

## Travel for Research

The majority of AREC grad students will write master's theses and the majority of those theses will utilize data sets obtained from other sources. An interest-

ing minority of students, however, will do things differently. Fátima Luna and Elizabeth Schuster, both of the same graduate student cohort, count themselves among

that minority. Both of them traveled to Mexico during the first part of 2012 and conducted primary field research to gather the data needed for their work.

### Elizabeth Schuster

*Elizabeth Schuster* (M.S. 2012) came to AREC in 2010 with substantial field experience already. From 2000 through 2004 she was a Peace Corps volunteer based in a coffee growing area of Guaimaca, northeast of Tegucigalpa, Honduras, where she worked on the commercialization of organic coffee. Her experiences in Guaimaca reinforced her belief in the importance of working collaboratively with

a community. "I've found projects are ultimately more sustainable if you involve the community," she says. At AREC, she found her mentor in Dr. Bonnie Colby, an expert in water economics, and became one of Dr. Colby's research assistants. When she began work on her thesis topic, ultimately to become "Farm Resilience to Water Supply Variability: An Economics

*Continued on page 2.*



*Elizabeth Schuster, second from right, conducting research in the Valle de Mexicali.*

### Fátima Luna

Working with her advisor, Dr. Paul Wilson, *Fátima Luna* (M.S. 2012) decided that she would travel to the Mexican state of Chiapas to gather the data she needed for her thesis topic, "An Economic Evaluation of Alternative Coffee Trading Regimes." Luna notes that Chiapas (in 2006) ranked first in Mexico in producing coffee (40% of total production) yet stood as the poorest of all Mexican states (77% multi-dimensional poverty). "Why is the state so poor yet so important in coffee production?" she asks.



*Fátima Luna in Chiapas, México.*

With funding from the Hillman Endowment, which covered travel, housing, and meals, plus additional support from a Hispanic scholarship that afforded her the ability to pay for a research assistant and a Chiapas guide, Luna set out to examine different models of coffee production.

She developed a survey instrument and during May and September of 2011, she pretested it first in a coffee processing facility in Agua Prieta, Sonora, Mexico. Then with a revised version,

*Continued on page 3.*



*Schuster continued from page 1.*

Analysis of Risk Management Strategies in the Mexicali Valley, Mexico,” she realized that if there were any data available, then it was, she says, “only at the county, region, or census block level, but *not* at the household level. Therefore, I *had* to go into the field.” Luckily, Dr. Colby and the Walton Family Endowment were able to fund her project.

Schuster needed to get to know the region she wanted to collect data from. She began by visiting the Valle de Mexicali in northeastern Baja California just south of the Arizona and California borders where the Colorado River delta is located. She made three or four trips beginning with only three contacts in the Valle. “It was very hard,” she says. Eventually she was able to pretest her survey instrument on twenty different farms in the area—“a relationship building experience”—allowing her the opportunity to revise and improve her questions before the main survey took place.

In January through March 2012, Schuster, Tatiana Marquez (current



*Elizabeth Schuster, special field assistants, and Mexican grower.*



*Irrigation in the Valle de Mexicali.*

AREC grad student), and three very field smart AREC undergrads fanned out to

collect the data needed. They administered 180 surveys, each at a different farm household, and interviewed 30 water managers, all employees of the official irrigation district.

Schuster says, “the great thing about doing your own field research and designing and testing your own survey instrument is that you don’t have questions about the data that you might have if it was merely purchased data.” And because she had done so much preparatory work initially, things went smoothly during the data analysis and writing phases of her thesis.

What else made primary data collection different from the more usual practice of finding or purchasing existing data sets? Schuster was able to attend two conferences, first as a presenter at the University Council on Water Resources (UCOWR) and again at the AAEA meetings where she was also a finalist in the Ag Extension competition. She found the networking opportunities to be wonderful and “profoundly interesting,” leading to new pathways and possibilities for the future.

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## Living Life in Tune

by UA External Relations Marketing

**Tom Rhodes** is a long-time member of the University of Arizona community. He received his bachelor’s degree in 1990 and his master’s degree in 1992, both from the UA in the fields of agricultural and resource economics. By day, he serves as Research Specialist Principal for the UA Graduate College, working to ensure that the college’s programs maintain high levels of excellence. He rides his bike to and from work for a total of

eight miles a day, which he describes as the perfect commute.

“It gives me time to relax and think about the day,” he muses, “And at the end of my day it’s a great break between the university and coming home.”

In contrast to his quiet days, he kicks it up at night with his band, the Last Call Girls, self-described on their website as “Tucson’s rockabilly, squawkabilly and hillbilly dance band.”

“They are some of the best musicians in Tucson,” Rhodes says. “In the band, everyone gets along, everyone contributes.”

As an undergraduate, he paid his way through school playing music. As a graduate student, he played three or four nights a week and worked his way through school.

Rhodes learned to make music the way countless traditional players have done: from his parents.

“I started learning with my parents

*Luna continued from page 1.*

she tested it with a former coffee producer, also in Agua Prieta. Her final pre-test work came in December 2011 in Chiapas.

The December trip was important, Luna says, since it established important contacts for her and led to her working with members of Cafe Justo, a coffee cooperative.



*Coffee producer in Chiapas.*

In the conventional coffee production model, the Chiapas coffee farmers sell their crops to a “coyote” middleman and have no ability to acquire any value added at later stages. From the “coyotes,” coffee then passes to exporters, importers, roasters, and finally to retailers.

Cafe Justo, on the other hand, follows a vertically integrated model (VIM) of coffee production. Farmer producers are part of a cooperative in the Chiapas town of Salvador Urbina. Coffee beans are trucked from there to Agua Prieta where they are roasted and packaged, then exported to the U.S. for sale.

In January 2012, Luna returned to Chiapas for the bulk of her fieldwork and data acquisition. She and her assistant Paola Fernández administered the survey to Chiapas coffee producers: 39 conventional, 39 VIM, and 40 Fair Trade (another VIM model) growers.

Luna was raised in an agricultural community in Zacatecas. “We produced corn, beans, and maguey,” she says. Her

childhood experiences prepared her beautifully for her Chiapas work. She stayed with a coffee farmer’s family and meshed completely with them. “We became friends,” she says.

For the future, Luna is planning to work in sustainable or rural development related to agriculture. Her fieldwork experience has given her a taste of what’s possible and whetted her appetite for more.



*Left to Right: Eva Cifuentes, secretary of Cafe Justo, Paola Fernández, field assistant, and Fátima Luna.*

and imitated what they did,” he says. “I came from a musical family. My mother was a singer, songwriter and dancer, and my father was a guitar and fiddle player and honky tonk musician.”

Today, with the Last Call Girls, Rhodes plays traditional stringed instruments, focusing on violin, guitar and mandolin.

“My mother and father never had to bug us about practicing,” he remembers.

“They had to bug us about go to bed and stop staying up and playing late.”

While the nights are filled with music, Rhodes loves what he does during the day as well.

“It’s very different than playing music. It uses different parts of the brain,” he says. “When I was a full-time musician, I didn’t

enjoy the music as much.”

As for living a life in tune, Rhodes has struck just the right balance, playing hard with his music, and working hard at a career that he truly loves.

“I love Arizona and I love this part of the country,” he says. “Nothing is more important to our future than the education of our chil-



dren, and to play a role in that at the flagship university in the state, it doesn’t get any better than that.”

*Please see the UA-produced video that accompanies this story on YouTube at this URL:*

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=fsGILeKFJbw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=fsGILeKFJbw)





## Alumni Doings

**Anand Murugesan** (M.S. 2008) writes from Washington, D.C., that his Ph.D. research is look-



*Anand Murugesan relaxing.*

kitchen. It helps me see tangible results for my effort, like chopping carrots which I know is going into the soup that will feed about 200 people in southeast D.C. I serve at the stops sometime and get to chat with many homeless people. Some of the stories of how they got there are painful, but I'm pleasantly surprised by the coherence and articulation of a few. They are clear headed, but are struggling due to circumstances." Anand also mentions that "I visited my friends' farm in Lancaster [Pennsylvania] and realized my childhood dream of being in Amish country. It naturally became a study of a culture eschewing modern technology in let-

have been working for my family's potato operation in Center, CO. I am a salesman and production manager for the company. We have three packing facilities and pack over 3 million cwt a year between russet and red varieties. It has been a pleasure working for my family as I have been able to pursue two careers at once as I was also competing professionally as a bull rider until I shattered my left leg in a mishap in June. Now I've got quite a bit of hardware in the leg but I always try to persevere and started riding again in December. However, I have become extremely interested in raising my own bucking bulls and may start a side business doing it as an alternative to competing."

**Bhagyam Chandrasekharan** (M.S. 2011) is working on her Ph.D. at Washington State University. She says the program is "quite challenging." She also finds she's conflicted about choosing whether to support the University of Arizona or Washington State sports teams!

**Haoying Wang** (M.S. 2010) reports from Pennsylvania State University where he is working on his Ph.D. in ag, environmental, and regional economics that he has married Si (Lucy) Luo. Lucy "comes from Shuyang City in Jiangsu Province and she was a TV station journalist before coming to the U.S. with me. We first met in 2006 when I was still a grad student at Xiamen University. We held a Chinese traditional wedding at my hometown (Qingyang City in Gansu Province, about 1,000 miles away from her hometown) on Dec. 28th, 2011. We also had a small ceremony on Dec. 24th at her hometown in a hotel." Haoying and Lucy are now living at Penn State until he finishes.

Writing from several months ago, **Todd Gaston** (M.S. 2011) lets

*Continued on page 6.*



*Haoying Wang with bride Si (Lucy) Luo.*

ter, but struggling I think, for the most part in spirit. More recently, I moved to U Street in D.C., which continues to be a center for African American culture. I enjoy walking around my lively neighborhood and beginning to make friends."

**Qing Qing Wu** (M.S. 2006) has received her Ph.D. in finance from Arizona State University and has started a new job as assistant professor in finance at North Carolina State University. She says she expects to be teaching the second level course in corporate finance.

**Rob Bache** (B.S. 2011) reports that "[t]hings have been good, I



*Nancy Smith and Qing Qing Wu.*

ing at the intersection of informal institutions (cultural norms) and formal institutions (legislation). He notes that "it opens up so many interesting questions, that I have to put blinders [on] for the time being to get things done." Anand has found time for a lot of activities outside of academia. "I have been volunteering at a soup

**Family Additions**



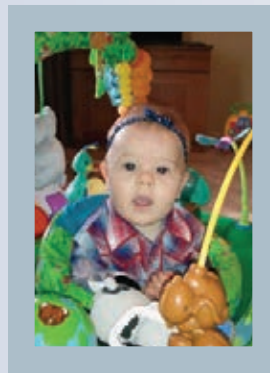
*Mayuka Nair and her parents.*

This summer **Anoop Nair** (M.S. 2007) and his wife Jaya welcomed a baby girl, Mayuka, to the world. Anoop says that Mayuka means lustre or sparkle in Sanskrit. No doubt she is a gem for her parents.

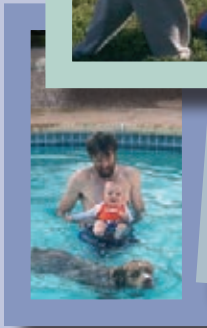
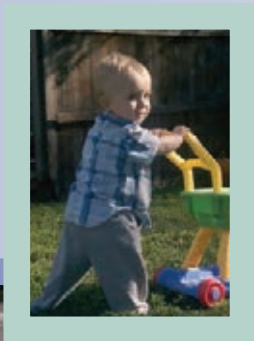
**Jennifer Kanipe Pullen's** (M.S. 2006) son, Hagan Thomas Pullen was born on September 26 of 2011 while classmate **Katie Pittenger Adams** (M.S. 2006) had her daughter, Lucy Kyla Adams, only a few months earlier on June 8th. Katie and her husband Dave are expecting another child in late February of next year. "Lucy will be around 22 months when the new baby arrives, so they'll be pretty close in age. We anticipate a lot of work but are really looking forward to having the two grow up together."

Also adding to the family are **Quatie Jorgensen** (M.S. 2009) and her husband Kody: "We welcomed our daughter, Kuwayah Nanye-hi Jorgensen on March 9, 2012 at 12:41 pm. She weighed 7lbs and 13oz and was 21 inches long. Her name is Cherokee (like mine). Kuwayah means 'huckleberry' and Nanye-hi means 'one who goes about doing good.' It is pronounced Kuh-y-yuh. Kody did get to come home for her birth and stayed for 6 days. It was perfect! I ended up being induced (I was 4 days overdue anyways) so Kody could fly in for the birth. She is such a joy and a blessing!"

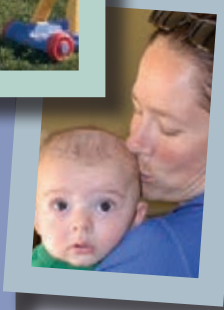
And in Brazil, **Raquel Gomes** (M.S. 2003) and her husband Rogerio welcomed baby Alice to the world on January 9th this year. Alice joins big brother Gabriel.



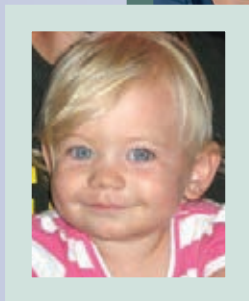
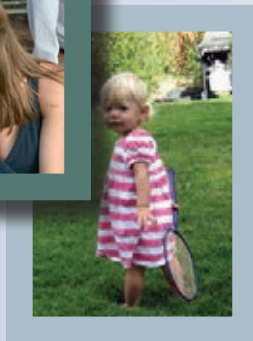
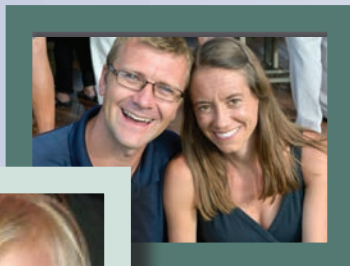
*Kuwayah Jorgensen and her parents.*



*Hagan Pullen and his parents*



*Alice, big brother Gabriel, and their parents.*



*Lucy Adams and her parents.*



*Alumni Doings continued from page 4.* us know that “I am currently in my third month on the job here in Denver with the USBR [U.S. Bureau of Reclamation] and it has been a great experience so far. I frequently describe it to people as graduate school with a salary. I am surrounded by a great team of economists, hydrologists, and engineers. Interestingly enough, one of the projects I’ll be working on is an economic evaluation of some potential water projects in the San Pedro River Basin near Sierra Vista, so I may be lucky enough to travel through Tucson for work. Another project our team is working on is developing representative wholesale water prices for different regions in the western U.S. We are working backwards from retail water rates in some municipalities where wholesale rates are not available.”

**Chris Stoller** (B.S. 2008) has moved to Phoenix and become the director of Communications and Strategic Initiatives for the Arizona-Mexico Commission in the Office of the Governor. As he puts it, it’s “a fancy way of saying I’ll be doing marketing and policy work.” Chris leaves Tucson after eight years at the UA, first as a student and then as an employee.

**Lora Mwaniki-Lyman** (M.S. 2002) writes that she has departed the University of Arizona and is now a regional economist. “I started work at the Maricopa Association of Governments on August 15th in Phoenix and am enjoying the new job and city. We are currently renting in Chandler while house hunting. The kids are all in new schools and adjusting to them.”

**Quatie Jorgensen** (M.S. 2009) writes with lots of news: “Things are great here in Oklahoma...I

have had a lot of changes in my life recently! My husband Kody and I live in Morrison, Oklahoma, a very small farming community north of Stillwater (where Oklahoma State University is located). Kody is currently pursuing a master’s degree in animal science. He has 1 year left!

I recently took a job with Equity Marketing Alliance, LLC (EMA) in Enid, Oklahoma. EMA is the largest grain originator in the state of Oklahoma! Fourteen co-ops in 3 states own us and we market/originate their grain for them. I am at the Hedge Desk. Dr. Dahlgran would be proud! I absolutely love my job. Basically I buy/sell wheat, milo, corn, and soybeans on the futures market from 930-115. I also manage all the producer grain contracts. I have been here since Oct 3, 2011. It is finally nice to have a ‘career’ and not just a ‘job.’

Kody is deploying with a Georgia Army National Guard Agricultural Deployment Team (ADT). I don’t know if you have heard of these ADT teams before, but they are becoming more popular. Basically, a group of 10–12 ag specialists deploy for one year, mostly to Afghanistan, and help educate their farmers/ranchers on ways to better sustain themselves. Kody is going over as a vet tech/large animal husbandry specialist. I think this will be an awesome experience for him. His advisor at OSU is also letting him use the various projects they work on over there as part of his master’s thesis, so that will help him get done quicker. He will more than likely be gone until Jan/Feb 2013. I am not looking forward to him being gone that long, but I am sure with a little one, the time will fly by. At least that is what I am hoping!!”

In recent news from **Melissa Burns** (M.S. 2005), she says that she has departed the Federal Reserve for new challenges at PricewaterhouseCoopers. “I’m back in a manager role at a firm where I feel that I have some upward mobility and a clear sense of what our strategy is. My role is very similar to the one I had at KPMG (consumer credit loss modeling), but here I will also be learning some new things like anti-money laundering and fair-lending modeling.” Melissa notes that she ran in the Chicago Marathon “which was great! I really enjoyed it. It wasn’t my PR [personal record] (I ran it in 4:05) but it was the best that I’ve ever felt during and after a marathon, so I think that the training paid off in that way. I’m looking forward to my next one.” Melissa is getting married in a few weeks. “We’re heading to Germany and Austria for our honeymoon shortly after—can’t wait!!”

**Katie Pittenger Adams** (M.S. 2006) (in addition to expecting her second child) is finishing her Ph.D. at UC Davis. She notes that “I am staying on as a post-doc for one of my advisors to continue working on the maternal and early childhood nutrition project in Ghana, so I’ll be around.”

**Elizabeth Basta** (M.S. 2010) reports that she has joined the Fontana Group in Tucson. The firm provides management consulting and expert economic testimony for the retail automobile industry and other franchise businesses and industries. Also at the Fontana Group is **Ted Stockton** (M.S. 2010) where he is director of Economic Services.

## Traveling Home

### Alumni Profile

**Santiago Guerrero** (M.S. 2006) has come home again. After years abroad going to school, working, and simply traveling for pleasure, Guerrero has returned to Mexico City.

Since August 2011 he's been employed at Banco de México in the part of their research division that works to systematize information. He says that in the past they used to calculate price indices but now tend to concentrate on sectoral analyses. Guerrero was hired to focus on the agricultural sector, in particular, the corn–tortilla supply chain. Not only does he conduct research in Mexico City, but he also travels to collect information and meet with various stakeholders. His trips include time in Jalisco, the second largest maize-producing state in Mexico after Sinaloa, where he generally meets with producers' associations, wholesalers, and so forth, to gather information on production and prices.

One challenge he has discovered is making the transition from a purely academic approach to a more policy-oriented one. Maize production and tortilla prices are highly politicized in Mexico so Guerrero has to be attuned to the political as well as the economic realm. While working on maize–tortilla connections, he's also writing a slightly more academic piece on agricultural contracts and their impacts on prices received by farmers.

Guerrero says his future at Banco de México will follow one of two paths. He'll either specialize in research or he'll become a manager/administrator (*funcionario*). But at this point, he's not sure which way he'll go.

In total, Santiago Guerrero spent seven years in the United States: two in Tucson, three plus in Berkeley, and several more in Washington, DC, while he finished his dissertation and worked as a consultant for the World Bank. He chose the AREC master's at Arizona first largely because of conversations with Dr. Gary Thompson and **Ricardo Cavazos Cepeda**,

(M.S. 2002) then a Ph.D. candidate at Berkeley. Guerrero says his preparation at Arizona, especially in econometrics and in doing research, was an excellent prelude to his Ph.D. studies in ag and resource economics at Berkeley.

During his time away from Mexico, Guerrero was able to travel fairly extensively outside the United States, visiting Morocco, Turkey, Tanzania, Cambodia, and Vietnam. Of all those places, he says, Vietnam impressed him most because of the tremendous entrepreneurial drive and optimism people displayed despite years of colonial dominance.

Returning to Mexico after seven years living outside the country was a shock. First, Mexico City is an immense place, which takes getting accustomed to. On first arriving, Guerrero stayed with his parents and had to commute an hour and a quarter each way to work. Now he lives nearer and is only a half-hour subway ride away. He's also found his vocabulary sprinkled with English words like "roommate" which he inadver-



*Santiago Guerrero at Machu Picchu, Peru.*

tently used with people who knew no English. But the transition at work was less of a challenge as many who work at the Bank were educated outside Mexico.

Guerrero says his stay in the States changed many of his attitudes about the country. Prior to arriving he had heard lots of the stereotypes about there being racism and prejudice, in particular against Mexicans. To his surprise, he felt he was seldom discriminated against. Even when people detected he had a foreign accent, he was not made to feel inferior. He also came to appreciate that in academic circles, foreigners of all sorts are welcomed and many academics are open and curious about others' culture and history.



# *TRAVELING*





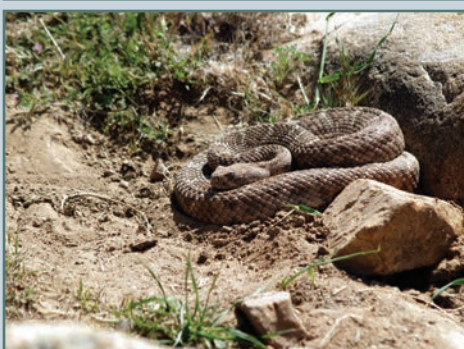
# THE ARIZONA TRAIL

**It's 393 miles from Mexico to Utah as the crow flies, 465 miles by highway, and 800.6 miles via the Arizona Trail.**

**AREC faculty member Roger Dahlgran hiked the entire trail in March and April of this year while on sabbatical leave. The trip took 42 days.**







There are a variety of ways to hike the Arizona Trail and many of these approaches revolve around obtaining food. Professor Dahlgran's strategy was to minimize the time and effort spent in food procurement so that he could focus on completing the trail. To accomplish this he pre-cached food in 5-gallon buckets at twelve locations starting at Molino Basin in the Catalina Mountains and ending at Cedar Ranch north of Flagstaff. In some instances, water was also cached with the food. The final one hundred miles to Utah was provisioned with food purchased at the South Rim of the Grand Canyon. This plan avoided having to cache food and water on the Arizona strip north of the Grand Canyon as that would have involved considerable driving.

Cache locations were selected based on distance from the previous location and proximity to major roads. One flaw in this plan became apparent as he was hiking up from Lake Roosevelt into the Four Peaks Wilderness Area carrying a pack that had been refilled with food and water cached at Lake Roosevelt. Upon arriving at the Mills Ridge Trailhead parking lot he met a group of Iowa retirees who had driven up the 1,400 feet that he had just climbed and the road appeared to be pretty good. Maybe caching food and water at more remote but higher trail access points is an idea worth considering for next time.

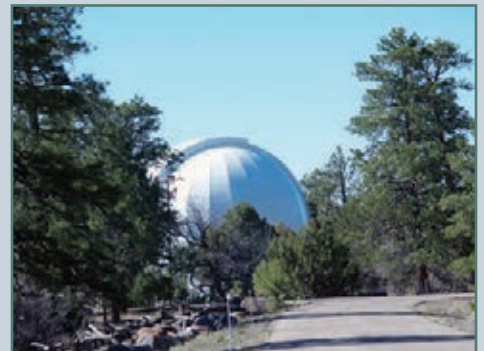
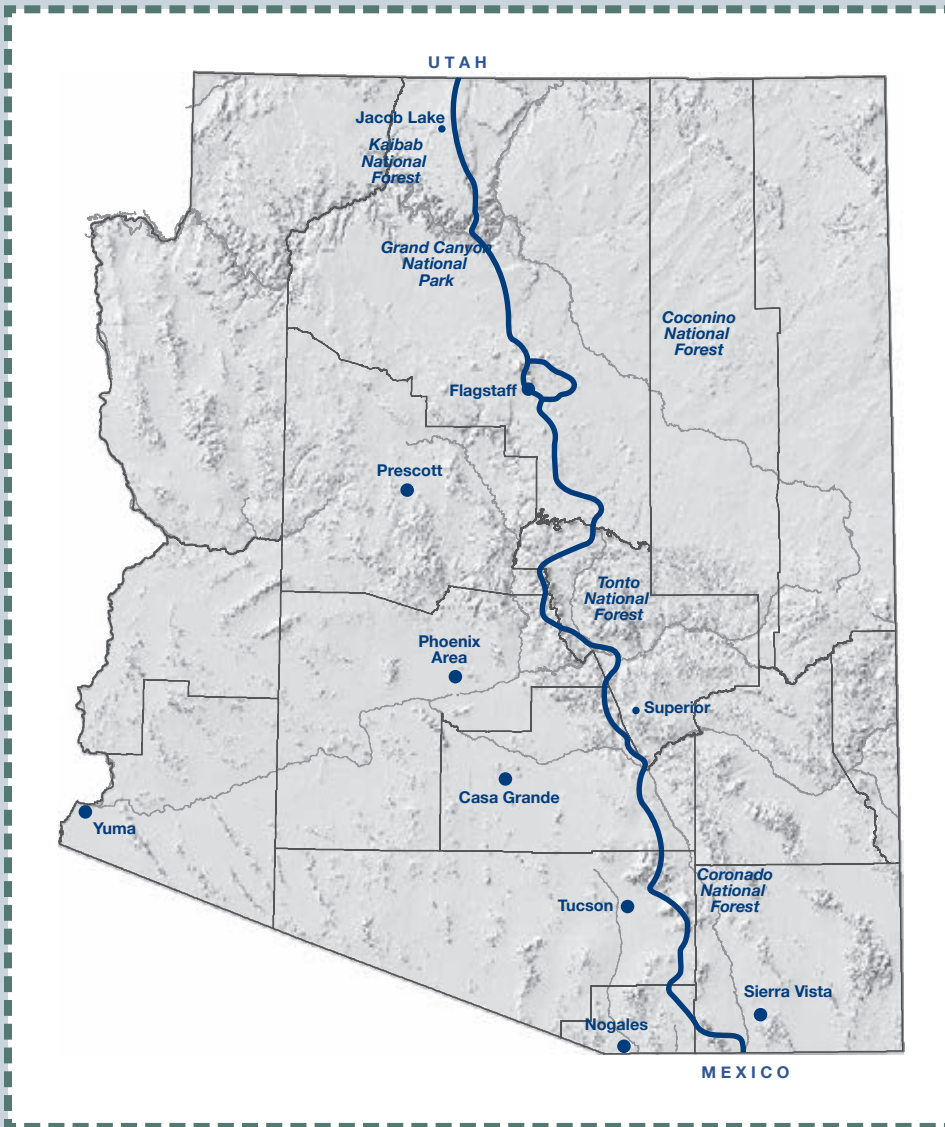
Otherwise, the food caches worked well. One was found by unknown parties and an aggressive, thwarted, and frustrated Kaibab squirrel. In the end, this cache was still intact and all of the others were undisturbed.

Water came from a variety of sources including drinking fountains, spigots, cached supplies, springs, streams, snow banks, the Gila River, and, as a last resort, stock ponds. Depending on the source the water was treated by filtration, iodine, or boiling. While our intrepid trekker never ran out of water, its availability was a continuous source of anxiety.

Why undertake such a trip? According to Professor Dahlgran, you can learn a lot about utility maximization, risk management, and constrained optimization when the objective function is re-







duced to its simplest terms. On this trek, utility depended on food, water, rest, vistas, wildlife sightings, and pack weight (a bad). This mode of travel also affords an incomparable means of learning through observation about the agricultural and natural resources within Arizona's borders. Risks were continually assessed along the route. These risks included the risk of travel in the border region, the risk of large predator encounters in the mountains, the risk of rattlesnake and venomous creature encounters in the desert, the risk of falling with each step, the risk of severe weather, and the risk of regret at not completing a fantastic adventure. These risks together with the financial and physical costs were continuously weighed along the route and our

trekker was propelled forward through utility maximization.

The trek produced abundant and indelible memories. These included

- A striking display of colors as the sun set over the Grand Canyon.
- A howling 24-hour snow storm that ultimately dumped about a foot of new snow. This storm caught up with Professor Dahlgran during the night as he was camping one mile from Mormon Lake. He retreated to the Mormon Lake Lodge for two days which were spent resting, doing laundry, eating restaurant meals, and enjoying a snug room.
- Backtracking to regain the trail after losing it at many points, including near

*Continued on page 17.*



# Travel for Summer Jobs and Internships

Between May and August this year, six current undergrad and grad students spread out across the country to work at summer jobs and internships. Here are their thoughts on their experiences.

### Sarah Strahler



This summer Sarah Strahler, majoring in agribusiness, worked as a crop scout intern with CHS Inc., a leading global agri-

business owned by farmers, ranchers, and cooperatives across the United States, and number 78 on the Fortune 500 list. Sarah lived and worked in Wiggins, Colorado, a small farming community based in the Great Plains near the Nebraska and Wyoming borders. As an agronomy intern, she spent most of her days out in farmers' fields, analyzing crops and determining the specific herbicides and pesticides to be sprayed. She was also trained on how to use the Agris accounting system to manage inventory and bill out invoices. She was lucky to work alongside her manager, giving her an opportunity to practice the skills necessary to successfully manage an agronomy location. Sarah notes that overall, her entire experience as an intern with CHS was absolutely incredible. She's hopeful the knowledge she gained will make her a more valuable employee in the future. During the last few weeks of her internship, she interviewed for a management trainee position with CHS in Sharon Springs, Kansas. She's been offered the position and will begin the year-long trainee program just a month following her graduation in December of 2012.

### Stephen Karnell

Over the past summer, I had the unique opportunity to undergo two internships that drastically benefited my future and future career goals. The first internship was for my father's company, Karnell En-

terprises. A good description of the firm is a fully diversified investment bank working with oil and gas, real estate partnerships, commodities, stocks and options. My job as investment management intern gave me a number of specific duties I performed on a daily basis that allowed operations to run smoothly. These duties included assisting in the execution of trades of stocks and options for various clients' portfolios; managing and calculating monthly expense reports; performing quantitative and qualitative analyses of various securities; and executing net present value analysis for prospective oil and gas investments.

For my second internship, I worked in operational finance for the world's largest publicly traded copper producer, Freeport-McMoRan Copper and Gold, a firm ranked in the top 150 of the Fortune 500. I was one of hundreds of interns all over the country, a cool aspect because it gave me the chance to network with many very intelligent people who want to get involved in the same fields that interest me.

Both internships provided me with incredible opportunities to take the tools I learned in school, specifically in my more advanced econ/finance classes, and use them in real world applications. There were two things that I enjoyed the most about both internships. For Karnell Enterprises, my favorite part was using the knowledge I gained in AREC 450 to analyze net present value spreadsheets for a potential oil deal. I thoroughly enjoyed this specifically because it helped us make the best possible decision, given a number of different variables/scenarios, that we couldn't otherwise have made. When interning for Freeport, the thing that I liked most was analyzing contracting costs for all the mines versus specific mines and evaluating underlying trends of behavioral cost patterns of the sites. I took what I learned in AREC 403 and directly applied it to composing analytical graphs that helped tell a story of why costs were behaving like they were. Getting to apply something I learned in

school to a real world situation to help create value has changed my perspective on learning in the classroom.

Overall, these internships provided me with incredible opportunities which will help me decide what field I want to work in come graduation in December. Because both internships were equally valuable yet incredibly different in essence, I feel I have a better understanding of what type of working environment I hope to be in when I begin my business career. I would prefer working for a smaller firm than a multinational corporation. I came to this conclusion based on how much I can actually contribute to the value of the firm. There are more decision making opportunities for me working for Karnell Enterprises than working for Freeport, which is more valuable to me.

### Rachel Pergamit



I spent this last summer in Washington, D.C., interning at the American Farm Bureau Federation. It was quite an experience to work and live in D.C.—I was surrounded by more young, energetic people interested in the Farm Bill than I thought possible. For nine weeks, I worked in the Economic Analysis department alongside real-life economists and was able to travel to Savannah, Georgia, for a conference. To contribute, I attended briefings, conducted a literature review, and gave a presentation of my work. As an environmental and water resource economics major, I chose to focus my research on sustainable agriculture. I analyzed journal articles cov-



ering biotechnology (genetic engineering) in food and agricultural water use. Having a personal project was a rewarding and unique aspect of this internship, since it allowed me to pursue my interests while providing useful information for AFBF.

Working with people from farming backgrounds also gave me an opportunity to learn about rural life. I learned that not every place has curbed sidewalks, Angus cattle are mean, and forty-five minutes to the nearest Wal-Mart is normal. Conversely, I taught them irrigating crops is standard in Arizona and wearing socks with Birkenstocks is common in Oregon.

The internship introduced me to career paths such as working at a trade association or within a myriad of branches of the federal government. The Council on Food, Agricultural, and Resource Economics (C-FARE) hosted talks for agricultural economist interns by professionals in a variety of organizations. It was enlightening to see the different options and the countless ways people ended up as professional economists. The summer gave me many skills and experiences I will take with me when I graduate, and I am exploring ways to return to D.C. soon.

### Gan Jin



Summer break is *always* a fun time. Over this past summer, I went traveling, skeet shooting, go-carting, bowling, attended my cousin's wedding, visited the Benton County fair,

had chickenpox (yes I'm 23 and I've never had it before), ate at an all-you-can-eat crab buffet, had two cute teenage girls for roommates, attended lots of parties, ate millions of watermelons, and most fun of all, worked at an internship for Dorman Products in Bentonville, Arkansas.

Dorman Products is one of the largest suppliers for AutoZone, focusing on automobile aftermarket items. However, 10% of Dorman Products' business is in home decor, with products such as hooks and hanging devices, door knobs, and interior/exterior screws. With a team

of only 6 staff members, this part of the company operates mainly in Bentonville Arkansas, away from Dorman Products' home office in Colmar, Pennsylvania. The Bentonville operations are growing rapidly, generating over \$50,000 in revenue every week. The role of the office in Bentonville is supplying items (mostly produced by Dorman Products—by the time I left Bentonville the office was negotiating with 3M about co-branding) and services, mainly forecasting, and problem solving for Wal-Mart (including Sam's Club), K-Mart, and Home Depot.

For anyone who may just frown and ask, "Wait a second, isn't Bentonville the headquarters of Wal-Mart?" the answer is yes, and the Dorman Bentonville office is located just by the town square, 50 yards away from the first Wal-Mart. In fact, most of Dorman Bentonville's business is done with Wal-Mart.

During the internship, I got to observe operations as a supplier to the largest retailer in the world. And as a bonus, I attended Wal-Mart's annual replenishment summit and I worked in the top-secret Wal-Mart layout room. The annual replenishment summit is a seminar-style meeting for all the suppliers to learn Wal-Mart's new policies, and of course the lectures are boring, but I was stunned to see how the meeting was so well organized and coordinated. The layout room is the top secret facility at the end of policy making. It is more of a ready-to-go super center than a "room," a place where all the suppliers come and display their products (yes, all the products, toys, outdoor items, cosmetic products, you name it), getting approval by the buyers before the items are put on the shelf in any Wal-Mart store in U.S. I went there twice and helped set up the display of Dorman's items. It is a science to set things up so that customers will buy more of their more popular and more expensive products.

Summer is always short, and this one seemed even shorter, not only because I had a fun summer, but also because I had a wonderful internship that helped me understand the business of Wal-Mart and the supply chain, retail business, and the whole business world.

### Georgia Pfeiffer



I spent five weeks of the summer traveling, studying, and living in Italy. The first thing I learned in Portici is that a classroom housed in the Royal Palace of Portici, between Vesuvius and the sea, is geographically the best place to learn econometrics. In addition to reinforcing econometric concepts, the class equipped me with new methods of analysis and taught implementations of these methods using STATA. I also met students from the University of Massachusetts and the University of Naples. The Italian students were excellent hosts and were eager to help me with anything from making me feel at-home in class, to giving weekend travel advice, to ensuring that I ate plenty of pizza.

I shared an apartment in Naples with the students from UMass, which allowed me to experience Italian culture and explore the city after class. From a stranger helping me on the street when I got my key stuck in the apartment door to the fruit vendor by our apartment teaching me numbers and how to ask for apricots in Italian, the people that I met in the city were incredibly friendly and generous. The city itself was full of history. In our neighborhood an excavation dating to the Roman era and another dating to medieval Naples were juxtaposed with gelato shops and pizzerias.

Perhaps the most unique opportunity was to travel in a country with such a vibrant history. Traveling on the weekends gave me a glimpse of a country entirely new to me and a chance to meet many different people, try delicious food, and see wondrous sights. The some-



times on-time trains gave me an exciting way to travel across Italy, from Venice in the north to Sicily in the south, seeing something new each weekend. The most amazing weekend trip was to Valley of the Temples in Agrigento, Sicily; here, I walked along a ridge to visit some of the best preserved Greek temples in Italy. It's absolutely incredible to contemplate the level of craftsmanship and skill required to build such long standing artifacts.

All in all, the time I spent in Italy helped me develop my perspectives on econometrics, travel, and the world, which is more than one can ask for in a summer break.

### Hunter Richards



I was extraordinarily fortunate to land a great professional experience for the summer following my first year at AREC. I had spent some time over Christmas break to research consulting firms in my main area of interest—environmental and water resource economics—and inquire about internship opportunities. After a telephone interview with a firm in Florida, I was thrilled to be awarded a paid summer internship in an area that perfectly suited my interests.

The Balmoral Group is an economics and engineering consulting firm that specializes in transportation and environmental policy analysis, with additional expertise in economic development. I really enjoyed the diversity of projects, which kept the work fast-paced and engaging. The Strategic Resource Evaluation Study (SRES), a research report advising the Florida Department of Transportation on construction materials supply and cost trends, was the biggest transportation

project I worked on. Environmental projects included mitigation banking analysis for endangered species policy in the city of Deltona, Florida, and optimal management strategy for stormwater sustainability ponds, which help stave off pollution from highway stormwater runoff. I also had the chance to contribute to an economic impact analysis for an air force base in Avon Park, Florida. It was deeply fulfilling to see how my economics background could be applied to real-world problems that fit my interests so well.

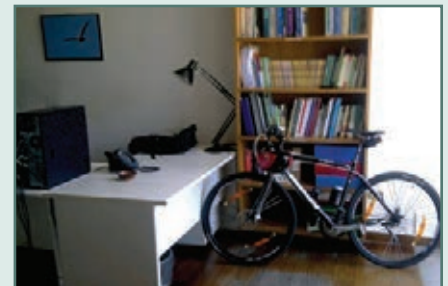
I also got an intimate glimpse at how the consulting business works, including collaboration with other consulting firms, consultant-client relationships, and the project proposal process. Seeing the applications of technology—such as LIMDEP econometrics software, Microsoft Access, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and others—was also invaluable. Even beyond all the strictly professional stuff, I was also very fortunate to meet some great people who knew how to run a company with a friendly and productive atmosphere, and who valued me as a part of their team. The weekends were enjoyable as well; I visited beaches, rode a jetski, and went tubing, which were all very refreshing after a year in the scorching desert!

### Tatiana Marquez



This summer I had the pleasure of working for the National Park Service (NPS) Denver Service Center (DSC). DSC is the central planning, design, and construction management project office for NPS and as such works with parks all around the country. In my role as a natural resource specialist/economist I was able to

help in a variety of projects ranging from estimating land acquisition costs to assessing socioeconomic impacts of proposed park management plans to developing long range planning documents. My favorite project involved helping San Juan National Historic Site in Puerto Rico put together their long-term management plan that will be used for the next 20 years and assisting them in their assessment of a possible non-adjointing park boundary expansion. Working with this park was particularly satisfying because I was able to help in one project with their natural resource concerns and in the other assessing the impact on fiscal resources if additional historical sites were acquired. Two of the best things about working for DSC are that the office has a highly integrated interdisciplinary team which allows for great collaboration and amazing learning opportunities and that there is great variety in projects as the office helps parks with any projects falling under the planning, design, and construction umbrella. My experience this summer with DSC has reinforced my desire to work in an interdisciplinary team and possibly pursue a career with the federal government.



*The inevitable Thompson bicycle whether here in Naples or back in his fourth floor office at AREC.*

Professor Gary Thompson, as has been his practice for the last several years, spent part of his summer teaching microeconomics at the Centro per la Formazione in Economia e Politica dello Sviluppo Rurale. Known simply as the “Centro,” the institution is in Portici, Italy, situated on the slopes of Mt. Vesuvius just a stone's throw from the Bay of Naples.



## Traveling to Recruit

### Daryl Nikkel

Daryl Nikkel is one of AREC's regular visitors. Neither an alum nor former faculty or staff member, Nikkel arrives prepared to make offers: he's on a mission to recruit soon-to-graduate AREC undergrads into jobs at Farm Credit.

As director of recruiting and selection at Farm Credit, Nikkel travels to a number of land grant universities, including the UA, ASU, and New Mexico State University, to seek out potential hires in a variety of areas. These include positions as loan officers, credit analysts, appraisers, support staff, accountants, and loan processors.

Although his recruiting trips are geared at students, Nikkel tells the story of a fellow recruiter who had a booth next to his during a recruiting visit to the UA. As Nikkel re-

calls, the man "came over to inquire about Farm Credit 'for my sons.' The way it turned out, he was really interested in a new career for himself. He was burned out as a senior level executive [at a major retail] company and wanted a total career change. We took him through all our assessments, as we do everyone. He interviewed with one of our company offices and is now a successful and talented employee of Farm Credit thoroughly enjoying his new career. We, of course, are always looking for good, talented university students. However, we never know who is watching and listening to us...as was the case here."

On his most recent visit to AREC, Nikkel was a guest speaker in Professor Paul Wilson's Finance Management (AREC450/550) and Academic Success (AREC 197A) classes

in addition to interviewing 12 AREC majors. "We, at Farm Credit, are always looking for the best students that are passionate about working with the best people in the world... those that are the producers of food and those that support them. We are proud to be able to provide funds to those that 'feed the world' through our service. We look for those who have the desire to work in the agricultural lending industry."

Nikkel, who also responds to "Dad" and "Grandad," grew up on a dairy, wheat, and milo farm in the Oklahoma Panhandle. He has a master's in education and worked in that field for seven years. He and his wife now reside in Wichita, Kansas.

More information about Farm Credit and career opportunities there can be found at [www.farmcredit.com](http://www.farmcredit.com).



*Daryl Nikkel waiting for his next interviewee.*

## Commencement



*May 2012 photo at top right of graduating master's students: Elizabeth Schuster, Gaurov Arora, and Fátima Luna. Also pictured are professors George Frisvold, Paul Wilson, and Gary Thompson.*



*Top left photo shows a gathering of newly minted undergrad graduates. Having just received their bachelor degrees in December 2011 are (no particular order) Melissa Turner, Mark Menges, Chad Elmer, Juan Varela, Daniel Swanson, and Tyler Pierce.*

*Mark Menges, at left, was the AREC Outstanding Graduating Senior, December 2011.*



*April 2012 gathering of AREC undergraduates and Paul Wilson who came together with other UA students to package thousands of meals to be sent to needy people in Haiti. Pictured from left to right in back row are Shawn Kolofer, Cameron Kerr, Professor Paul Wilson, Kevin Nood, and Pablo Elias Hopkins. Middle row includes Rebecca Felix, Lauren Magnus, and Luis Camargo. Kneeling in front is Ian Briggs.*



## Student Travel to Phoenix



*Back row, left to right: Colin Moore, Jingyu Liu, Placide Hiol, Ron Klawitter, Xiangrui Wang, Gan Jin, Anubhab Gupta, Hunter Richards, Ben Holman [Ph.D. math student], Georgia Pfeiffer. Front row, left to right: Brett Fleck, Avralt-od Purejav, Chia-Yun Tsai, Xiaoyi Yang. Photo credits this story: Jill W. Polk.*

A graduate student bonding experience as told by Brett Fleck.

The baseball trip started out as a bit of a cultural exchange between Mr. Anubhab Gupta and myself. I do not remember how we got on the topic, but last spring semester he started telling me about cricket and I started telling him about baseball. Neither of us knew anything about the other game. I was almost appalled when he said he didn't know who Babe Ruth or Barry Bonds was but then again, he was probably just as astonished that I didn't know Sir Donald Bradman or Sachin Tendulkar, his favorite player. We spent a few hours exchanging lessons on the gist of the game and decided that seeing it would make things a bit easier to understand. I have always wanted to know how to play cricket as the fact that games could go on for days amazed me and because the two sports are so similar, though baseball is actually thought to have grown out of an English game called Rounders.

Before he left back to India for the summer, I said that I would take him to a baseball game. In return he said he would invite me to learn how to play cricket with some friends of his and that we would watch a real game on TV as there are not any professional

cricket teams in the U.S. I gave him a baseball of mine to play around with and he tried to bring a cricket ball back from India for me but it was lost en route, most likely going through security. He is determined to get me one. I can't wait to

play with it. :)

When we got back from summer break, I mentioned to Ashley Kerna that I was going to take Anubhab to a professional baseball game in Phoenix at Chase Field to watch the Arizona Diamondbacks play. She, ever the organizer, suggested we put out an invitation to all AREC grad students. I went online and found a game versus the San Francisco Giants (Colin Moore's favorite team) on Friday, September 14th, which happened to be college night and fireworks night—fate I'm sure. The first promotion allowed for \$6 tickets and the second gave a fireworks show after the game that I thought was surprisingly good, maybe better than Tucson's 4th of July show, but that's not saying much. I announced the idea at the annual AREC fall potluck and it was warmly received. Because we have a lot of international students in this year's cohort, many had never seen a baseball game of any kind before. Being a huge baseball fan myself and recalling fond memories of my dad taking me to baseball games back in Minnesota as a kid, I was very proud that I could be the purveyor of their first baseball experience. I organized three drivers and, inclusive of myself, all cars were full.

We met at 4:00 P.M. on Friday and drove up to the game. We were a little late as organizing 14 other people (a total of 15 went) is not the easiest thing to do, but we arrived in the bottom of the first inning. It made my day to see the faces of some of my fellow students light up as they walked into the stadium and got a glimpse of the field and the enormity of the structure. I had a smile on my face to see that the retractable roof was open as I had only seen a game with it closed before. Baseball was meant to be played outdoors so that made me happy. We hurried to our seats, in the upper deck right behind home plate. The seats were pretty good though you lose a lot of the sights and sounds of the game from that far away. Good to explain the game and to take it all in though. Many went to get a beer and a hot dog right away, completing their American experience. The game was a







*Arizona Trail continued from page 11.*

Parker Canyon Lake, Sunflower, Cedar Ranch, and Tusayan.

- Fondness for each overnight campsite that was used on the trip.
- Desserts purchased at restaurants in towns along the trail including Patagonia, Summerhaven, Pine, Flagstaff, the

South Rim of the Grand Canyon, and Jacob Lake.

- The wonders of nature including wildlife sightings, night-time star shows, sleeping out under a full moon, and seeing the incredible landforms that the trail accesses.

Having completed this journey, Professor Dahlgran remains an enthusiastic backpacker and continues to pursue new adventures. He is now interested in the Colorado Trail, the John Muir Trail, and the Continental Divide Trail.



bit slow, the Giants had their ace on the mound, much to Colin's delight. A grand slam by the Giants sealed Arizona's fate, but they made a comeback attempt with their last at bat that came up short with the Giants winning 6-2. The game ran much longer than normal and was a bit boring with little run scoring, though the newbies didn't seem to notice. Everyone had a smile on their face.

Without planning, we somehow had people who knew the game staggered with people who were new to it, so there was a lot of explaining and teaching going on throughout, such a nice sight. Lucky for us who know baseball,

we had bright AREC students to teach to, which made the process a lot easier and faster. The highlight of my night was when Avrald told me he would take his son to see a game when he joined him in the States soon. All whose first time it was said they would definitely go again. Anubhab had a good time so mission accomplished. We made it back around 12:45 A.M. because of the long game, though no one complained. There is some talk about doing an AREC camping night somewhere but that might be a little more difficult to organize. We also plan on going to a batting cage at some point to give people a try at hit-

ting a baseball—that should be a lot of fun.

All in all, the trip was great, everyone had a good time, and I feel pretty lucky to have had the opportunity to share one of my passions with my classmates.







*Top: Joshua Ariga addressing a workshop retreat in Nairobi, Kenya. Bottom: Interviewing an agro-dealer in Ngororero, Rwanda.*

## A Tribute To Eric Monke and Gary Thompson

Have you ever met someone who changed the way you look at the world? A person who gave you a completely different outlook on life? I have. Two people, in fact. Eric Monke and Gary Thompson. And it's fair to say that these two people transformed my life. These professors put pressure on me (literally) to apply for admission to the agricultural economics department at the University of Arizona in the mid-1990s. Both men apparently saw something in me, which at the time I did not see in myself.

I had received my undergraduate degree and was working as a research assistant with an agricultural policy research project affiliated with a local university in Kenya. Eric and Gary were providing technical and leadership support to the project, which was funded

by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). With constant urging from them both, I finally applied to the UofA. The rest is history, culminating in a Ph.D. in agricultural economics.

Over the years, I have conducted research with a number of organizations as both a consultant and employee (World Bank, IFPRI, Michigan State Food Security Group, Tegemeo Institute of Agricultural Policy and Development and others). Currently, I am an economist and program manager in the Research and Development Division of the International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC, [www.ifdc.org](http://www.ifdc.org)). This public international organization works to increase agricultural productivity in developing countries and is improving food security and in-

comes for smallholder farmers throughout the world. As part of that responsibility, I am coordinating research in twelve countries in Africa, utilizing synergistic linkages with other organizations and governments in these countries to identify constraints, challenges and opportunities aimed at raising productivity and improving food security. In the course of my career, I have authored and co-authored reports, book chapters, and have been involved in analysis of policies towards creating conducive environments for agricultural investment in developing countries.

Is it fair to say that I might not be where I am today without the not-so-subtle urging and support of a couple of professors from UofA? Absolutely. Without the opportunity afforded me by UofA and the support from Eric and Gary, I most likely might be laboring in some other activity with lesser fulfillment or impact on the world. I salute Eric for his good heart towards all of the people who were lucky to be close to him; I fondly recall staying with his loving family for months as I adjusted to the "strange" new environment in "Saguaro" country before I managed to find my own apartment. I will never forget the love and kindness that was shown to me by Eric and his family. And who can forget Gary's detailed derivation of elasticities, whose names are so difficult to remember? And not to forget the local gang, I blame my circle of Tucson friends for my supplementary "graduation" into hot peppers. Clearly, I owe a lot to UofA and the staff at the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics.

—Joshua Ariga, M.S. 2001

### The Eric Monke Memorial Scholarship

**Eric Monke died in 2003 at the very young age of 51. A scholarship was established in his memory. If you would like to donate money to this, you may contact the UA Foundation at [www.uafoundation.org](http://www.uafoundation.org). Alternatively, there is direct online link to the scholarship fund via the incredibly unwieldy URL listed below:**

<https://www.uafoundation.org/netcommunity/sslpage.aspx?pid=493&fid=%2f1R5zahBmeo%3d&fdesc=mtyc2dJYNBEUMNuCSzejQZH5mUgaCVW8eQe5xsTlywa0MI4oW>

**This will take you to an online donation page that lists "The Eric Monke Memorial Scholarship" in the Donation Information section.**

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