

OAC welcomes new dean

OAC is under new leadership with the arrival of Robert Gordon, who assumed the role of dean on August 1

An OAC alumnus, Dr. Gordon returns to Ontario after nine years at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC), where he served as a dean, department head and professor, as well as heading the environmental management section of the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture. He is a leading authority on climate-related issues in Canada and held a Canada Research Chair in Agricultural Resource Management, which focused on identifying adaptive resource management issues at the farm level.

Gordon holds a PhD in land resource science from the University of Guelph along with a bachelor's degree in agricultural engineering and a master's degree in agricultural physics from McGill University as well as an engineering diploma from NSAC.

"I am genuinely excited to be back at OAC and the University of Guelph," Gordon said. "There are enormous opportunities emerging in the agriculture and agri-food sectors in such areas as the bioeconomy, in enhanced food and well-being, in environmental sustainability and agricultural production systems. OAC will continue to have a strong leadership role, providing innovative educational programs, outreach services and research in support of these rapidly evolving industry opportunities." (For more on Robert Gordon's vision for OAC, see *Dean's Message* on page 2).

Gordon, an Ontario native, describes the move to Guelph this summer as moving back home. He and his partner Sarina Randall, a federal government employee with Correctional Services Canada, have family and friends in the area and across the province. They look forward to introducing their two teenaged daughters, Emily and Hannah, to the many new opportunities that living in Guelph can offer.

Members of the OAC community will have the opportunity to meet the new dean at a number of events this fall. On Wednesday, September 17, Dr. Gordon will speak on the topic: *OAC – Connecting and Reconnecting*, the first presentation in the Fall 2008 OAC Public Lecture Series. The lecture will take place at 5:30 p.m. in the Lifetime Learning Centre (OVC1714). On Tuesday, September 23, the new dean will host an OAC Community BBQ on Johnston Green from 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. For more information or to RSVP, please contact oacinfo@uoguelph.ca ■



Orientation 2008

Dean's Message	2	Appointments	7
New funding for bio-economy initiatives	3	Public Lecture Series	7
Summer Convocation	4	Congratulations!	8
		Calendar of Events	10

>forward

Dean's message

2



I can't begin to tell you how great it is to be back at OAC and the University of Guelph! The long and significant history of OAC and its tradition of exceptional leadership in delivering education, research and outreach in supporting agriculture, food, our environment and the emerging needs of our rural communities are more evident than ever before. The strong sense of community that prevails throughout all of OAC's faculty, staff, students across each of our campuses and research stations as well as alumni, partners and friends makes our college truly a unique global family. A family that I'm particularly proud to be part of.

As you all know, we are entering a period of significant change with many new and exciting opportunities ahead which will dramatically redefine the face of our agriculture and agri-food industries. Simultaneously these important industries are increasingly being viewed as being well positioned to provide new and innovative solutions to a wide range of societal challenges. The leadership that OAC and its partners play in supporting the growing

bioeconomy, health and well-being and environmental sustainability will be key components of our future. We must therefore continue to work with our traditional partners in redefining the face of agriculture but also establish new and vibrant partnerships that will help to create opportunities for a more competitive and innovative sector.

Our teaching programs must continue to meet and exceed students' expectations of value for their investment through dynamic programs that prepare them for the opportunities and challenges ahead. Attracting and retaining the best students in OAC is essential for meeting the industry's growing need for highly trained personnel.

Although there are considerable challenges ahead for OAC, I believe that significant and meaningful growth opportunities also exist which we must fully take advantage of. It is essential that we work together to forge a brilliant future for OAC. Since my arrival in Guelph this summer, I have met with many of you, and look forward to meeting more of you in the days and months ahead as we continue to build OAC's legacy as a national and international leader for the life sciences. ■

Robert Gordon
Dean, Ontario Agricultural College
Guelph • Alfred • Kemptville • Ridgetown

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Guelph Centre for Urban Organic Farming opens

3

The new Guelph Centre for Urban Organic Farming (GCUOF), a one-hectare plot of land at the northwest corner of the Arboretum, will provide inter-generational learning opportunities for OAC, the University and the Guelph community.

Officially launched September 4, the centre will offer students of all ages experiential learning in year-round organic food production, food security and resource conservation, and will serve as a community networking centre. Three non-governmental agencies – the Canadian Organic Growers, the Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario and FarmStart – were involved in the planning, along with U of G faculty from Plant Agriculture; Environmental Biology; Family Relations and Applied Nutrition; Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics; Land Resource Science; and Environmental Design and Rural Development. The centre will be coordinated by Martha Gay Scroggins, a commercial organic market

gardener, who will oversee teaching and learning opportunities for students in the Organic Agriculture major of the BSc(Agr) program.

Professor Ann Clark (Plant Agriculture), who played a key role in developing the major and in creating GCUOF, plans to involve students in helping run the centre. Clark also expects students and professors in other U of G programs to integrate the centre into various courses in agronomy, food and environmental issues. Students in the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management will use produce from the farm to prepare meals. ■



Inter-generational learning will start with children at the U of G Child Care and Learning Centre, who will gain hands-on experiences in their own vegetable patch on the site.

New funding for bio-economy initiatives



Ridgetown Campus has received \$938,260 from the federal government to develop a functional, farm-scale oilseed processing and biodiesel plant. The funding, announced on June 20, is provided through Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's *Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food* program, delivered in Ontario through the Agricultural Adaptation Council. The project will include a variety of educational and research initiatives aimed at developing biofuels technologies. ■

< **At Ridgetown for the June 20th announcement were: Matt McLean, executive director, Southwestern Ontario Bio-Products Innovation Network; Dave Van Kesteren, M.P., Chatham-Kent-Essex; Art Schaafsma, director, Ridgetown Campus; Peter Purslow, acting associate dean, research and innovation, OAC; and Jim Shaw, project manager, Ridgetown Campus.**

Convocation celebrates promising scholars and distinguished service

4

More than 660 degrees, diplomas and certificates were conferred upon OAC students at convocation ceremonies held at Guelph, Ridgetown, Alfred and Kemptville this past May and June. Thanks to the generosity and commitment of alumni, community organizations, businesses and individuals, financial awards surpassing a total of \$108,000 acknowledged the academic excellence, leadership and community spirit of exemplary graduating students across OAC.

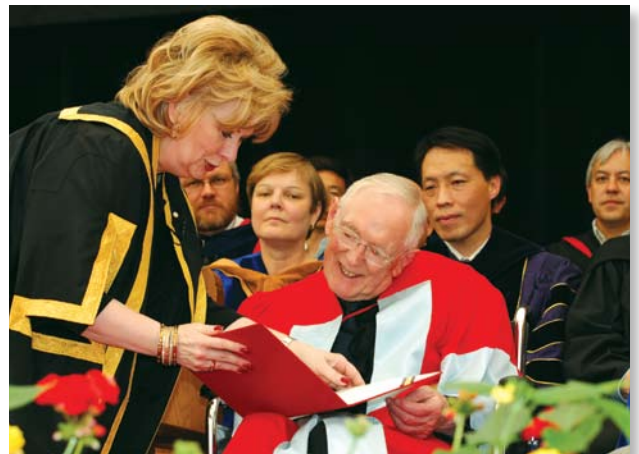
On June 12 at the Guelph campus, 216 undergraduate students received degrees in Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Commerce, Bachelor of Science (Agriculture) and Bachelor of Science (Environmental Sciences). An additional 35 students received Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degrees. At the graduate level, 45 Masters and 15 PhD degrees were granted. Associate Diplomas in Turfgrass Management were presented to 24 students.

At the ceremony, retired OAC professor T.K. (Sandy) Warley received the Lincoln Alexander Medal of Distinguished Service, a tribute to an individual who has played a pivotal role in the functioning of the institution and influenced the quality of academic life. Warley came to Guelph in 1970 as chair of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension Education and remains a strong advocate for his discipline, OAC and the University.

At Ridgetown on May 30, 168 students earned diplomas and certificates for programs in Agriculture, Environmental Management, Horticulture, Veterinary Technology and Veterinary Medical Office Administration.

Forty-two French-language students earned diplomas and certificates for programs in Agricultural Technology; Food, Nutrition & Risk Management; Veterinary Technology (in partnership with Collège Boréal); and Food Service at Campus d'Alfred on May 24.

At Kemptville's May 23rd convocation, 65 associate diplomas were granted to students in Agriculture, including the Equine option; Food, Nutrition & Risk Management; Horticulture; and Co-op Apprenticeship in Agriculture and Heavy Equipment. Fifty-one students received certificates in industrial welding, diesel equipment mechanics and equine management. ■



▲ U of G Chancellor Pamela Wallin presents Sandy Warley with the Lincoln Alexander Medal of Distinguished Service at the June 12 convocation ceremony.

Leave for Change: Improving food safety and quality in Malawi

Planting seeds of information to enhance the quality and safety of food is how Don Mercer, associate professor at Kemptville Campus, describes his *Leave for Change*, a project providing short-term volunteer placements for people who work to make a difference in developing countries. This summer, Mercer was among six U of G employees to participate.

From July 27 to August 17, Mercer travelled through Malawi to work with its national Farmers' Union, agri-food associations and co-ops, to help make food processing systems more efficient and competitive.

After visiting organizations for organic cropping, dairy farming, coffee growing, juice processing, horticulture and seed multiplication, Mercer identified numerous challenges faced by Malawian farmers, processors, and its agri-food sector. Addressing these challenges formed the basis of a workshop he facilitated August 13 – 14 in Dezda, 80 km outside the capital city of Lilongwe.

Mercer explains the goal of the workshop was to add value and capacity to Malawian products and processes. For example, a presentation on drying mangoes provided options to enhance the storage life and export potential of this abundant crop prone to spoilage.

While this was not Mercer's first trip to Africa, he describes the experience as unique in its strong focus at the grassroots level. Interviews on local radio and television allowed information to reach the people, creating a ripple effect.

Leave for Change is run through Uniterra, Canada's largest international voluntary service program operated by the World University Service of Canada and Centre for International Studies and Cooperation. ■



▲ Processes ranging from harvesting coffee cherries to irrigation were assessed by Don Mercer during his travels through Malawi.

MidWest Tour leads students through U.S. farming heartland

6



▲ **This year, 43 students joined in the MidWest Tour, a two-week field study course traditionally taken just before the fall semester begins.**

What began in 1969 when OAC's soil and crop club headed west on an impromptu road trip is better known today as the MidWest Tour, a field study course designed to increase students' awareness of agricultural production and agri-business in North America.

From August 24 to September 6, Plant Agriculture professors Clarence Swanton and Manish Raizada guided 39 senior undergraduate students and 4 graduate students on this year's tour to experience the breadth and influence of the American farming industry.

Crossing 7200 km through eight states – Michigan, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, and Indiana – the group of agriculture and agribusiness students toured cash crop and livestock farms, processing and manufacturing operations, and markets from elevators to stockyards.

Each destination encouraged students to discuss production, environmental, economic and social issues in agriculture and reinforced a theme, ranging from water usage, livestock production and animal welfare to global markets. According to Swanton, a day at the Chicago Board of Trade (CBOT) was a definite highlight. As they toured the facility, students learned the role of the CBOT in the global market, met with a recent U of G graduate working there, and experienced the excitement of the trading floor.

While the tour explores the immensity of farming operations and the politics of American agriculture, its success also results from the generosity and entrepreneurial spirit of the individual farmers who serve as hosts and guides.

"Some of the farming operations that participated when the tour first began continue to demonstrate the same hospitality, enthusiasm, and dedication towards the students of the U of G," says Swanton. ■

>forward

Appointments

Bev Hale has resumed responsibilities as acting chair in the department of Land Resource Science. Hale, who previously served in this role in 2007, replaces Stew Hilts. She joined the U of G as a faculty member in 1990. Her research expertise is the soil-plant relationship for trace elements, and laboratory studies focus on metal contamination of soils.

Jim Mahone (Environmental Design and Rural Development) has been appointed acting associate director of the Guelph Institute for the Environment (GIE) from May to December 2008. Established in February 2007, the Institute bridges science and environmental research with policy development. Mahone, who replaces Ellen Wall in this role, is based administratively in the Faculty of Environmental Sciences.



Faculty Appointments

John Devlin joined the faculty of Environmental Design and Rural Development, effective September 1, 2008. His research interests include comparative politics and public administration, public policy, democracy and development, environmental impact assessment, the role of state in the development process, democratization and good governance in developing countries, and environmental governance. ■

Public Lecture Series Fall 2008

7

The OAC public lecture series features distinguished speakers on topical issues related to the environment, agriculture, food and rural communities in Canada and around the world. Developed with support from the alumni and friends of OAC, these lectures are provided free of charge for the University community and the public.

OAC – Connecting and Reconnecting

Speaker: Robert Gordon, Dean, OAC
Wednesday, September 17, 5:30 – 6:30
Lifetime Learning Centre, OVC1714

2008 Agrologist-in-Residence Public Lecture: Food, Fibre and Energy – How to Position Yourself in the Next Decade

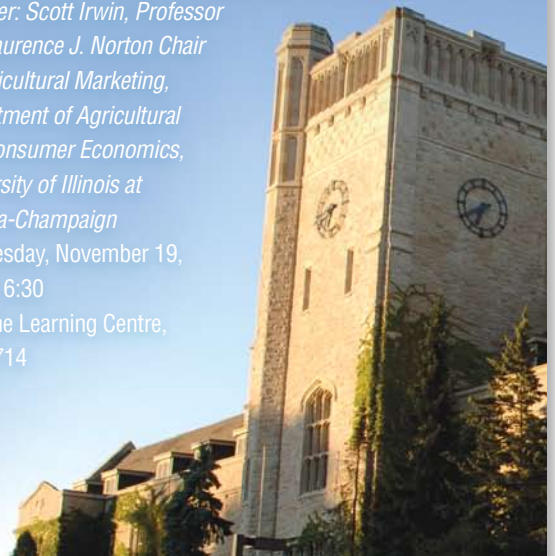
Speakers: Ove Hansen, P.Ag. and Igor Dimkoski, P. Ag.
Tuesday, September 23, 5:30 – 6:30
Lifetime Learning Centre, OVC 1713

The Impact of Technology on Food Production in Ontario

*Speakers: David Hume, Professor Emeritus, University of Guelph
and James Dalrymple, President, Livestock Technology Services*
Wednesday, October 22, 5:30 – 6:30
Lifetime Learning Centre, OVC 1714

Kenneth R. Farrell Distinguished Public Policy Lectureship: Angel or Devil? The Role of Speculation in the Recent Commodity Price Boom

*Speaker: Scott Irwin, Professor
and Laurence J. Norton Chair
of Agricultural Marketing,
Department of Agricultural
and Consumer Economics,
University of Illinois at
Urbana-Champaign*
Wednesday, November 19,
5:30 – 6:30
Lifetime Learning Centre,
OVC1714



Congratulations!

- > **Madhur Anand** (Environmental Biology) was inducted into the Hall of Fame at Oakville's Thomas A. Blakelock High School, from which she graduated in 1989.
- > **Lise Burcher** (Environmental Design and Rural Development) has been re-elected to the Board of Directors of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). In addition, Lise was elected to serve as a juror for FCM's 2008 Sustainable Community Awards. FCM has been the national voice of municipal government since 1901.
- > MSc (Planning) student, **Heather Chisholm**, claimed the prestigious Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) Presidents Scholarship, valued at \$5000, following her return from the 2008 CIP National Conference held in Winnipeg, July 13-16.
- > **Milena Corredig**, acting chair (Food Science) has received the 2008 American Dairy Science Association Foundation Scholar Award in Dairy Foods. The award recognizes a young dairy foods scholar who shows potential research and educational leadership. Corredig is the Canada Research Chair in Food Nanostructure and the chair in dairy technology at the University. Her research incorporates functional, healthier ingredients in food products.
- > Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics (FARE) graduate students have received top honours from the Canadian Agricultural Economics Society. **Richard Vyn** was awarded the Outstanding PhD Thesis Award for his research on the effects of strict agricultural zoning and farmland values. **Kate Tsiplova** and **Predrag Rajsic** tied for the Outstanding Master's Thesis Award.
- > **Anna Gallina** (Environmental Design and Rural Development) is the recipient of the 2008 Community Service Award for her involvement with the University's *Learn to Run* program, the Guelph Track and Field Special Olympics, and United Way. The award was presented at the annual community breakfast, which provides an opportunity to recognize employees who demonstrate a commitment to excellence, community volunteerism and betterment of the University.
- > Landscape Architecture students earned three honours at the 2008 Canada Blooms Show, including Outstanding Outdoor Entertainment Area Prize, Honourable Mention for Universal Access, and The People's Choice Garden Award. Third-year undergraduate students **Danielle Bushore**, **Adam Chamberlin**, **Jeff Fenske**, **Daniella Giovanatto**, **Andrew MacDougald**, **Catherine Mann** and **Matt Sloan** formed the LARC*4730 crew to design and construct a garden for the more than 100,000 visitors to the March event.
- > Landscape Architecture undergraduate students **Colin Bailey**, **Dan Burton**, **Steve Euser**, **Jason McMillen**, **Veronica Porter** and **Leah Ward** created the winning entry in the inaugural Canadian Landscape Architecture Student Poster Competition. The poster, designed for the Canadian World Landscape Architecture Month campaign held April 2008, depicted the theme *See the Future, Be the Future*.
- > **Nate Perkins** (Environmental Design and Rural Development) has been named a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA). The honour recognizes extraordinary work, leadership, knowledge and service to the profession over a sustained period. He will be formally inducted at the ASLA annual meeting in Philadelphia in October.

Continued on following page...

>forward

Congratulations! *continued*

- > Rural Studies PhD students **Ashlee Cunsolo Willox** and **Erin Nelson** have been awarded Canada Graduate Scholarships valued at \$105,000 over three years of study. These doctoral scholarships aim to develop research skills and support students who demonstrate a high standard of scholarship achievement in the social sciences and humanities.
- > **Angie Trivet** (Plant Agriculture) is the recipient of the 2008 Susanne Sprowl Community Service Award. Named for the late Susanne Sprowl, the award recognizes significant contributions to the betterment of the University and the external community through community spirit and volunteer work.
- > **Katie Wood**, an MSc student in Animal and Poultry Science (APS), was awarded a 2008 Animal Nutrition Association of Canada Scholarship at the Eastern Nutrition Conference held on campus in May. APS PhD candidates **Anoosh Rakhshandeh**, **Yajing Wang** and **Hector Martinez** placed first, second and third, respectively, in the poster competition held in conjunction with the conference. ■

OAC on the menu



Outlook Conference

9

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs invites you to join the 2008 Outlook Conference, taking place at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Toronto on November 13. Featuring world-renowned speakers and thought-provoking panel discussions, this year's conference will focus on future directions and opportunities in the agri-food sector. Topics will range from economic and environmental challenges to future technologies and consumer trends.

For more information or to register:
www.ontario.ca/outlook2008



- < Yukon Gold potatoes, Simcoe cabbage, Millennium asparagus and Vineland pears were some of the flavours the Department of Plant Agriculture added to *A Taste of Guelph*, a special menu served to the Legislature of Ontario on May 1 at Queen's Park, Toronto. Hosted by the University of Guelph and the City of Guelph, the luncheon showcased the U of G Food Inventory to more than 80 guests, as part of a new venture called Community Day at Queen's Park.

Calendar of EVENTS - FALL 2008

SEPTEMBER

4	Classes commence
8 – 12	Aggie Week
9 – 11	Canada's Outdoor Farm Show – Woodstock
16 – 20	International Plowing Match – Teeswater, Bruce County
17	OAC Public Lecture – <i>OAC: Connecting and Reconnecting</i>
20	Homecoming
21	Wall-Custance Memorial Forest Dedication Service – Arboretum
22 – 24	Agrologist in Residence Week
23	OAC Community BBQ
23	OAC Public Lecture – <i>Agrologist in Residence</i>
26 – 27	OAC Leadership Conference
26 – 28	Ontario Universities Fair – Toronto

OCTOBER

9	Journée des conseillers en orientation – Campus d'Alfred
13	Thanksgiving
20	Fall Convocation (No ceremony)
22	OAC Job Fair – Peter Clark Hall, Guelph Campus
22	OAC Public Lecture – <i>The Impact of Technology on Food Production in Ontario</i>
23	Fall Open House – Kemptville Campus

NOVEMBER

1	Season opens for Theatre in the Trees – Arboretum
2	Fall Preview Day – Guelph Campus
7 – 16	Royal Agricultural Winter Fair – Toronto
13	OMAFRA Outlook Conference, 2008 – Toronto
13 – 15	Science Teachers' Association of Ontario Annual Conference – Toronto
16	Science & Engineering Sunday – Guelph Campus
18	Soirée Portes ouvertes – Campus d'Alfred
19	OAC Public Lecture – <i>Kenneth R. Farrell Distinguished Public Policy Lectureship</i>
25	Fall OAC Awards Reception – Guelph Campus
27 & 28	Red Carpet Days – Ridgetown Campus
27	Classes conclude

DECEMBER

1	Examinations commence
12	Examinations conclude
24	University closes for Winter Holidays until January 2, 2009

OAC website relaunched

The OAC website – www.oac.uoguelph.ca – has a new look after undergoing redevelopment this summer. Designed to meet the requirements of the new U of G branding platform, the revised site also includes new sections that provide specific program counselling information for OAC students in the BSc(Agr) and BBRM programs as well as an overview of OAC's teaching activities. ■



Wins continue for OAC Weeds Team

11

One graduate and three undergraduate teams representing the U of G travelled to the University of Delaware's Carvel Research and Education Centre to compete in the 2008 Northeastern Weed Science Society's Collegiate Weed Science Contest held July 30. A total of 40 students from five universities – Guelph, Cornell, North Carolina State, Penn State and Virginia Tech – participated in an educational experience that tests their skills in the disciplines of crop protection and agronomy.

Coached by Prof. Clarence Swanton (Plant Agriculture), the 14 OAC students placed competitively within their categories and events. The undergraduate team to place first included Blair Scott, Kelly O'Connor and James Ferrier. Achieving third place were team members Tyler Denham, Will Sebben, Scott Snowe and Amanda Green.

Blair Scott also received the top award for the highest mark achieved by an undergraduate student in the competition.

OAC Weeds Teams have dominated the annual collegiate contest with 14 first-place wins since 1983. ■



▲ The 2008 OAC Weeds Team includes (first row, from left) Amanda Green, Kelly O'Connor (second row, from left) Craig Annett, Meghan Moran, Emily Green-Tracewicz, Tyler Denham, Scott Snowe (third row, from left) Clarence Swanton, Andrew Reid, Ryan Stafford, Scott Cressman, Blair Scott, Will Sebben (fourth row, from left) Blair Freeman, James Ferrier.

T.R. Hilliard award recipient named

Ray Robertson, manager of Grey County Agricultural Services in Markdale, has been chosen as the recipient of the 2008 T.R. Hilliard Distinguished Agricultural Extension Award.

Robertson is well known for his leadership in the agricultural community, especially in Grey and Bruce counties. His efforts were instrumental in the establishment of the Grey County Agricultural Services office and the Bighead and Beaver River projects, and he played a leadership role in rejuvenating the Grey-Bruce Farmers Week, an important educational venue for many producers in the Grey-Bruce area. Robertson has also been an effective advocate for the adoption

of environmental stewardship practices in farming communities, serving as Coordinator and Leader of the Environmental Farm Plan for Grey County.

Robertson was nominated by the Ontario Forage Council, the Grey County Soil & Crop Improvement Association, and the Ontario Canola Growers. The award presentation will take place during Grey-Bruce Farmers Week in January 2009.

The T.R. Hilliard Distinguished Agricultural Extension Award was established by the OAC Alumni Foundation to recognize individuals who make significant contributions in agricultural extension in Ontario. ■

Summer program for high school students focuses on dairy industry

12



▲ **Field trips, tours and in-class sessions exposed students to the science and business of the dairy industry.**

For some of the 57 high school students who participated in the 3H@Guelph Dairy Summer Experience Program, it was their first time to be up close and personal with dairy animals, as they learned the intricacies of the industry from those working within it.

Held for a second year at the University's Guelph campus, the July week-long sessions are designed to promote opportunities in the dairy industry to students who are beginning to plan post-secondary education and career paths. These summer experiences are part of the broader 3H@Guelph Program, spearheaded by U of G dairy scientists John Walton (Animal & Poultry Science) and Ken Leslie (Population Medicine) and funded through the Ministry of Research and Innovation Youth Science and Technology Outreach Program and the Dairy Farmers of Ontario.

3H@Guelph aims to build awareness of the dairy industry through youth and public outreach, which includes promotional displays at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair and College Royal as well as visits to area high schools.

According to Nicole Perkins, operations manager, the three H's, which represent healthy milk from healthy cows in a healthy environment, set the pattern for the summer program. "These students learned how semen is assessed for motility and viability, and examined fermented rumen content from a fistulated cow. We had a mix of topics to help students investigate all aspects of the dairy industry," says Perkins. ■

OAC Community BBQ

OAC faculty, staff and students are invited to join in this fall celebration event. Meet the new dean and connect with friends and colleagues over an informal lunch.

Tuesday, September 23 (Rain date: Wednesday, September 24)
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Johnston Green

For more information, or to RSVP: ocainfo@uoguelph.ca