

BREAKING NEW GROUND



I often recall my years at MSU, hunting squirrel and deer on the Noxubee Wildlife Refuge and squeezing in my course schedule.

My roommates and I planned our fall class schedules to cram in as many classes between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. as we could to increase time spent hunting. When an adviser

made it clear that we absolutely had to take an 8:30 class, we did our best to make sure it was not the dreaded Monday/Wednesday/Friday lecture. Three mornings or afternoons in the woods were naturally better than two. Five was an almost unheard-of goal, and we looked upon any student who achieved this feat with great admiration—and envy.

Things have not changed much. Students still try to fit in as many hours as possible hunting, fishing or just enjoying the great outdoors, like we did when we were here. Like earlier generations, they find a way to make it to class and struggle to find time to get in a couple of hours of hunting when their schedules permit.

The main difference that I see today is that so many students have to work many hours to help defray the costs of attending a university, so leisure time is scarce.

I hunt with one young man who attends a community college and works nearly full time to save up money in hopes of attending MSU one day.

The prospect of leaving college with huge student loan payments and burdensome credit card debts is a very real possibility to most students. Scholarship dollars make a difference for these students.

As a former student who had some help, I like the idea of giving back a little now that I'm able. And I don't mind asking you to do the same thing. You can make a difference for a young person today by contributing to a scholarship.

Jeff Little
Director of Development
College of Forest Resources

Family Says “Thank You” Through Support for CVM

Two transplanted New York physicians have become members of the College of Veterinary Medicine family because of their appreciation for the animal hospital staff, veterinarians and the veterinary students who train there.

Dr. Rande Lazar is an otolaryngologist (head and neck surgeon), and his wife, Dr. Linda Lazar, is a pediatric gastroenterologist. They practice and make their home in Memphis. Their daughter Lauren is a student at Wake Forest.

Initially referred to MSU CVM by their local veterinarian, the Lazars brought their dog Dempsey to campus for treatments for a pancreatic disorder. Later, another Lazar family member, a mixed lab named Ruby, was also treated at CVM. Very impressed by the facility, the doctors and the loving care they repeatedly received, the Lazars committed themselves to the college's success.

In 2001, when Dempsey lost his battle with poor health, the Lazars chose to memorialize him and to honor Ruby by establishing the Dempsey and Ruby Lazar Endowed Scholarship. The Lazars felt endowing a scholarship was a fitting way to thank MSU CVM for the quality care provided to their loving companions, while also recognizing the abiding love they have for their pets as loyal companions and family members.

The scholarship is awarded to full-time CVM students who demonstrate exceptional academic achievement and show promise for an outstanding future as veterinarians.

“It is our desire to support the education of future veterinarians who are committed to demonstrating a compassion and love for animals and professionalism toward patients,” said Dr. Rande Lazar. “We know our scholarship will help ensure that other families with companion animals receive the same quality care that we receive when we visit our local veterinarian and MSU CVM.”

The Lazars have also contributed significant quantities of medical supplies, equipment and anesthesia machines used in the Animal Health Center. Most recently, the Lazars committed to a generous gift to support CVM. This support provides students with educational opportunities needed for future success.

“Having donors like the Lazar family, who support the college through endowment-level gifts, gifts in kind and planned gifts, is why we continue to exceed expectations in research, teaching and service,” said Keith Gaskin, senior director of development.

If you are interested in discovering how you can develop a friendship with CVM, contact Keith Gaskin at 662-325-3815 or kgaskin@foundation.msstate.edu.

Creating Leaders, One Student at a Time

One young man traveled more than 900 miles, while the other traveled 90 to follow their dreams at Mississippi State.

Mitch Weegman, a native of Winona, Minn., found a passion for waterfowl hunting and the outdoors at an early age. His father took him and his fraternal twin to the woods at the age of 3.

James Callicut, a native of New Albany, developed an interest in waterfowl when his uncles took him hunting and instilled in him an appreciation and respect for natural resources.

While these young men are from different parts of the country, they both love waterfowl and are recipients of the Scenic Homes/Dr. Richard M. Kaminski Scholarship in Waterfowl and Wetlands Conservation.

"This scholarship allows us to recruit students who aspire to become waterfowl biologists and continue engaging them in their passion for waterfowl and wetlands ecology and management," said Kaminski, wildlife and fisheries professor. "The students we recruit with these scholarships are already leaders in waterfowl and show tremendous promise for a productive career in waterfowl. This is important for the 1.5 million waterfowl hunters in the country."

For example, Weegman, an MSU track member, conducted research during junior high and high school.

"In seventh grade, I began conducting waterfowl-related research projects for local, regional, state, national and international science competitions," Weegman said. "My brother and I teamed up and continued conducting research for 6 years. The science fairs allowed me to fuse my passion for waterfowl with science. We were very fortunate to publish our recent findings on invertebrates consumed by lesser scaup in the *Journal of Wildlife Management*."

Weegman intends to become a waterfowl researcher and looks forward to learning waterfowl behavior on the wintering grounds of the Mississippi Alluvial Valley.

Callicut is a duck call maker and avid waterfowl hunter. The senior wildlife science major is working on a duck call that may soon be patented.

"I am going to further my knowledge of waterfowl conservation with an upcoming graduate opportunity," Callicut said. "My long-term goal is to obtain a waterfowl biologist position and work with private landowners."

Weegman and Callicut are rising stars in natural resource conservation, and scholarships helped make their success possible.

Won't you help students seek their passion today? Scholarship gifts can change the lives of young people and help make their dreams come true.

If you are interested in helping deserving young people obtain their goals, please contact Jeff Little at 662-325-8151 or jlittle@cfr.msstate.edu.

College of Forest Resources

Wanted: Great Teachers for Great Students

Remember that great teacher from high school or college, the one who encouraged you to do more and inspired you to try harder?

There is no doubt that great teachers lead to great students and even better graduates, so the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences is committed to recruiting and retaining the best faculty members to teach and mentor its students.

The university's current capital campaign, *State of the Future*, aims to raise at least \$400 million in private gifts or commitments by December 2008. The incredible generosity of alumni and friends has put the university nearly a full year ahead of schedule, with more than \$386 million already counted for all advancement efforts, including scholarships, building programs, research and teaching endowments. Alumni and friends of CALS have been equally generous, committing more than \$28 million to advance the college.

This is certainly a cause to celebrate, but it is also a time to focus on areas that still need support. One of those areas is endowed chairs and professorships.

In today's competitive environment, endowed positions are crucial to attract and retain outstanding educators—teachers who can help our students succeed in their chosen fields and inspire them to chase innovative pursuits.

The college is proud of the alumni and friends who have chosen to endow faculty positions. Just this year, MSU professor Glover Triplett and his wife Imogene endowed the Triplett Chair in Agronomy. Also, Michael Havard created the Lewis M. Havard Endowed Professorship in the Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology to honor his late father.

These endowed positions will recruit top scholars to Mississippi State for centuries and will benefit students for generations. So one day, when your children or grandchildren are asked to name an influential teacher, they just might mention an endowed professorship holder at Mississippi State University.

Endowed chairs may be created with a minimum gift of \$1.5 million, while professorships require a \$500,000 minimum contribution. For more information, contact Jud Skelton, director of development for the college, at 662-325-0643 or jskelton@foundation.msstate.edu.

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences