



# THE DATE DIGEST



THE NEWSLETTER OF AGRICULTURAL & TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION

NO. 2

MAY 2025

VIRTUAL



Photo by Tracy Ackeret

## Focus on Key Topics

- Welcome Message
- Congratulations Graduates!
- Student Spotlight
- Faculty Highlight
- Engagement Initiatives
- Teaching & Research Insights
- The Team Behind the Newsletter
- Social Media & Scholarships

## A Message from Dr. Perry

*This spring, we proudly celebrate one of our largest graduating classes, with 15 students earning degrees across all of our undergraduate and graduate options. Their achievements embody the spirit of our department and the land-grant mission, and we are excited to watch the incredible journeys they are about to begin. This season also finds us reinvigorated after hosting the Montana State FFA Convention in Bozeman—a true all-hands effort where our students rose to the occasion with pride and professionalism. I hope you enjoy this edition of the DATE Digest, where we celebrate our graduates, highlight current students, explore research efforts, and forecast exciting things to come.*

*Thank you for being part of our community—we look forward to continuing to share our story with you!*

*~ Dr. Perry, Department Head*



# CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!

CELEBRATING YOUR HARD WORK  
& BRIGHT FUTURE

We are proud to announce the following graduates...



Rebecca Berquist  
Morgan Devane  
Kaitlin Feeney  
Luke Harper  
Luke Heupel  
Jorgen Johnson  
Joe Lackman  
Cadence Lommori  
Sierra Owens  
Teodora Sinks  
Julianne Snedigar  
Joey TeSelle  
Rachel Umland  
Elise Wilkins  
Molly Yurdana



## RECIPIENT OF LAND GRANT EXCELLENCE AWARD

Congratulations to Molly Yurdana for receiving the Graduate School's Land Grant Excellence Award!

She received an honor cord for graduation as well as a letter from **President Waded Cruzado**. This honor recognizes individuals who excel at community engagement by sharing and applying new knowledge in ways that are locally relevant and mutually beneficial. Congratulations Molly!





# STUDENT & SPOTLIGHT

We are proud to recognize students who are making a meaningful impact both within our department and beyond. For this semester's student spotlight, we are excited to highlight Chloe Rowland, a junior in our Ag Education: Communications, Leadership, and Extension program.

Chloe is very involved on campus, serving as the Vice President of the Sigma Alpha sorority, sitting on the ASMSU Funding Board, and representing our college as a College of Agriculture Ambassador! Off-campus, Chloe is also one of the Lead Collegiate Facilitators for the 2025 USDA-NIFA National 4-H Conference.



## MEET CHLOE ROWLAND

### Chloe's Favorite Memory

*"One of my most favorite memories in the department has been planning and putting on the DATE banquet! I truly enjoyed being able to plan an event that benefits everyone and then seeing everyone come together in the department and have such positive relationships!" ~ Chloe Rowland*





# FACULTY HIGHLIGHT

We are proud to recognize **Kayce Williams** who is making a meaningful impact both within our department and beyond. Kayce received the MSU College of Agriculture's award for Impactful Outreach and Community Engagement Award.

This award recognizes faculty and staff who have demonstrated especially significant outreach/engagement achievements and/or an established and sustained body of outreach/engagement related to scholarly work. We appreciate Kayce's dedication to student success. Thank you for all that you do for the department.

**Congratulations Kayce!**



## KAYCE WILLIAMS

### Selection Criteria

The criteria includes evidence of effective, innovative and sustained outreach or engagement programming and activities, which includes documented changes in knowledge and action by stakeholders and communities, exemplary integration between scholarship and outreach or engagement programming, securing and affecting communities that have not traditionally been involved, lowering barriers to effective outreach or engagement, developing innovative programs that lower barriers to effective communication and/or increase participation by underrepresented communities, demonstrate efforts that go above and beyond the scope of the nominee's position.



# ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES

## 2025 Montana FFA State Convention

**In April**, it was all hands on deck for the Montana FFA State Convention! Many of our undergraduate students were enrolled in AGED 363 - *Event Planning & Management*, which focuses on running various state contests. This provides critical real-world opportunities for our students to learn the logistics behind planning an event and networking with supporters of youth development and agricultural education.

We'd also like to thank the many volunteers and sponsors of our events! We could not do it without you and your dedication to the next generation of leaders. Thank you!



## Superintendents Hard at Work



**The events our students and faculty put on this year were:**

- Agricultural Technology & Mechanical Systems (ATMS)
- Agri-science Fair
- Agricultural Communications
- Junior & Senior Creed
- Employment Skills
- Extemporaneous Speaking
- Junior Ag Mechanics Show
- Prepared Speaking

# TEACHING & RESEARCH INSIGHTS

## Dr. Perry Advocates for Ag Safety at NAAE

**Dr. Perry** and Dr. Michael Pate from Utah State University worked the NAAE Convention Members and Partners Reception. They handed out agricultural safety curriculum as part of their efforts associated with the Youth Farm Safety Education and Certification Program, project



award no. 2021-41521-35102, which was a High Plains Intermountain Center for Agricultural Health and Safety CDC/NIOSH grant.

## Agritourism Conference Nov. 20-21, 2025

**On November 21, 2025**, the Montana Agritourism Conference will take place at Montana State University in Bozeman. Hosted by our department's very own **Dr. Arnold**, her students, and the Montana Agritourism Association, the one-day event will bring together professionals from across the state to connect, collaborate, and explore new ideas in agritourism.



**Montana  
Agritourism**

With the theme “Opening the Gate: Unlocking Opportunities to Connect, Collaborate, and Share,” the conference will offer sessions on marketing strategies, visitor experience design, sustainability practices, and business development. Attendees will engage with innovative approaches and practical tools to help grow their agritourism ventures, while also building valuable relationships within Montana’s expanding agritourism community.



# POWERED BY GRADS: MEET THE TEAM



Meet the faces behind the newsletter! We're Faith, EmmaLee, and Kacie— the three Agricultural Education master's students passionate about keeping our department connected and informed. From student highlights to past events, we're here to bring you the latest news in the department! We're so happy you're here!

When we're not writing, designing, or gathering stories, you can find us teaching, learning, and living the agricultural experience right alongside you. Thanks for letting us share your stories and highlight the incredible work happening in our community!

**Got a story to share? We'd love to hear from you!**

## A Fun Fact About Us

Faith has held & been bit by a penguin!

EmmaLee is OBSESSED with thrifting!

Kacie loves training cutting horses!

## Why We LOVE our Department

Faith - The support & care for students is unparalleled anywhere else. I'm proud to be a DATE Bobcat!

EmmaLee - The fact that our department feels like a family, everyone is so supportive!

Kacie - They're dedicated to providing unmatched opportunities for students & everyone works together!



From left to right | EmmaLee Rotlisberger, Kacie Eshleman, & Faith Droszcz





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Thank You For Reading!

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## SOCIAL MEDIA



## SCHOLARSHIPS



## We Want to Hear From You!

If you have any news, achievements, or stories you'd like to share in the next edition, please reach out to us!

We are excited to include fresh content to highlight our amazing department.

Contact: [DATE@montana.edu](mailto:DATE@montana.edu)