

# THE SFAAS “NEWSREEL”

## Number 23 / July-August 2023

A new academic year is starting – a lot of new people are on campus, the band is practicing under the pine trees behind Swingle Hall, and the eternal hope for the football team is palpable.

In this issue of *Newsreel* we recognize several students who completed their degrees this summer and welcome several new students. Awards, a notable grant, and the annual publication total are also included.

Please keep sending things in so we can let everyone know what is going on. We especially need to hear from the alumni!

Joe Tomasso  
Professor & Director (and *Newsreel* editor!)

You can find past *Newsreels* at

<https://agriculture.auburn.edu/research/faas/newsletters/>





## NEW PhD GRADUATE

**Henry Hershey** recently defended his dissertation. The topic was the effects of dams on migratory fishes in the Alabama River.

His co-advisors were Dennis DeVries and Rusty Wright. Troy Farmer and Bob Gitzen served on his committee.

Henry has accepted an ORISE Postdoctoral Fellowship with the US Army Corps of Engineers.







## NEW PhD GRADUATE

**Jinhai Wang** recently defended his dissertation. The topic was the integration of antimicrobial peptide genes into catfish, using CRISPR/Cas9, to enhance disease resistance.

His major professor was Rex Dunham. Charles Chen, Ian Butts, Tim Bruce and Peng Zeng served on his committee.

Jinhai has accepted a position as an assistant professor at Northwest A&F university in China.





## NEW MS GRADUATE

**Abdulmalik Oladipupu** recently defended his thesis. The topic the effects of dietary immunostimulants on growth and immune response in channel catfish.

His advisors were Tim Bruce and Anita Kelly. Allen Davis served on his committee.

Abdulmalik will soon begin in our PhD program working with Anita Kelly and Tim Bruce.







## NEW MS GRADUATE

**Hannah Zinnert** recently defended her thesis. The title of her thesis was “Impacts of flue gas desulfurization (FGD) gypsum in hypereutrophic waters”.

Her advisor was Alan Wilson. Kevin Wang and Allen Torbert served on her committee.

Hannah hopes to land a water quality job in a state or federal agency.







## NEW MS GRADUATE

**Julia Palmer** recently defended her thesis. The title of her thesis was “Using fisheries techniques to estimate the age and growth of hybrid catfish in West Alabama commercial ponds”.

Her advisor was Luke Roy. Anita Kelly, Peter Sakaris and Rusty Wright served on her committee.

Julia is seeking employment with resource agencies in Pennsylvania.





## **NEW PhD STUDENT**

**Chia-Tsen Chiang** will soon join Allen Davis' lab. She is from Taiwan and holds a BS and MS in Aquaculture & Fish Nutrition, both from National Taiwan Ocean University

Her dissertation topic, although not yet defined, will focus on some aspect of nutrition.

Chia-Tsen hopes to have a career as a researcher.





## **NEW PhD STUDENT**

**Abigeal Adeyemi** will soon join the labs of Anita Kelly and Tim Bruce. She holds a BS in Aquaculture & Fisheries Management from the Federal University of Agriculture in Nigeria and a MS in Biotechnology from West Virginia State University.

Her dissertation work will address feed-based immunostimulants and novel vaccines.

Abigeal hopes to have a career aquatic animal health management.



## NEW MS STUDENT

**Jairo Gonzalez** will soon join Allen Davis' lab. He is from Colombia and holds a Bachelor in Animal Science from the Universidad Nacional de Colombia.

His thesis work will be in the area of warmwater fish nutrition.

Jairo hopes to have a career in aquaculture research.





## NEW MS STUDENT



**Safeerul Islam Hashmi** will soon join Tham Hoang's lab. He is from Islamabad, Pakistan and holds a BS in environmental engineering from the University of Engineering & Technology Taxila in Pakistan and a MS from the Asian Institute of Technology in Thailand.

His thesis work will assess microplastics in the Alabama River ecosystem and impacts on aquatic organisms..

Safeerul hopes to have a career in environmental engineering, particularly in water and wastewater treatment.





## NEW MS STUDENT

**Sayem Ahmed** will soon join Tham Hoang's lab. He is from Bangladesh and holds a BS and soon-to-be-completed MS in fisheries from Bangladesh Agricultural University.

His thesis work will focus on mixture toxicity of herbicides to algae.



## **NEW MS STUDENT**

**Byrille Tiara Galon** will soon join Tim Bruce's lab. She is from the Philippines and holds a BS in Fisheries from the University of the Philippines Visayas

Her thesis topic is not yet defined but will be in the general area of microbiology and fish diseases.





## NEW MS STUDENT

**Catherine Updegraff** will soon join Tim Bruce's lab. She is from Montgomery, but currently lives in Saint Augustine, Florida. Catherine holds a BA in Environmental Science from Northwestern University.

Her thesis topic is not yet defined, but she is interested in the microbiome and probiotics.

Catherine is undecided on a career goal but is interested in both the business aspects of aquaculture and fisheries management.





## NEW MS STUDENT

**Peyton Poe** will soon join Alan Wilson's lab. She holds a BS in environmental biology from AUM.

Her thesis project will examine the effects of gypsum application on the ecology of catfish ponds.

Peyton hopes to work in the field of harmful algal blooms.



## RECOGNITION



**Bill Daniels**, Associate Professor-Retired, recently served as General Secretary for the international Conference on Ecosystem Conservation and Sustainable Development (ECOCASD-2023) in Ethiopia. The theme of the conference was Aquatic Resources for Sustainable Aquaculture Development.

Bill was also one of two plenary speakers and received the Distinguished Scientist and Appreciation awards.

SFAAS, through the College of Agriculture, served as a major sponsor of the conference.



## RECOGNITION

**Thomas Billingsley** recently won the College of Agriculture's Spirit of Excellence Award.

Thomas been an Aquaculture Tech and Member of the EW Shell Fisheries Station Operations and Maintenance crew for 19 years. Over his career, Thomas has been an asset to the School as a jack of all trades assisting with projects covering pond renovations, system plumbing, herbicide treatment, landscaping, electrical, carpentry and fish harvesting.

His pastimes include hunting, fishing, and attempting to ride his horse some call Clifford. Congratulations to Thomas on this well-deserved recognition.





## RECOGNITION

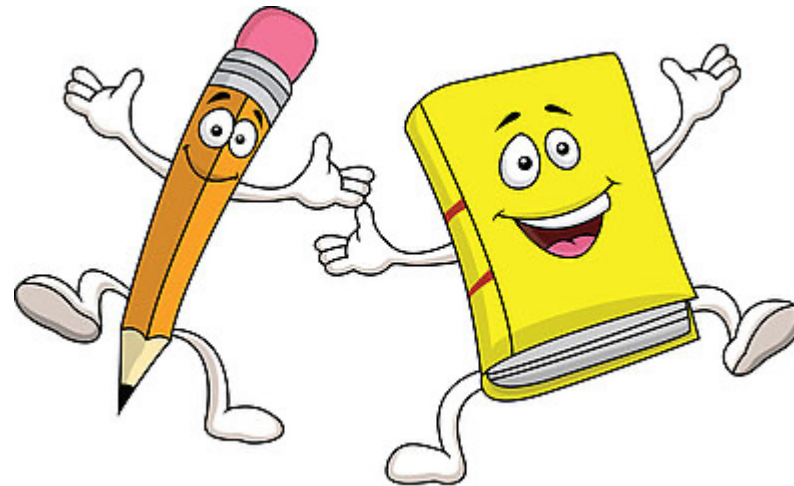
**Nate Steffensmeier** recently won the **North American Sturgeon & Paddlefish Society In-Memoriam Research Award**. The award was presented to Nate at the recent American Fisheries Society meeting in Michigan.

He is a MS student in the labs of Dennis DeVries and Rusty Wright. His thesis project is determining the influence of paddlefish rostrum damage on movement and body condition in the Alabama River.

Nate hopes to have a career as a state or federal fisheries biologist.

# JOURNAL ARTICLES

The SFAAS faculty, staff & students continue to publish widely. So far, 115 journal articles have been published with a 2022 date.



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**NOTABLE GRANT** Kevin Wang is co-PI on a grant from the USEPA Science to Achieve Results (STAR) Program. He and his colleagues from the University of Wisconsin and Yale University will develop a system for the detection and degradation of neonicotinoid pesticides in rural drinking water supplies.

