AGENDA

8:30AM	CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST	AGCT
9-10AM	GENERAL SESSION - WELCOME FROM VICE CHANCELLOR AND DEAN DR. MARK A. HUSSEY - FACULTY GROUP WHITE PAPER PRESENTATIONS - PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT - ENRICHING OUR YOUTH - IMPROVING OUR HEALTH - FEEDING OUR WORLD - GROWING OUR ECONOMY	AGCT
10AM-NOON	BREAKOUT TO CLASSROOMS	
	- PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT	AGLS 129
	- ENRICHING OUR YOUTH	AGLS 117
	- IMPROVING OUR HEALTH	AGLS 114
	- FEEDING OUR WORLD	AGLS 116
	- GROWING OUR ECONOMY	AGLS 113
NOON-1:30PM	LUNCH AND BREAKOUT REPORTS	AGCT

AGRICULTURE & LIFE SCIENCES
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

GRAND SOLUTIONS TO GRAND CHALLENGES:

WHAT'S YOUR ROLE?

GRAND CHALLENGES TOWN HALL

MAY 23, 2013

THE AGRILIFE CENTER

During AgriLife Conference this past January, I called upon each of us to discuss the major issues facing our society. The Blue Bell Lecture Series has provided a backdrop for these discussions throughout the year. There have also been faculty groups working on these grand challenges by identifying Blue Bell speakers and more recently drafting white paper plans for each of the grand challenge themes. I invite you today to join me and your colleagues in discussion as we work on these universal problems, and seek out diverse perspectives on how to find the best ways forward.

Mark A. Hussey, Ph.D
Vice Chancellor and Dean
Agriculture and Life Sciences

Thus far, our discussion series has included:

The Blue Bell Lecture Series
In 2012, we celebrated the 150th anniversary of the Morrill Land-Grant Act which led to the establishment of Texas A&M University. As we look forward, it is critical that the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences stays true to its land-grant mission, while boldly addressing issues facing society in the next 150 years. Our college's vision is to lead the effort to provide interdisciplinary solutions for the five grand challenges. Funded by a generous endowment from Blue Bell Creameries, a series of lectures throughout this academic year has provided a framework to spark our innovation and collaboration.

2013 Texas A&M AgriLife Conference discussions
At the 2013 Texas A&M AgriLife conference, more than 100 attendees split up into small groups to discuss each of the grand challenges. Each group was asked to define the issues and brainstorm areas of strength and opportunity, as well as any potential problems.

Future discussions and questions
There are many ways we can approach the grand challenges – specifically, how do we underpin existing programs? What programs might be needed? Where should we focus funding? Are there strategic hires we should encourage? There are many questions like these and more that will take our ideas and discussions and put them into action. Each of these sessions will be facilitated by the Dean's Office.

Protecting Our Environment

DR. DAVID REED - CHAIR
DR. JACQUI AITKENHEAD-PETERSON - SCSC
DR. SPENCER BEHMER - ENTO
DR. TOM LACHER - WFSC
DR. CLYDE MUNSTER - BAEN
DR. ASTRID VOLDER - HORT
DR. RICH WOODWARD - AGEC
DR. JOSHUA YUAN - PLPM

Agriculture and a healthy environment must go hand in hand. The College is committed to environmental sustainability and restoring the health of our ecosystems. Our students can follow their passion by creating parks and green spaces, protecting wildlife, and guarding the health of our water bodies and fisheries. With Texas A&M AgriLife Research and the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, the College is involved in many environmental projects, including restoring military training grounds, surveying and protecting endangered wildlife species, revitalizing rangelands, designing parks and trails throughout Texas, studying the effects of climate change, and developing biofuels for a clean and secure energy future.

Enriching Our Youth

DR. DANIELLE HARRIS – CHAIR
DR. GARY BRIERS - ALEC
DR. KEVIN HEINZ - ENTO
DR. TOBY LEPLEY - EXTENSION
DR. CORLISS OUTLEY - RPTS
DR. SHAWN RAMSEY - ANSC
MS. LISA WHITTLESEY - HORT

We prepare students to be leaders in solving the world's problems. Whether they choose medicine, engineering, business, environmental conservation, education, journalism, or food production, students can start their career in our College. In addition to a world-class education, our students have a full range of experiences to enrich their classroom learning. Study abroad, field experiences, internships, undergraduate research, and a wide choice of clubs and student organizations all allow students to develop leadership, organizational, and communication skills to become society-ready graduates. Our faculty and programs specializing in youth development and community development, particularly for at-risk youth in both urban and rural settings, equip policy makers and practitioners to address the many complex issues facing today's young people. Students can also choose from major programs in teacher training and certification as well as communications and journalism.

Improving Our Health

DR. KIM DOOLEY - CHAIR
DR. FULLER BAZER - ANSC
MS. KAREN BEATHARD - NFSC
DR. ELENA CASTELL-PEREZ - BAEN
DR. BHIMANAGOUDA PATIL - HORT
DR. DAVID SCOTT - RPTS
DR. ROSEMARY WALZEM - POSC

From recreation and weight control to designing fruits and vegetables with more phytonutrients for cancer prevention to using the latest biotechnology advancements to search for new drugs, the College is dedicated to improving health. Our students in the life sciences will be among the research scientists and technicians, physicians, pharmacists, and biotechnology engineers of the future. We believe in taking a leadership role in health by providing students and researchers with state-of-the-art equipment and facilities to investigate such areas as structure-based drug design using X-ray crystallography combined with computer bioinformatics to find the right drug to target a specific disease. Other research is aimed at finding nontoxic "smart drugs" that can be carried by nanoparticles directly to disease sites in the body.

Feeding Our World

DR. CHRIS SKAGGS – CHAIR
DR. CLINTON ALLRED - NFSC
DR. DAVID CALDWELL - POSC
DR. ELENA CASTELL-PEREZ - BAEN
DR. RHONDA MILLER - ANSC
DR. ELSA MURANO - NFSC
DR. WAYNE SMITH - SCSC

Growing populations, decreasing natural resources, and increasing environmental challenges present us with opportunities to find the most efficient and healthful ways to provide food for all, both domestically and globally. Our faculty and students work at levels ranging from the molecular to the industrial to develop best practices for growing, processing, and distributing food that is safe, high in quality, and abundant. Air quality and the sustainable use of land and water resources — as well as the impact of trade practices and governmental policies — are areas of active research and teaching by our faculty. In addition to improving our own food supply, our faculty and students are helping other nations become more food secure, which in turn can prevent conflict around the globe. The world's interconnected society and commerce make getting a global education critical to today's graduates as they help to meet the food needs in other countries by knowing their customs as well as their production constraints. Study abroad offers an important opportunity for our students to gain that understanding.

Growing Our Economy

DR. ALAN SAMS – CHAIR
DR. CRISTINE ALVARADO – POSC
DR. RONALD LACEY - BAEN
DR. DAVID MATARRITA - RPTS
DR. ED RISTER - AGEC
DR. GARY W. WILLIAMS - AGEC
DR. JENNIFER WILLIAMS - ALEC

Producing more, selling more, adding value, and increasing the safety and security of what we trade are all ways the College is growing our economy. Food and natural resources fluctuate in price and availability, in part because the population and economies of the world are growing. The United States has greater competition in the global marketplace because more countries are producing goods. As a result, their citizens have more disposable income. This provides us with an opportunity to reach new markets, use technology and innovation to add value to existing products, and create new products to meet previously unseen needs. We must do this in a way that ensures consumer safety and the security of global interests while protecting the environment from increased pressures on land, air, and water needed to produce more food and fiber.