

**UofA** **DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE**  
**RESEARCH & EXTENSION**  
*University of Arkansas System*



UNIVERSITY OF  
**ARKANSAS**

Dale Bumpers College  
of Agricultural, Food & Life Sciences

# AGRICULTURE AWARDS CEREMONY

**January 12, 2024**

C.A. Vines 4-H Center | Little Rock



# AGRICULTURE AWARDS CEREMONY

Welcome ..... Deacue Fields,  
*Vice President for Agriculture*

## **JOHN W. WHITE AWARDS:**

### **Outstanding Research Award**

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Lawton Lanier Nalley – Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness  
presented by ..... Jean-François Meullenet  
*Senior Associate Vice President for Agriculture-Research  
and Director, Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station*

### **Outstanding Teaching Award**

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Eunjoo Cho – School of Human Environmental Sciences  
presented by ..... Jean-François Meullenet

### **Outstanding Extension State Faculty Award**

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Amanda Philyaw Perez – Department of Horticulture  
presented by ..... John Anderson  
*Senior Associate Vice President for Agriculture-Extension  
and Director, Cooperative Extension Service*

### **Outstanding County Extension Educator Award**

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Terrie James – Hempstead County  
presented by ..... John Anderson

### **Outstanding Team Award**

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Value Added Food Production Team: Renee Threlfall & John Robert Swenson (Department of Food Science); Heather Friedrich & Amanda Philyaw Perez (Department of Horticulture); and Rusty Rumley (National Agricultural Law Center)  
presented by ..... Deacue Fields

**OUTSTANDING SUPPORT PERSONNEL AWARDS:**

presented by ..... Deacue Fields

**Program Area Awards**

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Lizzy Herrera – Department of Horticulture

Stephanie Williamson – Department of Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences

**Support Function Awards**

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Scott Mattke – Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness

Jill Williams – Human Resources

**Support Staff Awards**

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Phyllis Scurlock – 4-H & Youth Development

Cheryl Nimmo – Technology Commercialization Office

**BUMPERS COLLEGE AWARDS:**

unless otherwise noted, presented by ..... Jean-François Meullenet

**Outstanding Honors Thesis Mentor Award**

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Eunjoo Cho – School of Human Environmental Sciences

presented by ..... Lisa Wood  
*Assistant Dean of Student Success*

**Outstanding International Education Award**

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Adnan Ali Khalaf Alrubaye – Department of Poultry Science

presented by ..... Lisa Wood

**Bumpers College Alumni Society Outstanding Advising Award**

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Donia Timby – School of Human Environmental Sciences

presented by ..... Fendley Ragland  
*Bumpers College Alumni Society Board President*

**Jack G. Justus Endowment for Teaching Excellence**

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Nathan Kemper – Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness

**Bumpers College Dean’s Award of Excellence for Professional Staff Support**

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Becky Alverson – Bumpers College Dean’s Office Staff

**Bumpers College Dean’s Award of Excellence for Departmental Professional Staff Support**

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Daniela Kidd – Department of Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences

# Spitze Land Grant University Faculty Award For Excellence

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Michael Popp – Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness

## RECOGNITION OF ISSUED PATENTS:

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presented by ..... Lisa Childs  
*Assistant Vice President for Technology Commercialization*

- **Method to Reduce Microbial Bloom in Poultry Hatchery:** Lisa Bielke, Billy Hargis & Lucas Graham – Department of Poultry Science
- **Yeast Vaccine Vector Including Immunostimulatory and Antigenic Polypeptides and Methods of Using the Same:** Lisa Bielke, Olivia Faulkner, Billy Hargis & Leona Calhoun – Department of Poultry Science
- **Process of Using Arkansas Net Energy Requirements of Feed Ingredients for Broiler Production:** Katie Hilton & Craig Coon – Department of Poultry Science
- **Peptides that Block Transmission of Orthospoviruses and Methods of Using the Same:** Ioannis Tzanetakis & Jing Zhou – Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology
- **Rice Cultivar RU1901041 ‘CLL16’:** Karen Moldenhauer – Department of Crop, Soil, and Environmental Sciences
- **Wine Grape named ‘Dazzle’:** Renee Threlfall – Department of Food Science; John Clark, Justin Morris & James Moore – Department of Horticulture
- **Wine Grape Named ‘Indulgence’:** Renee Threlfall – Department of Food Science; John Clark, Justin Morris & James Moore – Department of Horticulture
- **“Blackberry Named APF-268 ‘Horizon’:** John Clark – Department of Horticulture
- **Peach Named Whitewater A-856:** John Clark – Department of Horticulture
- **Peach Named Whitewater A-857:** Margaret Worthington – Department of Horticulture



*Lawton Lanier Nalley*

## **John W. White Outstanding Research Award**

**Lawton Lanier Nalley** is a researcher who is as far from an ivory tower academic as can be. In a letter of support, John Anderson, agricultural economics and agribusiness department head, said that Nalley “is one of the most intentional faculty members that I have ever known in terms of ensuring that his research program provides direct, tangible benefits to the university’s stakeholders.”

Nalley joined the faculty at Arkansas as an assistant professor in 2008 and moved to associate professor in 2013 before being named professor in 2018. During his time, his research has made impacts on key stakeholders including Riceland Foods, Tyson, the U.S. Rice Federation and the Arkansas Soybean Board. His work shows economic effects of a wide range of issues including diseases, high nighttime temperatures and even the impact of broken rice on profitability. Nalley has also gained international attention for crop modeling in the face of climate change.

His prolific research output speaks volumes. Literally. He has 95 published articles and more than 100 refereed presentations. One of his articles, “Effect of warming temperatures on US wheat yields” has racked up more than nearly 18,000 downloads and was voted one of the top 10 stories in science in 2015.

With all of this, it’s important to note that Nalley only has a 65 percent research appointment, as well as five percent service appointment. Nalley has a 30 percent teaching appointment, and in 2021 won the John White Outstanding Teaching Award.

Jesse Tack, professor of agricultural economics at Kansas State, echoed Anderson’s statement: “At a fundamental level, he respects the unique conditions/viewpoints of individuals and actually listens to what they are saying. He wants to lean and help, rather than bend the world to his vision.”



*Eunjoon Cho*

### **John W. White Outstanding Teaching Award**

**Dr. Eunjoon Cho**, associate professor of apparel merchandising and product development in Bumpers College's School of Human Environmental Sciences, has over 10 years of professional and academic experience. She received her B.S. in apparel design and product development and her M.S. in apparel merchandising at Hanyang University in Seoul, South Korea. She earned her Ph.D. in apparel merchandising and consumer behavior from Iowa State University in 2011.

Cho has published 19 referred journal articles and 38 peer-reviewed proceedings of papers presented at international conferences, and has secured funding of more than \$340,000 from external and internal funding sources such as USDA NIFA and Cotton Inc. Since she joined the U of A in 2013, she has received 14 awards and recognitions such as the 2023 GSIE Outstanding Mentor Award, 2021 Paper of Distinction Award from the International Textile and Apparel Association, 2021 Teaching Academy Fellow, 2021 Gamma Sigma Delta Teaching Award of Excellence and 2018 Outstanding Mentor Award from the Office of Nationally Competitive Awards.



*Amanda Philyaw  
Perez*

### **John W. White Outstanding Extension State Faculty Award**

**Dr. Amanda Philyaw Perez** graduated with her bachelors degree in psychology from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock in 2003. In 2007, she received her masters in public health from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. She completed her PhD. in Food Systems and Public Health at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in 2016. After working as a program and policy advisor at UAMS and then as a senior policy analyst for the Arkansas

Department of Human Services, Dr. Perez joined the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture in 2013 as a program associate for the Public Policy Center at the Cooperative Extension Service. Dr. Perez became an Assistant Professor for Produce Safety with Extension in 2017, and she now serves as an Associate Professor and Food Systems and Safety Specialist.

Dr. Perez leads the Local, Regional and Safe Foods program team, which supports the growth of local and regional food systems and helps specialty crop growers understand and implement food safety regulations. Since 2017, Dr. Perez has worked to build a statewide program to educate the produce industry about the Food Safety Modernization Act's Produce Safety Rule. She also expanded her program to include value-added food systems innovation, helping to create Share Grounds, an education and technical assistance program for food entrepreneurs. In her time at Extension, Dr. Perez has secured more than \$3 million in funding to support her efforts and hired a team of 21 employees and interns for the Local, Regional and Safe Foods team.



*Terrie James*

### **John W. White Outstanding County Extension Educator Award**

In her 20 years with the Cooperative Extension Service, **Terrie James** has become a trusted leader and source of support for her community. She began working as a family and consumer sciences county agent for Sevier County in 2003. Since 2013, James has worked as a county extension agent and staff chair for Hempstead County, where her programming focuses on health and wellness, 4-H and youth development, and community and economic development.

James has helped raise more than \$500,000 in funding to support Hempstead County Extension programs. She



collaborated with the Cooperative Extension Service Public Policy Center to prepare a Hempstead County ballot initiative publication on the local sales tax election, which proposed renovating a former bank building owned by the county to become the new county courthouse. The sales tax passed, and the courthouse was completed in 2022. James also helped lead efforts to establish and grow the local farmers market, partnering with the City of Hope to showcase local foods. She led a series of grant-writing workshops around Arkansas to help potential applicants navigate the grant application program for the USDA's Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program. James's commitment to meeting the needs of Hempstead County clients is evident in the variety of relevant, quality programming she provides, including teaching ServSafe classes, SNAP-Ed programs, financial management lessons, Best Care training for childcare professionals and many 4-H programs.

### **John W. White Outstanding Team Award**

This year's John W. White Outstanding Team Award goes to the Division's Value Added Food Production Team made up of **Renee Threlfall and John Swenson** (Department of Food Science); **Amanda Philyaw Perez and Heather Friedrich** (Department of Horticulture); and **Rusty Rumley** (National Agricultural Law Center).

At the core of the team's work is the Arkansas Food Innovation Center, which was established in 2013 to help strengthen the state's food system by providing farmers and food entrepreneurs with education, resources, and opportunities to grow and process food products. For the past decade, this value-added food production team has been instrumental in supporting farmers and entrepreneurs in Arkansas by providing infrastructure, technical assistance, and support to further value-added food production such as the Share Grounds project and

the forthcoming Market Center of the Ozarks. From 2014-2023, this team received more than \$2.3 million from 16 federal, state, regional, and community grants or gifts to support value-added food production activities in Arkansas.

Dr. Threlfall, a research scientist at the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, has worked in the food science department for over 30 years and assisted with the creation of the Arkansas Food Innovation Center. Her research and extension is focused on processing and postharvest storage of specialty crops and value-added processing of horticultural crops. She works with the horticulture department and the Cooperative Extension Service to evaluate crops from the field to the consumer.

Swenson became the manager of the Arkansas Food Innovation Center in 2016 and supports AFIC's clients by instructing



*(top to bottom, left to right) Value Added Food Production Team: Renee Threlfall & John Robert Swenson (Department of Food Science); Heather Friedrich & Amanda Philyaw Perez (Department of Horticulture); and Rusty Rumley (National Agricultural Law Center)*

them on sanitation, process optimization, marketing and retail opportunities. His certifications aid in ensuring clients understand safety and future regulations. Swenson works with faculty, students, and organizations such as the Walton Family Foundation to support creation of the Market Center of the Ozarks. The new food hub will begin offering resources to farmers, food entrepreneurs and northwest Arkansas residents in 2024.

Dr. Philyaw Perez is an associate professor in the Cooperative Extension Service's horticulture department and has worked as an extension specialist for food systems and food safety since 2017. She proposed, funded, constructed, and implemented the Share Grounds Certified Kitchens and Distribution Centers project in collaboration with Threlfall, Swenson and Dr. Ruben Morawicki. The Share Grounds program supports commercial and home-based food businesses to understand food safety, liability and regulations.

Rumley is a senior staff attorney with the National Agricultural Law Center. He also teaches an introduction to agricultural law course through the Dale Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food, & Life Sciences. Rumley co-wrote Direct Farm Business Guides for states participating in the Food MarketMaker program and was a part of the team that applied for the grant that created the Center for Arkansas Farms and Food within the Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station. Rumley teaches aspiring farmers about legal issues for new and beginning farmers.

Friedrich is the assistant director of the Center for Arkansas Farms and Food. Although CAFF was formally established in 2019, Friedrich has worked in the horticulture department on local food and farming issues since 2003. Since 2015, she has played an integral role in writing and implementing more than \$2.6 million in grant-funded projects focused on training farmers and food entrepreneurs on specialty crop production and value-added opportunities for local and regional markets.



*Lizzy Herrera*

## **Division of Agriculture Outstanding Support Personnel Awards – Program Area**

**Lizzy Herrera** joined the Division of Agriculture’s Horticulture Department in 2018 as a Program Technician and now serves as a Program Associate and Program Manager for the Arkansas Sustainable Agricultural Research and Education (AR-SARE) program. In both roles, Herrera has gone above and beyond to further research and extension efforts for the Division of Agriculture.

Since taking leadership of the AR-SARE program in 2020, Herrera has worked to increase the program’s reach. She has expanded the program’s traditional in-person workshops to include virtual events and YouTube videos, extending the reach and longevity of educational materials. Additionally, Herrera manages an annual budget of around \$12,000 to support county agents and growers with workshops and scholarships to attend conferences focused on sustainable agriculture.

Perhaps the most notable of Herrera’s efforts are her contributions to the horticulture extension team’s outreach efforts, including in-person and virtual workshops and field days. In this role, she spearheaded the development of the UAEX Fruit and Vegetable YouTube channel which hosts over 5,700 subscribers and 108 videos. Herrera has been directly responsible for the planning, filming and editing of 70 videos for this channel and 30 webinars. These videos and webinar recordings have more than 250,000 views. She developed the skills necessary to produce these videos entirely on her own, becoming a mastermind of virtual outreach courses.

In addition to her work with AR-SARE and her outreach contributions, Herrera also creates fact sheets, supports field trials, and provides leadership to program technicians, graduate students and interns. She has laid the groundwork for a productive, far-reaching horticulture extension team.



*Stephanie Williamson*

**Stephanie Williamson** has been with the Division of Agriculture since 2001 and, after seeking new challenges with field crops, transitioned to Program Associate in Dr. Trent Roberts' lab in 2010. She quickly moved up the ranks and was promoted to Program Associate II in 2014 and Program Associate III in 2020. Williamson currently manages all aspects of the Nitrogen Soil Test for Rice (N-STaR) lab and Dr. Roberts' research program.

In her current role, Williamson's responsibilities vary greatly. For her field research duties she creates and maintains plot plans, field maps and record sheets, all accessible via smart phones in the field and organized in physical notebooks. She oversees all greenhouse and laboratory studies and constantly seeks ways to increase efficiency. In the N-STaR lab, Williamson manages all billing, analysis and reporting for the N-STaR Service Center. In order to do this efficiently, Williamson taught herself Microsoft Access and programmed macro-enabled databases to streamline operations, create billing sheets and instantly produce conditionally formatted reports to be sent to clientele, saving hours of work and minimizing the chances of human error.

Aside from her day-to-day responsibilities, Williamson also serves as a resource for undergraduate and graduate students. She ensures students understand soil and plant sample preparation, proper data organization, and helps prepare them for research presentations both in extension events and professional meetings.

Through hard work, dedication and leadership, Williamson has had a tremendous impact on the N-STaR program, the soil fertility program, the Crop, Soils, and Environmental Department and on the Division of Agriculture.



*Scott Mattke*

## **Division of Agriculture Outstanding Support Personnel Awards – Support Function**

**Scott Mattke** began his career with the Division of Agriculture in 2004, joining the Crop, Soil, and Environmental Sciences (CSES) department as an Accounting Tech II. After 3 years in that position, he moved up to the Departmental Fiscal Manager position where he has been for the last 17 years. In that role, he manages over 180 cost centers and \$20 million in grants annually.

In addition to his accounting duties, Scott has taken on the additional responsibilities of managing the department's fleet of 32 vehicles, printing over 200 posters a year for conference presentations, and overseeing over \$7 million in inventory. Over the years, he has managed the renovation of conference rooms, undergrad and graduate student spaces, and laboratories. Scott is responsible for two positions reporting directly to him, and he has trained and mentored 13 people to work in the department, two of whom have gone on to be Fiscal Managers in other departments. While working full time in the CSES department, Scott also completed a master's degree in agriculture from the University of Arkansas.

When Workday entered our life in 2020, Scott was part of the team tasked with testing the new system and was the Workday Coach for the CSES Department, helping everyone in the department transition to the world of Workday as easily as possible.

Outside of work, Scott enjoys working on his cattle ranch and works on the renovation of his house. He also enjoys traveling the world and SCUBA diving.



*Jill Williams*

As the Division of Agriculture's Human Resources Manager for the past 14 years, **Jill Williams** assists Division employees daily in the areas of recruiting, onboarding, hiring, performance management, staff training, personnel issues, compensation and more. Jill was an integral part of the design and implementation team for the Workday transition and holds roles that support employees in almost all HR-related areas. Her background prior to joining the Division was in recruiting and staffing. Jill's position is essential to the hiring and recruitment of approximately 500 Division employees annually. She administers online employment and position descriptions in Workday, provides training and support to end users and applicants, and drafts and maintains HR-related policies and procedures. She also works with the Division's compliance officer to ensure compliance and to further diversity recruiting efforts.

In addition, Jill administers and provides leadership over programs including employment verifications, the vehicle safety program, unemployment claims, Workday Learning, the 4-H Volunteer and Extension Employee Youth Maltreatment Check program, and many others. Jill currently supervises three human resources employees including two Human Resources Specialists and HR's most recent hire, the Instructional Designer. Jill manages and maintains HR's social media web pages and works with departments to coordinate job advertising efforts. Jill works to ensure adequate and timely answers to a variety of questions from administration, staff, and the general public. She takes pride in having a customer service mentality at work and loves helping others.

All in all, Jill's efforts directly influence over 1,000 Division employees who rely on her skills to help them perform their research and extension duties, which indirectly impact thousands of Arkansans.



*Phyllis Scurlock*

## **Division of Agriculture Outstanding Support Personnel Awards – Support Staff**

The first voice you might hear on the phone at the Arkansas 4-H Center is also one of the busiest. **Phyllis Scurlock**, an administrative specialist III, not only supports nine full-time educators and 10 part-timers, but she's also the lifeline for up to 10 volunteer summer staff.

And as the person who does the final invoicing, Scurlock winds up working with 250-300 groups each year. She creates and processes 250 client agreements a year, as well as hundreds between the 4-H Center and the center programs. Scurlock also manages about a half-million in income and expenses each year for the center programs. When another administrative specialist went out on extended leave and then resigned, Scurlock did both jobs.

If her name sounds familiar, it's because she started with the Cooperative Extension Service in 2015, first at the Credit Union, then in animal science, joining the 4-H Center in 2017. She was also named employee of the year for the Cooperative Extension Service in December 2023.

Shannon Caldwell, 4-H Center program director, supervisor and self-professed "super fan," said Scurlock is a person who brings dignity, respect, compassion, enthusiasm and care to everything she does.

Eric DeVries, the Arkansas Outdoor School coordinator, said Scurlock's warm welcome is an asset with clients. "By the time Phyllis transfers them to me, clients feel so welcomed, they can't wait to sign up for our program."





*Cheryl Nimmo*

Since **Cheryl Nimmo** joined the University of Arkansas in 1992, she's done a lot of heavy lifting. In her work at the registrar's office, she helped register and enter grades for thousands of students. Later, she was part of the original team that helped roll out BASIS – a Workday predecessor – across campus.

In 2013, she joined the Division of Agriculture's Technology Commercialization Office at a pivotal moment – just as the office separated from the campus. Nimmo helped the TCO simplify and streamline the process of managing hundreds of licensing agreements.

She manages the Division's requirements to keep the federal government informed of patent filings and other documentation required by the Bayh-Dole Act. When the regulations changed, she sought out training to ensure that the Division complied with the regulations.

She does more than just keeping up with the Division of Agriculture's many fruit licenses and patents, tracking more than \$5 million in invention revenue and patent attorney invoices each year. One of Nimmo's shining moments came during one of the office's darkest hours, when it was realized that more than a decade's worth of royalty revenues needed to be re-documented. Lisa Childs, who heads TCO said "If she hadn't helped me understand what I was looking at, I'm afraid I would still be staring at spreadsheets."

John Clark, whose fruit patents comprised a great deal of Nimmo's work, praised her intelligence, calm and patient demeanor, focus and commitment, and ability to follow through and complete activities.



*Eunjoo Cho*

### **Bumpers College Outstanding Honors Thesis Mentor Award**

**Dr. Eunjoo Cho**, associate professor of apparel merchandising and product development in Bumpers College's School of Human Environmental Sciences, has over 10 years of professional and academic experience, including working as an associate merchandiser at Sourcing & Vendor Development Korea, Branch office of Gap Inc., from 2003-07. She executed the entire merchandising process in driving sales profitably through textile and apparel product sourcing, costing, quality assurance and shipment control.

Cho's research primarily focuses on fashion marketing and brand management, particularly luxury fashion consumption, branding and sustainability, and social media marketing. She is dedicated to undergraduate and graduate education, and has served or is serving as a major professor for nine master's and six honors undergraduate student theses. Since she joined the U of A in 2013, she has received 14 awards and recognitions such as the 2023 GSIE Outstanding Mentor Award, 2021 Paper of Distinction Award from the International Textile and Apparel Association, 2021 Teaching Academy Fellow, 2021 Gamma Sigma Delta Teaching Award of Excellence and 2018 Outstanding Mentor Award from the Office of Nationally Competitive Awards.



*Adnan Ali Khalaf Alrubaye*

### **Bumpers College Outstanding International Education Award**

**Dr. Adnan Ali Khalaf Alrubaye** was born and raised in the South region of Iraq, traveled to the U.S. in 2008 and became a U.S. citizen in 2017. He completed his bachelor's degree in veterinary medicine the University of Baghdad in 2000 and earned his master's degree in medical

microbiology from the University of Baghdad in 2003. In 2013, he completed a doctoral degree in Cell and Molecular Biology, a master's degree in Science Education, and earned a Graduate Certificate in Preparing for the Professoriate.

Alrubaye is an assistant professor of poultry science and the associate director of the Cell and Molecular Biology Graduate Program. His desire to help students comes in part from growing up in a "third-world country" and being deprived of basic needs: "I survived three major wars and lived through times when securing a daily meal or even the most straightforward medication for treatment was challenging." He received the University of Arkansas Imhoff award for Outstanding Teaching and Student Mentorship, the Outstanding New Faculty Advisor of the Year Award, the Golden Tusk Award, the Collis Geren Award for excellence in graduate and international education, the UA Most Outstanding Faculty Member, and the Hoyt H. Purvis Awards for Service in International Education from the Graduate School and International Education.



*Donia Timby*

### **Bumpers College Alumni Society Outstanding Advising Award**

**Donia Timby** is a dedicated educator and senior instructor in the School of Human Environmental Science's human development and family sciences, and birth through kindergarten programs. Her academic journey began in 1996 when she stepped onto campus, ultimately earning a Bachelor of Science degree and Master of Science degree in 1999 and 2004, respectively. Timby's passion for education led her to serve as a Master Teacher at the U of A Nursery School and a program project specialist for the Child Assessment team of Childhood Services at Arkansas State University.

In 2017, she fulfilled her dream by joining the U of A, where she now plays a vital role in shaping the academic experience for

students. Her commitment extends beyond the classroom as she actively participates in committees, teaches classes and advises undergraduate students. Her most fulfilling work involves collaborating with and mentoring students during class and honors projects. Timby's journey reflects a profound dedication to education and a genuine enthusiasm for guiding students toward success.



*Nathan Kemper*

### **Jack G. Justus Endowment for Teaching Excellence**

**Dr. Nathan Kemper** is a native of Missouri where he grew up on his family's dairy farm, a Missouri Century Farm established in 1889. He attended Missouri State University, earning a B.S. in finance in 2001. Upon graduating, he took a position with Deutsche Bank. He moved

to Fayetteville to pursue a M.S. in agricultural economics at the U of A, graduating in 2005. Kemper then worked for the Division of Agriculture from 2005-13, conducting research focusing on the economic impacts of agriculture, agricultural sustainability, life cycle analysis, and local and regional food systems. He also coordinated the Trade Adjustment Assistance for Farmers program that provided training, business planning consultation and cash payments to southern farmers and fishermen negatively impacted by U.S. trade policy.

In 2014, Kemper joined the Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness faculty as an instructor. Kemper completed his Ph.D. in public policy with an emphasis in food policy economics in 2016. In 2017, he was promoted to teaching assistant professor and served as undergraduate program coordinator. In 2020, he was promoted to teaching

associate professor and in 2021 was named assistant department head for undergraduate and online programs. In August 2023, Kemper accepted a tenure track position as associate professor of community and rural economic development. His current research interests are in areas of local foods systems, economic development, food policy and behavioral economics. Kemper teaches courses in microeconomics, farm business management and marketing management. He also coordinates the agribusiness internship and capstone programs.



*Becky Alverson*

### **Bumpers College Dean’s Award of Excellence for Professional Staff Support**

**Becky Alverson** has worked in the Bumpers College Dean’s Office as project specialist for scholarships, development and external relations for two years. Her primary responsibility is the development, management and administration of the college’s scholarship program. Alverson works closely with faculty, staff, students and the Development Office to ensure fair and transparent selection processes, efficient disbursement of funds, and accurate tracking and reporting of more than \$1,100,000 in scholarship funding.

Prior to this, she worked in University Development and Gift Services at the U of A for five years. Before moving into higher education, she owned a flower shop.

Born and raised in Camden, Arkansas, she earned a bachelor’s in psychology from Southern Arkansas University. She and Floyd have been happily married for 35 years, and they are the parents of daughters Courtney and Rylee. Courtney works in product development and project management in Oklahoma City, and Rylee is a freshman majoring in elementary education at Arkansas Tech University.



*Daniela Kidd*

## **Bumpers College Dean's Award of Excellence for Departmental Professional Staff Support**

**Daniela Kidd** joined the U of A in 2011, working with the Arkansas Leadership Academy where she helped provide professional development to educators. She joined the staff of the Department of Crop, Soil and Environmental Sciences in July 2017.

Originally from Brazil, Kidd is the departmental manager of CSES, ensuring the department meets deadlines, complies with policies and operates efficiently. Key responsibilities include establishing and maintaining operating procedures; collaborating with the department head for independent decision-making; ensuring compliance with university policies and procedures; serving as graduate coordinator and managing student enrollment; acting as a liaison between various university offices, students, and faculty; conducting degree audits and facilitating student graduation; coordinating human resources, recruitment and personnel management; facilitating monthly faculty meetings and stakeholder interactions; managing personnel procedures and process improvement initiatives; and overseeing all departmental reporting, including faculty service reviews and annual reports.

Kidd has a passion for management, and is recognized as a team player and lifelong learner, with strong interpersonal and leadership skills. She earned a bachelor's degree in human resources and workforce development, and a master's in education. Kidd received the Division of Agriculture Outstanding Non-Classified Support Personnel Award in 2022 and the Division of Agriculture Early Career Recognition of Professional Excellence Award in 2021.

# SPITZE LAND GRANT UNIVERSITY FACULTY AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

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## 2024 AWARD RECIPIENT

### Dr. Michael Popp

Dr. Michael Popp's research focus is on the evaluation of alternative farm enterprises involving innovative and sustainable production methods by analyzing risk-return tradeoffs. Recent efforts have involved evaluation of soybean production practices, effects of GM labeling, modeling of crop agriculture for the state with a view to estimate spatial land use changes with the introduction of switchgrass, energy sorghum, pine (for carbon sequestration)

and industrial hemp. Further topics include logistics associated with cellulosic energy crops; modeling of pasture and development of decision support software for beef production from a net return and net greenhouse gas emissions perspective; analysis of cost and returns for alternative energy crops; economic and phenological modeling of soybean; long term analysis of weed control options for Palmer Amaranth from economic and herbicide resistance management perspectives; evaluation of precision agriculture; alternative poultry litter application methods; pasture aeration and solar investment analysis.

Born and raised in Germany, he moved to Canada in 1983 where he gained farm experience working on mixed operation involving crops of wheat, barley and canola, as well as forages and beef

(Continued on pg. 22)

cattle. His academic training started with a business degree in management information systems, followed by an MBA with an emphasis in finance and Ph.D. in agricultural and resource economics. Popp started his career as assistant professor of agricultural economics at the U of A in 1996. He also worked as assistant professor at the University of Manitoba from 1997-98 and returned to the U of A in 1998. He was promoted to associate professor in 2001 and full professor in 2006.

## **Spitze Land Grant University Faculty Award for Excellence Recipients**

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1995 – James N. Moore	2010 – Eric J. Wailes
1996 – George E. Templeton	2011 – John R. Clark
1997 – Justin R. Morris	2012 – Donna L. Graham
1998 – Ronald E. Talbert	2013 – Yanbin Li
1999 – Fred Stephen	2014 – Navam Hettiarachchy
2000 – John Kirkpatrick Skeeles Sr.	2015 – Pengyin Chen
2001 – Robert D. Riggs	2016 – Fred Bourland
2002 – Lawrence R. “Dick” Oliver	2017 – Michael Richardson
2003 – Terry J. Siebenmorgen	2018 – Larry Purcell
2004 – Max V. Meisch	2019 – Don Johnson
2005 – Derrick M. Oosterhuis	2020 – Kristofer Brye
2006 – Sung Man Lim	2021 – Jason Norsworthy
2008 – Duane Wolf	2022 – Mary C. Savin
2009 – Park Waldroup	



# SPITZE LAND GRANT UNIVERSITY FACULTY AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

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*Robert G.F. Spitze,  
Ph.D., BSA 1947*



*Hazel Taylor Spitze,  
Ph.D., BSHE 1943*

The Spitze Land Grant University Faculty Award for Excellence recognizes meritorious and comprehensive scholarly performance in the areas of academic responsibility unique to the Land Grant mission: teaching and advising, research and

publication, extension and public service, and participation in professional associations and faculty governance. Tenured faculty members with at least 10 years of continuous service with the Dale Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences or the Division of Agriculture are eligible for consideration.

The award includes an unrestricted cash award of \$6,500 from a fund established by the late Robert G.F. Spitze and the late Hazel Taylor Spitze. The Spitzes have also provided generous endowments for student scholarship funds. Bob Spitze, a native of Berryville, and Hazel Spitze, a native of DeQueen, were both graduates of the college with B.S. degrees in general agriculture and home economics, respectively. They went on to earn doctoral degrees, hers in education from the University of Tennessee and his in agricultural economics from the University of Wisconsin. As professors at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, they have made lasting, nationally recognized contributions through the Land Grant University System.

## ADMINISTRATION

Vice President for Agriculture	Deacue Fields
Senior Associate Vice President for Agriculture – Extension & Director, Cooperative Extension Service	John Anderson
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