

National ACTion

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Training, Fun in Kansas City

ACT members join ACE/NETC for convention

Cool Bytes and Jazz Nights brought members of the Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow, the Association for Communication Excellence (formerly Agricultural Communicators in Education), and the National Extension and Technology Conference together in Kansas City, Mo., for a joint 2003 national convention.

During the convention, ACT chapters from Canada to Texas attended a variety of professional development workshops and social events.

ACT members took advantage of workshops offered by ACE/NETC, as well as specific workshops designed for students.

Members learned business etiquette in a workshop conducted by Diane Johnson, Details by Design and the Livestock Publications Council; Cheryl Oxley, Angus Journal; and Rick Cozzitorto, AgriLabs.

Additionally, Rebecca Terry of Showboat Graphics Co. and Marilyn Brink of Kanwaka

Communications presented a seminar and answered questions on the basics of the freelance business.

Fleishman-Hillard Inc. received the 2003 ACT Honored Professional Award and also hosted ACT members at its Kansas City, Mo., office. Members had the opportunity to learn about crisis communication during an interactive workshop conducted by FH Senior Vice President Daren Williams.

Although the convention was full of professional development and growth, the attendees had time to meet and interact with each other in a social atmosphere.

On Saturday, members tested their knowledge in the first ACT Quiz Bowl competition. After successfully answering grueling questions on AP style, communication practices and basic agricultural knowledge, winners were presented with the coveted Dancing Turkey trophies.

ACT members met under the lights of
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Each year the National ACT presents the coveted Outstanding Chapter of the Year award to a chapter who has excelled in three activities. This year, the ACT bestowed the award to the University of Florida and the University of Missouri. Several chapter members were present to receive the award: (back left) Ricky Telg, UF adviser; Bryan Beaty, UF; Josh Brown, UF; Casey Buckman, MU; Jacob Shellabarger, MU; Marilyn Cummins, MU adviser; (front left) Allison Eckhardt, UF; Ashley Craft, UF; Cindy Herndon, UF; Sara Brown, MU; Scott Hopke, MU; and James McNary, MU.

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Meet Your 2003-2004 Officers

The National Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow elected its 2003-2004 national officer team at the national convention June 22 in Kansas City, Mo. The team was elected to their positions by delegates to convention.

President

Jacob Shellabarger
University of Missouri

Jacob Shellabarger grew up on a grain farm north of Centralia, Mo., where his parents still farm the land. In high school, Shellabarger served as a U.S. House Page in Washington, D.C., during his junior year. He was active in band, choir and sports, which led him to his work in broadcasting. During his senior year of high school, Shellabarger got a job working at the local Christian radio station and worked as a DJ and a production assistant until July 2002.

At Mizzou, Shellabarger became interested in agricultural journalism, taking broadcast news classes, and writing for and helping to launch CAFNR Corner Post, a "for the students, by the students" publication in the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources. Currently, Shellabarger is working for KOMU-TV, the local NBC affiliate, as a general assignment television reporter, producer, production assistant and editor.

When he's not working for ACT or working on another ag story at the television station, Shellabarger can be found with his fiancée, Dawn. He also enjoys watching sports, snow and water skiing, and SCUBA diving. Shellabarger said he is looking forward to his year as national ACT president and wants to ensure the National ACT continues to represent the needs, goals and professional development interests of its members.

First Vice President

Laura Bodell
Oklahoma State University

After growing up on a purebred cattle operation in Alberta, Canada, Laura Bodell decided to attend junior college at Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College in Miami, Okla. There, she participated in student body government, Phi Theta Kappa honor society, the livestock judging team,

the Aggie Society and the International Society.

Upon completion of her associate degree, Bodell transferred to Kansas State University where she was involved with the ACT and Block and Bridle organizations. Bodell has since transferred to Oklahoma State University to complete her Bachelor of Science in agricultural communications and animal science and will graduate in May 2004.

Bodell said she will do her best to serve the members of ACT and is open to any suggestions.

Second Vice President

Kim Waalderbos
University of Guelph

Kim Waalderbos grew up on a family dairy farm in Amherst, Nova Scotia, where she developed an interest in agricultural communications. She is now a sophomore majoring in agriculture science at the University of Guelph, Ontario.

As president and a founding member of CanACT (Canadian Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow), Waalderbos is also a member of the Young Speakers for Agriculture Committee, class treasurer of Ontario Agricultural College Class of 2006, class representative for Celebrant of College Royal 2003 and a student writer with the university's Students Promoting Awareness of Research Knowledge, or SPARK, program. As ACT second vice president, Waalderbos is looking forward to a great year of learning and connecting with fellow ACT members.

Secretary/Treasurer

Cindy Herndon
University of Florida

As the daughter of a strawberry farmer, Cindy Herndon grew up surrounded by agriculture. There wasn't much to do in Floral City, Fla., and you could often find her helping on the picking carts, taking care



Jacob Shellabarger (second from right) of the University of Missouri ACT chapter will lead the National ACT as president for 2003-2004. His officer team includes Kim Waalderbos (left), Laura Bodell, Cindy Herndon and Rachel Bobbitt.

of the livestock, or just riding around in her dad's truck while he surveyed the fields. As Herndon got older, she became more involved in the running of the farm. She helped in the store, answered phones at the office and helped run U-Pick. By the time she had graduated from high school, Herndon had obtained an intricate knowledge of the world of agriculture and a deep appreciation for the individuals involved in that world.

Herndon is now a third-year student at the University of Florida and is majoring in agricultural communication. She plans on using this major to enlighten the general public on the importance of agriculture through images, videos and articles. Herndon said her hope is that by increasing awareness, funding will increase, agricultural friendly laws will be passed, and the public will realize what she has known her whole life: Agriculture is a vital part of the United States and deserves attention.

Editor

Rachel Bobbitt

Oklahoma State University

Rachel Bobbitt, an agricultural communications junior at Oklahoma State University, grew up on a wheat and cattle farm in north central Oklahoma.

While at OSU, the 20-year-old remains active in many organizations. Bobbitt has served on the President's Leadership Council and the Ag Council public relations committee, and she serves as secretary for the OSU ACT chapter, chronicler for Alpha Zeta and is a member of the Chi Omega sorority. She is also the Web design chairwoman for OSU's Homecoming 2003. Additionally, Bobbitt represents Oklahoma State University and the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources as an Ag Ambassador.

Bobbitt was recently named the Outstanding Freshman in the Department of Agricultural Education, Communications and 4-H Youth Development for her freshman year accomplishments at OSU. She was also named a Wentz Scholar and has been listed on the President's Honor Roll for three consecutive semesters.

Although school and extracurricular activities keep her quite busy, Bobbitt does try to find time to relax and hang out with friends.

ACT Listserv

A Listserv is an e-mail tool used to send the same message to a group of people.

The National ACT uses a listserv to benefit its members by sending out e-mails with information about job openings and new internship opportunities. Through the listserv, ACT also provides convention updates and other important ACT information.

How To Register:

- Send a new e-mail to listserv@listserv.okstate.edu
- Leave the subject line blank
- In the message, write:
subscribe nact Your Name

The national adviser approves new entries into the listserv. Only dues paying members will receive the listserv e-mails.

Questions?

Contact the National ACT Adviser Shelly Sitton or your local chapter adviser.



And the winners are ...

At its national convention, ACT recognized members and chapters who excel in various areas of agricultural communications.

This year, ACT members from 13 universities submitted 233 entries in 23 categories within six divisions. 2003 was the first year awards were given in Web design, online publication and news release categories.

Writing Division

Sponsored by

Kansas State University

News Story Category

1st: Julie Watson, Florida
2nd: Mary Jane Short, Texas Tech
3rd: Shannon Hartenstein, K-State

Short Feature Category

1st: Lance Zimmerman, K-State
2nd: Casey Buckman, Mizzou
3rd: Sharlene Swain, Cal Poly
4th: Brian Bendele, Oklahoma State
5th: Shannon Hartenstein, K-State

Long Feature Category

1st: Courtney Wimmer, K-State
2nd: Shannon Hartenstein, K-State
3rd: Mary Jane Short, Texas Tech
4th: Nicola Xanthus, Oklahoma State

5th: Sharlene Swain, Cal Poly

Opinion Piece Category

1st: Andrea Flynn, Mizzou
2nd: Maria Francesca McGinnis, UW-RF

Research Paper Category

1st: Amanda Ruth, Florida
2nd: JonnaLee Henderson, Cal Poly

2003 William S. Sullins Memorial

Writing Award

Courtney Wimmer, K-State

Design and Layout Division

Sponsored by Vance Publishing Corp. Food System Group

Advertisement Category

1st: Cody Seeley, Oklahoma State
2nd: Oklahoma State ACT
3rd: Ginger Bright, Oklahoma State
4th: Jennie Parham, Georgia
5th: Martha Ostendorf, Oklahoma State

Page Layout Category

1st: Oklahoma State ACT
2nd: Jonathan Drew Taylor, Texas Tech
3rd: Sharlene Swain, Cal Poly

Graphic Design Category

1st: Martha Ostendorf, Sarah Harris and Ginger Bright, Oklahoma State

2nd: Nick Garcia, Cal Poly

3rd: Joshua Krenz, UW-RF

Web Design Category

1st: Emily Eubanks, Florida
2nd: Nikki Davis, Oklahoma State

Award of Excellence in Design and Layout

Martha Ostendorf, Sarah Harris and Ginger Bright, Oklahoma State

Publications Division

Sponsored by Meredith Corp. and *Successful Farming Magazine*

Magazine Category

1st: *Cowboy Journal*, Oklahoma State

2nd: *AgriLeader*, Texas A&M

3rd: Corinne Blender, K-State

Newspaper, Newsletter and Tabloid Category

1st: Ginger Berry, Mizzou
2nd: UW-RF ACT
3rd: Shannon Hartenstein, K-State

Brochure Category

1st: Sharlene Swain and Nick Garcia, Cal Poly
2nd: Kristen Andrews, Oklahoma State

Online Publication Category

1st: CAFNR Corner Post, Mizzou
2nd: Cowboy Journal Online, Oklahoma State

Award of Excellence in Publications

CAFNR Corner Post, Mizzou

Electronic Media Division

Sponsored by the National Association of Farm Broadcasters

Radio Production Category

1st: Joshua Krenz, UW-RF
2nd: "ACT on Ag Radio," UW-RF ACT

Video Production Category

1st: Brian Bendele, Oklahoma State

2nd: Elizabeth Kinney, Oklahoma State

3rd: Melissa Thompson, CanACT - University of Guelph

Computer/ Multimedia Production Category

1st: Jodi Nichols and Melissa Majors, Oklahoma State

Award of Excellence in Electronic Media

Brian Bendele, Oklahoma State

Photography Division

Sponsored by *Progressive Farmer*

Photo Story Category

1st: Leslie Ann Simon, Texas Tech
2nd: Rachel Bobbitt, Oklahoma State

3rd: Bekah McCurdy, The Ohio State University

Black and White Category

1st: Afton Jameson, Oklahoma State

2nd: Jamie Griffin, Texas A&M

3rd: Rachel Bobbitt, Oklahoma State

4th: Martha Ostendorf, Oklahoma State

Color Category

1st: Shannon Webb, Oklahoma State

2nd: Leslie Ann Simon, Texas Tech

3rd: Nikki Davis, Oklahoma State

4th: Kristen Owens, Oklahoma State

5th: Whitney Ferris, Oklahoma State

Digitally Enhanced Category

1st: Kristen Owens, Oklahoma State

2nd: Melissa Majors, Oklahoma State

Award of Excellence in Photography
Kristen Owens, Oklahoma State

Public Relations

Sponsored by Fleishman-Hillard

Single Item Category

1st: Rachel Mehlhaf, South Dakota State

2nd: Nikki Davis, Oklahoma State

3rd: Courtney Wimmer, K-State

Campaign Plan Category

1st: Sarah McDonald, Arizona

2nd: Katrina Waters and Shane Lloyd, Texas Tech

News Release Category

1st: Shannon Hartenstein, K-State

2nd: Lindsey Vaculin, Texas A&M

3rd: Sharlene Swain, Cal Poly

Award of Excellence in Public Relations:

Shannon Hartenstein, K-State

National ACT Scholarship

(\$250 each)

Jodi Nichols, Oklahoma State
Mary Jane Short, Texas Tech

Chapter of the Year Awards

Outstanding Chapters of the Year
University of Missouri-Columbia
ACT Chapter
University of Florida ACT Chapter

Educational Activities: University of Missouri-Columbia

Leadership Activities: University of Wisconsin-River Falls and University of Florida

Community Service Activities: University of Missouri-Columbia

Fundraising Activities: University of Missouri-Columbia

Membership Recruitment and Retention: University of Florida and Texas Tech

Social Activities: Texas Tech

Convention *(Continued from page 1)*

Penn Valley Park Sunday for a night of sports. While some ACT members played volleyball, others united against faculty and graduate students in a game of softball. Although the faculty and graduate students won the game, everyone enjoyed

the evening of fellowship and fun.

Next year's National ACT Convention will be held in conjunction with the Agricultural Publications Summit in Tampa, Fla.