



# UVM College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS)



## CALS Reps Newsletter Fall 2014

~ "Excellence in what we do" ~

### Meet the new Reps!

The CALS Reps are pleased to welcome 15 new students! We are excited for what the next year has to hold for these new members!

#### List of new members:

1. Michael Barnum, *Junior, Microbiology major*
2. Olivia Baronas, *Sophomore, Environmental Studies major*
3. Rachel Benjamin, *Sophomore, Community & International Development major*
4. Katie Berkelhamer, *Sophomore, Animal Science major*
5. Colleen Cataldo, *Junior, Molecular Genetics major*
6. Haley Cook, *Senior, Public Communication major*
7. Muriel Enders, *Sophomore, Animal Science major*
8. Mia Fishkin, *First-Year, Nutrition & Food Science major*
9. Ivonne Headley, *First-Year, Dietetics major*
10. Alicia Krewer, *Sophomore, Biological Science and Spanish major*
11. Jenna Morrissey, *Junior, Community & International Development major*
12. Ellen Seyller, *Junior, Microbiology & Molecular Genetics major*
13. Katy Silber, *Junior, Animal Science major*
14. Skylar Stanfield, *Sophomore, Animal Science major*
15. Teal Staniforth, *Junior, Dietetics major*

### CALS Reps Mission

*In 2005, CALS brought together a group of students to assist with recruiting and retention in the College. This group became known as the CALS Representatives (CALS Reps) and they have expanded their roles to include representing the College at events, providing information and resources to current students, and compiling a newsletter on student perspectives. CALS Reps actively assist in perpetuating the vision of the University of Vermont as well as the mission of CALS.*

#### Contact the Reps :

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Like the CALS Reps on  
Facebook!

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/UVM-CALS-Reps/27257168609155>



#### IN THIS ISSUE :

- ◆ Featured Article: "Meet the new CALS Reps!" pg. 1
- ◆ Life Sciences, pg. 2
  - "Choosing MMG was the Best Decision I've Ever Made" by Reed Hausser
  - "MEDLIFE Changed My Life" by Michael Barnum
- ◆ Applied Sciences, pg. 3
  - "Studying Abroad in Botswana" by Ben Daggett
  - "Volunteers for Intercultural and Definitive Answers" by Chantal Girard
  - "A 'WIC'-ked awesome summer public health nutrition practicum" by Annie Hutchinson
- ◆ Social Sciences, pg. 4
  - "Glimpse into CDAE Classes" by Heather Skillman
  - "Public Communications Internship" by Allie Zlotnick



## CALS Reps Newsletter, Fall 2014

### *Choosing MMG was the Best Decision I've Ever Made*

by Reed Hausser

Being a part of the Microbiology and Molecular Genetic (MMG) program at UVM, was absolutely the best decision I've ever made. We are a smaller program, which gives way to a much more close-knit community. I officially have one advisor, but I haven't met a professor yet who isn't willing to sit down with me and help me coordinate my life. Right off the bat, taking a course with Stephanie Phelps (Professor in the MMG department) really helped confirm that I had made the right choice in choosing my academic program. She always makes time for her students and really tries to get to know us all.



*Reed in Dr. Markus Thali's research lab*

In the second year once you get acquainted with Brenda Tessman and Dr. Doug Johnson, then the family unit really starts to develop. Beyond getting a plethora of amazing opportunities for courses and extra curricular activities, I know I am getting a strong education that will prepare me for any field that I want to go in after graduation. With some of the most abundant resources on campus, I have found myself involved in things I never would have expected. Right now, I work with Dr. Markus Thali, and am preparing to right an undergraduate thesis while working in his research lab, which studies various aspects and events of HIV infection. All in all, I cannot say enough positive things about the department, and I could not be happier with my academic home.

### *MEDLIFE Changed My Life*

by Michael Barnum

I currently work on UVM Rescue and wanted to experience what health care in low-income areas was like, so this past spring I went on a volunteer trip with MEDLIFE to Lima, Peru. This organization partners with low-income communities around the world to improve their access to medicine, education, and community development initiatives.



During my trip I worked at mobile clinics that set up a variety of stations from pharmacy to tooth brushing. One day we worked on a development project for a small community. We hauled buckets of cement for hours to build a 100+ step staircase. It was incredible to see the community members so ecstatic for something we really take for granted. Ironically enough, although I went on the trip for medical experience, the most memorable part was the development project.

The gratitude expressed by the community made it feel like we had made a huge difference, one that was much greater than medicine could ever provide.



*Michael looking over the shantytowns in Pamplona Alta, Lima, Peru*



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### *Volunteers for Intercultural and Definitive Answers*

by Chantal Girard

As a pre-veterinary student, scheduling time to study abroad can be difficult, and so instead of going away for a semester abroad, I chose to do a trip over winter break. I traveled to Ometepe, Nicaragua with an organization called VIDA (Volunteers for Intercultural and Definitive Answers).

On my trip, I was working with six other pre-veterinary volunteers from another university in the US and one veterinarian from VIDA. We set up veterinary clinics in small communities and offered free veterinary services such as spaying/neutering, vaccinations, and physical exams. I was able to work directly alongside the veterinarian and gain hands-on surgical experience in less-than-ideal conditions.

Although it was a short trip (10 days), it left a lasting impact on my undergraduate time here at UVM. It was an amazing experience that helped shape my individuality and career goals.



*Chantal doing a procedure on an animal in the clinic*

### *Studying Abroad in Botswana*

by Ben Daggett

**ROUND RIVER Conservation Studies—Botswana—Fall 2013** . I participated in a study abroad program with Round River Conservation Studies for three months in Botswana this past fall of 2013 during the first semester of my junior year at the University of Vermont.



*Ben at the CARACAL Center (Center for African Resource: Animals, Communities and Land Use) in Kasane, Botswana*

Conservation is the focus of all of the Round River's programs. The program in Botswana is centered on wildlife research in the form of the collection of spatial data (Concession Area, GPS coordinates, etc...) and non-spatial data (Age, Gender, Habitat, etc...) of herbivores in the Okavango Delta Region.

Since wildlife tourism is one of Botswana's major industries, all land-use management has massive impacts on the country in regards to human, environmental, and animal health. My semester was filled with too many elephants to count, amazing people, and memories that will last a lifetime.

### *A 'WIC'-ked awesome summer public health nutrition practicum*

by Annie Hutchinson

As an aspiring public health dietitian, I have always had an interest in working with at-risk and underprivileged families to promote healthy lifestyles. This past summer, I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to experience first-hand the impact federal programs do for these populations with my internship at the Vermont Department of Health where I worked with a Registered Dietitian in the WIC program.

Through my internship, I learned about effective nutrition education and counseling strategies that both inform as well as motivate mothers and their young children about making healthy lifestyle choices through a friendly, nurturing and fun approach. I also was able to plan an activity to teach the participants about the United States Department of Agriculture MyPlate, a visual approach that aims to teach the general public about nutrition. Seeing the mothers interact with their children while doing this activity and seeing how much children enjoyed learning more about food and nutrition was a truly inspiring experience.

My exposure to this program definitely sparked my interest in pursuing a career in the public health nutrition field, particularly in the area of maternal and child health. I would highly recommend working with WIC to any aspiring nutrition professional, because it is a highly successful federal nutrition program that many families benefit from.



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### *Glimpse into CDAE Classes*

by Heather Skillman

The University of Vermont prides itself on its commitment to providing a hands-on experience for its students that often involves the community. This year, I have been given that opportunity in two of my classes. In a class titled Contemporary Policy Issues in Community Development with Professor Richard Watts (seen in photo), our class has split into groups that work on campaigns relating to a series of specific issues: Money in Politics, Climate Change, Housing, Bike Advocacy, and the Sugar-Sweetened Beverage tax. Each group is working with a specific community partner that assists the groups to set goals and manage a timeline to see what working on these campaigns would really be like.

In another class, Public Communication Media with Professor Dr. Rob Williams, Dr. Rob hosted our "Rocktober Speaker Series," in which we had speakers come to class every week in October. Guests included marketing staff from Alchemy and Science, Seven Days, and Ben & Jerry's, as well as Howard Dean. We have also hosted Benjy Adler, co-founder of the Skinny Pancake, who has generously given our class the opportunity to create and implement a marketing plan for an event that the Skinny Pancake will be hosting in the coming weeks. Learning about specific marketing/communications strategies has been integral to my experience in the class and overall as a Public Communication major.

Not only have the speakers' wisdom inspired me to see the possibilities that lie ahead, but meeting them is great for networking! The combination of their insight as well as the hands-on experience has really given me the opportunity to see the many ways that various classes intersect and build upon one-another, growing my confidence and capacity to succeed.



Lower Right: Heather with Professor Richard Watts and co-founder of Ben & Jerry's Ben Cohen

### *Public Communications Internship*

by Allie Zlotnick

Public Communications is one of the best kept secrets of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. The professors offer a unique method of teaching which pushes students to not only learn about their precise major, but to also understand how communications relates to community development and applied economics.



I worked closely with Charles Ferreira, the internship coordinator for Community Development and Applied Economics students, and we created an internship in which I could receive credits for my efforts, apply my public communication skills, and work in an office setting, as well as gain basic knowledge of fashion as I am interested in following the career path of a sustainable fashion designer.

The experience as a whole was incredible. I spent my time working with the designers preparing for the unveiling of their Fall/ Winter 2013 line to major department stores such as Bloomingdales and Saks Fifth Avenue. We also worked on preparing their showroom for a pop-up shop for private buyers and clients. I never thought I would complete so much work in just one short month.

Overall my experience was incredible. To think that as a first year student I had already completed an internship is very cool, it only makes me wonder what possibilities there are for my future in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.