Involve your students! CBT will cover travel expenses for the following experiential learning event: Fort Hays State University has announced a business competition scheduled for February 12, 2015. The website is www.fhsu.edu/management/mma

Faculty/Administration

The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) Student Chapters program awarded Dr. Nathan Barry, Industrial Technology, Outstanding Educator at an awards ceremony held at the 2015 NAHB International Builders’ Show in Las Vegas in January. Sponsored by Delmar Cengage Learning, this prestigious award recognizes and encourages high quality standards in teaching construction education. Educators are recognized for their voluntary extracurricular activities, including those with construction industry organizations, as well as their construction experience and professional initiatives. Photo attached.

Dr. Allan Jenkins, Economics, was interviewed by the North Platte Telegraph for an article entitled “Degrees losing value, but education still vital” which was published January 17, 2015.

Dr. Ngan Chau, Marketing, has been appointed to the University of Nebraska Graduate Faculty, recognizing her scholarly accomplishments and contributions made to graduate education at UNK.

Impact

What are you doing? Where are you going? What impact are you making? Tell me, please!

Students:

As part of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) Student Chapters 2015 Residential Construction Management Competition (RCMC), which is a highlight of the Annual International Builders’ Show, UNK Construction Management, Interior Design, and Industrial Distribution students collaborated by working on an experiential learning team to analyze a 42 acre development site in Nashville, TN and create an investor business plan, and management project proposal. Students defended their proposal to construction company executive judges. The 2015 UNK-NAHB Student Chapter Team placed eighth in the nation out of 34 national teams. UNK Student Team-Construction Management: Klayton Kasik, Jerod Strong, Mary Greblunas, Jade Clement, Colton Johnson, Zach Jeffery, Jesse Rule, Patrick Murphy, Joey Isaacson, and Kyle Peters. Interior Design: Jacqueline Star. Industrial Distribution: Matt Lenagh. Eric Holt, Construction Management, coached the team. Photo attached. Klayton Kasik was recognized as a National Outstanding Student for the UNK NAHB Student Chapter.

Take a look at the attachments to see how SIFE has made a difference to a small town and its grocery business.
Experiential Learning/Internship
Kaitlyn Steele, Business Administration and Pre-Health double major, advisor Dr. Heather Schulz

Kaitlyn Steele completed a fall semester internship in Xi’an, China, at the American Exchange Center on the campus of Xi’an Jiaotong University. Kaitlyn worked at the AEC as an office assistant, as well as a cultural liaison to Chinese students who were working to improve their oral and written English and educate them about American culture. She and two other students from UNL were selected from a pool of applicants from UNK, UNL, UNO, and UNMC to serve as paid interns during the fall semester and also attend classes on the Xi’an campus. Kaitlyn taught cultural seminars on American cooking (grilled cheese, tomato soup, and Rice Krispie treats) and American tailgating, including a chili cookoff, and also helped put on a Halloween party for over 150 Chinese students, among other activities. She also was able to travel to Beijing and Shanghai. She aspires to work in international business someday and believes that her experience in China has shaped the way she views her future. Additionally, she feels that the experience has changed her personally in that she has learned to conduct herself professionally throughout the day and also manage her time better. Kaitlyn testifies that her internship in China greatly impacted her life and recommends that other students should study or work overseas if they have the opportunity because it will change their view of the world.

Alumni News
Tell me about your alumni!

A message from UNL-

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Undergraduate Women in Business organization is proud to announce the Inaugural Collegiate Women in Business Conference. The goal of this convention is to expand the network of Women in Business groups and individuals throughout the Midwest. We would be honored to have you or your organization attend our conference on Friday, February 27, 2015.

Your day at the Collegiate Women in Business Conference will include:

• Gaining insight into advancing your organization's potential
• Meeting other Women in Business groups from across the Midwest
• Expanding and nurturing your network of successful women in business
• Listening to distinguished professional women in various breakout sessions and workshops
• Tips to advance your professional career interests

The conference will run from 11:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. on February 27, 2015. The cost of attending the convention is $35 per person or $30 per person for groups of four or more. Lunch and a snack will be provided for those attending the conference.

Be sure to check out our Facebook event, Collegiate Women in Business Conference, and pay attention to your email for further correspondence with registration links. We look forward to seeing you or your organization at the Inaugural Collegiate Women in Business Conference this upcoming spring!
Please remember to forward your news items to Marsha Yeagley so that proper coverage can be provided. Your news may be added to the next Dean's List, and/or posted on the "Notables" section of the website, or the Dean's page of the site. When appropriate, a news release will be sent to students' hometown newspapers and/or the Hub, as well as covering the item in the June publication of the College of B&T Annual Report. Remember that what you and your students do "makes a difference." In order to send the press release to the students' hometown newspaper, please provide the hometown. Help us in the recruitment and retention process by informing Marsha of your news.

Send to: yeagleym@unk.edu.

Please only send information regarding papers and presentations after the fact. Think about doing an article for the Kearney Hub during the 2014-2015 academic year. Also, consider promoting your program, students, and/or event on NTV (first Wednesday of the month at 6:25 a.m.) and KGFW Talk of the Town (4th Wednesday of each month at 9:30 a.m.) The schedules are attached.

Criteria for the Hub article:
- 500 words or less
- Business tips/backed by your research if you so choose
- Long text or short bullet points
- Author picture and short bio
- Every other month to start

I will send it on to the Hub after the Dean’s approval.

Marsha K. Yeagley
Senior Lecturer, Marketing/MIS Department
Coordinator of College Communications
West Center Building W241
University of Nebraska at Kearney
Kearney, NE 68849
308-865-8345
MESS ON THE MISSISSIPPI

Years of wear and tear have taken a toll on this invaluable waterway system.

PLUS

New Corn Record Hits 503 Bushels
Steps To Avoid A Cash-Flow Crunch
Drones Hit Another Headwind
COVER STORY
MESS ON THE MISSISSIPPI
A crumbling infrastructure and lack of funding threaten America's great grain way.

ABOUT THE COVER. This mighty marvel needs system-wide repairs to its 37 locks and dams. Cover photograph by Steve Wolt.

Ag Summit Review PAGE 12

TWO SISTERS,
One Bold Move
Conservation is key on this century-old Montana ranch that almost never was.

Few and Far BETWEEN
Small towns look for innovative ways to bring back and support local grocery stores.
Few and Far BETWEEN

Small towns look for innovative ways to support local grocery stores.

BY VIRGINIA H. HARRIS
PHOTOS BY JERI DOBRAMJSKI

As a grocery store goes in rural communities, so go other businesses,” reports David Proctor, director of the Kansas State University (K-State) center for engagement and community development. He’s summarizing a study done by K-State’s Rural Grocery Initiative that examined the economic impact of grocery stores on rural communities. In Kansas alone, the Rural Grocery Initiative found that a staggering 38 percent of 213 stores in towns of 2,500 or fewer residents closed between 2006 and 2009. Proctor says that’s a problem because those stores and markets serve purposes beyond selling milk, eggs and butter.

“They’re what we call anchor businesses in these small towns because they are places where people gather,” Proctor says. “They have art galleries in these stores, they have knitting clubs in these stores, they have local Kiwanis meetings in these stores.”

Proctor says because of their importance to community life, city commissioners or chambers of commerce will point to the grocery store as a sign of economic health and potential for growth. In fact, Proctor points to another K-State study that showed grocery stores employed 15 people (a combination of full- and part-time workers) on average and account for nearly 20 percent of sales and property tax dollars on average in rural communities. Small communities across the country are finding ways to bring these important community assets back to their main streets.

Take, for example, Pam Budenbender. She launched the Onaga Country Market, in Onaga, Kan., in 2011, after the town languished for a year without any type of market when an existing market burned down. As it is, the closest supermarkets, such as a Walmart super center, are in Manhattan and Topeka, 45 and 55 miles south, respectively. While a bus was sponsored to transport senior citizens to a store 30 miles from Onaga, other families individually racked up miles and time in transit to other stores. Budenbender herself brought groceries from Kansas City when she and her husband traveled to their farm, near Onaga, on weekends. Before opening the store, Budenbender and her husband spent weekends with his extended family on the farm. “I had to plan ahead and bring everything with me because it wasn’t available here,” she recalls. She explains the previous market lacked variety, and what items the store did carry were typically in limited supply.

At Onaga Country Market, Budenbender wanted to provide variety, a welcoming environment for customers and well-stocked shelves and freezers. “We have a huge produce selection and a beautiful, well-stocked meat case,” she gushes, adding, “I think you could find everything in this store you could possibly want.” Budenbender hired a local butcher to manage the meat department of the store and included a café area near the deli for customers to enjoy.

Of course, it’s not all a bed of roses. Budenbender started the store from scratch, including financing, building the store and stocking it. “It’s been very challenging to service the debt on all of the loans and still make the store pay for itself, because the electric bills are expensive and payroll is expensive,” she acknowledges. “But we’ve been making it work and are looking forward to getting some of that debt paid off.”

COMMUNITY ASSET. The loss of grocery stores in rural communities creates another serious problem for small towns. According to the USDA, 2.3 million rural Americans live in a food desert. USDA quantifies a rural food desert as an area lacking a grocery store within a 10-mile radius. Sherrie Conklin lives in a former food desert, Burden, Kan. It’s a former food desert because she opened her own market in 2013,
after the town went without for nearly 20 years. Conklin's inspiration is similar to Budenbender's. She needed powdered sugar one Christmas, having forgotten it on her trip to the nearest grocery store, which was 20 miles away. She went to the local gas station, which had the sugar but charged an astronomical price. Conklin had recently lost her job, and paying high prices, even in an emergency, wasn't tenable.

"I came home and told my husband, 'we can't do this,'" Conklin says. So, the Conklin's decided to open a market, aptly called Forgotten Item Market. "He [Conklin's husband] was reluctant at first," she recalls.

Conklin points out Burden and its surrounding residents are a mix of farmers, ranchers, elderly folks and blue-collar workers. Few have plenty of disposable income. She saw a "desperate need" in Burden and knew a local market could save time and money by providing a nearby place for residents to pick up necessities.

**CREATIVITY GETS IT DONE.** She doesn't expect the store to be a big moneymaker. Conklin explains income from the store covers overhead costs of utility bills and the store's stock. She drives the local school bus during the school year for extra income, and her daughter works in the store when Conklin can't be there. But, Conklin wasn't necessarily looking for a profit, she says. She wants to save people money. "If you are providing a service for people, you will want to provide it at a price they can afford," she explains.

Kansas State's Proctor agrees that operating a grocery store is an expensive endeavor. So, some towns look for ways aside from the traditional sole proprietor model. In Cody, Neb., the local high school opened a market to serve the small town and found innovative ways to make it work. Before the Circle C Market opened in May 2013, the town of 150 people hadn't had a grocery store or market in 10 years. But the store offers other benefits to the students aside from the obvious benefit to residents.

The Circle C Market serves as a classroom for students who learn skills about operating a business, customer service, even public speaking. Todd Chessmore, the school district's superintendent, says the idea for the market sprouted about seven years ago at a brainstorming session at the high school. Community members wanted a market, but knowing a sole proprietor couldn't make a living off of their small town's business, they came up with a school-based idea. The school applied for and received grants to construct the building, and sought help from a grocer 40 miles away in Valentine to connect with a supplier.

During the school day, students man the store stocking shelves, assisting customers and placing weekly stock orders. Outside of school hours, students are hired part-time, along with one full-time adult worker, to keep the store running. In its first year of operation, the store sold roughly $250,000 in inventory.

So this store is more than a market—it's a hands-on learning environment for students and an easy way for Cody's residents to be directly involved with their students' success.

**PART OF THE FABRIC.** K-State's Proctor agrees that recognizing community makeup and needs is important. "What we find is the stores that are most successful are those where the owners are committed to the community," he says. Circle C Market, Forgotten Item Market and Onaga Country Market are prime examples of stores engaged with the community.

Pam Budenbender credits much of the Onaga Country Market's success to location. "I would not have built a store if I had been closer to a Walmart super center or something similar," she asserts. Her 8,000-square-foot store saves surrounding communities, and her own, the minimum 30-mile trip to larger towns. That centralized location adds additional benefits for customers, too. "One of the things I think is great is when a customer comes in, and they run into someone they haven't seen in a while, so they sit and visit," Budenbender adds.

Cody's Todd Chessmore stresses customer service to his students: "We really try to be very sensitive to the wishes of the people who shop here." He adds one customer purchases a certain yogurt every two weeks, so the store makes sure to have it in stock for her. The store also makes home deliveries to elderly residents and by request.

Conklin features local artisanal goods in her small space. She says giving local crafts makers shelf space helps her customers remember the artisans when looking for unique and meaningful gifts.

Local communities benefit from the intended purpose of a market, and they become more connected to their fellow citizens. Not to mention, customers keep returning because of the service, location and community pride the markets represent.