



ACTion

December 2011

Newsletter of the
Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow

Students and Professionals Gather at the American Royal

Story by Robin Kleine

Nearly 50 students and more than 20 Livestock Publications Council members gathered in Kansas City for the Second Annual Speed Networking Event on Thursday, Oct. 28.

Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow (ACT) students from as far as the University of Illinois, Texas A&M University and Oklahoma State University met at the American Royal for an evening of networking and professional growth.

Professionals from a variety of organizations, such as the National Pork Producers Council, the Kansas Department of Agriculture and Broadhead Communications were on hand to offer advice to ACT members. Common themes included perfecting elevator speeches, proofreading and being quick to respond to questions and email.

Crystal Young, product and marketing manager for Sure Champ, attended the Speed Networking Event for her second year. Young is considered a “social media guru” and shared advice for those going into communications.

“When I was a student, social media was just used to connect with friends, no one had started to use it as a marketing tool,” Young said. “Now, it is important for students to understand how to use social media, and to use it in a way that can bring my company recognition or earn

us dollars. It will be important for graduating students to know how to use the technology.”

Company representatives also used this time to share more about their employment and internship opportunities, which opened many student’s eyes.

Bridget Hoover, a sophomore at Kansas State University, attended the event for the first time this year.

“I would recommend this event to other agricultural communications students because it is a great way to network with professionals and get your foot in the door for potential future job opportunities and internships,” Hoover said.

Melanie Acklin, director of marketing for SFP, was impressed by the students’ drive to reach their goals.

“The biggest advantage for me is to provide students an introduction to our company,” said Acklin. “Since we are a



Angie Denton of Hereford World visits with students Beth Holz, Maverick Squires and Keelie Curran.

new and smaller company, it is often hard to get students interested in applying for SFP. I want to introduce us to the students and give them a comfort level with our company as a potential employer.”

Young offered a final piece of advice. “Remember that a quick thank you note can go a long way. Even though someone might not have an internship or job for you now, it doesn’t mean something won’t open up in the future or that you might work together as peers,” Young said.

Upcoming Events

**Professional Development Conference -
Feb. 23-25, 2012 at Texas Tech University**

Grow professionally.

**Yamaha-ACT Scholarship Program-
Applications due March 30, 2012**

www.nactnow.org

Be sure to check our website, www.NACTnow.org
for the most up-to-date job & internship postings!

Alumni Spotlight: Becca Lasich written by Chelsey Ahern, Texas Tech ACT

Becca Lasich does not have the typical agriculture background. Instead of growing up on a farm, she was raised in a more urban atmosphere. Her exposure to agriculture came from her great-grandparent's dairy and involvement in 4-H. These experiences helped Lasich know she wanted to become a writer and promote agriculture when she grew up.

Her passions for promoting agriculture through writing, photography, print and web design led Lasich to pursue her bachelor's degree in agricultural communications from Oklahoma State University, where she graduated in 2007.

"How broad our industry really is and what all you can do with an agricultural communications degree is what ACT helped me to realize," Lasich said.

Lasich currently works for the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture,

Food and Forestry as the Marketing Coordinator for Oklahoma Agritourism. She meets with farmers and helps them develop business and marketing plans to get them started in agritourism. Lasich is responsible for the marketing pieces on the Oklahoma Agritourism website, print pieces promoting agritourism and providing producers with helpful resources to ensure the success of their agritourism business.

Lasich was actively involved in her ACT chapter and had the opportunity to attend various conferences designed for its members. At a regional conference in Fort Worth, Lasich was able to network with many industry leaders which landed her an internship with the American Royal.

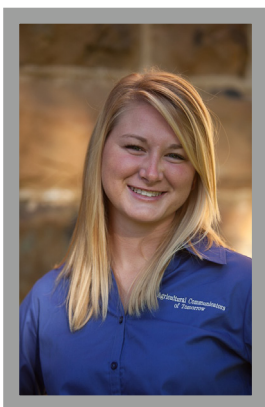
"Take every opportunity to network," Lasich said. "You never know how meeting or being nice to someone can benefit you in the future."



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*Thank you to our featured National ACT Sponsor,
Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc.!*

From the Secretary/Treasurer's Desk



Simple acts of kindness are by far the most wonderful gifts to give and to receive. Over the past three months, several companies have given NACT and its members a wonderful

gift by sponsoring our organization. Their generous donations are what help make events such as Professional Development Conference and our national meeting at the Ag Media

Summit possible. Now it is our time to thank our sponsors and give back to others.

As the holiday season draws near I would like to challenge each of you to go out and perform some act of kindness. Say thank you and truly mean it, do something special for no reason or help out at a local charity.

Then as we say here in the great state of Missouri- SHOW ME! Share your acts of kindness by posting them on the NACT Facebook wall or Twitter. In doing so, you will be spreading the holiday joy and sharing your stories with the rest of NACT members across the nation.

I further challenge you to look at the NACT website, www.NACTnow.org. It has a new look and is a click-away resource to check out potential internships and scholarships. Winter break is a great time to start looking for a summer internship.

I wish you all the best of luck with the rest of the semester, final exams and challenges ahead of you.

Holiday cheer and a Happy New Year!

*-Kari Weis
2011-2012 National ACT
Secretary/Treasurer*

Spotlight On the National ACT Officers

The National ACT officer team traveled to Fayetteville, Ark. Sept. 30-Oct. 2 for the team's annual business meeting and planning retreat. The officers were accompanied by national advisor, Dr. Jeff Miller, and incoming advisor, Dr. Dwayne Cartmell.

Over the weekend, the officers conducted their first official business meeting, learned more about agritourism while getting lost in a corn maze and were able to get to know each other better, which will allow them to work more effectively as a team.

During the business meeting, the team discussed many ways to keep the organization strong. The team decided that the National ACT Constitution was in need of updates and time was spent bringing the document up to current organizational standards. Gaining sponsors was also a big topic of discussion.

It was determined that the ACTION newsletter and National ACT website needed some tweaks to help keep the organization current. The group also decided to add a new advertisements division to the Critique and Contest. The new division will include several new categories, giving members more opportunities to have their work seen.

After the business meeting was completed, Dr. Miller took the officer team to Farmland Adventures, a corn maze and agritourism destination in Springdale, Ark.

In less than a year, the Parsons family converted an empty field into a thriving corn maze. The team spoke with the Parsons about their marketing strategies and how they educate the public about agriculture.

By the end of the weekend, Krista, Andy, Carrie, Kari and Wyatt, along with Dr. Miller and Dr. Cartmell, were



The 2011-2012 National ACT Officer Team with advisor, Dr. Jeff Miller, during their retreat at the University of Arkansas.

impressed with the progress made over the weekend and the wealth of ideas formulated. Be sure to keep an eye out over the next few months for exciting changes and ways for you to become involved!

We hope to see you all at the Professional Development Conference at Texas Tech in February!

- Krista, Andy, Carrie,
Kari and Wyatt

Thank you to our featured National ACT Sponsor,
High Plains Journal!

Spotlight on Purdue University ACT

From the minute the Purdue ACT chapter heard that the 2012 National ACT Professional Development Conference would be held at Texas Tech they started making plans to attend. Based on the previous experiences members had at National ACT conventions, the group became passionate about continuing to have a presence.

As soon as school was back in session, Purdue ACT members got to work planning to make this trip happen. Veteran members gave testimonials about how the conference affected them and got the whole club

excited about this great opportunity.

With nearly 15 members signed up for PDC, the tough work began. The officer team devised a plan for



Members of the Purdue ACT Chapter.

obtaining funds. From talking about grants to industry sponsorship, Purdue ACT knew that the task would require dedication for all who wanted to attend.

Raising funds for expenses incurred

by the trip has been a great educational experience thus far. More than ever, members are working together to see results. They are networking and building connections with the industry through asking for sponsorships and improving their writing skills by filling out a variety of grants and proposals.

For Purdue ACT, the PD Conference encompasses more than just a four day event. The benefits of attending are already being felt and the event is still months away. Needless to say, you will definitely be seeing some Boilers at Texas Tech in February!

-Written by Brooklynne Slabaugh
of Purdue ACT

Spotlight on Illini ACT



Members of the Illini ACT Chapter.

The Illini ACT chapter has been very busy this fall. From monthly meetings and social gatherings to professional development and networking sessions, Illini ACT members are truly experiencing the impact of opportunity.

Recently the chapter has partnered with the Illinois Agri-Women to help promote the 2012 Women Changing the Face of Agriculture conference. The chapter has developed three committees: writing, design, and social media. The committees are collaborating efforts to create promotional materials, website content and to generate social media interaction.

This partnership with the Illinois Agri-Women and the conference has opened doors to new opportunities for Illini ACT members. Not only do members have a chance to connect with professionals in the industry, but they also have the opportunity to create content for their portfolios and gain real experience.

In return, the Illinois Agri-Women are providing the chapter with

financial support to attend professional development events such as the Speed Networking Event at the American Royal in Kansas City, the Agricultural Media Summit, and local chapter professional development trips.

The chapter is also trying a new mentor program this year. As the new class of members joins, they are assigned a mentor to help get them involved in the chapter's meetings, professional opportunities and serve as someone to turn to for help with classes.

As the first semester of the academic year begins to wind down, the chapter is looking forward to new speakers, social gatherings, and another successful year.

*-Written by Ellen Reeder
of Illini ACT*

Check the NACT website, Facebook and Twitter for all the latest news, including information about the upcoming Professional Development Conference!

Spotlight on Kansas State ACT

On Thursday, Oct. 27, Kansas State University's ACT chapter had their annual Officer Bombardment event. This year K-State ACT coordinated their Officer Bombardment day with the American Royal Speed Networking event in Kansas City, Mo.

K-State's first stop was an urban organic farm called Cultivate Kansas City. Ami Freeberg led a tour of the Cultivate KC garden and explained a little bit about the work they do. According to Freeberg, Cultivate KC is a non-profit organization that made around \$100,000 last year on their two acre organic vegetable farm. Their main mission is to help introduce urban agriculture into city environments so people can utilize agriculture to their advantage, while also providing healthier eating options and a more sustainable community.

The next stop was Osborn and Barr, an advertising agency in Kansas City that specializes in creating brand identity for agriculture companies. Boo Larsen, managing director at Osborn and Barr, says branding is one of their most important focuses. Larsen also explained that you must create something that everyone will remember and associate with a particular company while tying it into all aspects of advertising design and marketing techniques.

Each stop gave K-State's ACT members a unique look into different aspects of the industry, such as urban agriculture communications, as well as the ways in which advertising agencies operate.

*- Written by Bridget Hoover
of Kansas State ACT*



Members of Kansas State ACT after a successful Office Bombardment visit.

Don't forget to submit your spotlights to isaacson@calpoly.edu to be included in the next edition of ACTION!