHONY SINGH
MADDAX RYAN	ANGELINA SONOQUI
HAILEY SADOWSKI	CHRISTINA SPILIOTIS
	SARAH STAPLES

 Martin-Gatton
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment

DEAN'S LIST FALL 2024

EQUINE SCIENCE AND MANAGEMENT

MADISON STEHLIK	SADIE WARREN
ALEXANDRA STEWART	AMELIA WEBSTER
ISABELLA STILES	LACI WEINZAPFEL
KEEGAN ULRICH	MAGGIE WELCH
LANEY UNDERWOOD	BRIGID WHIPP
CASSIDY VENABLE	ALEXIS WILLIS
ANGELA VESHIA	CASSIDY WOOD
AVA VRANY	CHLOE YOUNG
SYDNEY WALKER	MOLLY ZAHN

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Equine Science and Management Students hosted a phone-a-thon Feb. 3 and 6 to reach out to prospective students who had been accepted to UK for Fall 2025 but hadn't yet committed, answering questions, providing information and sharing their journeys. Here, UK Ag Equine Programs' interns Loralye Page (left) and Sarah Ziese (right) contact future Wildcats from across the country.

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY HOSTS SUCCESSFUL PRE-VETERINARY EXPERIENCE DAY

by Holly Wiemers; photos by Sabrina Hounshell and Sarah Coleman



Close to 100 college students from 25 different universities and colleges across the nation with aspirations to become veterinarians attended the University of Kentucky Pre-Veterinary Experience Day Feb. 15 at the Thoroughbred Center in Lexington.

Organized by the UK Pre-Veterinary Advising Program within the Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, in collaboration with the Kentucky Horse Council and made possible by industry partners, the daylong event showcased the diverse career path options within veterinary medicine. The event was designed to offer a unique and valuable opportunity for students interested in veterinary medicine to connect with veterinarians, advisers and industry partners from a variety of career paths, all eager to share their experience and expertise.

"Pre-Vet Experience Day was a great success," said Colette Tebeau, UK senior pre-vet academic coordinator and an event organizer. "Especially noteworthy was the excitement and interactions stimulated by our 'networking passport,' which challenged students to communicate with a diverse group of experts and each other."



During the morning, attendees chose informational sessions based on their level of knowledge and preparation for veterinary school. Those early in their pre-vet pathway focused on assessing veterinary schools and comparing educational formats, while those who might be further along in their journey investigated the Veterinary Medical College Application Service process, interviews and essays.

The morning sessions also provided finance-focused information exploring strategies for funding veterinary school through smarter financial decision-making. Additionally, all attendees received information about diverse veterinary career possibilities and heard a panel of practicing veterinarians speak about challenges and adaptations in veterinary medicine.

Following a networking lunch, students participated in one of five afternoon veterinary career path explorations: equine, large animal, small animal, mixed animal practice and wildlife veterinary medicine. Site locations included Bluegrass Stockyards, Commonwealth Veterinary Clinic, Park Equine Hospital, Richmond Road Veterinary Clinic and a focus talk from wildlife veterinarians. The mixed



animal practice and wildlife medicine focus sites were new this year, based on feedback from past participants.

“THIS EVENT PROVIDES A FANTASTIC OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDENTS TO ENGAGE WITH VETERINARIANS AND TEAM MEMBERS, ADVISERS AND OTHER PROFESSIONALS.”
- AMBER MCNAMARA



“This event also gives students the opportunity to learn about the application process, finances and career options in the industry,” said Amber McNamara, director of UK’s pre-vet advising program. “It is wonderful to see so much student engagement as well as genuine support and guidance from the veterinary community.”

Attendees were pleased with the event. Some were returning a second year, while others found the event for the first time.

UK freshman Kathryn Bhatia said she heard about the event through Canvas, the interactive teaching and learning program used by UK students, and got a lot out of the session about debt and loans. She participated in the wildlife afternoon track.

University of Louisville student Matt Gomez said he heard about the event from Instagram. He had also attended last year and said the event was valuable. He focused on the application part of his veterinary school journey and was excited about his afternoon session at a mixed animal location.

Dylan Foster, a sophomore from Morehead State University, attended last year as well and felt he got more out of this year’s event focusing on his application. He participated in the mixed animal session during the afternoon.

“This event was only possible due to our generous sponsors, speakers, panelists and focus sites who took the time out of their day to educate our participants. We could not be more grateful,” Tebeau said.



Universities represented included Asbury University, Berea College, Cal Poly Pomona, Centre College, College of the Redwoods, Cumberland University, Eastern Kentucky University, Elizabethtown Community and Technical College, Georgetown College, Lees-McRae College, Marshall University, Morehead State University, Murray State University, Northern Kentucky University, Texas State University, The College of Southern Maryland, The Ohio State University, Transylvania University, Union Commonwealth University, University of Florida,



University of Kentucky, University of Louisville, University of Tennessee, Utah State University and Western Kentucky University.

The gold sponsor for the event was Park Equine Hospital.

Silver sponsors included American Association of Equine Practitioners, Hagyard Equine Medical Institute, Kentucky Association of Equine Practitioners, Kentucky Livestock Coalition, Kentucky Veterinary Medical Association, Lexington Equine Medical, Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital and The Jockey Club.

Bronze sponsors included the Kentucky Cattlemen's Association, Chevy Chase Animal Clinic, Farm Journal Foundation, Merck Animal Health, National Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association and the VIN Foundation.

Event partners and collaborators included the UK Department of Animal and Food Sciences, UK Ag Equine Programs, Blue Grass Stockyards, Centre College, Eastern Kentucky University, MedVet Lexington, Kentucky Horse Council, Veterinary Wellness Clinic, VisitLex and Zoetis.

UK's Pre-Veterinary Advising program consists of an advisory team that serves all university pre-vet students by guiding and educating participants about their requirements for veterinary schools across the U.S., including contract seats with Auburn University and Tuskegee University. For more information about the Pre-Veterinary Experience Day, visit <https://afs.ca.uky.edu/students/pre-vet/pre-vet-experience-day>.

See video from the event [here](#).





UK AG EQUINE PROGRAMS WELCOMES ALL TO THE HORSEY HUSTLE 5K, BENEFITING STUDENT ENRICHMENT

by Holly Wiemers

The University of Kentucky Ag Equine Programs at the Martin-Gatton will host the fourth annual Horsey Hustle 5K April 13 beginning at 1 p.m. at Coldstream Park. Event proceeds benefit the program's Student Experience and Applied Education Fund, established to support UK students in gaining horse experiences, both academically and recreationally.

"The Horsey Hustle is a fun, family event that brings people together to benefit students within our program. The 5K is also serving as a fundraiser for our equine-focused clubs and teams, so all efforts will directly benefit our students in multiple ways," said Mary Jane Little, academic coordinator within UK Ag Equine Programs and event lead.

"We are also promoting UK's Waggin' and Walkin' Club and will have a dog adoption event on race

day," Little said. "So, whether you walk or run, come as a group or bring your dog, we hope to see the greater Lexington community turn out at Coldstream Park."

The Horsey Hustle 5K is part of an event planning class within UK's equine science and management undergraduate degree program. Students help develop a plan and then create an event that benefits the program and its students.

"I'm excited for the Horsey Hustle 5K to bring together UK, the equine industry and the local community," said sophomore Haley Ropel, one of the students in the equine event class.

The [Student Experience and Applied Education Fund](#) has benefited several students and opened opportunities for others. Last year's event raised \$6,000 for the fund.

New this year, \$10 from each ticket sold under an equine club or team at UK will be transferred directly that their financial account. Clubs and teams are encouraged to use a code for their specific organization to track and earn that money.

Organizers encourage costumes, dogs on leashes and groups and there will be fun awards for multiple categories on race day. Food trucks will also be on site.

The title sponsor for this year's Horsey Hustle 5K is Stable Recovery. Other event sponsors include Hagyard Medical Institute, Hallway Feeds, Red Mile, Spy Coast Farm, Stone Column Farm, Stonestreet Farm, Thoroughbred Daily News and VisitLex.

"We are grateful for all of our generous sponsors," said James MacLeod, director of UK Ag Equine Programs. "This event offers so



much and spring is the perfect time for outdoor activities. We welcome all to join us and support our students."

Registration is \$30 and includes a T-shirt for those registered by the early bird March 13 deadline. For those unable to attend but who wish to make a donation, visit the registration page.

Onsite registration begins at noon. Participants are encouraged to bring a chair or picnic blankets. The event location is Coldstream Park, located at 1850 Pisacano Drive in Lexington.

Learn more and register at <https://raceroster.com/events/2025/97840/uk-horsey-hustle-5k-runwalk>.



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How Media Drives Views

"To educate & inform different agriculture aspects to horse enthusiasts and the impact of media on Kentucky's agri-tourism sector to the state's agriculture industry"

WHEN: MARCH 11

TIME: 6 P.M.

WHERE: SEAY AUDITORIUM

UK Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment



Ag Equine Programs



UK EQUINE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING SHOWCASE HELD DEC. 3



by Holly Wiemers, photos by Sarah Ziese

UK Ag Equine Programs held its annual Equine Experiential Showcase (formerly named the Internship Showcase) Dec. 3 on the UK campus. The event recognized the summer and fall internship and study abroad experiences by Equine Science and Management students. Students presented their work via posters and an Outstanding Intern Award was presented for summer and fall. A People's Choice award was also given to the interns whose poster and presentation was voted most impactful to attendees.

Congratulations go out to the follow interns who were recognized with awards:

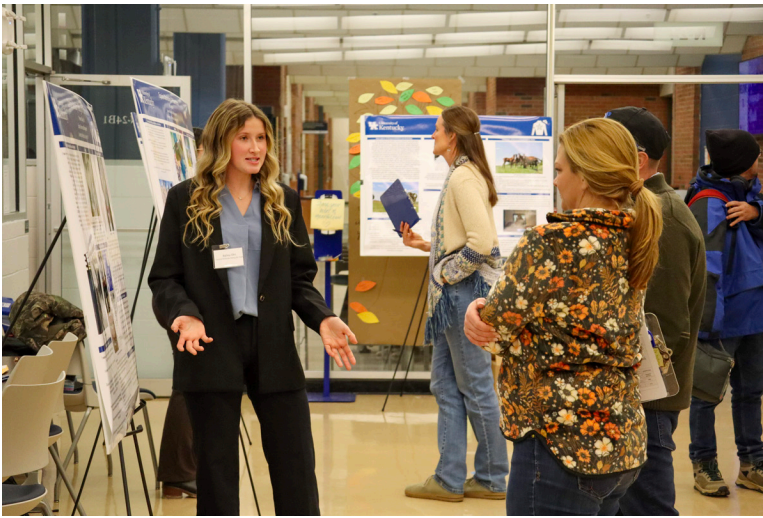
- Summer 2024 Outstanding Intern, Angelina Sonoqui, Kentucky Department of Agriculture
- Fall 2024 Outstanding Intern, Alana Quirindongo- Baunsoe, Spy Coast Farm
- People's Choice, Susie Cerulli, Hagyard Equine Medical Institute

The following interns participated with posters

Summer 2024:

- Morgan Appel, Godolphin
- Kamryn Barth, Gluck Equine Research Center
- Sydney Borne, Hagyard Equine Medical Institute
- Susie Cerulli, Hagyard Equine Medical Institute
- Kiera Delahanty, United States Equestrian Federation
- Sara Fouts, Kentucky Derby Museum
- John Cabelka, National HBPA
- Avery Cummings, Southwest Show Management
- Samantha Grinnell-Spiller, Dizzy D Ranch
- Lauren Hall, University of Kentucky Veterinary



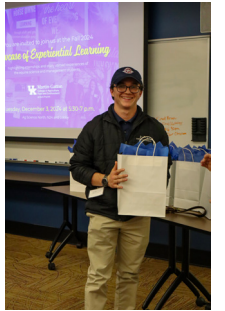
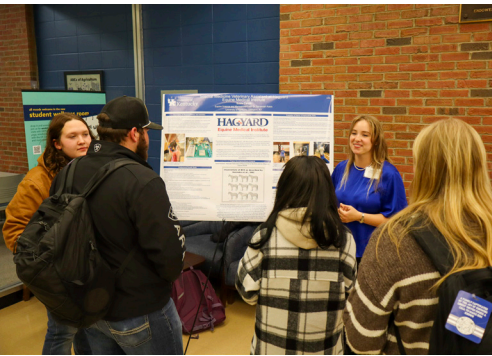


Diagnostic Laboratory

- Braden Heath, Three Chimney Farm
- Isabelle Davis, Park Equine Hospital
- Savannah Meacham, Central Kentucky Riding for Hope
- Noah Meagher, Resolute Racing
- Emily Nelson, Refined Social
- Riley Pauley, Lexington Equine Dentistry
- Danielle Northup, Roiville Run Farm, To The Max Eventing LLC
- Carolyn Parker, Secretariat Center
- Oliva Petrey, New Vocations Racehorse Adoption Program
- Abigail Pikturna, Frankfort Park Farm
- Brooke Porter, Winstar Farm
- Angelina Sonoqui, Kentucky Department of Agriculture
- Meghan Sorcabal, Hagyard Equine Medical Institute
- Lily Tynan, Hagyard Equine Medical Institute
- Ava Vransy, Snake River Ranch
- Maggie Welch, McConathy Farm and Rescue

Fall 2024:

- Elizabeth Alderson, McMahan and Hill Bloodstock
- Joe Archambault, Claiborne Farm
- Alyssa Bartosch, Stone Column Farm
- Richard Daly, BraveHearts Equine Center
- Kellyn Kane, Briar Hill Stables
- Kiersen Larsson, UK Ag Equine Programs
- AJ McCoy, Lexington Equine Medical
- Bailey Ohi, Central Kentucky Riding For Hope
- Alana Quirindongo-Bausoe, Spy Coast Farm
- Angela Veshia, Gluck Equine Research Center



STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN KEEP DAY AT THE CAPITOL, LEARN MORE ABOUT LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

A group of Equine Science and Management undergraduate students traveled to the Kentucky Capitol and participated in KEEP Day discussions, sat in a Tourism Committee meeting and toured the Capitol Rotunda and House and Senate Chambers. *Photos by Elizabeth Gordon.*



Speaker of the House Desk at the front of the House Chambers.



Law Library



Law Library



Rep. Matt Koch talks to attendees.



Rep. Kim King poses with attendees.



Students in House Chambers.



Students talk with Walker Hancock of Claiborne Farm.



Supreme Courtroom



UK students are joined by Kentucky 4-H students



UK students are joined by Kentucky 4-H students

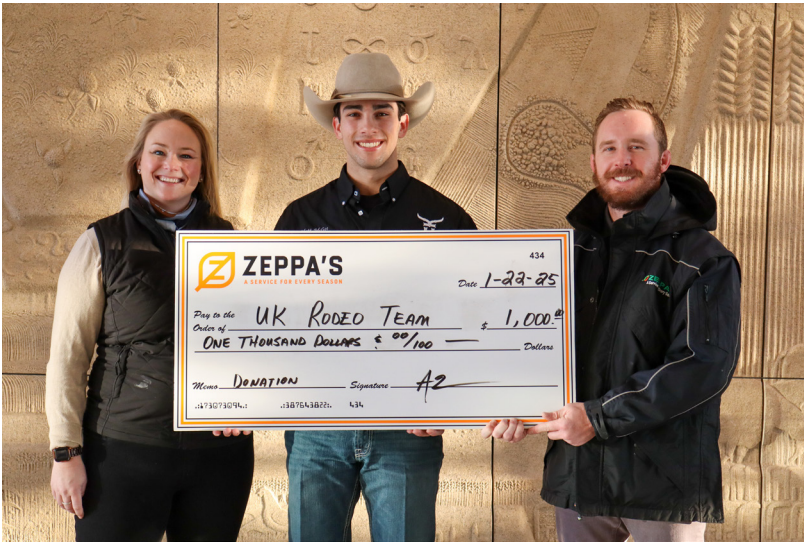


UK students are joined by Kentucky 4-H students

UK RODEO TEAM PRESENTED WITH DONATION

photo by Sarah Ziese

Rusty Parks presented a check on behalf of Zeppa's Landscaping Company to UK Rodeo Team President Matthew McGee Jan. 22. Zeppa's Landscaping Company specializes in robotic mowing for Central Kentucky horse farms and wanted to support the team. Photo by Sarah Ziese. Pictured, left to right, Annie Martin, past equine philanthropy director, McGee and Parks.



MORGAN ASKINS 1ST RUNNER UP AT MISS RODEO USA

UK Ag Equine Programs congratulates Morgan Askins, graduate teaching assistant for Equine Programs and PhD candidate within the Department of Veterinary Science, on her achievement at Miss Rodeo USA.

UK AG EQUINE PROGRAMS STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND APPLIED EDUCATION FUND WILL NOW BE OPEN FOR APPLICATIONS YEAR ROUND

The University of Kentucky Ag Equine Programs Student Experience and Applied Education Fund was established to enable undergraduate students in the Equine Science and Management major opportunities to gain horse experience through both academic and recreational activities while enrolled at UK.

This fund is to be utilized to provide financial support for individual students or student groups to initiate, develop or participate in equine-related extracurricular activities including, but not limited to outreach activities, educational efforts developed and coordinated through equine-related clubs and teams, and other equine-related and enriching educational events or opportunities. In addition, this fund can be used to help enable undergraduate student capstone projects or to support student involvement in undergraduate research.

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year. Awardees will be notified approximately one month after submission about the status of their request. Awards to individuals or groups are typically in the range of \$500 to \$3,000. This annual program anticipates that funds provided will be spent during the 12-month period after award notification. However, an extension of this funding period can be requested. Application guidelines are provided below, with the total length of applications normally in the range of two to three pages. Completed applications should be submitted to equine@uky.edu as a pdf email attachment or via the Qualtrics form at https://uky.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_55FYP9VIFWTat9Q.

Confirmation that a submitted application has been received will be sent. Please reach out if you do not receive this confirmation within one week.



UK LAUNCHES NEW UNDERGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN AGRICULTURAL LEADERSHIP

by Zoey Ortega

To meet the needs of tomorrow's workforce, the University of Kentucky Martin Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment (CAFE) is offering a certificate in agricultural leadership. Starting in Spring of 2025, the new certificate aims to create a pathway for students seeking to enter the agriculture industry by teaching transdisciplinary skills through leadership development and hands-on experiences.

Bill Gatton, who bestowed a transformational \$100 million gift through The Bill Gatton Foundation in 2023, believed that experiential learning is the foundation for helping students open doors for success and create breakthroughs in their lives.

"Students will see how having a foundation in leadership, teamwork and collaboration are transferable skills towards advancing in the agriculture industry and beyond.

Leading, serving and supporting are all critical skills no matter where you are and where you are going," said Savannah Robin, Ed.D., lecturer for career and professional development within the Department of Agricultural Economics at Martin-Gatton CAFE. "The electives are transdisciplinary, making them accessible and value adding, setting up students to be successful in many areas."

This 12-credit hour certificate is open to all students and majors, focusing on creating well-rounded individuals for any industry. Students are required to complete three core courses in leadership foundations, experience and applications. Additionally, students must satisfy two courses from a suite of available electives; one in leadership and another related to communications.

The first core course in agricultural leadership foundations will be

offered asynchronously. It will help develop students' individual leadership abilities, team collaboration, conflict management and other skills through the agriculture leadership experience course gives students the opportunity to apply their leadership skills to a semester-long leadership experience such as an internship or volunteering.

"We want to work with students to curate a valuable leadership experience that will allow them to get the most out of the certificate," said Emily Roe Brown, Kentucky Agricultural Leadership Program coordinator. "This program is designed to empower students to see themselves as change agents."

In the third core course in leadership applications, students will take part in a case study-based capstone course. Students can apply their skills by interacting with industry employers and leaders and

generating solution strategies for current agriculture issues.

Available leadership electives include courses in agriculture, equine or environmental law, human resource management, agriculture and food policy, government and public policy, community leadership, and more. Communication electives include agricultural product marketing and sales, professional development in agriculture, community media writing, multimedia writing, persuasive speaking and more.

Upon completion of the certificate, students will have stronger skills in project management, critical thinking, problem solving, communication and information processing.

"We will explore leadership styles to help you determine how to apply skills in different situations," Brown said. "We want to equip you to be a dynamic leader and team player."

To learn more and to apply to the Agricultural Leadership Certificate at Martin-Gatton CAFE, visit <https://www.uky.edu/academics/undergraduate-certificate/martin-gatton-college-agriculture-food-environment/agricultural-leadership>.



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT, EMILY BROLIER-CURTIS ('09) IN THE NEWS BACK FROM THE BRINK: AFTER AN 'UNSURVIVABLE' TBI, EMILY BROLIER CURTIS SEES LIFE DIFFERENTLY

Story excerpt, published Dec. 20, 2024, by Lindsay Berreth, The Chronicle of the Horse

Emily Brollier Curtis isn't quite sure what happened on Jan. 19, 2024.

The professional dressage trainer was hacking a horse after an uneventful schooling session at her Florida winter base before her assistant, MacKenzie Wood, found her 40 feet away from the barn, on the ground with no visible injuries. Wood checked Curtis over briefly as the rider sat up and took off her helmet, assumed she just got the wind knocked out of her and quickly took her horse back to the barn. She returned to find Curtis unresponsive and not breathing, and she began to administer cardio-pulmonary resuscitation. What followed was a harrowing month that changed Curtis' life and riding career forever.

"Me being able to talk to you, there is no other word—it's miraculous," she said. "I'm a pretty faith-based person. I do think there's no other word for it than miracle. I'm thankful for that, because the best medicine in the world can't explain why I'm OK."

Curtis was diagnosed with what she was told was an "unsurvivable" brain injury, displaced fractures of her C1 and C2 vertebrae, as well as some broken ribs.

She'd been known as someone who could ride just about any horse and took on some of the toughest ones, rarely coming off—though the horse she fell from was considered a safe one. She always wore a helmet.

"It's a wonderful example of, accidents happen," she said. "My neurosurgeon said, based on my injuries, he thinks I was unconscious before I hit the ground. Whether the horse stumbled and stunned me and hit the brim of my

helmet, or I passed out—I've never passed out before. I had zero defensive wounds. I know how to fall."

Intubated and airlifted to St. Mary's Medical Center in West Palm Beach, Florida, she underwent an emergency craniotomy less than an hour after her fall to relieve bleeding and pressure in her brain. She had a 9-millimeter midline shift of her brain, and was told a "significant" shift was anything over 5 millimeters. Anything over 7 millimeters was not often survivable. Combined with neck fractures that left a small piece of bone sitting right next to her spine, there was a possibility of her being paralyzed or unable to speak if she woke up.

After being airlifted to St. Mary's Medical Center (Fla.) where she spent several weeks in an induced coma, shortly after regaining consciousness Emily Brollier Curtis was transported to the Shepherd Center in Atlanta for rehabilitation, but only needed to spend six days there. Photos Courtesy Of Emily Brollier Curtis

"They said they see this kind of injury in head-on collisions going 80" miles per hour, she said. "I've been over it a billion times, what could have happened to me. And my helmet doesn't even have a scratch on it. It's the most bizarre thing. It was so bizarre that they taped off the farm as a crime scene because they assumed I was dying. I had a less than 1 percent probability to survive through that first night."

It was a terrifying prospect to her family, employees and her husband, Aaron Curtis, who flew in from their Nicholasville, Kentucky, home with their 2-year-old daughter Olive Curtis.

Doctors kept Emily in an induced coma, where she spent two weeks before she started making movements, giving them hope that she wasn't paralyzed.

"As I'm coming awake and finally wrapping my head around what happened to me, I asked my husband," she recalled. "He said I fell off a horse and hit my head. I just looked at him and said, 'No, that can't be right.' They started to determine I was going to be verbal, and by the time I left critical care, they looked at my husband and said, 'I think she's going to make a full recovery.' "

Three weeks after the fall, Emily was flown to the Shepherd Center in Atlanta, which works with brain and spinal-cord injury patients. She and her husband were told to expect a long stay, but six days later, she was discharged because she was "too high-functioning."

But it would still be a long road to recovery. Emily started attending occupational and speech therapy in Kentucky as her neck fractures healed. Before the accident, she was extremely fit, running 30-40 miles each week, riding 10 horses, teaching and going to the gym.

Meanwhile, her team at her Miramonte Equine took over riding her horses and her clients' horses and running the business.

See the story in its entirety here: <https://www.chronofhorse.com/article/back-from-the-brink-after-an-unsurvivable-tbi-emily-brollier-curtis-sees-life-differently/>

UK'S HORSE RACING CLUB GIVES STUDENTS GUIDANCE ON WORKING IN THE 'HORSE CAPITAL OF THE WORLD'

Story excerpt by Hannah Piedad, Kentucky Kernel, Feb. 1, 2025

On what is normally known as the loudest floor of the William T. Young Library, one room, B- 108C, is almost completely engulfed in silence as students look to a lone speaker at the front of the room.

Recounting her time spent pursuing a veterinary career, Claire Foster, a veterinarian for Hagyard Equine Medical Institute, gives these silent students a glimpse into her journey, and the dedication it took to get to where she is.

Listening to stories like Foster's is common for these students. As members of the University of Kentucky's Horse Racing Club, opportunities like this are available to them at their fingertips.

Between guest speaker events like Foster's, and tours of highly regarded facilities like Keeneland; Horse Racing Club members are gaining valuable insight into the inner workings of the "Horse Capital of the World," according

to Sydney Richmond, the club's president.

Providing members with these experiences is a goal for Richmond, as she says she aims to show members the "range of specialties" they can pursue within the equine industry.

"I want to expose members to other career paths," Richmond said. "I'm just trying to show members that there isn't just one way to do things. Like, you don't have to be a trainer, you don't have to be a vet to be involved."

Having a long-time interest in horses, Richmond said when she came to UK she talked with an advisor about joining the Horse Racing Club. However, she learned the club had become inactive during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This is when Richmond said she took it upon herself to bring it back to campus.

"I wanted to join the horse racing club . . . I talked to my advisor about it, and she told me that the club didn't actually exist," Richmond said. "I was like, 'What does the process look like for reactivating the club?'"

See story in its entirety here: <https://kykernel.com/110632/features/uks-horse-racing-club-gives-students-guidance-on-working-in-the-horse-capital-of-the-world/>

MEET THE UK RODEO TEAM - YES, THEY EXIST, AND THEY'RE LOOKING FOR COMMUNITY SUPPORT

By Ellen Ice, Lex18, Jan 31, 2025

There's a club at the University of Kentucky that doesn't get much attention - or financial help.

"I put my heart and soul into this team and into bull riding and it's everything to me," said student president Matt McGee.

The rodeo team has eight rodeo members who go to out-of-state competitions and another 20 to 25 practice members. They compete in bull riding, barrel racing, goat tying, and roping.

"We're driving 14 hours on the high end going to college rodeos, going to Mississippi and Arkansas, our closest one is four hours away, gas and then entry fees, they're \$90, so it all adds up quickly," said McGee.

As college students trying to get sanctioned by the university, the expense is hard to manage. Care for the horses alone is around \$1,200 a month.

"We're always accepting sponsors, anything helps and we are very appreciative," said McGee.

Professional barrel racer and coach Kelly Curry said she's hopeful the community will get behind her team. She says they're worth it.

"When they're winning and getting buckles in our shows and winning saddles, I'm just so incredibly proud of them," said Curry.

If you're interested in becoming a sponsor or to learn more about the team, contact McGee at 618-974-5794.

See story in its entirety here: <https://www.lex18.com/news/covering-kentucky/meet-the-uk-rodeo-team-yes-they-exist-and-theyre-looking-for-community-support>



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