



2026 CSES BANQUET



19 March 2026

Social Hour | 4:30 PM

Dinner Served | 5:30 PM

Awards Presented | 6:00 PM

UofA
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System



AWARDEES

Outstanding MS Alumnus.....Amanda Mathis

Presented by.....Dr. Paul DeLaune

Outstanding PhD Alumnus.....Dr. Jeffory Hattey

Presented by.....Dr. Paul DeLaune

Friend of the Department.....Daniela Alles

Presented by.....Dr. Paul DeLaune

Legacy Award.....James Barrentine

Presented by.....Darrin Malone

Outstanding Senior.....Andie Forbes

Presented by.....Dr. Jason Norsworthy

Tri-Societies Award.....Colten Nichols

Presented by.....Dr. Jason Norsworthy

Outstanding MS Student.....Jonathan Brye

Presented by.....Dr. Jason Norsworthy

Outstanding Grad Teaching.....Jonathan Brye

Presented by.....Dr. Jason Norsworthy

Gerald O. Mott.....Gabriela Mengez

Presented by.....Dr. Jason Norsworthy

Spooner Scholar.....Gabriela Mengez

Presented by.....Dr. Jason Norsworthy

Ron & Alice Talbert Award.....Juan Velasquez

Presented by.....Dr. Jason Norsworthy

OUTSTANDING M.S. ALUMNUS

Amanda Mathis

Amanda J. Mathis serves as the State Conservationist for USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Arkansas. In this role Mathis provides leadership and direction for NRCS administrative and technical functions. This includes overseeing the planning, organization, and implementation of natural resource conservation programs and initiatives and ensuring effective delivery of technical and financial assistance to farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners throughout Arkansas. Under Mathis's leadership, NRCS Arkansas manages a budget of more than \$130 million and delivers voluntary programs that improve water quantity, soil health, water quality, and wildlife habitat across the state.

Mathis has expanded access to programs like the Conservation Stewardship Program, ensuring that nearly every county in Arkansas benefits from conservation funding. She works closely with a broad network of partners to strengthen agriculture and protect natural resources for future generations.



OUTSTANDING M.S. ALUMNUS

Amanda Mathis

She grew up on a cattle operation in northwest Arkansas and boasts a deep love for agriculture and a belief in the power of great partnerships and voluntary, locally led conservation efforts.

Mathis holds a degree in Conservation and Wildlife Management from the College of the Ozarks in Point Lookout, MO and a Masters in Crop Soil and Environmental Sciences from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. She and her husband, Kevin, reside on their cow-calf operation in White County and enjoy the company of their five rescue dogs, camping and traveling.



OUTSTANDING PH.D. ALUMNUS

Dr. Jeffery Halley

Originally from a family farm near Kansas City, MO, Jeff finished high school in Albuquerque, NM where his interest in wildlife and plants was nurtured, ultimately leading to his interest in soil science. He earned a B.S. in Agronomy from the University of Central Missouri and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Arkansas with an emphasis in soil chemistry/fertility under Dr. Wayne Sabbe. He served as post-doctoral Fellow at Auburn University, then moved through the ranks to Professor of Soil and Environmental Sciences at Oklahoma State University where he held the Hodges Professorship of International Agriculture.

in 2011 Jeff moved to The Ohio State University, College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences where he served as Assistant Dean in Academic Programs.

In 2017 he returned to his role as full-time faculty where he is currently the Ohio State Specialist in Soil Management and co-leader of the OSU Extension Urban Agriculture team.



OUTSTANDING PH.D. ALUMNUS

Dr. Jeffery Hatley

As a teacher, Dr. Hatley had responsibilities for introductory of soil science, soil and water conservation, environmental capstone, study abroad, and college freshman orientation teaching thousands of students. He mentored 15 students who entered the professorate and others who were recipients of highly competitive merit or research scholarships including the Morris K. and Stewart L. Udall, Harry S. Truman and NSF-Research Experience for Undergraduates.

At Oklahoma State, he led a multi-disciplinary research team in animal waste management for 17 years which collectively graduated 30 M.S. and Ph.D. students, produced more than 100 publications, and over 85 extension presentations to producers or policy makers.

At a college and university Dr. Hatley has provided leadership to assessment of university general education, implementation of university data analytics and curriculum development at university, college and department levels. He has worked to increase student retention, degree completion and enhance leadership skills by developing bridges between academic, residential life and admissions initiatives.



OUTSTANDING PH.D. ALUMNUS

Dr. Jeffery Halley

Professionally Jeff provided leadership to the North American Teachers and College of Agriculture (NACTA), American Society of Agronomy, and Soil Science Society of America. He supported capacity building efforts with higher education partners in Brazil, Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Sierra Leone.

His commitment to higher education teaching and learning has been recognized by students and peers with numerous awards including the USDA Teaching Award, Soil Science Society of America Teaching Award, NACTA Teacher Fellow, NACTA Outstanding Teacher Award, and NACTA Distinguished Educator Award.

Jeff and his wife Susan are parents to four children and grandparents to 14 who provide them many reasons to travel.



FRIEND OF THE DEPARTMENT

Daniela Alles

Being part of CSES has been both professionally rewarding and personally meaningful. The department has provided an environment that values collaboration, intellectual curiosity, and genuine support. I've appreciated the opportunity to work alongside colleagues who are deeply committed to their students and to the land-grant mission. CSES has not only been a place of work, but a community that has shaped my growth and reinforced why I care so much about education.



LEGACY AWARD

James Barrentine

Jim Barrentine began his career in 1965 with the Cooperative Extension Service as a pesticide specialist in northeast Arkansas. For a time, he worked for Elanco, but, in 1967, he went back to school to earn his PhD at Purdue. After graduation, he continued to work for Elanco and moved several more times. Along the way, he worked as a field development specialist, product development manager and then as director of plant science and field research, finally leaving the company in 1993. Five years later, he returned to extension, where he was responsible for the crop, soil and environmental sciences department and agronomy program for eight years. During that time, he worked on an initiative that encouraged eastern Arkansas students to attend college at the University of Arkansas.

In 2001, Barrentine and his team established a golf tournament in Helena, Arkansas to raise money for student scholarships. Since that time, the tournament, which became known as the Delta Classic, has raised money for more than 240 scholarships, including hundreds of Delta Classic and dozens of James Barrentine scholarships.



LEGACY AWARD

James Barrentine

In 2018, Barrentine retired, after working for an ag chemical company in Denmark and then a company in Indianapolis. However, he hasn't been idle since then, working with herbicides and different specialists within Arkansas, as well as remaining involved with the golf tournament.

After more than 50 years spent contributing to the agricultural industry, and supporting students, the Delta Scholarship Golf Classic tournament has officially been renamed to the Barrentine Delta Scholarship Classic in Barrentine's honor.



OUTSTANDING SENIOR

Andi Forbes

I am a senior Environmental, Soil, and Water Science student from Louisiana. I am obtaining minors in sustainability and political science. In the Environmental, Soil, and Water Science Club, I serve as the Event Coordinator. After graduation, I hope to pursue a career in environmental education and outreach, focusing on coastal environments or watersheds.

In the CSES department, I have most enjoyed creating connections with peers and faculty members. The CSES department has created a tight-knit community where I have made some of my closest friends. I have also found incredible mentors through the department. These connections have made my journey throughout college much more enjoyable and stable.



TRI-SOCIETIES AWARD

Colten Nichols

Colten Nichols is a graduating senior studying both Crop Science and Biology with a Minor in Crop Biotechnology. Colten has been very involved in the department during his undergraduate education. He has been an officer for the Environmental, Soil, and Water Sciences Club for three years, serving as President for two of those years. He has also been an officer of the Agronomy Club for the past two years and was its founding President. Colten also represents the CSES department as a Bumpers College Ambassador, assisting in the recruitment of potential ESWS and CS majors and advocating for the department at the college level.

Colten has attended and competed in various undergraduate competitions at the past three National Tri-Societies meetings. Most notably, he was awarded second place for his oral research Presentation at the 2025 meeting. He has also been an active member of the department's Crop Judging team, competing at 3 National Meetings and 1 Spring Meeting.



OUTSTANDING MS STUDENT

Jonathan Brye

I am from Farmington, AR pursuing a master's degree in Crop, Soil, and Environmental Science. My master's degree research involved conservation agriculture impact on greenhouse gas emissions.

My most meaningful CSES experience has been soil judging, field research, and relationships. Traveling to southeast Arkansas or soil judging events with coworkers, professors, and other students is a holistic academic experience for teambuilding, learning field research, and experiencing something new. Additionally, the amazing faculty, staff, and graduate students I've had the privilege to work with have made the graduate experience pleasurable. After graduating with my master's in May, I'll start working on a PhD at LSU in the Department of Oceanography and Coastal Science where I will study soil biogeochemistry.



OUTSTANDING GRAD TEACHING

Jonathan Brye

I am from Farmington, AR pursuing a master's degree in Crop, Soil, and Environmental Science. My master's degree research involved conservation agriculture impact on greenhouse gas emissions.

My most meaningful CSES experience has been soil judging, field research, and relationships. Traveling to southeast Arkansas or soil judging events with coworkers, professors, and other students is a holistic academic experience for teambuilding, learning field research, and experiencing something new. Additionally, the amazing faculty, staff, and graduate students I've had the privilege to work with have made the graduate experience pleasurable. After graduating with my master's in May, I'll start working on a PhD at LSU in the Department of Oceanography and Coastal Science where I will study soil biogeochemistry.



GERALD O. MOTT

Gabriela Mengez

Gabriela is a second-year MS student at the University of Arkansas, supervised by Dr. Gerson L. Drescher. In 2023, she earned her BS degree in Agronomy from the Federal University of Lavras in Brazil. Her MS research focuses on potassium management in corn production systems, assessing the effects of K fertilization timing on grain yield and advancing new approaches for K diagnosis to improve nutrient management strategies. She will begin her PhD under Dr. Drescher this Fall and is excited about the opportunity to receive the Gerald. O. Mott Meritorious Graduate Student in Crop Science and the Spooner Scholar Awards, which represent meaningful investments in her academic development and enable her to continue learning, conducting impactful research, and collaborating with US farmers.



SPOONER SCHOLAR

Gabriela Mengez

Gabriela is a second-year MS student at the University of Arkansas, supervised by Dr. Gerson L. Drescher. In 2023, she earned her BS degree in Agronomy from the Federal University of Lavras in Brazil. Her MS research focuses on potassium management in corn production systems, assessing the effects of K fertilization timing on grain yield and advancing new approaches for K diagnosis to improve nutrient management strategies. She will begin her PhD under Dr. Drescher this Fall and is excited about the opportunity to receive the Gerald. O. Mott Meritorious Graduate Student in Crop Science and the Spooner Scholar Awards, which represent meaningful investments in her academic development and enable her to continue learning, conducting impactful research, and collaborating with US farmers.



RON & ALICE TALBERT AWARD

Juan Velasquez

I am a Colombian citizen raised in a middle-income family from a small city called Fusagasugá, at 50 km south of the Bogotá. My interest in the field of agronomy started as a child, having as a model my father who encouraged me to love agriculture while working on his small farm in the Andes. I got my bachelor's degree in Agronomy at the National University of Colombia (2019), and subsequently master's degree in weed science at the Federal University of Pelotas (UFPel), Brazil (2021). Since 2017, I have been conducting research in weed science. Parallel to my academic trajectory, I have led and assisted in many projects related to weed science such as evaluating the resistance of weeds in Colombia (2017) (3 projects), identifying symptoms of herbicides in Brazilian crops (2018) (2 projects), assisting and training personnel in weed science in CIAT and FLAR (2021) (2 lectures), assisting in

multiple and diverse weed science studies at the University of Arkansas (2022 to 2025) (48 projects). During this time, I have participated in multiple international conferences presenting results from multiple studies in Canada (1), Costa Rica (1), Panama (1), Thailand (2), Brazil (3), Colombia (2) and the United States (9).



RON & ALICE TALBERT AWARD

Juan Velasquez

Additionally, last year, I had the opportunity to teach a graduate level class in Colombia as a add honorees professor. These experiences allowed me to recognize the problems of weed science from a global and holistic perspective, as well as improve my communication skills. I am fortunate to have the opportunity to work in weed sciences in three different countries. Thanks to that, I have developed broader and critical thinking about weed management in different realities. The opportunity to be at the University of Arkansas has brought me a sense of friendly competitiveness since I have been a member of the weed team for three years, with the team placing first and second. Additionally, the University of Arkansas has brought me a sense of community and leadership since I have also been involved in student organizations such as the Latino Graduate Student Association, where I have served as Treasurer (2024-2023).

After earning my Ph.D., I hope to give back the knowledge I gained by becoming a top-tier researcher and/or professor, applying my skills and expertise. I believe that societal transformation begins with education; therefore, I want to share the opportunities I have had around the world.



RON & ALICE TALBERT AWARD

Juan Velasquez

I see research as the tool and education as the raw material to improve our society. My dream job would be working in alternative weed control strategies in diverse crops with the option to develop my own research and continue developing my skills in mentoring.



UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS WEED TEAM



Award Presented by Dr. Jason Norsworthy

Rhet Baxley

Diego Rodriguez

Noah Chandler

Aidan Ross

Cade Halbrook

Juan Velasquez

Cory Ketchum

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS WEED TEAM

Team Awards:

- Team A – Noah Chandler, Cade Halbrook, Cory Ketchum, and Rhet Baxley place 1st team overall at the Southern Weed Science Society Graduate Student Weed Contest in Newport, AR.
- Team B – Aidan Ross, Diego Rodriguez, and Juan Velasquez placed 2nd place team overall

Individual Awards:

- Noah Chandler – 2nd place overall high individual
- Cade Halbrook – 3rd place overall high individual
- Aidan Ross – 5th place overall high individual
- Haydon Houser – 1st place overall high individual (undergraduate contest)

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS WEED TEAM

Working together on this team taught us that we are much stronger together and can accomplish much more working together. The team calibration event took all members to come up with the right solution, as well as allowed for accountability. We are most proud of how we represented this University and Division by showcasing the knowledge and experience we have gained by studying here. We learned to have confidence in ourselves and how to have confidence when communicating with growers. We look forward to competing again next year, as well as taking these skills with us into the workplace, to in hope, better the lives and experience of the farmers of this beloved state.

CROP, SOIL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES CLUB OFFICERS

Graduate Student Club

President | Rafael Marmo

Vice President | Gabriela Mengez

Treasurer | Matt Lombardi

Secretary | Cade Halbrook

Social Chair | Emanuel Ferrari do Nascimento

Crops Representative | Rhet Baxley

Soils Representative | Geraldinn Cortez

Environmental Representative | Jonathan Brye

CROP, SOIL, AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES CLUB OFFICERS

Agronomy Club

President | Hannah Jenkins

Vice President | Raymond Owens

Treasurer/Secretary | Colten Nichols

Social Media Coordinator | Alyssa Foley

ESMS Club

President | Colten Nichols

Treasurer | Kaitlyn Feld

Secretary | Joyce Ho

Event Coordinator | Andie Forbes

Social Media Manager | Avery Selle

Sentinel | Hannah Harrison

UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS SOIL JUDGING TEAM

Abigael Villeneuve

KC Joyner

Brody Wilson

David Reed



UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS SOIL JUDGING TEAM

The University of Arkansas (Dr. Brye) hosted the 2025 Region IV Soil Judging Contest on October 9, 2025 in Benton County, AR. A total of 45 undergraduate students representing seven institutions throughout the region, including Texas Tech University, West Texas A&M University, Oklahoma State University, Texas A&M University, Stephen F. Austin University, Texas A&M University - Kingsville, and the University of Arkansas, participated in the contest.

Though the University of Arkansas' team could not formally compete for individual or team awards due to hosting the contest, all four students went through all of the contest-day activities as if they could formally compete. In the final ranking of all students and teams, Abigael Villeneuve would have finished as the 5th-high individual, KC Joyner as the 15th-high individual, Brody Wilson as the 20th-high individual, and David Reed as the 23rd-high individual. The University of Arkansas team would have been 6th in the team-judged-pit portion of the contest and would have finished 4th overall in the final team ranking.

Without the benefit of three full days of concentrated practice, as normally would have occurred had we not hosted the contest, the individual and team performances were outstanding.

2025 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES

In 2025, the CSES Department gave out over 100 scholarships to our students, totaling an impressive \$200,000. Below, we recognize our hard-working students for their efforts.

Bobby R. Wells Memorial Scholarship Fund

Lilith Douglas

Jordan White

2025 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES

C. Roy Adair Agronomy Scholarship Fund

Lilith Douglas

Rachel Haley

Mason Mabry

Anna Price

Sydney Talley

Mary Whatley

2025 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES

Caviness Endowed Scholarship

Colten Nichols

Charles A. Stutte Memorial Scholarship

Konnor Wall

Dale A. Wilhelmina S. Finkle Scholarship

Rosa Martinez

David and Gwendolyn Howard Endowed Award

Molly Clark

2025 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES

Delta Classic Scholarship

Blair Baxley

Tyler Carey

Jack Erwin

Marshall Fant

Natalie Jordan

Lawson Petrus

Randa Rhoades

2025 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES

Dr. and Mrs. J. O. Legg Department of
CSES Scholarship

<i>Parker Bartmess</i>	<i>Lauryn Gray</i>
<i>Alexander Beck</i>	<i>Avery Harville</i>
<i>Johnny Bell</i>	<i>Lillian Hill</i>
<i>Hannah Brown</i>	<i>Isabella Kidd</i>
<i>Kolt Burton</i>	<i>William Lanier</i>
<i>Caroline Cheek</i>	<i>Caroline Lee</i>
<i>Molly Clark</i>	<i>Devon Leshert</i>
<i>Connor DeMetropolis</i>	<i>Christian Machen</i>
<i>Lilith Douglas</i>	<i>Rosa Martinez Vergara</i>
<i>Rae Durham</i>	<i>Mayna McGrede</i>
<i>Walker Ferguson</i>	<i>Liv Mortensen</i>
<i>Brooklyn Franke</i>	<i>Emmanuel Mutatuzi</i>
<i>Emma Gastineau</i>	<i>Ryan Northington</i>
<i>Bibiana Ghanim</i>	<i>Olivia Osborne</i>

2025 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES

Dr. and Mrs. J. O. Legg Department of
CS&S Scholarship

Yariadna Pimentel

Jake Pittman

Jaydyn Putman

Gracie Rich

Gabriela Rioja

Keely Roman

Alivia Schmidt

Avery Selle

Delaney Sisney

Brighton Smith

Madelyn Stiles

Zane Thompson

Hannah Walters

2025 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES

Dr. James L. Barrentine Endowed Scholarship

Gaston Fletcher

Brick Fox

Luke Walker

Dr. Robert Frans Memorial Endowed

Scholarship Award

Alyssa Foley

Eddie Davis Scholarship

James Hill

2025 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES

Fontaine Richard Earle Endowment

Kaitlin Ahrens

Connor DeMetropolis

Reed Dickson

Kaitlyn Feld

Alyssa Foley

Erin Harders

Olivia Osborne

Jordan White

2025 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES

Harold and Iva Hicks Endowed Scholarship

Jordan Ramirez

Harvey A. York and John O. York Plant

Breeding Scholarship

Alyssa Foley

Jacob Coleman Memorial Endowed Scholarship

Erin Harders

Joe M. Steele & Hardy W. Croxton Memorial

Scholarship

Caroline Cheek

2025 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES

Paul and Irma Boyer Scholarship

James Huff

Colten Nichols

Jordan Ramirez

R.D. and Mildred Elizabeth Kline Bartholomew

Memorial Scholarship

Kalea Snow

2025 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES

Sam Offutt Memorial Scholarship in Agronomy.

Max Bergeron

Kira Burnett

Lydia Merriman

Sherman D. Cullum, Sr., Scholarship

Colten Nichols

2025 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES

Tanner Thompson Shuck Memorial Endowed Scholarship

Kaitlin Ahrens

Andie Forbes

James Hill

Esther Moore

Alexandra Partain

Lauren Pruitt

Natalie Roell

2025 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES

Wayne E. Sabbe - Arkansas Plant Food
Association Endowed Scholarship

Madelyn Stiles

West Family Soil Science Scholarship in
Crop, Soil, and Environmental Science

Abigael Villeneuve

White River EPA Scholarship

Sydney Talley

Abigael Villeneuve

2025 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES

Woody Miley - Arkansas Plant Food

Association Endowed Award

Jordan Ramirez

SPECIAL THANKS

Bobby R. Wells Memorial Scholarship Fund	Mrs. Marcia R. Wells
C. Roy Adair Agronomy Scholarship Fund	Dr. and Mrs. Joe D. Waldrum
C. Roy Adair Agronomy Scholarship Fund	Mr. and Mrs. James C. Bourne
Caviness Endowed Scholarship	Mr. and Mrs. Ronnie C. Caviness
Charles A. Stutte Memorial Scholarship	Mr. Charles L. Stutte
Dale A. and Wilhelmina S. Hinkle Scholarship	Dr. Jarvis Harper
Dale A. and Wilhelmina S. Hinkle Scholarship	Dr. Christina Jefferson
David and Gwendolyn Howard Endowed Award	Mr. and Mrs. David A. Howard
Delta Classic Scholarship	Mr. and Mrs. Darrin Malone
Delta Classic Scholarship	Mr. Robby Rorie
Dr. James L. Barrentine Endowed Scholarship	Mr. and Mrs. Gerald R. Wilson
Dr. James L. Barrentine Endowed Scholarship	Dr. and Mrs. James L. Barrentine

SPECIAL THANKS

Dr. Robert Frans Memorial Endowed Scholarship	Mrs. Cathy Hall
Fontaine Richard Earle Endowment Fund	Ms. Sharon A. Crosiar
Harvey A. York and John O. York Plant Breeding Scholarship Fund	Ms. Elizabeth York McNair
Jacob Coleman Memorial Endowed Scholarship	Mr. and Mrs. John G. Segars
Jacob Coleman Memorial Endowed Scholarship	Mr. and Mrs. Craig Coleman
Jacob Coleman Memorial Endowed Scholarship	Mr. Will Clancy Gunnell
Lyell and Marcella J. Thompson Endowed Scholarship	Dr. and Mrs. Kurt Bevernitz
Paul and Irma Boyer Scholarship	Mrs. Jane Shipley
R. P. & Mildred Elizabeth Kline Bartholomew Memorial Scholarship	Mr. Mike Bartholomew
R. P. & Mildred Elizabeth Kline Bartholomew Memorial Scholarship	Mr. William D. Bartholomew
Ron and Alice Talbert Endowed Weed Science Scholarship	Dr. and Mrs. Ronald E. Talbert

SPECIAL THANKS

Sam Offutt Memorial Scholarship in Agronomy	Dr. James E. and Dr. Victoria Turner
Sherman D. Cullum, Sr., Scholarship	Mrs. Sherman D. Cullum
Tanner Thompson Shuck Memorial Endowed Scholarship	Mr. and Mrs. Charles L. Strickland
Wayne E. Sabbe - Arkansas Plant Food Association Endowed Scholarship	Arkansas Plant Food Association, Inc.
West Family Soil Science Scholarship in Crop, Soil, and Environmental Science	Dr. and Mrs. Larry West
White River EPA Scholarship	Mrs. Linda L. Stith
Woody Miley - Arkansas Plant Food Association Endowed Award	Arkansas Plant Food Association, Inc.

*We would like to express our
gratitude to the Crop, Soil, and
Environmental Sciences
Graduate Club, the Agronomy
Club, the Environmental, Soil,
and Water Sciences Club, and
the Crop, Soil, and
Environmental Sciences faculty
and staff.*