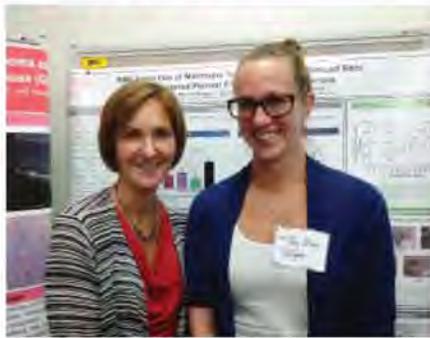


# Animal Science Update

## The Department of Animal Sciences

Newsletter

2015-2016



Wendie Cohick and Hillary Stires



Ag Field Day: Don't miss the Animal Fitting & Showmanship Contests.



Inspiring Careers: Alums Kathleen Rahman and Michele Marino Nichols

### Chair's Message

by Wendie Cohick, Ph.D., Department Chair

We're very happy to report that **Drs. William Belden and Nicholas Bello** were recently promoted to the rank of Associate Professor with tenure, effective July 2016. We're proud of these revolutionary thinkers! Speaking of revolutionary, I invite you to participate in the yearlong celebration leading up to November 10, 2016, our university's 250th birthday (see [250.rutgers.edu](http://250.rutgers.edu)). Featured are exhibitions, lectures, concerts, and other events.

Congratulations to **Dr. Carey Williams**, who received the 2015 Equine Science Award from the American Society of Animal Science and Equine Science Society! Her many achievements in extension, research, and teaching earned her this prestigious award. As Associate Extension Specialist, Carey provides statewide leadership in pasture and horse management and equine nutrition. She organizes the annual Horse Management Seminar (see page 3) and teaches *Comparative Mammalian Anatomy*, a popular upper-level undergraduate course she created several years ago.

**Dr. Kathleen Rahman**, now serving as our Undergraduate Program Director (and an alum herself), reports below on how alumni are enriching our Animal Science curriculum. I invite all alumni and friends to share their expertise, donate to our excellence fund ([makeagift.rutgers.edu](http://makeagift.rutgers.edu)), "like" us on Facebook, and come to Ag Field Day!

### Giving Back: Alumni Teach Animal Assisted Therapy, Transform *Careers* Course

by Kathleen Rahman, PhD, Undergraduate Program Director

**Jennifer Streltsova Tevlin, MS** (CC '01; GSNB '05, McKeever lab) returned to Bartlett Hall to teach our newest course, *Animal Assisted Therapy*, which focuses on small companion animals and horses. Students learn the relevance of AAT as an alternative treatment modality for common psychological disorders. Her Fall 2015 course was so well received that we'll be offering it in both Fall and Spring semesters from now on!

*Careers in Animal Science* has undergone a remarkable transformation from a one-credit course to a dynamic, three-credit course that dispels students' stereotypes of animal science careers, prepares students for interviews,

and creates a myriad of career-networking opportunities. Alumni have enriched the *Careers* course tremendously!

**Michael Graziano, PhD** (CC '79), Vice President for Drug Safety Evaluation at Bristol-Myers Squibb, has provided both veterinary science and toxicology teams to elucidate career opportunities. **Michele Marino Nichols, MS** (GSNB '06, Katz lab), AlcheroBio (pictured above right); **Kurt Roman** (SEBS '12), Westfield Animal Hospital; **Daniel Stobie, DVM** (CC '90), NorthStar Vets; and **Jennifer Tevlin** are each providing guest lectures. Current students **Ankita Gupta '17** and **Elena Rizzo '17** share their experiences as Animal Science majors.

## Undergraduate Program News, cont.

Six seniors in the G. H. Cook Scholars Program are completing their research on a variety of topics:

- **Hayley Cohen** (Bello), Neurobiology of Obesity and Eating Disorders
- **Emily Convery** (Katz & Becker), Development of Self-Enurination Behavior in the Male Goat
- **Christina Enoch** (Fagan), Developing a Community Animal Response Team at Rutgers University
- **Caitlin Kober** (Katz & Becker), The Effect of Co-Twin Gender on Estrous Behavior in Goats
- **Mary Nasr** (Bagnell), The Effects of Nursing and Age on Neonatal Porcine Small Intestine Development
- **Kathryn Sinko** (Cohick), IGF-Independent Role of IGFBP-3 in Regulating Cell Death in Mammary Epithelial Cells

After successfully defending their theses in April, they will graduate as G. H. Cook Scholars, Class of 2016.

In recognition of their excellence in academics, research, and service to the department, SEBS, and Rutgers, **Hayley Cohen**, **Caitlin Kober**, and **Kathryn Sinko** will receive department endowed scholarship awards. The Rex L. Gilbreath Memorial Award will be given to **Mary Nasr**.

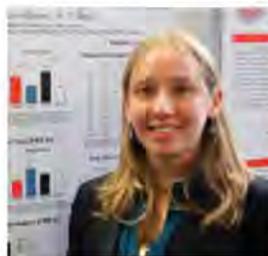
**Samantha Valliant '16**, a starter on the RU Women's Soccer Team, helped her team win at No. 1 Virginia in the NCAA Tournament Quarterfinals (November 2015).

**Congratulations to all of our graduating seniors!** Wherever your career paths take you, please remember that you'll always be welcome to visit us or be guest speakers at club meetings or in our *Careers* class.

## Graduate Program Highlights

by **Carol Bagnell, PhD**, Graduate Program Director

Two students in the Graduate Program in Endocrinology and Animal Biosciences (EAB) earned their degrees in October 2015, and a third will graduate in May 2016.



**Jessica Verpeut** studied the neural behavioral outcomes of a ketogenic diet in *Engrailed-2* null male mice. She completed her PhD dissertation research under the supervision of Dr. Nicholas Bello in June 2015. Since graduating, Jess has been a postdoctoral research associate at the Princeton Neuroscience Institute with Dr. Samuel Wang studying neural circuits and the role of the cerebellum in autism spectrum disorder.

**Elizabeth (Liz) Krumm** investigated the effects of flame retardants on arcuate nucleus gene expression and offspring energy homeostasis in mice. Her MS advisor was Dr. Troy Roepke. After defending her thesis in August 2015, she accepted a research associate position with Regeneron Pharmaceuticals in Tarrytown, NY.



In March 2016, **Hillary Stires** successfully defended her PhD dissertation on the role of the estrogen axis in promoting mammary tumorigenesis in rats exposed to alcohol *in utero*. While finishing her dissertation work, Hillary was supported with funds from the Philip and Ann Aines, Hilda S. Foster, and Robert & Lillian White-Stevens fellowships. Hillary plans to continue working in breast cancer research as a postdoctoral fellow at Georgetown University's Lombardi Cancer Center. (Hillary is pictured on page 1 with Dr. Wendie Cohick, her advisor, and in the adjacent photo of grad students.)

Two students began full-time in Fall 2015: **Chelsea Holloway**, a McDaniel College alum who completed a post-baccalaureate year at Virginia Tech, and **Jennifer Hanke**, a Rutgers alum who had been a part-time grad student with us for several years while working full-time.

### Graduate Students at the 2015 Holiday Party (at left)

*Back row (from left): Bill Fritz, Bryn Yeomans\*, Jennifer Skorupa, Jennifer Hanke, Hillary Stires, Miguel Cabrera, and Ali Al-Yasari. Middle row: Chelsea Holloway, Mariana Saboya, Ashley George, and Shaima Jabbar. Front row: Qiaoqiao Zhu, Jinhee Park\*, Jennifer Yang, Juliet Gotthardt\*, and Kyle Mamounis.\**

\*Graduate students in other programs who work with dept faculty



**RUTGERS**

School of Environmental  
and Biological Sciences

Ashley George, a PhD candidate, will attend the Frontiers in Reproduction course this spring at the Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole, MA.

The 2016 Nutrition, Endocrinology and Food Science (NEFS) Graduate Student Conference is scheduled for Tuesday, April 19, at the Cook Student Center. This year's highlights include a keynote address by Dr. Paul Cohen of Rockefeller University, talks by graduate students, a poster session, and a career panel. NEFS is a collaboration between our EAB Graduate Student Organization (GSO) and the Nutritional Sciences and Food Science GSOs.

The Log Cabin and Alumni Pavilion at Rutgers Gardens was the site of the EAB GSO's late-August picnic to celebrate the end of the summer and welcome new students. Faculty and staff were invited, and all enjoyed the time together. (Pictured in top photo: Mariana Saboya, Ali Yasrebi, and Jennifer Yang; bottom photo: Qiaoqiao Zhu and Seher Yirtici)



## Horse Management Seminar

by Carey A. Williams, Associate Extension Specialist

"Why Do They Do That?: Behavior and Training of Horses" was the theme of the 2016 Horse Management Seminar hosted by the Rutgers Equine Science Center and Rutgers Cooperative Extension. The all-day seminar, which took place on February 14, featured presentations by several equine industry experts and a panel discussion. The goal of the seminar was for everyone to gain a better appreciation for how horses learn. One hundred individuals attended the event, one of the largest crowds that the seminar has drawn in recent years. (Pictured at right: Dr. Carey Williams, Dr. Karyn Malinowski, and Kyle Hartmann)



## Alum Lizzy Leahy Receives Scholarship

Elisabeth Leahy, MS (CC '10) is one of five veterinary students committed to careers in equine medicine who received \$5,000 scholarships through the Merck Animal Health/American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) Foundation scholarship program. The scholarships were presented in December 2015 at the AAEP's annual convention in Las Vegas.



**Snapshot of her career path to date:** Lizzy received her BS in Animal Sciences from Rutgers in 2010. She worked closely with graduate student Emily Lamprecht while doing undergraduate research in Dr. Carey Williams' lab. During her junior and senior years at Rutgers, she worked part-time at the New Jersey Equine Clinic in Millstone and continued working there for two years before going to the University of Connecticut for her MS in Animal Sciences. From there, she began her veterinary studies at Michigan State University's College of Veterinary Medicine as a member of the Class of 2018.

Lizzy offers current prevet students the following "words of wisdom": "I did not take the direct route to veterinary school but each step along the way helped me grow personally and professionally and prepared me for the rigors of the DVM program at Michigan State. Don't be afraid to take an alternate path towards your professional goals. Take advantage of the resources at Rutgers, especially within the animal science department, and build relationships with the faculty because they will continue to support you after you graduate."

Photo credits: Susan Becker (p 1, middle); Michael Leahy (p 3, left); Anna Fojtik (p 3, middle); Carey Williams (p 4, top); Kendall Phelps (p 4, bottom); Kathy Manger, Newsletter Editor (all other photos)



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"Team D" Competing in the Quiz Bowl



The Rutgers NESAs Team traveled to U Conn for the annual competition.



Horse Judging: Alex Moore '16, Dana Tsuchida '19, and Ankita Gupta '17

## NESA Competition: More Popular Than Ever!

Once again, Rutgers undergraduates brought home a yellow ribbon from the annual competition of the Northeast Student Affiliate (NESA) of the American Society of Animal Science and American Dairy Science Association. Their 4th place overall institutional finish was achieved after months of practice in judging livestock, studying for the quiz bowl, and preparing presentations of original research or review papers.

NESA 2016 was hosted by the Univ of Connecticut in early February. Our eight Rutgers teams competed against

33 other four-member teams from the Univ of New Hampshire, Univ of Massachusetts, Univ of Rhode Island, Penn State, Univ of Delaware, and Delaware Valley. Of the 41 teams, Rutgers Team D members **Mike Betros**, **An Le**, **Anna Tyryllo**, and **Kristen Johnson** (pictured above left) placed 2nd in livestock judging and 7th overall!

Individually, **Kristen Johnson** and **An Le** won 5th and 6th place, respectively, in livestock judging. **Ankita Gupta**, **Vipa Patel**, and **An Le** placed 4th, 5th, and 6th, respectively, for Original Research Presentations. Congrats to all RU teams!

## Recent News from Other Alumni

**Shira Rosenblum '15** was accepted to her dream veterinary school (U Penn) but deferred for a year to work as a research specialist at U Penn's School of Medicine. In a recent email to Dr. Sarah Ralston, Rutgers Prevet Advisor, she writes: "That year is now coming to an end, but Rutgers has helped me prove myself in a lab where I am working on a therapy for Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, a disease that afflicts dogs as well as people....This year has allowed me to settle into a lab that I will continue to remain tied to through the next four years as I start my veterinary studies."

**Meghan Ramos '14**, another U Penn vet student, volunteers with the Working Dog Center ([pennvetwdc.org](http://pennvetwdc.org)), which trains dogs to sniff out cancer and diabetes as well as drugs. She writes: "The WDC is an amazing organization. I went with Dr. Cindy Otto to testify at a Senate hearing for Working Dogs. The experience was incredible!"



**Kendall Phelps, MA (CC '10)** posted this "selfie" of her with Kaos, a binturong, on Facebook. Currently an educator at the Downtown Aquarium in Denver, she interned at Northwest Trek, in Washington State, and studied Evolutionary Physiology at Hunter College.

**Sarah Grossman Beckerlegge, MRCVS (CC '06)** now lives in the Yorkshire Dales in England practicing veterinary medicine in James Herriot's (*All Creatures Great and Small* author) original practice. They are filming a new TV show about the practice, *The Yorkshire Vet*.

In an email to Dr. Barry Jesse, **Andrea Sheremeta Muller '03** reported that she is now Assistant Director/Adoption Coordinator of Pandas International, a nonprofit that works to protect the Giant Panda population in China.