

## Notes from the Director



*Alex Winter-Nelson (left) with Moses Nawiko from the Agriculture Consultative Forum of Zambia and Pete Goldsmith at a conference on the role of livestock in poverty alleviation in Lusaka, Zambia.*

For many faculty and staff in the College of ACES, the summer months bring increased travel for interaction with partners abroad. The activity level is so intense that it is rare for me not to run into a colleague when I make my own trips.

On the way to Zambia this summer, I traveled halfway

with a colleague from Crop Sciences who was bound for Kenya. On the way to Saskatoon, my first leg was with a colleague from Agricultural and Biological Engineering who was heading to China. On a layover in San Francisco, I found myself on the phone with colleagues from Agricultural and Consumer Economics who were in Bangladesh, and returning through Dallas I am sure I saw a faculty member from Food Science and Human Nutrition arrive from Mexico and slip into a train that I missed.

The College of ACES continues to expand its international work in each dimension of the land-grant mission. The articles in this newsletter reveal just a tiny share of the impactful work that ACES faculty, staff, and students are doing around the world. This semester, the Office of International Programs is trying to make us all more aware of the work that is happening by co-sponsoring international seminars within the various departments and units of ACES. If you are on campus, please look out for the international speakers visiting your department. If you are off campus, you are welcome drop in for events you see on our bi-weekly announcements e-mail. And, all readers are encouraged to reach out to us if you would like to use the international seminars series as a way to make others aware of your work, even if they don't bump into you at O'Hare International Airport.

*Alex Winter-Nelson, Director, ACES Office of International Programs*

## USAID extends partnership with University of Illinois

In September 2018, USAID awarded \$6,000,000 to the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Soybean Value Chain Research (Soybean Innovation Lab, SIL) to help build the foundation of the soybean industry in emerging markets, principally in Sub-Saharan Africa. The new three-year award adds to the \$10,000,000 awarded in 2013 from USAID as well as multiple external grants totaling \$2,400,000. The University of Illinois, in partnership with the University of Missouri and Mississippi State University, leads the research program operated by 35 researchers in the U.S. and a like number of researchers across Africa, plus numerous public and private sector partners overseas. The team currently operates in 17 countries including Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, with additional collaborators in Australia, Brazil, Colombia, and South Africa.

SIL utilizes a research for development strategy that directly links its technical knowledge and innovations in support of soybean development partners. SIL's international team of tropical soybean experts provides the evidence and technical guidance to its partners to enable smart soybean development, economic growth, poverty reduction, and improved livestock and human nutrition from soybean systems.

SIL's research and scaling, which started in 2013 in five countries, now comprises a suite of 25 products and services. SIL designed these products for direct uptake and scaling by development partners. Example technologies include local production of affordable harvesting and planting mechanization to reduce labor demands and improve seed and grain quality; a business benchmarking and training program to improve the viability of commercial soy dairy producers; economic and nutritional analyses and recommendations for soy fortified menus to elevate the nutrition level of national school lunches while reducing costs. For more information about SIL's suite of products and our activities, or to collaborate, visit [www.soybeaninnovationlab.illinois.edu](http://www.soybeaninnovationlab.illinois.edu).

## ACES builds partnerships in Israel



A new partnership between the University of Illinois and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem kicked off in July 2018 with a visit to Israel by a delegation from the College of ACES. The group, led by ACES Dean Kim Kidwell, cited complementary

research interests, as well as Israel's vibrant and supportive environment for entrepreneurial development, as the basis of the partnership. The aim of the visit was to identify opportunities and strengthen collaborations to increase the effectiveness of agricultural practices and food processing; to identify potential industry partners; and to explore opportunities for shared student experiences that can lead to industry connections and eventual full-time employment. While in Israel, the ACES delegation also visited Tel Aviv University.

*The Office of the Vice President for Economic Development and Innovation (VPEDI) provided travel support to encourage the development of new or the strengthening of existing faculty and college collaborations with Israel and Mexico. VPEDI is offering up to 15 travel grants to further the mission of VPEDI, the Discovery Partners Institute (DPI), and the Illinois Innovation Network.*

## ACES builds capacity for maize in Haiti by “training the trainers”



A group of agricultural professionals from Haiti visited the University of Illinois campus during September to learn best practices for developing standardized experimental procedures, phenotyping, and selecting genotypes to optimize the production of maize (corn) in

their country.

“Corn is a staple food in Haiti, but most of the corn they eat is not actually grown in Haiti; they rely on imports and donations. Our goal is to enable these professionals to find the best suited cultivars to grow in Haiti considering the limitations their farmers experience, including low levels of nitrogen and water,” explained Dr. Martin Bohn, associate professor and corn breeder in the Department of Crop Sciences.

The focus of the week-long training was on variety trial setup, management, evaluation, and statistical analysis. The visitors learned how to draw useful conclusions from the data and how to report the results in ways farmers can use.

The visit and training was funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) as part of the Support to Agricultural Research and Development (SARD) project led by the University of Florida.

## ACES announces the 2018-19 Academy for Global Engagement (Global Academy)

Seven faculty and staff from the College of ACES have been selected to form the newest cohort of the ACES Academy for Global Engagement (Global Academy). The 2018-19 Global Academy, which marks the 12th year of the program, will focus on building academic partnerships in South Africa, specifically with the University of Pretoria and the University of Kwa Zulu Natal. The Global Academy training program encourages greater internationalization of the College by providing a platform and assistance to ACES faculty and staff who wish to further their global research, teaching, and service engagements. This year's scholars are:

1. Dr. Dustin Boler, Assistant Professor (Animal Sciences)
2. Dr. David Bullock, Professor (Agricultural and Consumer Economics)
3. Dr. Sandy Dall'erba, Associate Professor (Agricultural and Consumer Economics)
4. Dr. Tony Grift, Associate Professor (Agricultural and Biological Engineering)
5. Grant McCarty, Extension Educator
6. Dr. Carmen Ugarte, Research Specialist (Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences)
7. Dr. Frank Zhao, Professor (Crop Sciences)

Participating in the Global Academy requires an academic year commitment to the program, which focuses on global activities at the college, campus, and national levels, and culminates with an international immersion experience. A full cohort visit to South Africa is planned for June 2019.

## ADMI hosts Bangladesh Ministry of Food



As a component of the Bangladesh Integrated Food Policy Research Program, the ADM Institute for the Prevention of Postharvest Loss (ADMI) hosted a three-week capacity building short course for persons

engaged in food policy issues with the Government of Bangladesh.

The eight officials from the Bangladesh Ministry of Food visited the University of Illinois for a series of seminars, workshops, and field trips to gain new perspectives on food systems, food policy, and postharvest management.

For more news items on international activities in the College of ACES, visit <http://intlprograms.aces.edu>. To receive an electronic version of this newsletter, visit <http://illinois.edu/gm/subscribe/7045>