



# Summer Undergraduate Career Experience (Internship) & Research Opportunities to USDA Career Success / USDA Internship Programs

## Texas A&M University-Kingsville Yearbook 2012-2018



TEXAS A&M  
UNIVERSITY  
KINGSVILLE®

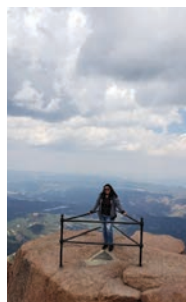




# Summer Undergraduate Career Experience (Internship) & Research Opportunities to USDA Career Success / USDA Internship Programs

## Table of Contents

Message from the Dean and Program Director.....	1
Summer Undergraduate Career Experience (Internship) & Research Opportunities Program.....	2
2012 Interns.....	4
2013 Interns.....	19
2014 Interns.....	34
2015 Interns.....	49
2016 Interns.....	64
2017 Interns.....	74
2018 Interns.....	90
All Graduate Students.....	111



## Program Coordinators

Dr. Shad Nelson, Program Director  
Dr. Consuelo Donato, Program Manager  
Dr. Tanner Machado  
Dr. David Ruppert  
Dr. Greta Schuster  
Dr. Randy Stanko

## Collaborating Institutions

Del Mar College  
Florida International University (FIU)  
South Texas College (STC)  
Texas A&M University-AgriLife  
Texas A&M University Corpus Christi (TAMU-CC)  
Texas State Technical College (TSTC)  
University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP)  
University of Puerto Rico-Mayagüez (UPRM)  
University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV)



## Message from the Dean & Program Coordinator

---

**Shad D. Nelson**

### **Impact of Continuous USDA Support and Collaboration**

Fifteen years ago, Dr. Randy Stanko and I had a goal of increasing the experiential learning opportunities for undergrad students through faculty mentored research within the College of Agriculture at Texas A&M University-Kingsville. Thanks to the continuous funding support and partnership with the USDA-NIFA Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) grants program and the USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service, the vision and impact of this program has grown to provide annual funding of 45 fully funded summer internships that provide the students of TAMUK career-building experiences. Students are able to work side-by-side with a USDA agency scientist or other agriculture-related mentor for 10 weeks. The College of Agriculture and Natural Resources faculty engaged in this USDA funded internship program have been able to establish TAMUK as a forefront leader to many other HSI institutions as a positive and effective model for student engagement and retention through research and career development. Thanks to the continuous financial support of the USDA-NIFA and -NRCS, we have been able to expand our network to impact the lives of many highly deserving students across the USA through our network of HSI collaborating partnering institutions. I am pleased to present to you the many examples of our high caliber agricultural students from Texas A&M University-Kingsville and for them to share with you a small part of where they have performed their summer internships within Texas, throughout states in the USA, and even abroad internationally.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shad Nelson".

Shad D. Nelson, Project Director



**TEXAS A&M**  
**UNIVERSITY**  
**KINGSVILLE®**

# Summer Undergraduate Career Experience (Internship) & Research Opportunities to USDA Career Success / USDA Internship Programs

---

Over the years, the USDA Career Experience program has provided over 300 students, undergraduate and graduate, at TAMUK along with students at other universities and colleges the opportunity to gain knowledge about United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) through internships and research opportunities.

This was accomplished thanks to the funding of 12 USDA grants, numerous mentors in 11 different USDA agencies across the United States, and four Texas state agencies. The USDA Career Experience has been a collaborative effort with 13 universities and colleges.

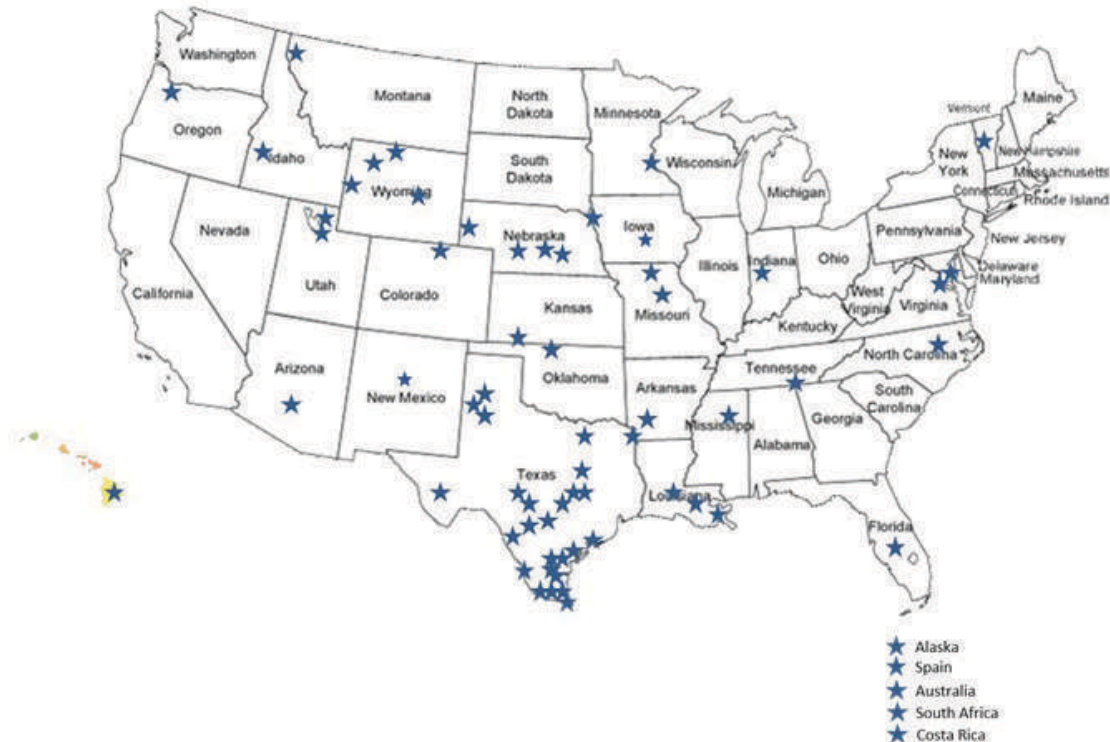
## USDA-HSI Grants

- 2002: Meeting the experiential needs of South Texas students for careers in agricultural science. Award #2002-38422-12168.
- 2004: Teaching and mentoring south Texas Students for careers in agricultural science and research. Award #2004-38422-14608.
- 2006: Increasing student learning and career development through agricultural and natural resources based research. Award #2006-38422-17008.
- 2009: Experiential learning and career development in agricultural and natural resources.
- 2011: STEP UP to USDA Career Success: Science, Technology and Environmental Programs for Undergraduate Preparation to USDA Career Success. Award #2011-38422-30826.
- 2011: BGREEN-BuildinG Regional Energy and Educational alliaNces: A partnership to integrate efforts and collaboration to shape tomorrow's Hispanic sustainable energy leaders. Award #2011-38422-30803
- 2015: WHEELS of Change: A Consortium to Develop Champions in Agriculture in the Areas of Sustainable Energy and Natural Resource Management. Award #2015-38422-24112
- 2015: STEP 2 USDA Research Success: South Texas Excellence Program to USDA Research Success. Award #2015-38422-24061
- 2016: START NOW: Student Training in Agricultural Research Techniques by Novel Educational Workshops. Award #2016-38422-25542
- 2016: USDA Education and Research Experience in Unmanned Aircraft Vehicles (Drones or UAS) for Precision Agriculture. Award #2016-38422-25543
- 2016: Increase Qualified Hispanic Student Enrollment in Pathways Programs through Natural Resources Career Development Program. Award #69-3A75-16-915
- 2017: Natural Resources Career Development Program. Award #68-3A75-17-385





## Internship Locations



### USDA Agencies

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS); NRCS-Plant Material Center; Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS); Agricultural Research Service (ARS); Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS); APHIS-Plant Protection Quarantine; APHIS-Wildlife Service; Forest Service (FS), Farm Service Agency (FSA); Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS); Office of Communication.

### Texas State Agencies

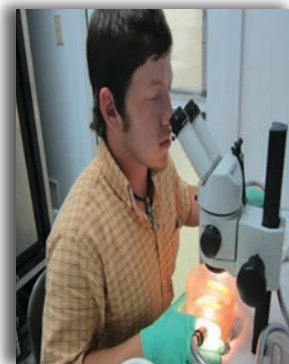
Texas A&M University-Kingsville Citrus Center, Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension, Texas A&M University, Texas Animal Health Commission, Texas Parks and Wildlife.

### Academic Institutions

TAMUK, University of Texas-Pan American, University of Texas-El Paso, New Mexico State University, Florida International University, University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez, Texas State University, South Texas College, Texas State Technical College, Del Mar College, El Paso Community College, Dona Ana Community College, and Galveston College.

# 2012 Undergraduate Students

**Name:** Calan Ahrens  
**Hometown:** Kingsville, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Sophomore  
**Major:** Wildlife Recreational Entrepreneurship  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2014  
**Degree:** Bachelor Degree in Wildlife recreational Entrepreneurship  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** Internship with USDA ARS Knippling- Bushland Livestock Insects Research Laboratory, Kerrville, Texas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** My position at the ARS Lab was Sand Fly Colony Maintenance and Biological Science Aid Intern under Dr. Andrew Li. I worked under Darci Burchers the Biological Science Technician who trained and educated me how to properly conduct maintenance of the Sand Fly Colony (Kerrville Strain).

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I plan to make a career owning my own business as a whitetail breeder, stock contractor for rodeos, or a ranch manager.

**Name:** Emma Biediger  
**Hometown:** Schertz, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2013  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS/AMS  
**Grant:** BGREEN



**Career Experience/Location:** Texas A&M AgriLife Research & Extension Center, Mentor: Dr. Megan Clayton – District 11 Range Specialist

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I learned how to treat brush and invasive plant species with herbicide through IPT and other spraying methods. I also learned about extension, the work they do, and what it takes to outreach to the public and help them understand new information about range management. I learned how to develop a research project, plan events, and network with other professionals.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Find a job I can enjoy.



---

**Name:** Jessica Castellanos  
**Hometown:** McAllen, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science and Technology with teaching certificate  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2014  
**Degree:** Bachelor Degree in Agricultural Education  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS/ NRCS  
**Grant:** BGREEN



**Career Experience/Location:** Internship with Texas A&M University- Kingsville Citrus Center, Weslaco, Texas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This past summer I worked at the Citrus Center and conducted research on Nematode Quantification and the soil borne fungus Phytophthora. I extracted DNA from soil and plant leaves to see if they were infected with the fungus

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon graduation, I plan on continuing my education by pursuing a Master's degree in Agricultural Education. I would love to teach agriculture and be the FFA Advisor to bring leadership to the young minds of our society.

**Name:** Adrian Cisneros  
**Hometown:** Brownsville, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** General Agriculture  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2014  
**Degree:** Bachelor's Degree in General Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** The STEP UP/USDA funding has helped me in graduating from a 2 year Technical College and transferring into a four year degree university in Texas A&M University Kingsville

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Border Inspector on plants and animals.

**Name:** Carlos DeLeon  
**Hometown:** McAllen, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2014  
**Degree:** Bachelor Degree in Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** Texas State Technical College (TSTC)

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** The STEP UP program has made my transfer from TSTC to the Texas A&M University-Kingsville so much easier. It helped me cover some tuition and book expenses. Overall I am glad to be a part of the Step Up program at Texas A&M Kingsville

**Name:** Dante Delgadillo  
**Hometown:** Port Isabel, TX  
**Institution:** TSTC  
**Rank:** Sophomore  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2015  
**Degree:** Bachelor Degree in Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** TSTC.

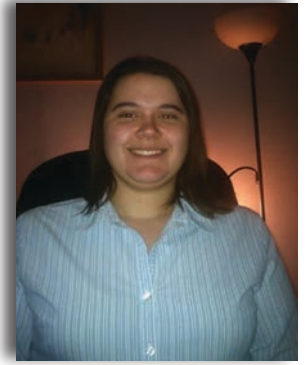
**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** The STEP UP Program has been a huge help for me in the sense that it's giving me some financial breathing room, allowing me to really concentrate on performing well in my classes. I just don't think that I could handle the load with study time considered if it weren't for the step up USDA funding.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I plan to be a plant science researcher



---

**Name:** Megan Dupnik  
**Hometown:** Corpus Christi, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Plant and Soil Sciences  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2014  
**Degree:** Bachelor Degree  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** Internship with Texas A&M University- Kingsville with the Cotton Boll Rots Project.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I enjoy gaming, I love spending time on the beach or walking my dogs. I volunteer out at a barnyard animal sanctuary. I originally went to Delmar College getting my associates degree in Biotechnology with the intention of going into human genetics, but plants ended up interesting me more. More can be done with them.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Plant Disease resistance researcher

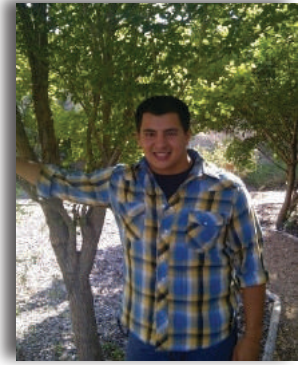
**Name:** Ignacio Garcia  
**Hometown:** McAllen, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agribusiness  
**Expected date of graduation:** Fall 2013  
**Degree:** Bachelor Degree in Agribusiness  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** Internship with NRCS-Plant Material Center at Kingsville, Texas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** The more important thing is the experience I got from working in the Plant Material Center in Kingsville TX. All the work we did will help me in the future after graduation. This internship has helped me in several ways to get my four year degree.

**Name:** Diego Garza  
**Hometown:** Harlingen, TX  
**Institution:** TSTC (Texas State Technical College)  
**Campus:** Harlingen  
**Rank:** Sophomore  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2015  
**Degree:** Bachelor Degree in Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS, NRCS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** Transfer to Texas A&M University- Kingsville Citrus Center, Weslaco, Texas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I transferred to TAMUK in 2012. I have a firm belief that without the STEP UP/ USDA funding my goal of a four year degree would be much tougher. The extra funds have helped me with some tuition and book fees that my financial aid didn't cover as well as living expenses such as food, rent, and gas.

**Name:** Wesley Gibson  
**Hometown:** Kingsville, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agribusiness  
**Expected date of graduation:** August 2012  
**Degree:** Bachelor Degree in Agribusiness  
**USDA Agency of interest:** AMS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



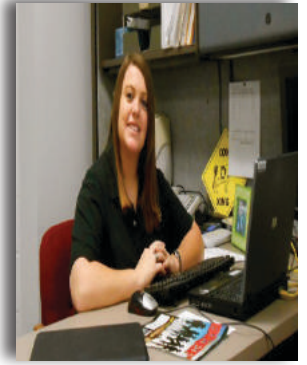
**Career Experience/Location:** Internship with NRCS-Golden Acres Genetics, in Waco, Texas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I worked as Special Topics Assistant. Here I learned all aspects about the seed genetics industry in the south and had continual apprenticeship throughout to keep me pointed in the direction of seed sales.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I want to work in agribusiness because it helps me to learn more about marketing and management to be a leader and good decision maker.



**Name:** Stephanie Godfrey  
**Hometown:** Kingsville, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Sophomore  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** Fall 2012  
**Degree:** Bachelor Degree  
**USDA Agency of interest:** AMS  
**Grant:** STEP UP

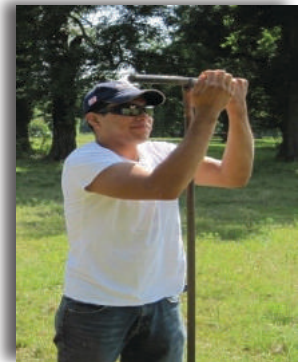


**Career Experience/Location:** Internship with USDA-AMS at Livestock and Grain Market News (LGMN), Amarillo, Texas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I was covering various livestock auctions and producing reports both livestock and grain.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I am interested in beef cattle production and reproduction. I enjoy working as volunteer feeding cattle and horses.

**Name:** Miguel Gomez  
**Hometown:** San Antonio, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Plant and Soil Sciences  
**Expected date of graduation:** August 2013  
**Degree:** Bachelor Degree  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** BGREEN



**Career Experience/Location:** Internship with USDA-NRCS- at the Soil Survey office in Denham Springs, Denham, LA

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I worked reclassifying soils below the hypothermic line.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** My research interest is to work within the areas of soil nutrition, soil toxicity, plant nutrition and possibly plant genetics.

**Name:** Gilbert Gomez  
**Hometown:** Harlingen, TX  
**Institution:** TSTC (Texas State Technical College), Harlingen  
**Campus:** Harlingen  
**Rank:** Sophomore  
**Major:** Agriculture  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2015  
**Degree:** Bachelor Degree in Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** TSTC (Texas State Technical College), Harlingen

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I transferred from TSTC to Texas A&M Kingsville. The step up program has helped me to make college life a lot easier and got me a lot farther, rather if I myself would have be trying to support myself through college. The program has granted me scholarship money to continue my goal, in completing my college degree. It pays for books and my tuition.

**Name:** Nathan Hammack  
**Hometown:** Edna, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science with teaching certification  
**Expected date of graduation:** Spring 2013  
**Degree:** Bachelor Degree in Agricultural Education  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** Internship with Texas AgriLife Research & Extension at Corpus Christi, Texas

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I worked on Effect of BT gene on Transgenic Corn  
**Career and Research Aspirations:** Graduate and receive my masters in Agriculture Science, teach Agriculture at a high school or at an accredited junior college or university. I live and grew up on a ranch in South Texas, immersed in agriculture from the time I was born, and hold the utmost respect for it.

**Name:** David Johnson  
**Hometown:** Rockport, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agribusiness  
**Expected date of graduation:** Spring 2013  
**Degree:** Bachelor  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** Internship with NRCS- Kika De La Garza Plant Materials Center at Kingsville, Texas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I participated on a Research project of alternative bio-fuels and also testing seeds: germination, lifespan, reproduction. The skills I obtained on the job were critical to my possible future with the NRCS. The time I spent in the field really helped me get a feel for what kind of work the NRCS does.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** The research we conducted during my summer internship excites me to possibly pursue the NRCS as a career path.

**Name:** Allison Logan  
**Hometown:** Bloomington, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Sophomore  
**Major:** Plant and Soil Science - Horticulture  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2013  
**Degree:** Bachelor Degree in Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** Internship with NRCS- Devereux Gardens, Victoria, Texas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** One of the best things about this internship was learning all of the tips and tricks of owning a nursery.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I want to have my own business whether it is a nursery in retail or wholesale, in the Victoria, Texas area.



**Name:** Andrew Martinez  
**Hometown:** Lytle, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Sophomore  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2013  
**Degree:** Bachelor Degree in Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP

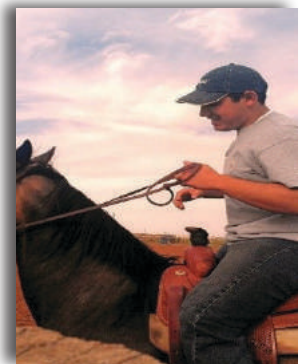


**Career Experience/Location:** Internship with Texas A&M University-Farm at Kingsville, Texas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I worked at the university farm growing sweet potatoes and on maintenance of the farm. I learned how the farm is managed and how labor intensive it is to keep the farm operating. I learned that growing sweet potatoes is very intense work until the vines take over the weeds.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I would like to research wildlife in areas of genetics.

**Name:** Charles Martinez  
**Hometown:** Ferris, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Freshman  
**Major:** Agribusiness-Ranch Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** Spring 2014  
**Degree:** Bachelor  
**USDA Agency of interest:** AMS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** Internship with AMS Cargill, in Bovina, Texas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** After being in the yard I gained a new appreciation for the beef feeders in our country. I learned that in order to be successful the people working at the feed yard need to be coherent and everybody needs to work as a team. I also learned that the way a feedlot makes money is by numbers and by being efficient.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I plan to be an active cattle producer and working in the beef industry.

**Name:** Dennis Tyler Mays  
**Hometown:** Kingsville, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Plant and Soil Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2013  
**Degree:** Bachelor in Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** Internship in Wharton County, Texas with Texas AgriLife Extension.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I worked as an Extension- IPM agent Intern learning about things in the fields of Entomology, Agronomy, Research, and general crop production. I learned the proper way to scout cotton, how to properly identify some insect pest, as well as how to understand thresholds and when to spray.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Once obtaining my B.S. in Agronomy I plan to go and get a degree in Integrated Pest Management to become an Extension IPM agent.

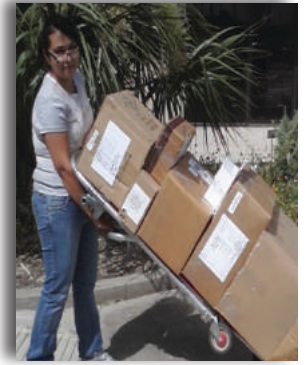
**Name:** Fidel Mendoza  
**Hometown:** Harlingen, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2013  
**Degree:** Bachelor Degree in Agricultural Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** Internship with USDA-ARS in Mission, Texas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I worked in a project about Research with Cattle fever tick, Arundo scale and Carrizo cane.

**Name:** Veronica Mata  
**Hometown:** Corpus Christi, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Sophomore  
**Major:** Animal Science Pre-Vet  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2013  
**Degree:** Bachelor  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** BGREEN



**Career Experience/Location:** Internship with NRCS Zone Office in Corpus Christi, Texas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I worked on preparing material for public, helping in training people in several cities. It was a lot more traveling that I was planning for. I never realized how many different types of jobs are involved with agriculture.

**Name:** Eduardo Reyna  
**Hometown:** Rio Grande City, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2014  
**Degree:** Bachelor Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** BGREEN

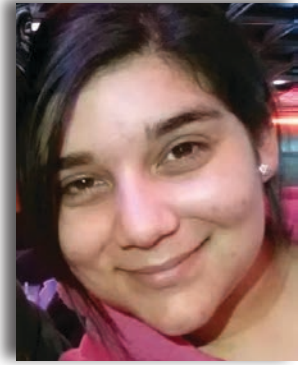


**Career Experience/Location:** Internship with USDA-AMS with JBS Swift Packing Plant at Grand Island, Nebraska

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I learned so many new things in the short amount of time that I was working in the two packing plants. This semester I'm actually looking forward to joining the meats judging team at Texas A&M University Kingsville. I can know say I am knowledgeable in that particular area. I learned so many new things considering the fact that it was my first time ever stepping foot inside a packing plant.



**Name:** Amy Marie Serrata  
**Hometown:** Robstown, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2013  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** Internship at Texas A&M University Kingsville Farm.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I learned how to work and care for livestock. Throughout my life, I have never been around cattle, goats, rabbits, or swine. This internship gave me the experience I needed to become comfortable working with livestock.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** When I Graduate, I plan to become a Veterinarian Technician.

**Name:** Roxanne Silguero  
**Hometown:** Kingsville, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2014  
**Degree:** Bachelor  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** Internship with Texas AgriLife Extension with Dr. Megan Clayton, Range Specialist, Corpus Christi, Texas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I learned many new skills pertaining to range improvements and plant/brush identification. I learned different ways to treat range and participated in test plots for chemicals targeting brush or plant species. I was also able to help and participate in the other intern's research project, such as supplementation needs of beef cattle fed native and improved grasses.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Obtain a master's degree in animal science

**Name:** Chad M. Sledge  
**Hometown:** Houston, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Plant and Soil Sciences  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2014  
**Degree:** Bachelor Concentration: Environmental Soil Sciences  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USFS and NRCS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** Internship with USDA-NRCS, Opelousas Louisiana Soil Survey office (South Texas Plant Materials center)

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I enjoy going to new places to study patterns in nature and business. Studying and creating maps and statistical data fascinates me however, my true passion is being outside.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Land Management Assessment and Strategies

**Name:** Cristina Teran  
**Hometown:** Corpus Christi, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2012  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS  
**Grant:** BGREEN



**Career Experience/Location:** Internship with USDA-ARS at Mission, Texas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I worked with *R. microplus*, or Cattle Fever Tick, *Arundo Scale* or *R. donacis*, *Arundo wasp* or *T. romana*, and *Arundo donax*, or commonly called Carrizo Cane.

---

**Name:** Travis Daniel Trevino  
**Hometown:** Mercedes, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2014  
**Degree:** Bachelor Animal Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** AMS  
**Grant:** BGREEN



**Career Experience/Location:** Internship with USDA-AMS, at Lexington and Grand Island, Nebraska.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I worked as a meat grader. When I took this internship I was very interested in the Meat Science field. I still maintain this interest and I am hoping to expand on it in Graduate School here at TAMUK. I enjoy fabricating meat and learning more and more about the industry that I hope that one day I am involved in it more directly. I am the first born son of my family where agriculture is a big part of our daily lives as we raise lambs for show in my hometown

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I would like to have a career in the Meat Science Field, hopefully having research in the field be the main part of that career

**Name:** Higinio Valadez  
**Hometown:** Odem, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agronomy  
**Expected date of graduation:** Fall 2013  
**Degree:** Bachelor Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** STEP UP

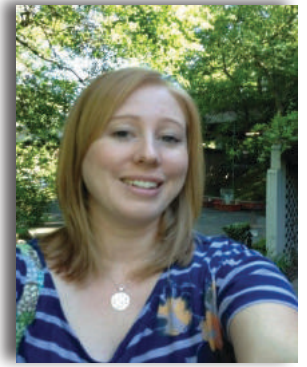


**Career Experience/Location:** Internship with Plant Material Center at Kingsville, Texas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** What the purpose was of a plant material center and how they worked with NRCS field offices supplying seed of plants that were specific for erosion control. How to operate a hammer mill and a seed cleaning machine.



**Name:** Crystal Weaver  
**Hometown:** Corpus Christi, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Plant and Soil Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2013  
**Degree:** Bachelor  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS/ NRCS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** Internship with the Forest Service, Regional Office at Portland, Oregon.  
**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I conducted several formal and informal interviews; I read and learned about climate changes and participated on the construction of the topographical poster map

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I am interested in Forest Biology and Ecology.

**Name:** Yvonne J. Sanchez-Welther  
**Hometown:** Brownsville, Texas  
**Institution:** TSTC (Texas State Technical College), Harlingen  
**Campus:** Harlingen  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2013  
**Degree:** Associates in Agriculture Technology  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** The STEP-UP grant greatly helped me in the transition from TSTC in Harlingen to Texas A&M- Kingsville with ease.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I enjoy working and playing outdoors. My heart has always been on agriculture, but I have also completed a degree in culinary arts and have worked in the private industry and institutional setting. I have also raised animals and sold their products eggs, meat or milk (chickens and goats). I like to work with people and have been involved in many community organizations, donating my time and skill to them. I hope to earn my degree from Texas A&M –Kingsville and get a job with the USDA or NRCS. My summer internship experience with the USDA was a wonderful experience.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** To work for USDA or NRCS

**Name:** Blake Lawrence Young  
**Hometown:** La Vernia  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Plant and Soil Science, **Concentration:** Agronomy  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2014  
**Degree:** Bachelor  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS/ NRCS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** Internship with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Port Lavaca, TX.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** My Internship Project was: Evaluation of Economic Threshold of Boll Feeding Bugs in Cotton.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** To be a research correspondent for local, state, or federal entities around the globe. My interests include being outdoors, such as, fishing, hunting, driving tractor, camping, golfing and the beach. An interesting fact about me is I will be the first person in my immediate family to obtain a college degree. I will also be the first in my family interested in a graduate degree.

## 2013 Undergraduate Students

**Name:** Calan Jacoby Ahrens  
**Hometown:** Alpine, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Wildlife Recreational Entrepreneurship  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2014  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA ARS  
**Grant:** STEP UP

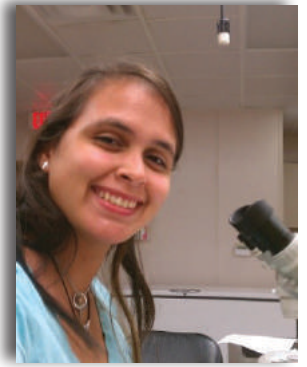


**Career experience/location:** I had the privilege to work with USDA-ARS Kerville Knipling-BUSHLAND insect Research.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** Thanks to this internship I have gained valuable experience within a laboratory setting that will help me in my further aspirations in the wildlife field involving IPM and wildlife.

**Career and research aspirations:** I want to be a wildlife manager for a hunting operation and further my research on feral hogs and soft ticks.

**Name:** Angelica F. Arredondo  
**Hometown:** Kingsville, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range and Wildlife Science- Wildlife  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2014  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** BGREEN



**Career experience/location:** During the summer of 2013 I worked in Kingsville, Texas with the Ceasar Kleberg Wildlife Institute.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** I learned how to properly map wetlands for slop and topography. In doing so, I used a laser level, learned how to use a GPS device along with creating maps on G15 software.

**Career and research aspirations:** As of now, I have come to the realization that I would like to pursue wildlife education.

**Name:** Jessica Castellano  
**Hometown:** McAllen, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Ag. Science- Certified  
**Expected date of graduation:** Spring 2014  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS or NRCS  
**Grant:** BGREEN



**Career experience/location:** During the summer 2013 I worked in Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Cameron County, Texas.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** I learned about the daily duties as an NRCS employee. I learned that when a client first comes in you must sit down and ask them what their intentions are with their land. I learned how to take GPS points along property lines to find out if the customer is in compliance with their contract. I also learned how to locate property on older maps, to see how the property has changed over the years. I also learned how to report on customer contracts, with minimal supervision.

**Career and research aspirations:** I plan to graduate with my bachelors in AG Science-certified, so that I can teach agriculture and FFA to youth of society.



**Name:** Leah Cedillo  
**Hometown:** La Joya, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** Fall 2015  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS, NRCS.  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career experience/location:** Last summer of 2013, I worked in the Microbiology Laboratory in the Animal Science Department in TAMUK in Kingsville TX.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** I learned how to do IHC –Immunohistochemistry- other things I learned was different ways of making solutions and how everything works in a lab. Dr. Garcia also showed us how it was like to be one of her grad students and how everything works around her lab and all the research she has done in her lab.

**Career and research aspirations:** My future career would be either becoming a vet in rural area and dealing with livestock or dealing with animal conservation. In 5 years I would hope to have finished vet school, if I decide to go the route, and then starting up my own vet clinic somewhere in Texas. If I decide to continue with my other route I would like to travel and continue to help with animal conservation and help protect endangered animals. And in ten years I see myself doing either one of these things either in Texas our out of state, and I would be happy with either one of these jobs.

**Name:** Adrian Cisneros  
**Hometown:** Brownsville, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** General Agriculture  
**Expected date of graduation:** Summer 2014  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA-APHIS PPQ  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career experience/location:** On Summer 2013, I worked with USDA APHIS-PPQ in Los Indios, Texas. I worked in the USDA plant inspection station.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** During the summer of 2013 I worked in a plant inspection station facility on the border in LOS Indios, TX, and I learned a lot of things about plant inspections. I also got to work with a lot of different types of insects, and seeds. I also got exposed to all the paperwork needed to import propagative plants into the United States.

**Career and research aspirations:** My career aspiration is to work with USDA-APHIS or U.S Customs and Border Protection. I like to work in an agriculture environment; therefore I would like to inspect plants or plant products.

**Name:** Carlos E. DeLeon  
**Hometown:** Mission, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** Spring 2014  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career experience/location:** This summer 2013 I spent ten weeks as an Earth Team Volunteer for the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) in Hidalgo County, Texas.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** This summer was by far one of the most productive summers I have ever had. I learned what the NRCS is and how they help the producers. Also, about all the resource concerns in the area I was stationed and how to address the resource concerns.

**Career and research aspirations:** Once I graduate in May I plan to apply with NRCS and hopefully get hired. If that doesn't work out, I would like to work with any other federal agency that has something to do with agriculture.

**Name:** Dante Delgadillo  
**Hometown:** Port Isabel, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** General Agriculture  
**Expected date of graduation:** Fall 2013  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career experience/location:** This summer I managed to secure a government internship with the USDA-ARS in Greeley, Colorado just outside of Fort Collins.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** My duties were primarily concentrated on water conservation and management in corn and sunflower crops. The goal was to realize just how little water we could use without sacrificing yields.

**Career and research aspirations:** My career aspirations are still somewhat undecided. I have a passion for agriculture and horticulture but I also have passion for law. I'm pretty sure I will pursue one of these options.

**Name:** Megan Dupnik  
**Hometown:** Corpus Christi, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Plant and Soil Sciences- Agronomy  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2015  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career experience/location:** Mycotoxin Research at Purdue University. In West Lafayette, Indiana.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** I was given the opportunity to learn how to process different columns, inoculate corn kernels, and learn how to use a Gas Chromatographer (GC). As well as how to analyze data and enhance knowledge I already had with new information.

**Career and research aspirations:** In five years I see myself with a master and hopefully out of school for a time. I want a job and to begin my career, hopefully by then I know for sure what that will be! In ten years, I am planning on running my own lab and helping new students discover what is for them.

**Name:** Christina R. Escobedo  
**Hometown:** Kingsville, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Jr.  
**Major:** Ag. Business  
**Expected date of graduation:** Summer 2014  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** Agri-Life  
**Grant:** BGREEN

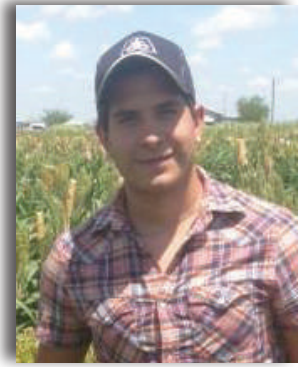


**Career experience/location:** Interned at the King Ranch Feedyard located on the Santa Gertrudis Division in Kingsville, TX.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** In this field I learned a lot about the buying and selling process of a feedyard as well as learning how to input data into the Feed Yard 3000 system, write up sells statements and do a lot of calculations involving hot weights and gross pay.

**Career and research aspirations:** The good thing about this internship is that for about seventy percent of the time I was sitting at a desk doing calculations and writing up data. I have learned that I do not want to be behind a desk for all of the day I would rather do hands on work. I can see myself owning my own agriculture business one day.

**Name:** Rodrigo Franklin  
**Hometown:** Mission, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Jr.  
**Major:** Plant and Soil Sciences- Agronomy  
**Expected date of graduation:** Spring 2014  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** BGREEN



**Career experience/location:** During summer 2012 I had the opportunity of working in Lubbock, Tx/ with USDA-ARS.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** During my Summer internship we researched on forage sorghum drought stress, we collected some data of heat damage on grain sorghum leaves, and we run some sugar analysis in the lab.

**Career and research aspirations:** Agriculture is my passion, I would like to finish my plant and soils degree and then go for the agribusiness masters. In 5 years I see myself working for a grain company as a sell rep, and in a future I would like to become a director.

**Name:** Amanda C. Garcia  
**Hometown:** Brownsville, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Graduate  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2012  
**Degree:** Masters  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



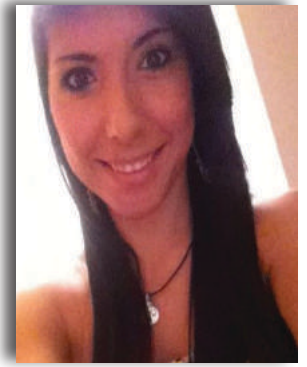
**Career experience/location:** Veterinary clinic internship, Gladys Porter Zoo, Brownsville, TX

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** I learned the daily happenings of a zoo veterinary clinic. I participated in administering vaccines, conducting x-rays, behavioral and illness observations, and in several necropsy examinations. I shadowed and assisted the veterinarian in minor surgeries, amputations, blood drawing and other medical tasks that arose.

**Career and research aspirations:** My future aspirations are to continue my studies into veterinary school where I will eventually work on conservation studies and breeding programs for endangered animals. Upon graduation, I would enjoy to travel abroad to research large animals, particularly elephants in Africa.



**Name:** Viviana Garza  
**Hometown:** Freer, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** Spring 2015  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS, ARS  
**Grant:** BGREEN



**Career experience/location:** This summer 2013 I worked in the molecular biology laboratory at Texas A&M University Kingsville in Kingsville Texas.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** I learned how to conduct certain experiments such as PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction), cell culture and tissue and cell extraction.

**Career and research aspirations:** My internship had made me enjoy laboratory work and I plan on pursuing a job in research. I plan on continuing to pursue a career in research. I plan on pursuing a job with the company Viagen in Austin Texas. I am very fascinated by laboratory research and the cloning side of reproduction.

**Name:** Aaron M. Gutierrez  
**Hometown:** Edinburg, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Sophomore  
**Major:** Range and Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** Spring 2016  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS, NRCS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career experience/location:** In 2013 I was located in Laredo, Tx. I had a great experience with the Natural Resources Conservation Services team

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** I learned about all the systems on the computer that are required to complete all paper work. I learned how to use the GPS, Range Finder, Auto level, Topography map, Database management, Map generation.

**Career and research aspirations:** Right now I am just looking forward to graduating college with a bachelor's and with what I learned in five years I would be going for my Master's degree. Ten years from now, I see myself working for an agency of my choosing.

**Name:** Ericka Humphrey  
**Hometown:** Anahuac, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science- Pre-Vet  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2014  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career experience/location:** During the Summer of 2013, I worked in a Veterinary Clinic as a Veterinary Technician Assistant, in Anahuac, Texas, at Animal Care Clinic.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** I learned how a vet clinic is run, what it takes to keep it running, how to run tests (fecal, heartworm); spin blood to separate serum and red blood cells, proper animal care.

**Career and research aspirations:** I know that I would like to have a career in medicine research.

**Name:** Victoria Longoria  
**Hometown:** Kingsville, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2014  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP

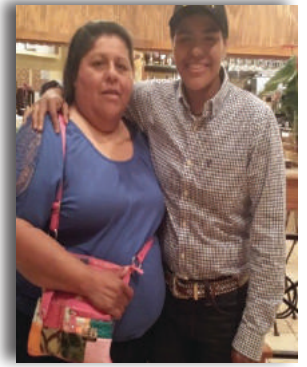


**Career experience/location:** This summer 2013 I worked at the TAMUK Research Farm in Kingsville, Texas.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** I learned to successfully manage sows before, during and after farrowing season; to provide a healthy environment for several species of livestock. I learned how to effectively communicate with supervisors, coworkers, exhibit professionalism and working hard pays off.

**Career and research aspirations:** I would like to eventually obtain my PhD, so I conduct research and teach.

**Name:** Emma R Martinez  
**Hometown:** Harlingen  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University Kingsville  
**Campus:** Texas A&M University Kingsville  
**Rank:** Jr  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** Spring 2015  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS, AMS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career experience/location:** My internship last summer of 2013 was great. I did my internship at the USDA-APHIS in Harlingen Tx. Work in lab screening Mexican Fruit flies.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** I learned and gained so much experience from the USDA\_APHIS from trapping flies to screening and dissecting mexican fruit flies. The employees made you feel welcomed and helped you with any question you had.

**Career and research aspirations:** Right now I am currently attending Texas A&M University Kingsville in Kingsville, Texas. As a transfer junior student. I currently just received my Associate Degree in Applied Science at Texas State Technical College in Harlingen, Texas. In 10 years I see myself working for the U.S Customs of Border protection in Agriculture.

**Name:** Charles Martinez  
**Hometown:** Dallas, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Ag. Business- Ranch Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2014  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** AMS  
**Grant:** STEP UP

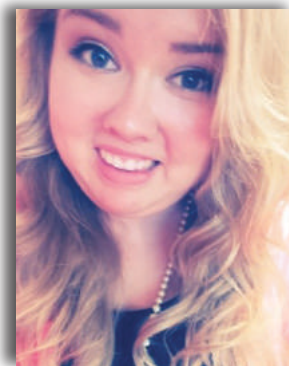


**Career experience/location:** My 2013 summer career experience was with Cargill Cattle Feeder in Bovina, Texas.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** I learned about intensive agriculture production .

**Career and research aspirations:** I would like to pursue a Master's degree in Ag Economics in relation to the cattle industry and pursue a career in the cattle industry.

**Name:** Brittany Palacios  
**Hometown:** Houston, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science – Pre-Vet  
**Expected date of graduation:** 2014  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS, APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career experience/location:** During the summer 201, I was interning in Weslaco, Texas working with with the USDA-APHIS Arundo Project at the Moore Air Base in Mission, Texas

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** I learned about field work and also lab research and how multiple projects work together. I also learned how the Arundo donax is a big issues along the river causing many problems for board security and the water levels and vegetation along the Rio Grande River.

**Career and research aspirations:** As of right now I am major in Animal Science with a concentration on Pre-Veterinary Medicine. I would like to go to Veterinary school once I graduate at Texas A&M University Kingsville. I have also considered other options in case I do not attend Veterinary school.

**Name:** Patricia Pena  
**Hometown:** Mission, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** 2015  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS, AMS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career experience/location:** Summer 2013, I worked with USDA-ARS Arundo-Donax Project in Mission, Texas.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** Working for the USDA-ARS, allowed me to understand the affects the Arundo Donax has given the river water levels, the security levels (CBP) and even affect the constructions in the International Ports entry. I have also acquired the acknowledgment that I am not someone to be in in a laboratory.

**Career and research aspirations:** Ever since I can remember, I have had the passion to rescue neglect and abuse animals, from livestock to pet animals. Becoming a Humane Officers is the one job I can see myself doing for a couple of years and from there stepping it up to bigger job opportunities. Acquiring a Bachelor in Animal Science and a Master in Criminal Justice or Criminology will allow me to accomplish my dreams. “Being the voice for those who need it the most”. By then I would also want to run an Animal Shelter in several different states.



**Name:** Erica Petropoulos-Justice  
**Hometown:** Tomball, Texas  
**Institution:** TAMUK  
**Campus:** -  
**Rank:** Sophomore  
**Major:** Agronomy  
**Expected date of graduation:** Spring 2015  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** AMS, NRCS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career experience/location:** Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Weslaco TX

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** I learned a lot about harvesting fruits and vegetables, including wine grapes. I learned different pruning methods and IPM practices. I also learned a lot about how to collect and compile data to compare varieties.

**Career and research aspirations:** I hope to either be working for AgriLife as an extension agent or working for a seed/chemical company as a sells rep.

**Name:** Stephanie Rivera  
**Hometown:** Mission, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science, Pre-Vet  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2014  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP

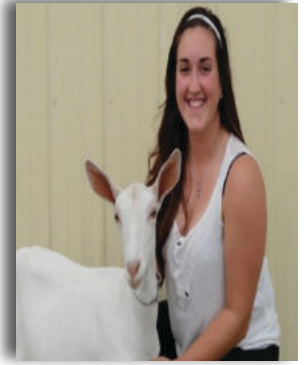


**Career experience/location:** Assistant Zookeeper at the Chattanooga Zoo in Chattanooga, TN

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** During this internship I learned about the medicines, and food preparation needed for animals in a zoo. I also got the chance to make presentations to the guest at the zoo while preparing and having enrichments for the animals in my area to help educate the community about our endangered species.

**Career and research aspirations:** I hope to attend veterinary school and specialize in the exotic animals that I am passionate about. In five years I can see myself working with these animals whether I am in a zoo, or sanctuary. In ten years I see myself pursuing a bigger dream and going overseas to possibly Africa where I can work on the endangered species in their original.

**Name:** Sonia Rodriguez  
**Hometown:** Warrenton, Mo  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2014  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS, APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP

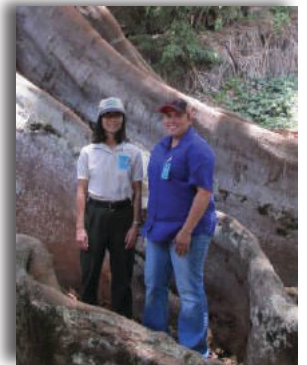


**Career Experience/location:** For my career experience, I chose to work with Poplar Hill Dairy Goat Farm. They are located in Scandia, Mn; run and operated by the Maefsky family.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** Through this internship I learned that I want to work with goats as a career. I also learned that herd health is a number one priority and that is what I would like to focus on. I also had a lot of field experience with taking blood samples, doctoring wounds and tractor work.

**Career and research aspirations:** My career aspirations are to become the Herd Manager of a dairy goat farm. I enjoy working with goats and want to focus my work on herd health. In five years hopefully I will have already been with a Dairy for at least two years, improving their overall milk production. In ten years I hope to have my own goat dairy; raising Alpines, Saanens and LaManchas.

**Name:** Ruby Saldaña  
**Hometown:** Weslaco, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2014  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS PPQ  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career experience/location:** USDA APHIS PPQ in Oahu, Hawaii

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** Along with being able to discover different careers that are available within USDA APHIS, I was able to gain knowledge in entomology, plant pathology, PPQ regulations in regards to the import/export of agriculture products. Other aspects of this branch of the USDA that I was able to learn from was the research being done regarding the fruit fly population, how they are reared (at a CDFA facility in HI), irradiated, and shipped over to California in order to control the overall population and protect citrus industries.

**Career and research aspirations:** Before this internship, I was fairly set on where I wanted to be in regards to my career, but that vision has now taken a new direction into a branch of science that I had not been exposed to before. I have decided to seek a Master's degree and hope to apply my research in entomology and/or aquaponics.

**Name:** Katherine Jazzel Sanchez Wolfe  
**Hometown:** Weslaco, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science- Certification  
**Expected date**  
**Of graduation:** May 2014  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency**  
**Of interest:** USDA-ARS  
**Grant:** BGREEN



**Career experience/location:** This past summer I worked with USDA-ARS on the Arundo Donax Project in Edinburg, Texas.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** Working on the Arundo Donax Project furthered my knowledge of plant and soil science. During my internship I had the opportunity to work both out in the field and in the lab. I learned how to identify different types of plants in the field and learn to work in a level three biosecurity lab facility as well.

**Career and research aspirations:** When I graduate I hope to be an Ag. Science teacher at the high school level. During that time I plan to work on my masters, so that I can eventually teach at the college level. However, through my internship I now feel a job with the USDA might also be a possibility as well.

**Name:** Chad Sledge  
**Hometown:** Houston  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Plant and Soil Science  
**Expected date**  
**of graduation:** December 2013  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency**  
**of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career experience/location:** This summer, I worked on the Kootenai National Forest as a Forestry Aid with the Timber Division.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** I learned about: soil disturbance analysis; Northwest plant I.D.; timber selection/measurements; cadastral survey; coarse woody debris measurement.

**Career and research aspirations:** Land and natural resource management. I would like to gain experience and savings to one day farm full time. My career experience has given me opportunities to see agricultural production and conservation methods used by the private and public sector in croplands and in rangelands. I have been able to observe the political and practical interactions between federal, state agencies and private landowners. This will help me tremendously in whichever sector of natural resource management I work in after college.

**Name:** Higinio Valadez  
**Hometown:** Corpus Christi, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Plant and Soil Sciences- Agronomy  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2013  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career experience/location:** Cotton variety trails, mycotoxin application of aflatoxin guard at V6 and tassel, horse spray efficacy trials, potato zebra chip physlloid study Texas A&M University Kingsville, Texas Agrilife extension Lubbock.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** Set up research plots, irrigation, use GIS mapping techniques, analytical skills, data collection

**Career and research aspirations:** My current career expectations can take me either into the private sector or government sector as of right now I am still weighing my options. In five years I hope to have made some headway as far as promotions maybe hopefully promoted at least three times. In ten years I hope to be managing a crew or better. My career experience might send me back to further my education and obtain a Masters degree it is only a thought for now, but if my employment needs or requires that of me I have no quarrel in working to obtain a M. S degree. My long term objectives is to find a company or agency where I can have my career working longterm for a company or agency.

**Name:** Cathy L. Weaver  
**Hometown:** San Benito, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** Fall 2014  
**Degree:** AA  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS, FS, AMS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



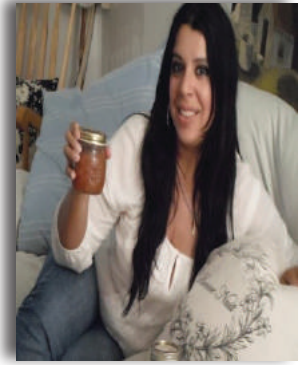
**Career experience/location:** United States Department of Agriculture, Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service (APHIS). This agency is located in Harlingen, TX.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** While working with the USDA, I learned about the Mexican Fruit Fly and what harm it does to any citrus trees containing fruit. I learned how to screen in the laboratory and how to trap it. I noticed how professional you must be in the work environment no matter what the situation.

**Career and research aspirations:** In 5 years I think I would see myself striving to fulfill my dream of working with Equine. I would probably transfer to a different University to pursue a career in Equine Science and hopefully obtain my degree within those 5 years. In 10 years, I could see myself working with Equine and people that want to learn or also work with people with disabilities such as Autism, Scoliosis, and others. I want to make a difference in people's lives and helping anyone I can.



**Name:** Yvonne Sanchez Welther  
**Hometown:** Bishop, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** General Agriculture  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2014  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS, NRCS  
**Grant:** BGREEN

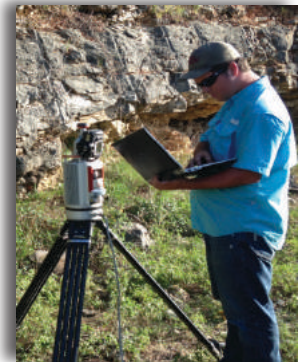


**Career experience/location:** My career experience with USDA-NRCS was served at the Golden Meadow Plant Materials Center ( PMC) in Galliano, Louisiana.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** I learned how each subagency works with each other in order to achieve a common goal. I also learned research skills, worked with farm and greenhouse machinery, tools and equipment and have a better understanding of the NRCSs role in conservation and community.

**Career and research aspirations:** My target agency with the USDA for my career would be with the NRCS in Louisiana. In ten years I would like to be employed by the USDA and work in either APHIS or NRCS, working in the field, with farmers and the community.

**Name:** Andrew White  
**Hometown:** Richmond, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** General Agriculture  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2014  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** Food Safety and Inspection Services  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career experience/location:** I worked in USDA- NRCS, Rosenberg, Texas.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** I learned about the different programs the USDA-NRCS provided. I also learned about what the geologist in the NRCS have to do in order to keep government dams and spill ways in working order. The impact of my carrer experience was that I met a lot of great people and they tought me a lot of useful tool to take with me after graduation. I got the chance to travel and see all the different projects that NRCS work on. They showed me all the differnet ways they help ranchers and producers with conserving there land. That is what I like about working for the NRCS is help others help the land.

**Career and research aspirations:** I plan when I graduate to use my agriculture business side of my degree to work my way up to a managerial position at HEB. I would if I got the opportunity to work for Duck Unlimited it would be a great experience.

# 2014 Undergraduate Students

---

**Name:** Ashley Abreu  
**Hometown:** League City, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range and Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2016  
**Degree:** Bachelor  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** STEP UP

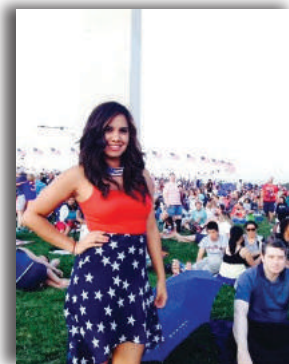


**Career Experience/Location:** For the summer of 2014, I served as an intern for the USDA. I worked as an unpaid intern for the ARS ALARC branch of the USDA.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I learned hand on experience with running and conducting experiments and lab produces in the water department of the ARS. I learned that repetition can lead to valued statistical data that can be of great benefit to the general public when put together in a presentation that is understandable.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After receiving my degree with Texas A&M- Kingsville I plan on getting a career with the NRCS or the department of Interior. I also plan on continuing my education, and in time, receiving my Ph.D.

**Name:** Magnolia Alcantar  
**Hometown:** Los Fresnos, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2015  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA, ARS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** In summer 2014 I interned for USDA with the Agriculture Research Service in Beltsville, Maryland under the title of lab intern.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience in a laboratory. I worked with disease infected manure that was contagious to humans as well. I gained a great understanding on how important safety in a laboratory is and how to handle unfamiliar laboratory equipment.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in December 2015, I will continue to further my education at Texas A&M University, College Station to study Veterinary Medicine.

**Name:** Jesse Charles Alegria  
**Hometown:** Saginaw, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range and Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** Spring 2015  
**Degree:** Bachelors of Science in Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS-WS, USFS  
**Grant:** STEP UP

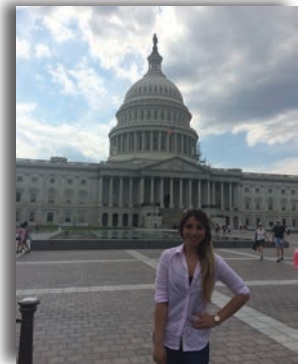


**Career Experience/Location:** In summer of 2014, I interned for Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service-Wildlife Services in Somerville County, Texas under the title Biological Technician.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This Internship gave me a unique opportunity to gain knowledge that is key in the wildlife profession. While in Somerville County, I learned many different trapping techniques that are used for trapping Feral Swine, Coyotes, and Raccoons. I also gained experience and knowledge in communicating with land owners that took advantage of our services. I was given the opportunity with several different land owners to explain the management techniques we were/would be using on their property.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After finishing with my undergraduate degree in the spring of 2015, I want to continue my education with a master's program. I am hoping to do my research in the field of predator control or feral swine management. Once I have completed my educational goals, I plan to apply for careers with APHIS-WS and careers within the private sector.

**Name:** Leah Cedillo  
**Hometown:** La Joya, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2015  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Animal Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career experience/location:** In summer of 2014 I interned for the USDA with the Agency of ARS, Beltsville MD in their lab as an intern researcher.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience in a wide variety of skills necessary for research. I gained experience in Lab techniques, working with animals, and working with different kinds of people, while also learning a great deal about how hard it is to run a lab.

**What is your perception of agriculture now:** In the time I spent working for the ABBL ARS lab I realized how  
**Career and research aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in May 2015, I hope to gain knowledge and experience that will broaden my options and opportunities in my future career search. My goal is to ultimately be in a position where I can do research and I can help the world with finding better ways on improving the food source for the country.

**Name:** Megan A. Dupnik  
**Hometown:** Corpus Christi, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University- Kingsville  
**Campus:** Texas A&M University- Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Plant and Soil Sciences - Horticulture  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2014  
**Degree:** Bachelors  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** My internship took place at the AgriLife Extension center in Robstown, Texas and I worked with Dr. Carlos Fernandez.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I learned about the physiological processes of cotton and the effects that drought stress has on the plant, as well as the maintenance it took to raise the plants. I also gained experience in the processes of algae and what it can be used for. This internship has given me the opportunity to explore fields and learn what types of plants I would enjoy working with and it even left an opening for me to get a job. Internships like these help in gaining experience and helping in making connections. It leaves opportunities for school and learning how to act in a professional situation as well as work with deadlines and process through data. As well as how to start and finish experiments.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Once I obtain my bachelor's degree I plan to go for a master's project and eventually a career working in a lab or greenhouse.

**Name:** Nnana Edmund  
**Hometown:** Nigeria  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University- Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agronomy (Plant and soil science)  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2015  
**Degree:** B.sc in agronomy  
**USDA Agency of interest:** U.S.D.A, ARS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



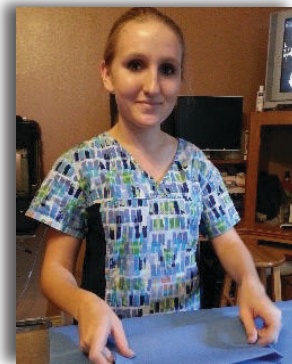
**Career Experience/Location:** In summer of 2014, I interned with the USDA agricultural research center, located in Beltsville Maryland/ NRCS E. "Kika" de la Garza plant material center Kingsville.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I learned how to culture microorganisms for research purposes, learned how to operate some laboratory equipment like the autoclave, germination chamber, soil ovens and soil sensors. I also learned some new lab principles and guidelines.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in May 2015, I will continue to further my education at Purdue University in the Masters of plant and soil science program. I will research on the use of plant extracts as an organic control of soil *Aspergillums flavus* fungi.



**Name:** Tiffany Fleming  
**Hometown:** San Antonio, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Sophomore  
**Major:** Animal Science Pre-Vet  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** During the summer of 2014 I interned at Kingsville Veterinary Services, a small and large veterinary clinic, assisting as a veterinary technician assistant.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** While at Kingsville Veterinary Services I gained more knowledge on small animal veterinary medicine as well as large animal veterinary medicine. I gained hands on experience working mainly with dogs, cats, horses, and cattle. I learned a great deal about what it takes to run a veterinary clinic as well as daily tasks within the clinic.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After I complete my undergraduate studies I plan on joining the military to later become a veterinarian in the United States Army. After being in the military for a few years I plan on going on to veterinary school to obtain a doctorate in veterinary medicine. I then plan on specializing in prosthetics for animals to focus on military animals who have lost limbs in battle.

**Name:** Rodrigo Franklin  
**Hometown:** San, Fernando, Mexico.  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agriculture  
**Expected date of Graduation:** December 2014  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Ag Science  
**USDA agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** BGREEN



**Career Experience/Location:** During my summer 2014 I had the opportunity to work on Texas A&M AgriLife at Weslaco and participate on new pest project.

**About my Career Experience:** This internship has prepared me to become a good agronomist, I learned the basis of entomology, Integrated pest management such as ( chemical, biological, mechanical control etc. had the opportunity to learn about irrigation, research and lab work and how to analyze data I even had the chance to publish a peer reviewed article.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After I graduate from my Bachelor's degree at Plants and Soil science I'm planning to start a graduate studies career as a plant breeder or a Master in Agronomy at Texas A&M Kingsville. I'm looking forward to finish my master and head to the private sector or private companies and start my career as a plant breeder or agronomist in a seed company or work as an IPM extension.

**Name:** Richard O. Garcia  
**Hometown:** Lyford, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2015  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** BGREEN



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2014 I interned with the APHIS department in Harlingen, Texas and was given a trapper job.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I really enjoyed the trapping job that I was given because I was given my own truck and my own routes. I had a different route every day and I got to meet a lot of citrus farmers. They really loved me going out and checking their groves because it gave them a peace of mind that their groves were being monitored to get rid of potential pests.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I plan to work with the USDA upon completion with my Bachelor of Science in Agriculture Science but I do plan to have my own hay baling business on the side. This has also been one of my goals and I will make it come true. I know I will be successful because I know a lot of people that have livestock and I would make them good deals to gain their business.

**Name:** Alvaro Garcia  
**Hometown:** Brownsville, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Sophomore  
**Major:** Plant & Soil Science-Agronomy  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science in Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA-ARS  
**Grant:** STEP UP

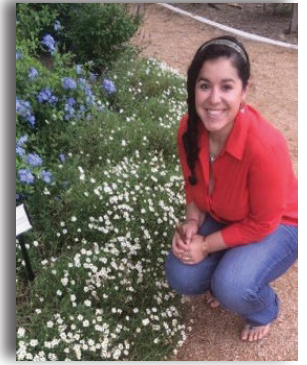


**Career Experience/Location:** For the summer of 2014 I was interning with USDA-ARS CRIS in Lubbock Texas, my experience at this facility was exceptionally educational and fun.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with numerous hands on experiences in the lab as well as out in the field. I learned all the necessary skills to work in a genetics laboratory and will pursue a job in this area. Not only did I learn a variety of lab and field skills, but also to work with a team and collaborate with them.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After completion of my four year degree plan with Texas A&M Kingsville, I will pursue higher education by completing my master's degree in Agronomy-IPM at Texas A&M University or continue at Kingsville. With completion of my master's degree in Agronomy-IPM I, will have a wider selection of job opportunities to choose from. My preferred job choice would have to be one involving genetic research of sorghum. Location would not be a big issue for me.

**Name:** Onelisa Garza  
**Hometown:** Linn, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University- Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2016  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** FS, NRCS, OC  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2014 I interned with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Edinburg, Texas at the Hidalgo County Extension Office.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** While interning with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service I was able to gain skills in an array of topics. I had the opportunity to do research on sunflower test plots, polish up my communication skills by planning and executing numerous activities for 4-H youth, and worked side by side with community leaders and politicians. This internship allowed me to gain experience in Agriculture and Natural Resources, Horticulture, Family and Consumer Science, and the Better Living for Texas program.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon graduating with my Bachelor's degree from Texas A&M University- Kingsville, I plan to attend Texas Tech University to obtain a Master's in Agriculture Communications. Speaking and educating people is my greatest passion and I would like nothing more than to put my degrees to use by ultimately being in a type of Public Affairs position that would help advocate the importance of agriculture to not only youth, but adults as well.

**Name:** Heather Gleason  
**Hometown:** San Antonio, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Sophomore  
**Major:** Animal Science: Pre-vet  
**Expected date of graduation:** Spring 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science in Agriculture- Animal Science-Pre-Vet  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** In summer of 2014 I interned for the San Antonio Zoo, I assisted the keepers in Birds 1 with the daily husbandry duties of their birds.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided my with the knowledge needed to run and successfully provide care for an area of birds. I gained the knowledge needed to successfully make diets for different birds, as well as the necessary knowledge needed to provide medical care for a bird in need. I also learned the proper techniques for holding various sizes of birds.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Soon after the completion of my Bachelor's degree I plan on going to graduate school to pursue my PhD in Animal Science- pre-vet, but as of right now I am currently undecided where I will attend graduate school. My goal is to broaden my skills and gain more knowledge of various animals, so it will enable me to truly research techniques and methods that will help caring for animals more successful.

**Name:** Tyler Gwosdz  
**Hometown:** Orange Grove, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University - Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agribusiness-Ranch Management;  
Minor: Animal Science  
**Expected date  
of graduation:** December 2014  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency  
of interest:** AMS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2014 I interned with Calcot Ltd., a cotton marketing agency based out of Bakersfield, California. I was titled office assistant for the Texas office in Corpus Christi.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me not only with an opportunity to travel and look at differences in cotton across the southwestern United States, but also an in-depth understanding of the driving forces behind the cotton market. I also learned about all the processes cotton undergoes after being harvested through numerous gin and warehouse tours around Texas.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in December 2014, I plan to continue working at Calcot Ltd., specifically in the Texas division as a field representative in direct contact with farmers around the state. In addition to this, I hope to continue growing my registered Beefmaster cattle herd that was established in 2008. I believe that this career path will not only be extremely enjoyable, but deem to be financially stable as well!

**Name:** Victoria Haynes  
**Hometown:** Victoria, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range and Wildlife Management  
**Expected date  
of graduation:** May 2015  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency  
of interest:** F.S  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** In Summer 2014 I interned for Texas Parks and Wildlife in Alpine, Texas at Elephant Mountain Wildlife Management Area.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship taught me the responsibility of collecting data in the field and how to record and report to the biologists. I learned how to conduct small mammal surveys, dove banding surveys, herpetological surveys, aerial pronghorn surveys, and vegetation sampling. I also learned how to enter data on computer spreadsheets and how to use several field guides to identify species in the field.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** When I graduate in Spring 2015, I plan to attend graduate school for a Master's of Science Degree in Range and Wildlife Management at Sul Ross State University in Alpine, Texas. I enjoyed being out in West Texas this summer and I have decided to attend graduate college there.



---

**Name:** Manoella Elizabeth Lopez  
**Hometown:** Laredo, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M Kingsville-University  
**Campus:** Kingsville University  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2016  
**Degree:** Bachelors in Agriculture and Natural Resources  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** Summer 2014 I interned for the USDA with the Natural Resource Conservation Services, in Laredo, Texas and Kingsville, Texas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience, I gained experience in conservation planning and how to work with landowners to implement conservation practices to protect and enhance the natural resources, while meeting the landowner land management goals.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in May 2016, I would continue to further my education at Texas A&M Kingsville-University with a Master in Agriculture. With this degree, I hope to gain knowledge and experience that will broaden my options and opportunities in my future career working for the USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Services. My ambition is to eventually be in a position where I can advocate and educate landowners the importance of conservation and preservation of our lands and natural resources.

**Name:** Jairo Lozano  
**Hometown:** Weslaco, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville, Texas  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** General Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2015  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Agriculture Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS, USDA  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2014 I interned for the Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension in Weslaco, Texas under the title of Extension Technician.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** During the internship I did a lot of manual labor; however, I loved that I worked with cotton and sorghum fields because I gain a lot of experience in the Rio Grande Valley. I learned many types of techniques; such as, what stage the crop is in and what herbicide and insecticides to use during each stage.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon my graduation on May 2015 with my degree of General Ag Science in Texas A&M University of Kingsville, I want to bring new ideas to the agriculture world. By helping out in areas where people need agriculture to survive. My education is my life because it showed me how agriculture works, constructs and develops. I would like to do a research on soils to create a new fertilizer that will help each crop in the world.

**Name:** Gregory Lujano  
**Hometown:** San Antonio, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Wildlife Management and Biology  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2016  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS, USFS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2014 I was a student intern with Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, wildlife services department. In Gainesville, Florida; National Wildlife Research Center Florida Field Station.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** The internship provided me with research skills in the areas of invasive species management, animal care of reptiles and avian, cage construction, reptile necropsies, trap and capturing techniques. It has also provided me with better understanding of how wildlife services interact with the public, and learning the behaviors of a target species.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completing my two bachelor's degrees in May of 2016, I plan to further my education in a master's degree at Texas A&M Kingsville in wildlife management or at University of Florida in Wildlife Conservation Biology. My goal with my degree is to become a research wildlife biologist in order to help the conservation of our natural wildlife and to better the relations between wildlife and the public.

**Name:** Emma Martinez  
**Hometown:** Harlingen, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University Kingsville  
**Campus:** Texas A&M University Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** General Agriculture  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2015  
**Degree:** Bachelors' Degree  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA\_APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** In summer of 2014 I interned for the USDA with USDA-APHIS in Los Indio's, Texas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience. Taking this internship has been very beneficial. I learned how inspect our incoming cargo, what procedure to take when finding an insect or seed, how to collect samples from our traps.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in May 2015, I will be applying for a job position as an Agriculture Specialist for U.S Custom of Border Protection. Hopefully with my experiences I had in working with USDA-APHIS will be beneficial in getting this job. I do see myself going back to school to proceed in getting my Master's degree in Agriculture. But first I would like to start in getting my career going.

**Name:** Jose Martinez  
**Hometown:** Raymondville, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** AG Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2014  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Ag Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS  
**Grant:** BGREEN

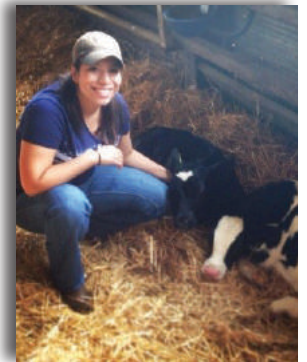


**Career Experience/Location:** I worked with Agrilife Extension in Weslaco, Texas over the summer and enjoyed the work there and what the management is like. It's was a great overall experience and I would definitely do it again and that's why I would love to work for them in the future.

**About my Career Experience:** I've learned a lot more than I ever knew about agriculture. Since I never did much of it when I was younger, I seemed to absorb most it was taught to me and all that I did while in my internship.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I don't believe my career will take off as soon as I get out of school, since I'm looking to join the oil field jobs for a couple of years and then start off my career when I'm ready to settle down. But I also don't plan to look for a career here in the U.S. I'm planning to go overseas or just a different country to see how things are done the same and how they are done differently.

**Name:** Patricia Peña  
**Hometown:** Mission, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2014  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science in Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS and FAS  
**Grant:** BGREEN

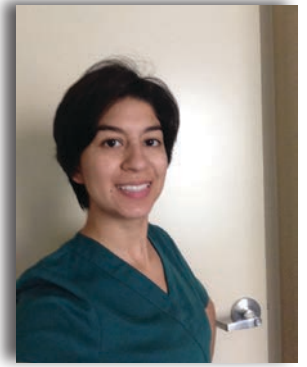


**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer 2014, I had the privilege to intern for the USDA-ARS Veterinary Service Program at Beltsville Maryland.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** The Veterinary Service Program has provided me with extensive hands on experience with livestock as for expanding my understanding of large animal medicine, ruminant medicine, laboratory animal medicine, dairy production, research, and government managed facilities and laboratories. Provided multiple different tasks with various different livestock, improving the health, productivity, and quality of life for animals.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** With graduation just around the corner December 12, 2014 for a Bachelor's Degree in Animal Science, things are becoming a little more serious and clearer and not simply a blur but reality. I have decide over the summer that I will continue to further my education with a Master Degree in Animal Law, I have not decide in a college of interest but soon will fine the one school that is meant for me. My inspiration is to make a difference "may we use our voice to speak for those who need us most, those who have no voice, those who have not choice".

**Name:** Corinna E. Ramirez  
**Hometown:** Mission, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science Pre-Veterinary  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2014  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career experience/location:** In the Summer of 2014 I interned through the USDA Step Up program at the Hubert Veterinary Hospital located at 2103 E. Caesar Ave. Kingsville, Texas. I interned as a Veterinary Technician under the excellent guidance and instruction of Ms. Trish Bartow and Dr. Amy Hubert.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** This Internship provided me with hands on experience with animals and a variety of other skills like learning the generic names of medicines and what they are used for. Observing surgeries help me understand the anatomy of the different breeds of cats and dogs. The size and age of an animal can make the surgery easier or more difficult.

**Career and research aspirations:** Upon my completion of my Bachelor's degree in December, I will continue to my education at Veterinary School. With this degree, I hope to gain knowledge and experience that will further enlighten me with the knowledge to diagnose and treat both animals great and small. I want to show the world that animals whether they are our pets or rise to enter the food chain need to be treating with compassion and care. We must honor them and thank them for all that they provide for us whether that be companionship or nourishment.

**Name:** Stephanie Danielle Rivera  
**Hometown:** Mission, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science Pre-Vet  
**Expected Date of graduation:** December 2014  
**Degree:** Bachelors  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** BGREEN



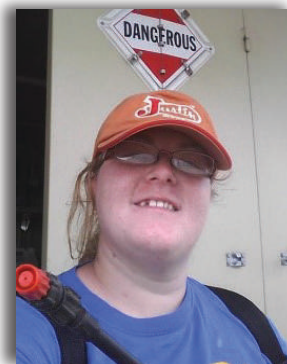
**Career Experience/ Location:** Research Assistant at Center for African Resources: Animals, Communities and Land Use in Chobe, Botswana

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** During this experience I learned bird rehabilitation and basic training. While working in the research lab I worked mainly on two projects, water quality and leptospirosis in banded mongoose. During water quality I learned TSS to determine E.Coli quantity in the Chobe River. While on the banded mongoose project I learned DNA extracting, and how to run a PCR machine to find traces of leptospirosis in banded mongooses, and finding places in the environment they could have received it from.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I hope one day to work with the big five of Africa in hope to increase the populations along with other animals on the endangered species list. As for research I want to continue working on research dealing with disease affecting people and animals.



**Name:** Amanda Seiler  
**Hometown:** Pleasanton, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M- Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** General Agriculture  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2014  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA, NRCS  
**Grant:** BGREEN



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2014 I interned at the NRCS “Kika” de la Garza Plant Materials center in Kingsville, TX where I gained knowledge of biofuels and sustainability.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I gained both knowledge and hands on experience working with biofuel legume species, laboratory, and greenhouse based work. I helped maintain NRCS research plots, assisted with harvest and post-harvest procedures, afterward processing of associated seed, and preparation of laboratory research trays. By the end of the summer I had gained a much better grasp of sustainability, natural resources, and native plant id. Through this internship I have gained a new appreciation for sustainable agriculture.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completing my Bachelor’s degree in December, 2014 I plan to join the work force. I plan to search for a career in USDA or NRCS in order so I can become more actively involved in agricultural research. If unable to find a career I plan to spend some more time in the field and gain more experience. Further down the line, if able, I would love to go back to school and specialize my knowledge base with a Master’s in an agricultural field and I am undecided whether I would like to teach, do research, or both.

**Name:** Sonia Lynn Rodriguez  
**Hometown:** New Florence, Mo 63363  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University- Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected Date Of Graduation:** December, 2014  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science-Animal Science  
**USDA Agency Of Interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP

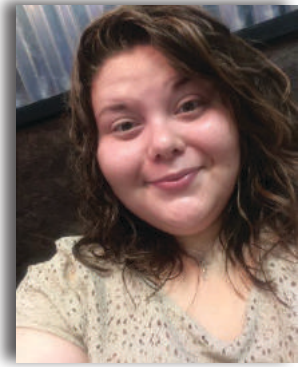


**Career Experience/Location:** Cranley Park in Clifton, Queensland, Australia and Ideal view Goat Dairy in Meningie, South Australia, Australia.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** During this Career Experience I learned a lot about Caprine Arthritis Encephalitis (CAE) and how difficult it is to eradicate. I also learned about breeding and synchronization programs first hand, with use of hormones. This experience taught me different ways to look at situations about dairy goats in terms of health, feed, disease prevention and even starting a new dairy.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** My goal is to work as a dairy goat herd manager, focusing on increasing herd health without decreasing production.

**Name:** Rebecca Ruiz  
**Hometown:** Whitsett, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Sophomore  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS, FSIS, GIPSA  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2014 I interned for the Hubert Veterinary Hospital in Kingsville, Texas under the title of Kennel Technician.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** The internship provided me with the opportunity to get hands on experience in many different skills attributed to Veterinary Medicine. I obtained background information in animal handling/restraining, animal nutrition and feeding, medication management, surgery preparations, animal exam procedures, and while also gaining business communication skills.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After the completion of my Bachelor degree in Animal Science in December 2017. I plan to farther my education at Texas A&M College Station in obtaining a PhD in the Animal Science Graduate program. With my degree I plan to gain experience in my career field and to also gain a job opportunity educating younger generations in Animal Science education or fathering my education in Veterinary Medicine.

**Name:** Ramon Saenz III  
**Hometown:** Uvalde, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range & Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2015  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2015, I interned for the Soil Water Conservation Board in Medina County TX under the title of Soil Water Conservation Technician.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** The internship provided me with a comprehensive range of practical knowledge of conservation practices under programs provided by USDA-NRCS. Some experiences gained was from cropland, rangeland, and pastureland conservation from designing of water facilities for wildlife and cattle to surveying terrain to establish terraces for erosion control.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** In completion of my Bachelor's degree in May 2015, I plan to search employment in the natural resources conversation field. I would like to become more active in different affiliations that promote conservation and preservation of land and wildlife. My ultimate goal is to join the agency of the NRCS, the internship captivated me where individuals within the agency were assisting agricultural producers with education and technical assistance.

**Name:** Ruby A. Saldana  
**Hometown:** Weslaco, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** General Agriculture  
**Expected date of graduation:** 05/2015  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS - PPQ  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2014, I worked with the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service – Plant Protection and Quarantine in Honolulu, Hawai'i.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** During the course of my internship, I worked with the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle project (recently established in the fall of 2013) servicing traps and performing quality control on already deployed traps. This involved the use of various types of equipment that also included gps and mapping systems which were established in order to compile pertinent data for both the USDA and the Hawaii Department of Agriculture. I was also working at the Plant Inspection Station at Honolulu International Airport where I honed my skills in plant pathology.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon my graduation in May 2015, I plan to further my education at Texas A&M University – Kingsville as a graduate student and also, seek employment with the USDA. With the completion of my Master's degree, it is quite possible that my education will not end there

**Name:** Jennifer Nicole Santos  
**Hometown:** Zapata, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2014  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science in Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS VS, FDA  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** In summer of 2014, I interned for the USDA with the APHIS PPQ in Laredo, TX.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This career experience has given me the opportunity to get first hand insight about the process that import/export commodities undergo. I also learned about some of the diseases and pests that are harmful to our agriculture and the method PPQ uses in efforts to prevent them from spreading.

**What is your perception of agriculture now:** Throughout the course of my career experience with APHIS PPQ, I have realized that our agriculture is much more complex than just growing and selling the end product. There are strict rules that must be followed when it comes to transporting/importing agricultural commodities.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in December 2014 I hope to be employed by APHIS VS as an animal health technician. I am also considering applying for a job position with the Tick Eradication Program. My ultimate goal is to pursue a career that is rewarding in more ways than one. I would like to make a difference in the agricultural world and share with the community how important our agriculture is.

**Name:** Marlyn Saucedo  
**Hometown:** Eagle Pass, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2016  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science in Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP

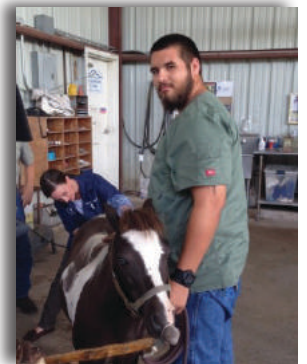


**Career Experience/Location:** I was an intern at Hill Country Equine in Boerne, Texas, at Chisholm Trail Veterinary Clinic in Luling, Texas, and at the Texas A&M University Farm in Kingsville, Texas aiding the veterinary technicians and the livestock manager.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** As an intern in three different locations, it gave me the opportunity to have a hands on experience with dogs, cats, rabbits, pigs, goats, cattle, and horses plus knowing the real work on maintaining and running a farm with more than one hundred animals.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my undergraduate's degree, I would like to continue my education by applying to veterinary school or apply to graduate school to complete a Master's degree that can let me help animals have the best performance and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

**Name:** Gerardo Raul Vela  
**Hometown:** Laredo, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University - Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science (pre-veterinary medicine)  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2015  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science in Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2014, I interned at a mixed veterinary clinic in Castroville, Texas working primarily with equine animals.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** Through this internship I was able to gain hands on experience treating animals and dealing with their owners. I was in direct contact with animals every day that were in need of medical care. Under the supervision of a veterinarian I was able to practice simple procedures such as administering medications, applying bandages, and drawing blood samples.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Once I complete my undergraduate work at Texas A&M Kingsville, I hope to be accepted into a college of veterinary medicine at Texas A&M College Station. If I am not accepted I would like to continue my education at the graduate level perhaps in biomedical technology or biotechnology at University of Texas at San Antonio. My goal is to gain more experience in the biomedical field and to reapply for the College of Veterinary medicine. I learned this summer that I do enjoy the work a veterinarian does and would like that career path for myself.



# 2015 Undergraduate Students

**Name:** Michael Aldridge  
**Hometown:** Hot Springs, AR  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University of Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville, TX  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** Spring of 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelors  
**USDA Agency of interest:** Agrilife  
**Grant:** STEP UP

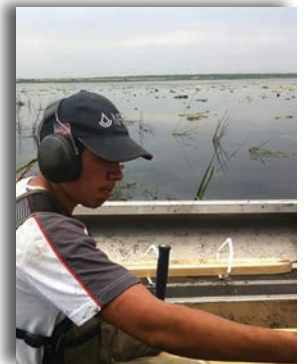


**Career Experience/Location:** Corpus Christi, TX at AgriLife Research Center

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I worked under an entomologist PhD named Dr. Brewer. In addition I worked with several grad students and a man named Darwin Anderson, who oversaw the experiments just as Dr. Brewer did and was in charge of helping the operations go smoothly. I knew very little about the insects we were studying before the summer, or agriculture in general for that matter. I got a first-hand experience working with the Sugarcane Aphid in Sorghum and Fleahopper in cotton.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I don't think I'd like to get much into the research side of agriculture. But I know understanding your growers' enemies will be important. I have yet to decide where I want to try to get a job at after graduation, or what I even want to do.

**Name:** Xavier Alfaro-Lopez  
**Hometown:** Houston, TX  
**Institution:** Texas Agricultural & Mechanical University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range & Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2016  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** Natural Resource Conservation Service  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2015, I interned for the USDA with the Natural Resource Conservation Service through the Pathways Program in Thibodaux, Louisiana as a Soil Conservationist Trainee.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** Through this internship I was provided not a lot of hands on experience, but experience in listening and speaking to clients. I helped oversee the Lafourche-Terrebonne parishes and learned a lot about Sugar Cane and Soybeans.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I hope to get a job as a Wildlife Biologist or Ecologist working outdoors to research and manage wildlife areas to preserve for the future generations to come. So that they too, can have the opportunity to learn about the importance of the natural world just as I had.

**Name:** Caleb Applewhite  
**Hometown:** Seguin, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University - Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville, Texas  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date**  
**Of graduation:** December, 2016  
**Degree:** Bachelor's Degree of Science- Animal Science  
**USDA Agency**  
**Of interest:** FSIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** USDA inspector at P-1137 plant (Tyson's Food Company) Seguin, Texas

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I learned the jobs and duties of an on-line USDA poultry inspector and I am now trained to spot Septicemia, Inflammatory process, Dermatitis and Airsaculitis amongst chicken.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I would like to become head of FSIS in any region.

**Name:** Alexandra Mariah Bazan  
**Hometown:** Alice, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M  
**Campus:** Kingsville, TX  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range and Wildlife Management  
**USDA Agency**  
**of interest:** NRCS, Forest Service, Texas Parks and Wildlife.  
**Grant:** STEP UP

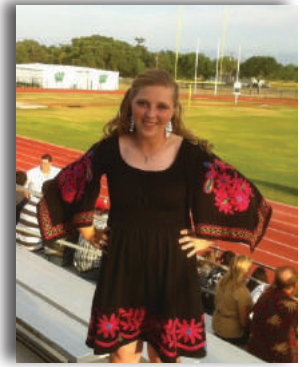


**Career experience/location:** In the summer of 2015 I interned for the USDA with NRCS in Uvalde, TX under the title of Earth Team volunteer.

**Description of career experience:** This internship provided me with hands on experience in a wide variety of skills needed in being an employee for the NRCS. I gained experience in several different topics including riparian zones, soil, engineering, and some of the office work also.

**Career and research aspirations:** Upon completing my Bachelor in Range and Wildlife Management in May 2015, I will then start working in whatever job accepted at the time. With the knowledge and experience I have learned over the years with school and the internships I have experienced. My goal would be to have a job that would not only help the environment and conservation but something I would enjoy doing every day of my life. So it would be just a job but a career.

**Name:** Lacie Jo Beall  
**Hometown:** Woodsboro, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science & Technology w/ Teaching Certificate  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2016  
**Degree:** Bachelor Science – Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service  
**Grant:** BGREEN



**Career Experience/Location:** Starting in January I began interning with District 11 Extension Service in Nueces County where I worked with the Ag/Natural Resource agent on numerous different projects. In June I started interning with San Patricio County where I worked with the 4-H and Ag/N.R. agents doing some many different projects.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in May 2016, I will continue to further my education at Sam Houston State University- Huntsville in the Masters of Animal Science- Equine program. With this degree, I hope to gain knowledge and experience that will broaden my options and opportunities in my future career search. My goal is to ultimately be in a position where I can advocate education to younger generations and to the general public about the importance of conservation and preservation of our animals and natural resources.

**Name:** Dedra Brown  
**Hometown:** Sweetwater, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University- Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville, TX  
**Rank:** Recent Graduate  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** August 2015  
**Degree:** Bachelors of Science in Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA- Agriculture Research Services  
**Grant:** STEP UP

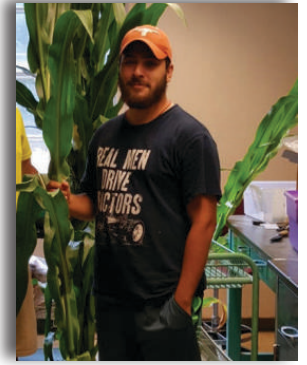


**Career Experience/Location:** During summer 2015, I interned for the USDA- Agricultural Research Service in Beltsville, Maryland working in the Animal Parasitic Disease Lab.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** During the internship, I learned a lot on the pathology of parasites, methods on how to develop a vaccine, how tissue samples are used, why mast cells are important when it comes to infections, and how long it can actually take to produce and get a vaccine approved.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Since completing my Bachelor's degree in August 2015, I would like to gain more knowledge working and having a career in Research. Before this internship, I was not completely sure if I even wanted to further my education until doing this internship. Throughout the internship I got a lot of encouragement to do so. As of now, I would like to keep my options open when it comes to choosing a Master's program and the location. My biggest aspiration is to make a difference in our research studies when it comes to producing new vaccines and techniques used to treat our animals when it comes to their well- being.

**Name:** Jose G. Casas  
**Hometown:** Santiago, Nuevo Leon  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** General Agricultural Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2015  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS  
**Grant:** STEP UP

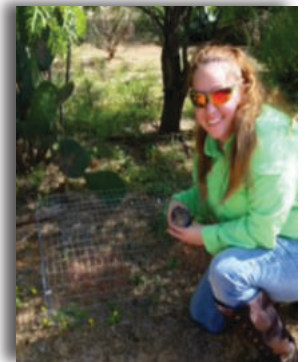


**Career Experience/Location:** In summer of 2015 I interned for the USDA with the ARS in the Sustainable Agricultural Laboratory; located in Beltsville, Maryland.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** Thanks to this internship I learned a lot of things; in other words, my knowledge of scientists and laboratory work has become greater. I gained experience in sustainability, organic and conventional crops, and soil sampling. This internship showed me how to be more responsible and be more efficient.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** As I receive my Bachelor's degree on this December 2015, I would like to work with a research team in the topic of over producing food for humanity. With this Bachelor's I want to start making a change in the Agricultural world. With the knowledge I know I might be able to bring new ideas that no one has ever thought about. I am really interested on making more food that a person could eat. This comes with the fact that there are more people than the world can handle.

**Name:** Daisy J. Castillo  
**Hometown:** Eagle Pass, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University- Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agricultural Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2016  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:**  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** During summer of 2015, I interned for a grad student from TAMUK in Carrizo Springs, Texas under the title of Quail Technician.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience in a wide variety of skills necessary for having a degree with wildlife or skills that I might need to work for Texas Park and Wildlife. I gained experience in natural resource management and wildlife management.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in May 2016, I will continue to further my education at Texas A&M University Kingsville in the Masters of Range and Wildlife Management program. With this degree, I hope to gain knowledge and experience that will help me teach future generation about the environment. My goal is to be in a position where I can teach future and the present generation.



**Name:** Jose Gerardo Cortez Jr.  
**Hometown:** Roma, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Sophomore  
**Major:** Environmental Soil Science/Range & Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** Throughout the summer of 2015 I interned at the NRCS office in Rio Grande City, Texas as an Earth Team Volunteer.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** The internship taught me a lot about myself and what I am capable of. I learned about what each of the different positions in the office specializes in, and how communication skills are vital in running an office well.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon graduating in May of 2018, I plan to go straight into a professional career either with the USDA or as a teacher. I enjoy the idea helping others and teaching the importance of agriculture to our future generations. The path that I have chosen to take on a double major will hopefully leave me in a perfect position to work for the NRCS since I will be efficient in not only soils, but in rangeland as well.

**Name:** David Coy  
**Hometown:** Raymondville, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2016  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS, NRCS  
**Grant:** BGREEN



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2015 I interned for the USDA with the Natural Resource Conservation Service in San Benito, Texas as a Field Technician.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I learned how the NRCS works with farmers and ranchers to help better the lands along with their ecosystems in some cases. We worked hand in hand with land owners creating conservation plans that would meet and usually exceed their needs. After working all summer long with the great staff at the San Benito Field Office I feel that I have obtained a great experience. One in which I believe has helped me discover a better idea of what I would like to do in life.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Now that I'm at a milestone in my life that I once dreamt about I can continue on to the next step in making my dreams come true. The last time I wrote this Bio I was dreaming about attending TAMUK, and now I'm a senior at TAMUK currently on my second semester as a Javelina. I plan to graduate in December of 2016 with my Bachelor in Animal Science, pre-vet option. After I achieve this, I plan to do my best to make it into a school of Veterinary Medicine, where I have the ultimate dream of achieving a DVM far as career.

**Name:** Tiffany Fleming  
**Hometown:** San Antonio, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** June 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** During the summer of 2015 I worked for the USDA with the ARS department in Beltsville, Maryland as a research assistant.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** During this internship I learned valuable laboratory, computer and hands-on experience that I will be able to apply to future jobs. I learned what being a scientist for the USDA-ARS can entail and the various research projects that are conducted by the USDA to improve agriculture techniques.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After I receive my Bachelor's degree in December 2016, I plan on joining the military to later become a veterinarian in the United States Army. After being in the military for a few years I plan on going on to veterinary school to obtain doctorate in veterinary medicine. I then plan on specializing in prosthetics for animals to focus on military animals who have lost limbs in battle.

**Name:** Alvaro Garcia  
**Hometown:** Brownsville, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Plant & Soil Science-Agronomy  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science in Agriculture  
**Agency of interest:** Purdue University  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** For the summer of 2015 I was interning with Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana with the Botany and Plant Pathology Dept. My experience at this facility was exceptionally educational and fun.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with numerous hands on experiences out in the field with a few inside the lab. I learned many important skills to work in a field pertaining to plant pathology research and will more than likely pursue a job in the research field. Not only did I learn a variety of field skills, but also to work with a team and collaborate with them.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After completion of my four year degree plan with Texas A&M Kingsville, I will pursue higher education by completing a master's degree in Plant Pathology at Purdue University or at Texas A&M University. With completion of a master's degree in Plant Pathology I will have a wider selection of job opportunities to choose from. My preferred job choice would have to be one involving research in corn. Location would not be a big issue for me.

**Name:** Veronica Garcia  
**Hometown:** Robstown, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2016  
**Degree:** Bachelors of Science in Animal Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USFS, APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** In summer of 2015 I interned for the USDA with the US Forest Service in New Waverly, Texas as a Recreation Technician. However, I also had the opportunity to work alongside the Ranger Stations Archaeologist, Timber Markers and Wildlife Biologist.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience in a wide variety of skills necessary for working in different areas in the Forest Service. I gained experience in recreational management, wildlife biology, archaeology, timber marking and also in running the front desk as a receptionist. This internship allowed me to learn what it takes to work in a District Ranger's office through the Forest Service.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** While my academic career continues, I will begin to volunteer with Texas Parks and Wildlife to continue learning new skills and to begin new work. I hope to continue this until my graduation in December 2016, along with any other volunteer opportunities that may come my way to help gain experience and broaden my career choice. Upon graduation

**Name:** Onelisa Garza  
**Hometown:** Linn, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University- Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2015  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** OC, NIFA  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2015 I interned with the USDA Office of Communications in Washington, D.C. under the title Communications Research Assistant.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** While interning with the USDA Office of Communications I was able to gain knowledge and experience in a variety of topics. I had the opportunity to write speeches, blogs, and opinion editorials for people such as Deputy Secretary Krysta Harden and Secretary Tom Vilsack. I also was able to communicate with newspapers and television stations all over the country to pitch different news stories. This internship helped me improve my writing and speaking skills all while learning about everything USDA does the public.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon graduating with my Bachelor's degree from Texas A&M University- Kingsville, I plan to continue there and obtain a Master's in Agriculture Education. Speaking and educating people is my greatest passion and I would like nothing more than to put my degrees to use by ultimately being in a type of position that would help advocate the importance of agriculture to not only youth, but adults as well.

**Name:** Maribel Glass  
**Hometown:** Houston, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range and Wildlife Management  
**Expected graduation date:** May 2016  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of Interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career experience/location:** In the summer of 2015 I interned for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Bethel, Alaska under the title Biological Technician.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** This internship has provided me with a variety of skills in waterfowl studies. I learned what it takes to be a field worker for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

**Career and research aspirations:** After completing my Bachelor's degree in May 2016, I will further my education at Texas A&M University-Kingsville and pursue a Master's in Wildlife Science. I hope to gain knowledge and experience that will help me to be an asset to my future career. My goal is help save endangered species from extinction.

**Name:** Clarissa Guerrero  
**Hometown:** Harlingen, Tx  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science, Pre- Veterinarian  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 11, 2015  
**Degree:** Bachelors of Science Animal Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA-ARS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



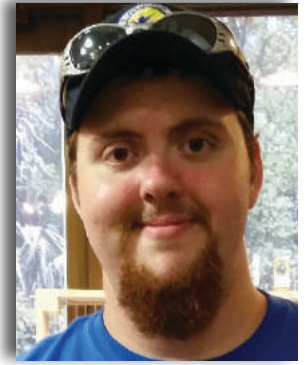
**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2015, I had the opportunity of interning with the USDA Agriculture Research Service in Beltsville, Maryland in an Animal Genomics research lab.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship experience let me explore a new area of research on metagenomics and pyrosequencing. I gained valuable knowledge on 454pyrosequencing, genetics, and statistics. I expanded my lab skills by learning DNA extractions and PCR methods and also participated in sample collections for an experiment.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in December 2015, I will continue to further my education by attending graduate school and pursue a master's degree in animal nutrition. After completion of my master's degree, I hope to attend Veterinary school at Texas A&M University. In the end, my ultimate goal is to work as a research Veterinarian and contribute to the agriculture industry through improving the diet of livestock for consumer purposes.



**Name:** Linden Eli  
**Hometown:** San Antonio, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University – Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agriculture  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2016  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USFWS, USFS  
**Grant:** STEP UP

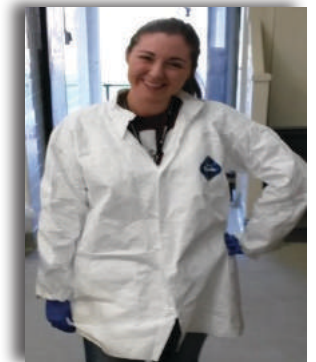


**Career experience/location:** In summer of 2015 I interned for the USFWS with the Santa Ana Wildlife Refuge in Alamo, Texas as their summer intern.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** This internship allowed me to work with several units that manage vegetation, wild cat populations, public education, wetlands management, and HR management. I got to familiarize myself with the work and connecting needed to organize just about anything involving a federal agency when working on anything within the public eye.

**Career and research aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in December 2016, I hope to begin work for USFWS as a biologist in ecology. After a decade or two I would like to transition from a field oriented job to more of a public relations area. Working for the federal government or a nonprofit as a public relations or public education manager would allow me to spread information and help out on the societal side of things.

**Name:** Victoria Lozano  
**Hometown:** Manchaca, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science-Pre Vet  
**Expected date of graduation:** December, 2016  
**Degree:** Bachelors in Animal Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** This summer I interned at the Agricultural Research Services division of the USDA in Beltsville, Maryland in the Diet Genomics and Immunology Laboratory under the mentoring of Dr. Gloria Solano-Aguilar.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I learned how to work in a laboratory setting, which included being able to work on independent projects as well as working on expert with others. I learned about many laboratory procedures and how they applied to different aspects of the research project.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After I graduate in December of 2016 with a Bachelor's in Animal Science and a minor in chemistry, I plan on attending Veterinary school in the fall of 2017 at Texas A&M University-College Station. I want to specialize in large animals, specifically horses and livestock, so that I can have my own clinic that will be able to provide good and convenient services at a more affordable price.

**Name:** Gregory Lujano  
**Hometown:** San Antonio, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Wildlife Management and Biology  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2016  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2015 I was a student intern with Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services department. In Gainesville, Florida; National Wildlife Research Center Florida Field Station.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** The internship provided me with research skills in the areas of invasive species management, animal care of reptiles and avian, cage construction, reptile necropsies, and test maze construction. It has also provided me with better understanding of how wildlife services interact with the public, and learning the behaviors of a target species.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completing my two bachelor's degrees in May of 2016, I plan to further my education in a master's degree at Texas A&M Kingsville in wildlife management or at University of Florida in Wildlife Conservation Biology. My goal with my degree is to become a research wildlife biologist in order to help the conservation of our natural wildlife and to better the relations between wildlife and the public.

**Name:** Javier Martinez  
**Hometown:** Laredo, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2015  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS, APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** I spend the summer of 2015 interning with the USDA Agency ARS in U.S. Meat Animal Research (USMARC) up in Clay Center, Nebraska. W here I learned a new set of skills that will be useful for my near future plans, as a graduate student. It has been the best experience of my college career and a very helpful one since it will open many other doors in the future.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship in the USMARC has provided me with the hands on experience needed to be successful not only as an undergraduate but especially as a graduate student. I learned unique lab and research techniques that one-day would become handy as I work on my project or anybody else research/project.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon graduation on December 2015 with a Bachelors in Science with an Animal Science major and with an assistantship research offer on the table. I will continue with my education and go for my master's degree in Texas A&M University Kingsville with intent to focus on beef cattle nutrition. Upon completion my focus will be to continue my education and someday achieve my goal of a PhD and work in either government research or academia.

**Name:** Stephannie Marie Ramirez  
**Hometown:** Edcouch, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**of interest:** ARS, USDA  
**Grant:** BGREEN



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2015 I had the opportunity to work as an intern for the USDA in the field of ARS in Beltsville, Maryland.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I had hands on experience and training. I was a lab assistant technician inspecting each and every single native honey bee. We would gently remove their abdomen to expose the disease we would examine under the microscope.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I am currently in the process of completing my Bachelor's in Animal Science, but with time and God willing I would like to continue my education, and earn a Master's in Animal Science. With this degree I picture myself in a vet's office, working on a farm or ranch, or teaching Biology in a classroom, preferably 4th grade. Nevertheless, I'll be enjoying what I do. If I'm doing what I love; I'll never work a day in my life.

**Name:** Iliana Rodriguez  
**Hometown:** Laredo, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A & M University – Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville, Texas  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science Certified  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS, USDA  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** In the Summer 2015 I interned with the USDA with the Natural Resources Conservation Services as a Earth Team Volunteer in Houston, Texas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This is internship provided me with many hands on experiences in the office and out in the field, which helped me improve my communication skills. I gained knowledge in conserving our natural resources as well as how to speak to all types of producers.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in May 2017, I will continue to further my education at Texas A & M University – Kingsville in the Master's of Agricultural Education program. Where I hope to broaden my knowledge and skills about conservation. I hope to inspire and encourage many more people to support and understand conversation and how important it is to help our nations land.

**Name:** Alfonso Sandoval  
**Hometown:** Los Fresnos  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2016  
**Degree:** Bachelors of Animal Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS, APHIS  
**Grant:** BGREEN



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2015, I interned for the USDA with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in San Benito, Texas. In this agency I worked a lot hands on and with the public learning how to help people help the land.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** In this internship I learned to do field surveys and how to set up all the equipment. I learned to do some office work; this was really interesting because you don't spend all the time out in the field there is office work too. I also gained experience in forage/pasture management, integrated pest management, soil textures, and public relations. Overall I think I learned enough to work with the agency.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in spring of 2017, I will strive to apply for a USDA job. I hope to find a job that is in my career path or in similar path as long as it is in the Agriculture industry. I also see myself continuing to grad school for a Master's degree and doing some research to gain more knowledge and skills.

**Name:** Laura Leigh Steele  
**Hometown:** Victoria, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University-Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2015  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS, APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



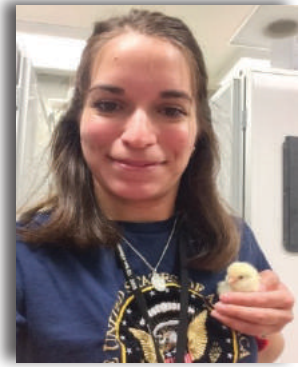
**Career Experience/Location:** In summer 2015 I interned for the USDA with the Natural Resource Conservation Services in Victoria, Texas under the title of Earth Team Volunteer.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on field work experiences. I gained experience in natural resource conservation, communication skills, plant identification, and many other skills necessary to be a successful employee for the NRCS.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in December 2015, I plan on pursuing a career with NRCS. My goal is to ultimately use this internship experience to enhance my resume and be hired on with the NRCS. I would love to be able to speak to producers and make a difference in natural resource conservation for generations to come.



**Name:** Cristina Teran  
**Hometown:** Mission, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Graduate Student  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2015  
**Degree:** Master's of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS, APHIS  
**Grant:** BGREEN

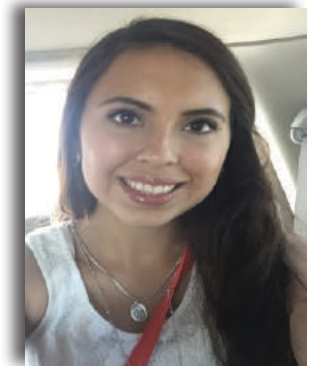


**Career Experience/Location:** In Summer 2015 I interned with the USDA Agriculture Research Services (ARS) division in Beltsville, Maryland as a Research Technician working with poultry.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** The summer internship allowed me to experience new lab techniques such as using the flow cytometer, making an agarose gel, growing bacterial cultures to harvest the plasmids, and helped me gain experience in handling poultry, artificially inseminating hens, as well as processing rooster sperm for insemination.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Before this summer internship, I still had doubts about wanting to work in the research field in general. After completing the internship, my perceptions changed to actually finding this field much more interesting and rewarding than how I used to perceive it. After completing my Master's Degree in Animal Science in December, I hope to work with Customs and Border Protection as an Agriculture Specialist and ultimately work in the K-9 unit to aid in identifying harmful pests and parasites that can harm the agriculture sector or our citizens. If this opportunity does not work out, I will then find a job within the USDA-ARS or –APHIS

**Name:** Catherine Uribe  
**Hometown:** Laredo, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agricultural science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2015  
**Degree:** Bachelors of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS-USDA  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** In summer of 2015 I interned with the ARS-USDA Nematology Laboratory in Beltsville, Maryland working under the plant parasitic nematology research technician

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** Working with the ARS-USDA Nematology Laboratory provided me with much experience such as hands on work and laboratory and research experience. I learned how to identify which plants were prone to root knot nematodes and how different bacteria's or plant parts that can lessen the population growth of nematodes in the plant roots.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After graduation with my BS in Agricultural Science, I plan on looking for a career. The careers I would love to follow is working as an agriculture specialist with customs and border protection or working with ARS-USDA as a research technician working with plants or animals. My main goal is to find a career based on my field and try to gain more experience to be able to get my dream job.

**Name:** Rebeca A. Vela  
**Hometown:** Laredo, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Animal Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA- APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** Summer 2015, I interned for both the Texas Animal Health Commission alongside USDA-APHIS. Locations: Laredo, Zapata, Pearsall and Alice, Texas. I was titled as an inspector for both agencies.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship gave me plenty of hands on experience working as a cattle inspector. I learned how to interact with ranchers and cattle owners. I learned of the type of work involved and necessary with the import of feeder cattle. I was also given the opportunity to tracheal swab chickens.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** In May of 2017, I will have completed my Bachelor's degree after which I plan to continue my studies in a master's program focusing on Animal Behaviorism. Eventually my plan is to apply into vet school with a focus in large animal medicine. I hope that with my degree I can help all large animals as well as educate others on why we still use them for food and work. Modern technology should be used to make our food supply healthier for consumption, and I hope to one day be part of that.

**Name:** Chase Henry Walther  
**Hometown:** Harlingen, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range and Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** May, 2016  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** U.S. Forest Service  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2015 I interned for the USDA with the US Forest Service in Dubois, Wyoming under the title of Wildlife Biology Technician.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with the opportunity to experience what a Wildlife Biologist working for the US Forest Service does on a day-to-day basis as well as a hands on look at how all departments of the US Forest Service work together to conserve the nations natural resources.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I plan on going on to graduate studies for Range and Wildlife Management at A&M University in Kingsville after I complete my Bachelor's degree. Once my graduate school is completed I hope to look for a career with either a state wildlife agency or federal agency to improve wildlife habitat for enjoyment by the public.

**Name:** Taylor Wilkins  
**Hometown:** West Columbia, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University-Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range and Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2016  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA, APHIS  
**Grant:** BGREEN



**Career experience/location:** In the summer of 2015 I interned for the USDA with APHIS in Starkville, Mississippi under the title of a Wildlife Intern.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience with wide variety of skills that will help me in the future when finding a job. I gained experience in research, collecting data, repairing vehicles, checking small engines, and trapping birds. While learning, I had the opportunity to have a skill in testing the water in the ponds that were provide to me when I arrived in Mississippi.

**Career and research aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in December 2016, I will stop my education at Texas A&M University-Kingsville and have a degree in Range and Wildlife Management. I will not go further in my education and do any research.

**Name:** Sam Elliot Young  
**Hometown:** Luling, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range and Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** May, 2016  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2015 I interned for the USDA with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Lockhart, Texas under the title of volunteer.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** the volunteering that I did this summer provided me with the experience and knowledge to know how to assist clients in their ranching needs. I gained skills in operating various types of equipment, computer skills, and social skills while also learning more about the native and invasive plant life.

**Career and research aspirations:** Upon the completion of my bachelor's degree in May of 2016, my time as a student will be at a conclusion. With my degree and experience I hope to land a job with the USDA in some form or another. My goal in life is to ultimately land a job that I truly enjoy doing and make enough money to have an easier life than when I was a kid.

# 2016 Undergraduate Students

**Name:** Isaac Dean Atkinson  
**Hometown:** Lyford, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2016  
**Degree:**  
**USDA Agency of interest:** Bachelor of Agriculture Science  
Texas Animal Health Commission  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2016 I interned for the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) in Beeville, Texas under the title of Livestock Inspector.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** Throughout my summer with the TAHC I've learned so much about the duties and expectations of this occupation. The TAHC deals with a variety of issues and diseases from CWD in whitetail deer to the Texas fever tick in cattle. If there is a disease that Texas has in livestock, the TAHC is in full force to maintain it and place quarantines in order to control the movement and spread of the disease.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I plan to graduate in December with my Bachelors of Agriculture Science, and use that to start up a cow calf operation in the Rio Grande Valley. If the opportunity arises I would highly consider working for the TAHC as a Livestock Inspector. Through this internship I gained knowledge on why livestock inspectors are important for the livestock industry. I would love to become in inspector and help the industry to prevent diseases from spreading.

**Name:** Rosa Nelia Badillo  
**Hometown:** Santa Rosa, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** General Ag Science/Minor in Plant Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2016  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA Aphis  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2016 I had the privilege to do my internship at the Texas A&M Kingsville Citrus Center in Weslaco, Texas under the title of research lab assistance.

**Description of Career Experience (What I Learned):** In the short period of time I spent at the Weslaco Citrus Center I learned various things. For example, I learned how to use an aspirator to collect the Asian Citrus Psyllid, how to set tests out in the citrus grove, how to plant and repot plant that are utilized for different test, how to collect and input data, and how to run a static analyses.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I wish to continue and plan to further my education at the Texas A&M Citrus Center in the Master's program of entomology and pesticide management. With this degree, it is my desire to have better job opportunities in my career. It is my hope to one day be employed as an officer for the USDA-Aphis-PPQ and conduct plant protection and aid in quarantine of citrus.



**Name:** Emma Broussard  
**Hometown:** Dripping Springs, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS  
**Grant:** STEP2



**Career Experience/Location:** In summer 2016 I interned at Beltsville Agricultural Research Center in Beltsville, Maryland. I worked in the Animal Biosciences and Biotechnology Lab under the supervision of Dr. Julie Long and Dr. Jianan Liu.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** During the duration of my internship I learned about the avian reproductive system. I learned that there are many challenges facing the commercial poultry industries and the conservation of the genetic stock. Through this internship I gained hands on experience with turkeys and learned their behavioral characteristics and how they should be handled and taken care of.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** My career aspirations are to graduate from Texas A&M-Kingsville with a Bachelor's of Science in Animal Science. I then plan to continue on to veterinarian school at Texas A&M-College Station. Since this internship has given me skill sets in the field of research, it is definitely something to consider as a career option upon completion of Veterinary Medicine School. If I were to pursue research I would very much like to continue to research and help advance the technologies of preserving genetic diversity in the avian

**Name:** Mathew J. Cantu  
**Hometown:** San Benito, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agriculture  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS, USFS  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE



**Career Experience/Location:** In summer of 2016 I interned for the USDA with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in San Benito, Texas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience in a wide variety of skills necessary for helping spread the conservation of natural resources in a safe and profitable manner. I gained experience in natural resource management, wildlife habitats, and grass mixtures while also learning a great deal about how an ecosystem needs a variety of grasses and shrubs depending on the season and stocking capacity a pasture can withhold.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in May of 2017, I would like to try and further my education in Kingsville in the Masters of Agriculture program. If completing this degree, I hope to gain the knowledge and experience that will broaden my options and opportunities in my future career search. My goal is to be in a position where I can help broaden the thought and practices of conserving our natural resources and wildlife while managing to still be profitable in the manner the producer or rancher sees fit.

**Name:** Pedro Casares  
**Hometown:** Brownsville, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture Plant and Soils  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA PIS  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE



**Career experience/location:** This summer of 2016 I attended my second interne for the USDA with the Plant inspection station in Los Indio's, Texas under the title of Plant inspection Technician.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** The opportunity that this internship provided gave me an understanding of the protocols, and procedures with an insight of various hands on experience both in the lab and in the field. With the knowledge I gained with my coworkers/friends I now have a better understanding of what the Plant inspection station is required to do in several situations.

**Career and research aspirations:** As I complete my Bachelor's degree in May of 2017 I am considering applying for a job in USDA APHIS Plant Inspection Station, but am now also considering counting a master's degree in agronomy, or a different Bachelor's degree in Entomology. With the intern I have completed it really introduced me to a career as an Entomologist a field of study that I realized I really enjoyed thanks to this internship.

**Name:** Alejandra Flores  
**Hometown:** Kingsville, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Range and Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USFS  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE

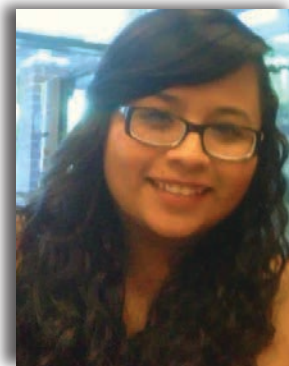


**Career Experience/Location:** In Summer 2016, I interned for the USDA with the US Forest Service. I was located primarily in Dubois, Wyoming, but we also had an office in Lander, Wyoming. I was a Wildlife Program Intern for the Department of Wildlife.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I learned a lot about what a Wildlife Biologist does and her/his position in the USFS. I also worked with the Department(s) of Engineering, Recreation, and Timber. I learned what it takes to manage the Shoshone National Forest through different perspectives from each department. Each department focuses on a different aspect of the forest in order to manage it as best as they can when all of the departments come together. I also learned how the public can affect and be affected by the way the forest is managed.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I recently changed my major from Range and Wildlife Management to Accounting. I plan to graduate from Texas A&M University-Kingsville with a Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting and a Minor in Spanish. I will then take the CPA (Certified Public Accountant) Exam. Once I have passed the exam, I would like to find work. I would still like to work for the USDA as an Accountant.

**Name:** Karen Flores  
**Hometown:** Edinburg, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA Aphis  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE

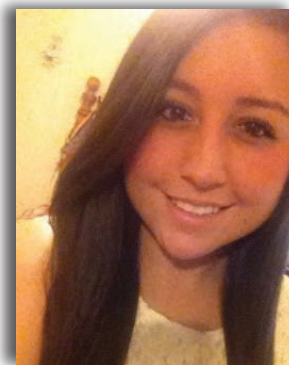


**Career experience/location:** In summer of 2016 I interned for the USDA with the Animal Parasite Diseases Lab in Beltsville, Maryland under the title of Laboratory Assistant intern.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience in a wide variety of skills necessary for running a research laboratory. I gained experience in how to properly research *Toxoplasma Gondii*, *Neospora*, how to handle and take care of lab mice.

**Career and research aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in December 2019, I will continue to further my education by applying to veterinary school to earn a Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine. Following this I will take the state test to become a full veterinarian. My goal is to land a position in a rescue center where I can watch and take care of animals in dire need and also to research for rare diseases causes.

**Name:** Rebekkah Flores  
**Hometown:** Laredo, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** June 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science in Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** During the summer of 2016, I interned with the USDA with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Laredo, Texas under the title of Earth Team Volunteer.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship with NRCS helped me gain hands on experience in a wide variety of skills like plant identification and rangeland practices that improve the Rancher's land. I also worked with the National Resources Inventory (NRI) and learned forage inventory that takes place every 10 years.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in June 2017, I will continue to further my education at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas. I plan to study my Master's in Equine Industry Management. This program will help me gain the knowledge of Equine so that it will help me in opening up my own Equine Rehab Center. I hope to buy my own land in the Hill Country to open up my Equine business.

**Name:** Anibal Garcia  
**Hometown:** Brownsville, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University-Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**Grant:** STEP2



**Career experience/location:** In summer of 2016 I interned with Texas A&M Agrilife Research and Extension Center at Weslaco with Danielle Sekulla as an IMP technician.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** The internship gave me knowledge of how bad a pest can destroy crops out in the field and what are some methods to prevent and control it. I also learned how to identify different types of pests and know when those pests will become a problem if not taken care of.

**Career and research aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in December 2017, I will go home and work at my family's ranch. I will use knowledge from both the university and my internship to implement new ways of farming and use those different methods for improvement of soil and eventually have greater yields. My goal is to double the size of what my father has achieved thought his life.

**Name:** Shanelle Haralson  
**Hometown:** San Benito, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency interest:** APDL, ARS  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE



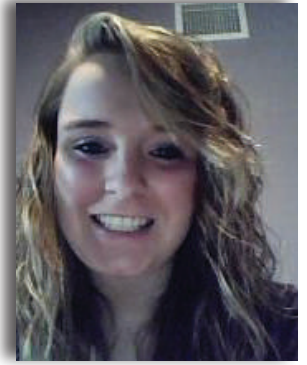
**Career Experience/Location:** My Summer 2016 internship was with the USDA in Beltsville, Maryland at their Animal Parasitology Disease Lab, as a technician.

**Description of Career Experience (what I learned):** In this internship I was able to get hands on experience on the multiple tests that are required for scientist to understand how the parasite operates in the host. I was also able to gain skills in animal husbandry. My knowledge in parasites and livestock is now broadening from this experience.

**Career and research aspirations:** Upon graduation in 2017, with my Bachelors in Animal Science I plan to continue my education by applying and getting accepted to Ross University for my Doctorates as a Veterinarian. My end goal is to become a licensed Veterinarian to help my community with their furry friends.



**Name:** Kailey Hill  
**Hometown:** Portland, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agribusiness  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** FSA  
**Grant:** STEP UP

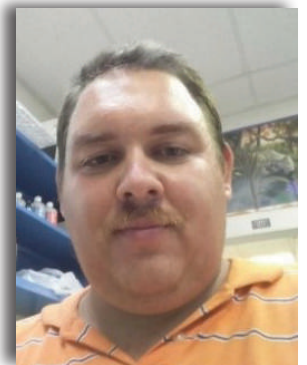


**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2016 I interned for the USDA with the Farm Service Agency farm loans and farm programs in Alice, Texas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship showed me what kind of job I could pursue with my Ag business degree. I got to experience the farm loans and farm programs and learn how they both work under FSA. I gained experience of the many different programs that the FSA has to help the local farmers. Also how the loan side can help farmers and ranchers with their operations.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Once I complete my bachelors in May of 2018, I hope to be able to get my Masters at Texas A&M University. After the completion of my masters I hope I can still continue with the Farm Service Agency by becoming a farm loan officer to then become a farm loan manager. Another plan would to start my own business to help farmers and ranchers with the financial problems.

**Name:** Juan Martinez  
**Hometown:** Laredo, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2016  
**Degree:** Bachelors of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP2



**Career Experience/Location:** In summer of 2016, I interned for the Agriculture Experiment Station located in the University of the Virgin Islands in the Virgin Island of St. Croix.

**Description of Career Experience (what I learned):** The internship provided me with hands-on experience with Senepol cattle and St. Croix White, breeds developed on the island. I learned how to place CIDRs in both species and how to properly process newborn lambs and calves. I learned how to test for parasite infestation by collecting fecal sample. I helped in two studies, one with sheep and the other with cattle. On the sheep, we gathered data the first week of every month and on the cattle, we gathered data on their behavior.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I plan to apply to graduate school at Texas A&M University – Kingsville for my Master’s Degree and plan to obtain a PhD in Animal Science that focuses on reproduction. I want to continue doing research whether working with the USDA or a University. I would like very much to work for A.E.S. at St. Croix at least for several years.

**Name:** Amber Roxanne Martinez  
**Hometown:** Combes, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville, Texas  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science Pre-Vet  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Animal Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** N/A  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** USMARC, Clay Center Nebraska

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** What I learned while I was an intern working with USMARC I was introduced to the microbiology side of research and learned how they use genome sequencing to look at bacteria population in cattle that might have BRD. I learned how to isolate DNA by taking nasal samples and extracting the DNA from them to be used later for PCR tests and taking the 16s gene to determine the bacteria population from prebreeding thru feedlot time points. By doing this we were able to see if there were any changes in bacteria throughout those time points and if there were any times where the bacteria were the same between different groups.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** My career plans are to become a Veterinarian and maybe do some research in the reproduction physiology department if I feel that ready for it.

**Name:** Raelene Mendez  
**Hometown:** Kingsville, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Sophomore  
**Major:** Horticulture  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Plant and Soil Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** Fruit and vegetable improvement center  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE

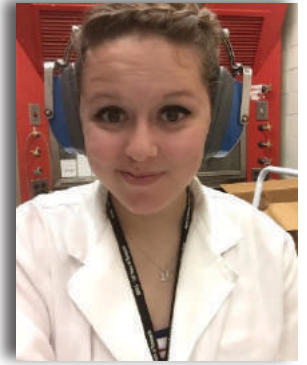


**Career Experience/Location:** Through the USDA Step up program, I completed an internship during summer 2016 in Horticulture Science at the Fruit and Vegetable Improvement center at Texas A&M' College Station, under the supervision of Dr. Bihmu Patil and Dr. G.K Jayaprakasha.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** After studying ten weeks in the lab environment, I have cultured a new perspective for a systematic approach in research. Alongside with one on one hands on experience, I also gained a significant understanding and appreciation for writing and presentation.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After the completion of my bachelor's degree in Horticulture science, I plan to apply to graduate school for a Master's of Horticulture Science, and further my career in the research aspect of this industry. My goal is to ultimately research Herbs and Spices to skin cells to achieve full understanding of their health benefits and eventual be able to conduct a line of natural skin care products.

**Name:** **Kassandra Peña**  
**Hometown:** **McAllen, Texas**  
**Institution:** **Texas A&M University**  
**Campus:** **Kingsville**  
**Rank:** **Junior**  
**Major:** **Animal Science (Pre-Vet)**  
**Expected date of graduation:** **August 2017**  
**Degree:** **Bachelor of Science**  
**USDA Agency of interest:** **ARS, APHIS**  
**Grant:** **WHEELS OF CHANGE**



**Career Experience/Location:** In Summer of 2016 I interned for the USDA with the US Agricultural Research Service in Beltsville, Maryland as a laboratory assistant.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with insight on different employment opportunities available within my career choice as well as the procedures and methods performed in a basic laboratory setting. I gained animal bioscience and biotechnology lab experience in molecular biology through training events, tech equipment application, and agricultural extension work.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in August 2017, I plan to further my education at Texas A&M in the professional DVM program. With this degree, I hope to fervently apply my knowledge and skills to a future position in veterinary care. My goal is to use these exceptional skills and meet all expectations in high pressure environments. Ultimately, I want to represent my commitment, perseverance, and hard work. In addition, I would like to provide quality veterinary services and learning opportunities to others seeking similar employment paths.

**Name:** **Jesse Jacob Robles**  
**Hometown:** **San Benito, Texas**  
**Institution:** **Texas A&M University**  
**Campus:** **Kingsville**  
**Rank:** **Senior**  
**Major:** **Animal Science**  
**Expected date of graduation:** **May 2017**  
**Degree:** **Bachelor of Science**  
**USDA Agency of interest:** **PPQ, APHIS**  
**Grant:** **STEP UP**



**Career experience/location:** In summer of 2016 I interned for the USDA with the Animal Plant and Health Inspection Services at the Plant Protection Quarantine, in Harlingen Texas. I was titled a Mex Fly Trapper three days of the week, a lab assistant one day, and a regulatory one day of the week.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience in a wide variety of skills necessary for servicing an average of forty traps a day. I gained experience in distinguishing types of host trees and plants, laboratory skills, and public relations. I was able to do an inspection at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley on their lab plans which contained a very dangerous virus for citrus plants and trees.

**Career and research aspirations:** As I finish my undergrad education I will move on forward on looking for a job and support my small family. Working in a work place like PPQ APHIS would be ideal for me. The Mex Fly program was very interesting, yet close to home.

**Name:** Iliana Rodriguez  
**Hometown:** Laredo, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A & M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agriculture  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS, USDA  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE

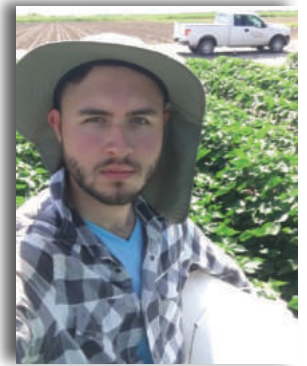


**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2016 I interned for the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Services in Texarkana, Arkansas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with many new ideas on how to conserve our natural resources for example pumping water out of the Red River in order to water our rice, corn, and soybean fields as well as setting up irrigation system around the river for water supply.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in May 2017, I hope to work with the USDA, NRCS where I will be able to help landowners and beginning farmers with conservation. I hope that I will be able to do all I can in order to help conserve our lands natural resources as best as possible.

**Name:** George Jim Thomas III  
**Hometown:** Tampico, Tamaulipas, Mexico  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** AARS, APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP2



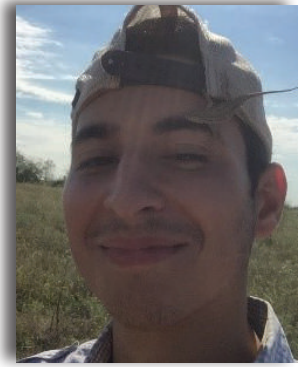
**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2016 I interned for Texas A&M AgriLife Center in Corpus Christi, TX, under the guidance of Dr. Michael Brewer and the help of Dr. Robert Bowling and Darwin Anderson.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience in different crops and methods of insect collection. I gained experience with analyzing data to obtaining more complex results from it. King ranch visits and center consultations made me more aware task management skills and goal completion.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in 2017, I would like to continue my educational career pursuing a Masters. Even though I enjoy working with the crops researched at AgriLife; I would like to learn more about fruits and vegetables production. I expect that with my educational career experience and knowledge I will determine my career goal.



**Name:** Alejandro Trevino  
**Hometown:** Laredo, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range and Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science in Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE



**Career Experience/Location:** During the summer of 2016, I interned for the USDA with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Laredo, Texas under the title of Earth Team Volunteer.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship with NRCS helped me gain hands on experience with rangeland practices and it helped improve my plant identification skills. I also learned how to do surveys of canopy cover and learn how the cost share programs with NRCS work.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelors degree in May 2017, I will further my education by applying for graduate school in Texas A&M University at Kingsville, Texas. I plan to do a Masters in range to gain more knowledge and be better prepared for a future job. My goal is to work for NRCS once I graduate with my Masters degree. I plan on applying for a rangeland specialist position, and hopefully work in a county where it is mostly rangeland.

**Name:** Ariel Danielle Zagala  
**Hometown:** Richmond, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelors in Animal Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA Agricultural Marketing Service, Washington, DC  
**Grant:** STEP UP



**Career Experience/Location:** I interned at the USDA-AMS in Washington, DC. I was hired onto the Country of Origin Labeling Program and the Livestock, Poultry and Grain Market News.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I learned what Country of Origin Labeling was and its purpose and impact in the industry. With COOL I was taught what each specialist does in headquarters and how they gather information from evaluators in different states. These evaluators make unexpected visits to stores to make sure they are Country of Origin (COO) compliant. I also learned about LPGMN and how they gather prices in the industry.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completing my bachelor's degree in Animal Science with a minor in Political Science, I plan on traveling back to Washington, DC to work at the USDA. With my degree I hope to use the knowledge I have and great work ethic to help better USDA wherever I end up. I hope to better my career skills and continue to learn as I go. I hope to be a mentor for incoming college students that it is possible to go to college and become someone who is looked up to. I want to be an example of someone who reaches their goals and continues to strive.

## 2017 UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

---

**Name:** Eutimio Alaniz Jr.  
**Hometown:** Rio Hondo  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University Kingsville  
**Campus:** Texas A&M University Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelors of Agriculture Science with Teaching Certification  
**Grant:** UAS

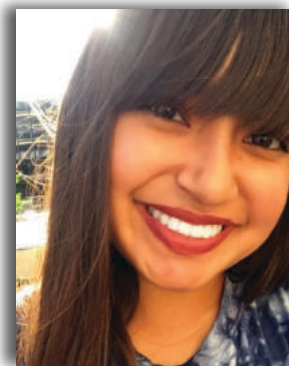


**Career Experience/Location:** Texas A & M Agrilife Student Worker, Corpus Christi, Texas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I learned how to properly map cotton and some new techniques to go about shop practices along with general maintenance about the items in the shop located at the Agrilife station.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I will be shooting for my masters and doctoral degree; hoping that I graduate with both. I look forward to a graduate degree and possible job with Agrilife or with the University or with the school as an adequate education teacher were either passed on the knowledge I have learned from internships and classes and wonderful teachers to my students.

**Name:** Alexandra Almazan  
**Hometown:** Edinburg, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science Pre-Veterinary Medicine  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 15, 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science in Animal Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS/ARS  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE

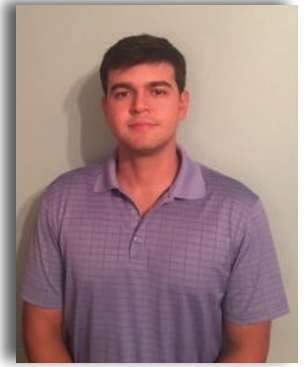


**Career Experience/Location:** This summer I had an internship in Beltsville, Maryland with the USDA-ARS participating in the research project involved in Immunological control of gastrointestinal Nematode parasites in Ruminants.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** With my experience at the internship I learned about the parasite *Ostertagia ostertagi*. I had not heard of the nematode before the experience, much less the effects that is prevalent with the infection of this organism. I got to observe first-hand the effects that are seen within the digestive system of a cow and I was able to do research on different control methods and several antibodies that are given off by the parasite which can hopefully be utilized in future vaccinations against these parasites.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I hope to become a veterinarian and study conservation medicine to help endangered species and finding new ways to help rebuild their populations. I believe that it is important to preserve the world's animals and the number of endangered species has been higher than ever and I hope to contribute by finding ways to either use breeding programs to help population numbers or to discover the main factors that affect the decline in numbers in certain species.

**Name:** Lazaro Bazaldua  
**Hometown:** Harlingen, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range & Wildlife Sciences  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelors of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** NRCDP



**Career Experience/Location:** I interned in Wyoming for the NRCS for the summer of 2017, I worked with District Conservationist and Range Ecologist.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I got the opportunity to work with two different District Conservationist, we helped with different irrigation problems that farmers and ranchers had. I also got a chance to work with a Range Ecologist, we did different surveys for determining total mass and cover of rangelands.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After finishing up with my Bachelor's degree, I wish to continue my experience with a USDA agency specifically, the NRCS. By doing so, I will be able to be part of a skillful group of individuals that are willing to help farmers and ranchers with their operations. Using the knowledge I have picked up throughout the years, I know that I will be a client's support for their successful outcome.

**Name:** Shelbie Van Beveren  
**Hometown:** Victoria, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville, Texas  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of AgBusiness  
**USDA Agency of interest:** Poplar Hill Dairy Goat Farm  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE



**Career Experience/Location:** In summer of 2017 I interned at Poplar Hill Dairy Goat Farm in Scandia Minnesota as an assistant herd manager.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience in a wide variety of ways for managing and running a dairy goat farm. I gained experience in herd and health management, the milking process, product distribution, and crop and forage management on a dairy farm.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my bachelor's degree I plan to pursue my master's degree in Agricultural Communications at Texas A&M University. With this degree, I hope to either be a sales representative in the agriculture industry or work with children by educating them about the industry. I am still undecided what I want to do as my career hopefully by getting my master's degree I will get more insight.

**Name:** Wes Burns  
**Hometown:** Clayton, New Mexico  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range and Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS, APHIS  
**Grant:** START NOW



**Career Experience/Location:** Plant and Soil Science “Boot Camp” at the Texas A&M Soltis Center in Costa Rica through the USDA START NOW Program.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I learned about various facets of agronomy including but not limited to: nutrient cycling, soil taxonomy and classification, plant health, agricultural pests, water quality, and sustainable farming techniques. However, I feel that the most valuable things I learned through this experience came from learning how people in another country confronted and dealt with challenges in agriculture which are faced by everyone across the globe.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** My career goal is to incorporate my agricultural background with my interest in wildlife by working as a wildlife biologist who helps farmers and ranchers manage wildlife to mitigate conflict while preserving wildlife as a natural resource for everyone to enjoy. I plan on continuing my education and receiving a Master’s Degree in Wildlife Science in order to be a more valuable and marketable employee in this field.

**Name:** David Campell  
**Hometown:** Vidor, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range and Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS, APHIS, USFS  
**Grant:** NRCDP



**Career Experience/Location:** This summer I was lucky enough to be selected for an internship with the Natural Resource Conservation Service, or NRCS for short. My internship is in Many, Louisiana which is located in the center of the state near the Texas/Louisiana border, only a 20-minute drive from Toledo Bend lake and the Sabine River which divide the states.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship allowed me to get a first-hand look at what it is like to work with the NRCS. I was able to work with many different people with different jobs within the agency, and learn how those jobs fit hand in hand with the mission of the NRCS.

**What is your perception of agriculture now:** I now realize how much of an effect agricultural practices can have on conservation. How easily the resources can be affected depending on how the landowners go about doing things.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I plan to finish up my bachelor’s degree in May of 2018 and continue on to a master’s degree in the natural resource field in the Fall of 2018. After my master’s I plan to pursue a job in the natural resource field either with a government agency, a nonprofit, or the private sector. Whichever I end up working with I hope to have a positive impact on people and the environment.



**Name:** Andrea Castillo  
**Hometown:** Seguin, Texas  
**Campus:** Texas A&M University- Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May of 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelors of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service



**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE

**Career Experience/Location:** Creek View Veterinary Clinic

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I learned how the system runs in the back of a veterinary clinic.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I hope to apply to veterinary school and become a successful and impactful veterinarian.

**Name:** Jorge Chavarria  
**Hometown:** Laredo, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science – Pre-Vet  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS, APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP2

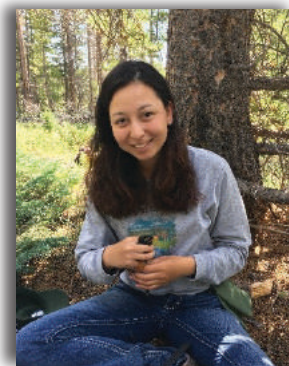


**Career experience/location:** In summer of 2017 I interned for the USDA with the Agricultural Research Services in Beltsville, Maryland as a research technician.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on laboratory experience in a wide variety of skills necessary for examining and identifying food borne parasites. The parasites I investigating were Cryptosporidium, Giardia and Blastocysts all of which were identified through immunofluorescence microscopy and genome sequencing. In addition, multi-locus sequence typing was performed on positive Cryptosporidium samples to further identify its respective subtype.

**Career and research aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in May 2018, I will continue to further my education in veterinary medicine. My aspirations are to practice medicine and conduct research concerning large animals such as cattle and horses. It is my ultimate goal to return and serve the community who once supported me.

**Name:** Arlene Cortez  
**Hometown:** El Monte, California  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range & Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** August 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARCS, NRCS, APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP2



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2017 I interned for Colorado State University with a graduate student named Marina Rodriguez, under the title of Field Technician.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience in a wide variety of skills necessary for conducting a master's student research project. I gained experience with the field work aspect side of the project. I was able to learn how to identify birds by sight and sound, how to capture birds, handle them, and process them.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in August 2017, I will continue to further my education at UT Health Houston in the Master's of Epidemiology program. With this degree, I hope to gain knowledge and experience that will broaden my options and opportunities in my future career search. My goal is to ultimately work for the CDC where I can be a benefit to both the public, the environment, and the scientific realm.

**Name:** Hallie Davis  
**Hometown:** Riviera, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science with Teaching Certification  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE



**Career experience/location:** In summer of 2017, I interned for the Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service in Raymondville, Texas under the title of Agriculture and Natural Resources/4H County Extension Agent intern.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience in a wide variety of skills necessary for working as an Agriculture and Natural Resources/4H County Extension Agent. I gained experience in the various agricultural pursuits of Willacy County & the Rio Grande Valley and the operations of the 4H program at the local, county, district, regional, and state levels.

**Career and research aspirations:** I am expected to graduate with a Bachelor's degree in May 2018. With this degree, I hope to gain knowledge and experience that will broaden my options and opportunities in my future career search. My goal is to ultimately be in a position where I can advocate education to younger generations and to the general public about the importance of agriculture, preservation of our lands and natural resources, and taking an active role in leading our communities, especially youth through the 4H program.

**Name:** Ashley Nicole De La Torre  
**Hometown:** Houston  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science Pre-Vet  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS



**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE

**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2017 I interned for the USDA in Beltsville, Maryland doing a research project in the field of poultry reproduction.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience with poultry by observing how to collect semen from toms and do assays that determine the viability and motility of the sperm. I also obtained experience with how to design and carry out an experiment.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in May 2018, I have decided to change my plan to apply to vet school and instead pursue graduate school. I want to pursue a graduate program with a focus in reproductive physiology most likely at Texas A&M University in College Station. After obtaining my Masters then I would either decide to either obtain my PhD or go to Veterinary Medicine School.

**Name:** Christopher Flores-Lopez  
**Hometown:** San Antonio, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Sophomore  
**Major:** General Agriculture Science/Agribusiness  
**Expected date of graduation:** 2020  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** Agriculture Marketing Service



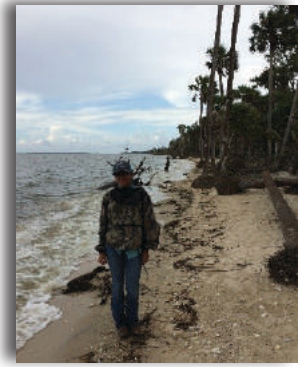
**Grant:** UAS

**Career Experience/Location:** During the summer of 2017 I interned for Dr. Catherine Simpson at the Citrus Center located in Weslaco, Texas to learn the processes behind research and unmanned aircraft systems.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** Working under Dr. Simpson and her group of graduate level students have taught me more about the fundamental processes behind scientific research. The most important concepts I learned while I was at the Citrus Center are how the rigorous, repetitive and precise procedures that make up scientific research are important to producing accurate conclusions.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I hope that the knowledge I obtain through my educational career will allow me to make sound decisions in the workforce. I am currently a general agriculture science and agribusiness double major at Texas A&M University—Kingsville. The scientific processes that go into agriculture commodities should be taken into account when discussing the business and economics of the field. My experience at the Citrus Center has broadened my knowledge of the sciences behind agriculture that could be necessary for my future career.

**Name:** Gabriella Garcia  
**Hometown:** Del Rio, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelors of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA, APHIS  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE

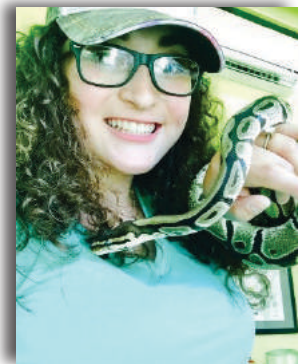


**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2017 my internship was in Gainesville, Florida with USDA with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** During this internship I gained a wide variety of knowledge and skills needed to work with wildlife. I learned all about the invasive animals that are coming into the United States. I learned different ways of setting traps for hogs and how they test their different organs for any types of diseases they might have

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After attaining my bachelors degree in animal science I plan on attending graduate school for my masters in animal science. Getting my masters will help me in the future because I have more knowledge about the animal science industry and I will be able to teach it to other students if I wanted to. During the time, I am getting my masters I plan on working on a research project involving a type of invasive animal, trying to figure out a way to control the population and alternative ways to trap the animal without causing any type of harm to it.

**Name:** Kassandra Garcia  
**Hometown:** Edinburg, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science- Veterinary Technician  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2020  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS, NRCS  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer 2017 I interned for the USDA with the Natural Resource Conservation Service in Edinburg, Texas under the title Soil Conservationist.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** During my internship I have learned so much about the land and how we have to care for the land or the land won't care for us. I plan on helping people with the skills I have learned through my internship. I have gained many skills that I believe has made me more aware of conservation resources.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Once I have received my Bachelor of animal science in Veterinary Technology I plan to work with livestock and ranchers to help them with their animals and their land using the skills I have gained from my internship to help others. I can help lead them to the programs that the USDA and NRCS have in place for farmers who want to help the land.



**Name:** Victoria Gutierrez  
**Hometown:** Edinburg, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range and Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS, USFS  
**Grant:** NRCDF



**Career Experience/Location:** In summer of 2017 I interned for the USDA with the Natural Resource Conservation Service in Tremonton, Utah.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience in a wide variety of skills necessary to properly assess rangelands that need either improvement or enhancement. I've gained experience with natural resource management, surveying equipment, while also learning a great diversity of plants that are not found in South, TX.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in May 2018, I plan on furthering my education at Texas A&M University – Kingsville in their master's program. With this degree, I hope to gain knowledge and experience with the wildlife aspect of my degree to have an overall understanding of range and wildlife. Having experience and knowledge in both areas will broaden my opportunities in my future career search. My goal is to ultimately be in a position that contributes to improving rangeland and working with educating the public on why such actions are necessary.

**Name:** Dominique Hernandez  
**Hometown:** San Antonio, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelors of Science- Animal Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS- Agriculture Research Services'  
**Grant:** STEP2



**Career Experience/Location:** I interned for USDA at Beltsville, Maryland at the Animal Parasitic Disease Laboratory

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship gave me experience in working with the protozoan parasite *Toxoplasma gondii* that are widely prevalent towards animals and people. It also gave me experience working with animals such as cats (the definitive host) and mice (intermediate host).

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After graduating with my bachelor's degree in Animal Science in May of 2018, I hope to continue my education at Texas A&M Kingsville in a graduate program to obtain a master degree in Animal Science.

**Name:** Cassidy Shea Hoyle  
**Hometown:** Bishop, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University- Kingsville  
**Campus:** Texas A&M University- Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Environmental Soil Sciences  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelors  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** NRCDP



**Career Experience/Location:** I was given the opportunity to experience my internship in Columbia, Missouri at the Boone county field office.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** My experience in Boone county has been so eye opening to me. I have learned so much in just a short amount of time. I knew I was going to learn a lot but never thought I would learn as much as I have within my first week.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** With this internship, I am hoping to gain knowledge that I can take with me and use after graduation. I aspire to work for the NRCS after graduation or in a field related to soil and water.

**Name:** Kole Jean  
**Hometown:** Kelso, Tennessee  
**Institution:** Texas A&M - Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected Date Of graduation:** December 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science - Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of Interest:** FSA, NRCS, APHIS  
**Grant:** STEP2

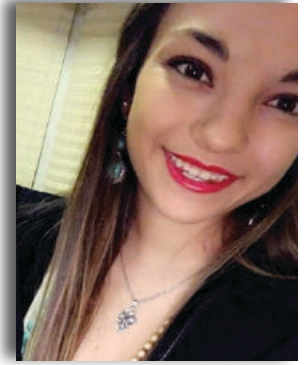


**Career Experience/Location:** The USDA summer internship took place in Fayetteville, Tennessee. I was tasked to shadow the Farm Service Agency's (FSA) County Executive Director (CED) for Lincoln County. Working with the CED exposed me to not only the task of the director, but also the many programs offered by the FSA. There were a few programs that were routinely used that will be discussed in later pages.

**About my Career Experience:** Government plays a large role in production agriculture. The amount of programs available to producers are far and wide. The skills and base knowledge that I attained should make a transition into working for FSA a little easier.

**Career and research aspirations:** Research is not really in the cards for me unless my job requires it, which likely will not be the case. As for career aspirations, I'm somewhat limited by the necessity of employment. I have to have a job after graduation. I would love for that to be with the USDA, but I will have to take what is available at that time, USDA or otherwise.

**Name:** Christina N. Lee  
**Hometown:** Bishop Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M Kingsville  
**Campus:** Texas A&M Kingsville  
**Rank:** Sophomore  
**Major:** Agriculture Science with a Certification  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2020  
**Degree:** Agriculture science with a Certification  
**Grant:** UAS



**Career Experience/Location:** Texas A & M AgriLife Student Worker at Corpus Christi.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** How to properly map cotton plants, the importance of keeping up with measurements for the crop fields going through the research and some new techniques to go about shop practices in the shop located at the AgriLife station. The internship was great!

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I still have a long way till I graduate from college, I'm planning on doing my masters right after I get my bachelor's. After that I will either be applying for teaching positions in high schools or going home and running the family farm.

**Name:** Gerardo Mata  
**Hometown:** Laredo, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA- APHIS  
**Grant:** START NOW

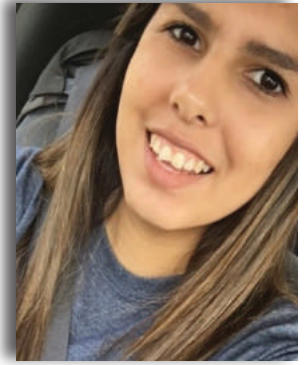


**Career experience/location:** In summer of 2017 I interned as an Intern for USDA with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service in Laredo, Texas,

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience in a wide variety of skills necessary for controlling exotic fruit flies. I gained experience in the use of lab equipment, invasive control management, Citrus identification, insect biology, and larvae identifier while also learning public relations skills in explaining to the community of why our work was important and how they could help.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in May 2018, I will go back to my hometown of Laredo, Tx where I plan to work for the USDA if job is available or work for U.S Customs and Border Protection Agriculture Specialist, My goal is to continue in doing my part to prevent the spread of invasive insects as well as any other pathogens that could cause major damage to our agricultural economy.

**Name:** Perla Nichole Liscano  
**Hometown:** Kingwood, Texas  
**Institution:** Sam Houston State University  
**Campus:** Main  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agribusiness  
**Expected date of graduation:** August 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelors  
**USDA Agency of interest:** AMS  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE

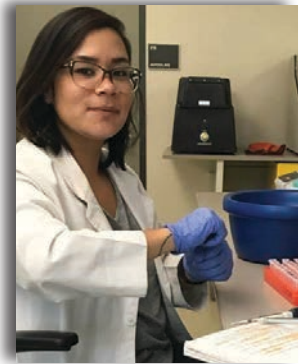


**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2017, I interned at the Texas Farm Bureau Legislative Department in Austin, Texas as a secretary intern.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** During this internship I learned how to use my computer skills by sending emails, putting together documents, and using business communication skills. I also learned what Texas Farm Bureau does and how they protect the Texas farmer, rancher, and society itself. The legislative directors work together to find language in the policy book and find ways to protect the policy their customers expect from this organization. I earned new words and learned the process of how bills turn into laws and how to either kill or pass a bill.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I definitely feel like a job with Texas Farm Bureau would be a great organization to work for. I love what Texas Farm Bureau stands for and how they really are the voice of agriculture. I am not sure exactly what job title I would want but I am willing to keep my options open.

**Name:** Raelene Mendez  
**Hometown:** Kingsville, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Horticulture  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Plant and Soil Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** Food and Nutrition Service  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE



**Career Experience/Location:** Summer 2017 I concluded a 10 week internship program funded by the USDA Step up grant, in Plant Pathology at the Texas A&M University-Kingsville Citrus Center, under the administration of Dr. Veronica Ancona and Fatta Gurung.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** Upon my departure from the Plant Pathology lab I take away with me confidence in myself and the work that I can provide, as well as patience. Working consecutively in the lab I learned patience is the key to success when trying to strive for accuracy, also gained a significant understanding and appreciation for writing and presentation.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After the completion of my bachelor's degree in Horticulture science, I plan to apply to graduate school for a Master's of Plant Pathology, and further my career in the research aspect of this industry. My goal is to ultimately work as a researcher focusing on diseases associated within the horticulture industry and to maintain the health and stability of plants.



**Name:** Elisha Lilian Palomo  
**Hometown:** Houston, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** N/A  
**Major:** Agronomy - Plant & Soil Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2020  
**Degree:** BS  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA - NRCS  
**Grant:** START NOW



**Career Experience/Location:** Rosenberg - NRCS

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** What I learned during my career experience with the USDA, the duties of a responsible employee from inside of the building and what happens outside of those doors - into the field. For example, as an Earth Team Volunteer I have skill sets that are required in the office and on land. My mentor also while I was with her gave many presentations, breaking down the grant programs that are offered from the USDA. But I believe was best that I learned was the work that I was filing all correlated with the field. On the land we worked a lot with Soil Mapping and surveying the land, but before I could put the work to the test, I sat inside and did the preparation.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After working the USDA - NRCS, I have found a passion to wanting to help the minority farmers. Before I entered into the program, a lawsuit happened into the Fort Bend county, with African American farmers, due to not receiving not enough help nor funding. In the county that I was working for so many generations of farmers came in, and also producers or farmers that weren't were too familiar with the technical and language part of the NRCS

**Name:** Cynthia Puente  
**Hometown:** Brownsville, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science in Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS, NRCS  
**Grant:** START NOW

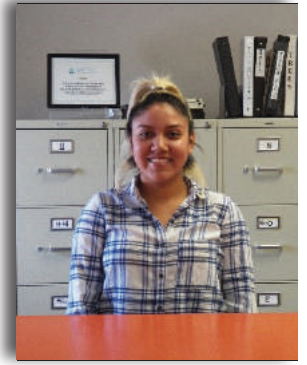


**Career Experience/Location:** In summer 2017 I received the opportunity to join the Start Now program. With Start Now I interned at the Soltis Center in Costa Rica and concluded the internship at Texas A&M-Kingsville.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with knowledge that can be applied to keep a sustainable agriculture. I learned about soil fertility, composting, water quality, tracing carbon footsteps, greenhouse facilities and insects. I also gained research experience in crop production from planting the seeds to harvesting and collecting data.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** When I complete my Bachelor's degree in May 2018, I will continue my education and gain more knowledge in plant and soil science. I will also want to be certified as a soil and crop advisor and gain experience in land management. I would want to gain the knowledge and motivation that is needed to qualify for a job in the USDA and the ability to help others grow.

**Name:** Sandra Reyes  
**Hometown:** Laredo, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science in Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** NRCDP

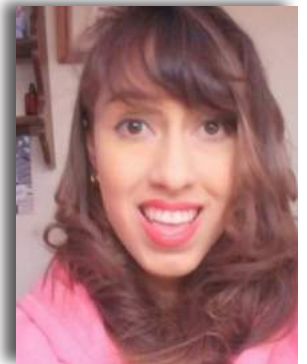


**Career experience/location:** In summer of 2017 I interned for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services in Holdrege, Elwood and Minden, Nebraska offices as well.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with knowledge on what it consists to be a soil conservationist. I gained experience in managing landowners land and learned some of the ways to prevent erosion. I was also able to learn that a resource conservationist's job is to restore, protect, and enhance enrolled Nebraska wet lands. I gained experience in office work as well such as mapping pivots and I gained knowledge in CSP payments and maps.

**Career and research aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in 2018, I will continue to further my education in animal science. With this degree, I hope to gain knowledge and experience that will broaden my options and opportunities in my future career search. My goal is to acquire knowledge in animal health and perform surgeries when they are needed. There is a lot that can be done with an animal science career and I am open-minded to do anything that will help keep an animal's welfare.

**Name:** Miriam Rico  
**Hometown:** Edinburg, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science-Pre-Vet  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA  
**Grant:** STEP2



**Career experience/location:** In the summer of 2017 I interned for the USDA- BARC in Beltsville, Maryland under the title of Tick Technician.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience in a wide variety of skills necessary for research on Invasive Insect Biocontrol and Behavior. I gained experience in Lyme Disease, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, wildlife biology, and integrated tick management.

**Career and research aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in December 2018, I will continue to further my education at Texas A&M University. With this degree, I hope to gain more knowledge in livestock husbandry and learn more about livestock diseases and how to control them. I am hoping that my experience and knowledge in both Animal Science and in Wildlife will sit well with the career that I plan to continue to pursue.

**Name:** Guadalupe Rodriguez  
**Hometown:** Bryan, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville, TX  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Plant and Soil Science-Agronomy  
**Expected date of graduation:** 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science in Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS, NIFA, GIPSA, FS, FAS  
**Grant:** UAS



**Career Experience/Location:** Texas A&M AgriLife Research & Extension – Corpus Christi, TX

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** Hands-on field research with corn, sorghum, and cotton.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Working this summer inspired me to pursue a Master degree in Agronomy with family, life, and my career in agriculture.

**Name:** Valerie Ruiz  
**Hometown:** San Antonio, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Sophomore  
**Major:** Animal Science Pre-vet  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2020  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** START NOW



**Career Experience/Location:** I interned for USDA's National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Eagle Pass Field Office in summer, 2017.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** Throughout this internship, I was able to learn about and take part in numerous land conservation practices such as brush canopy counts, forage inventories, prescribed grazing, livestock pipelines, pond construction for stock water, as well as public relations.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** My NRCS internship introduced me to the many different employment positions within the agency, as well as agriculture related jobs that exist overall. I plan to continue my pre-vet Animal Science studies. However, I'd like to become more involved with animal nutrition, and focus my studies to other parts that relate to the health and well-being of animals. Following, I strive to study Veterinary Medicine, or another, animal nutrition-related Masters.

**Name:** Spencer Smith  
**Hometown:** Newport Beach, California  
**Institution:** Texas A&M Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville, Texas  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture Business  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE



**Career Experience/Location:** I worked at the Natural Resource Conservation Service, Kingsville Office alongside the District Conservationist and Conservation Planner for Kleberg and Kenedy County.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I feel that I took the first steps into becoming a conservationist. I worked alongside numerous Natural Resource Service Employees, Conservation Planners, Rangeland Management Specialists, Soil Scientists, Natural Resource Specialists, Engineers, Agrilife Agents, etc. who specialize in different aspects of resource conservation. I learned how to start "Helping the People Help the Land."

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Next summer I would really like to work for Natural Resource Conservation Service or another agency like Bureau of Land Management or Bureau of Reclamation in another state. I would also like to find a pathways position in the area. I graduate in December of 2018; I would really enjoy working for the Natural Resource Conservation Service or another agency under United States Department of Agriculture.

**Name:** Doss Summers  
**Hometown:** Lampasas, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range & Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science in Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** NRCDP



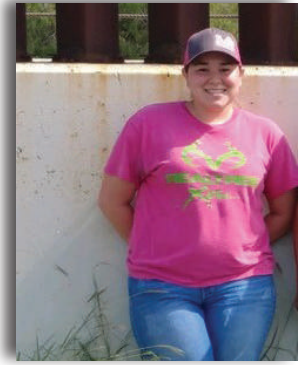
**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2017, I interned for the USDA with the NRCS in Boise, Idaho under the title of intern.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience in the many different fields of service that the NRCS provides. I gained experience in fields relating to range, wildlife, soils, cultural, and other resource conservation.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon the completion of my Bachelor's degree in May 2018, I look forward to pursuing a career that works to conserve the range and wildlife resources that our world provides us. It is important that in the present, we use these resources at a sustainable level so that we can insure their use for future generations. It is my goal to educate and work with the public in implementing management plans so that natural resources are readily available and continue to be available for use.



**Name:** Dagan Teague  
**Hometown:** Three Rivers, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science (with teaching certification)  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE



**Career experience/location:** In the summer of 2017 I interned for the USDA with Texas A&M Agrilife Extension in Weslaco, Texas.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience in IPM Extension. I gained experience in field work scouting for the different pests for grain sorghum, cotton, soybeans, sesame, and citrus.

**Career and research aspirations:** When I complete my Bachelor's degree in May of 2019, I would like to continue my education in Entomology, Horticulture, or in Extension. If I was to continue my education I think I could help people in my community with the more knowledge I have on plants and bugs since I live in a town with growers.

**Name:** Matthew Townsend  
**Hometown:** Mission, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2017  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS, FSA  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2017 I interned with the University farm at Texas A&M University- Kingsville under the title of student worker.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** In this internship I was able to learn about the different measures it takes to grow crops for GMO research and overall yield. I experienced planting, watering, weeding, basic crop consulting, data collection, and harvesting.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After I graduate in December 2017 I will begin my search or a job particularly in the produce or general crop area. My main goal is to become a crop consultant allowing myself to do what I find easy as well as fun. If the opportunity of obtaining a master's degree presents itself from a future employer I would gladly go back to school.

**Name:** Jonah Trevino  
**Hometown:** La Feria, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Plant and Soil Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** Spring 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS, USFS  
**Grant:** START NOW



**Career Experience/Location:** During summer of 2017 I interned for the USDA with the National Institute of Food and Agriculture through the Hispanic-Serving Institutions grant in Costa Rica and Washington DC as a student learner.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** The internship bestowed upon me provided me with hands on experience in Washington DC by taking precise soil samples, how to conduct experiments independently, how to manage and handle an infiltrometer, and how to extract nematodes from soil. In Costa Rica I learned how essential sustainable agriculture is becoming, how to conduct research independently, how to reduce our carbon footprint in agricultural practices, and how to handle problems in agriculture with nonconventional ways.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in Plant and Soil science with an emphasis in Horticulture in 2019, I plan on staying here at Texas A&M University Kingsville for graduate school to achieve a Master's in Soil Science. I hope to do graduate research that would reflect both my interest in horticulture and soils being an experiment that tests conventional agriculture and its practices; versus a cost efficient hydroponics system that could theoretically produce the same amount of crop while using less energy and having a positive impact on the environment.

## 2018 Undergraduate Students

**Name:** Julia Burchsted  
**Hometown:** Houston, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range and Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS.  
**Grant:** NRCDP



**Career experience/location:** In summer of 2018 I interned for the USDA under the NRCS in Kirksville, Missouri.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with multiple new skills and experiences that are crucial for a career in natural resource conservation and management. I have learned about the agriculture industry and the implementation and planning of government aid programs. My public relation and communication skills also benefited from this opportunity.

**Career and research aspirations:** Upon completion of my bachelor's degree in December 2018 I will pursue a job in the wildlife biology or conservation field. I would like to specialize in education and public outreach, and would really enjoy working with children and young adults. I have worked as a research technician for multiple positions and would also like going in that direction. Working for the USDA could be a good step towards my long term career goals.

**Name:** Scott Cardenas  
**Hometown:** Floresville, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University of Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agronomy  
**Expected date of graduation:** Spring 2019  
**Degree:** General agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** NRCDP



**Career Experience/Location:** NRCS Boone County Internship/ Columbia, Missouri

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I learned many office processes, how surveying is done, how official meetings are ran, and why conservation of the land is so important.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I hope to be an agronomist at a large company/corporation. I'd like to work closely with soil health and plant nutrition as well as being outside often throughout my average work day.

**Name:** Jeanette Casanova  
**Hometown:** Brownsville Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE



**Career Experience/Location:** This summer of 2018 I got the opportunity to attend my first internship at Texas A&M AgriLife Research in Weslaco Texas with Dr. Ismael Badillo. Research is done in this facility in Weslaco where they study some plants seeds, and psyllids to see the damage they do to some crops.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** The knowledge that I gained from this internship it lead me to understand the lab protocols, and procedures to DNA extraction for psyllids and plant tissue. With my mentor, I gained the knowledge that I now have for a better understanding of why research is important and why it is required to put a lot of time into it.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** This May of 2019 I should complete my Bachelor's degree in Agriculture Science. I plan to apply for a AgriLife or USDA job I want a job that I will be able

**Name:** Crisantos Casares  
**Hometown:** Brownsville Tx  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA- APHIS  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE



**Career Experience/Location:** In summer of 2018 I interned at AgriLife Research Center in Weslaco, Texas.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with a hands-on experience working on research projects. This experience helped me build skills needed to maintain and conduct research. I established multiple skills and learned on how to conduct data.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I plan to further my education at Kingsville and this internship helped me build some skills needed for research.

**Name:** Miguel Angel Cervantes IV  
**Hometown:** Brownsville, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA ARS  
**Grant:** STEP2



**Career Experience/Location:** In summer of 2018 I interned for the USDA with the Meat Animal Research Center (MARC) in Clay Center, Nebraska under the Reproduction Research Unit.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with the opportunity to gain the skills necessary to conduct research on swine. I was taught how to independently research background information to create an introduction for a research paper I was a part of. I would also work with various scientist across the research center and this gave me a deeper understanding on how to properly collect data involving different research projects and how to work with other individuals. This internship enabled me to realize how it is to work in a research environment and how to be through and consistent in my work.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelors degree of Animal science in May 2019, I will continue to pursue a greater education at Texas A&M in the Masters of Animal science program with an emphasis in Reproductive Physiology. After completing a master's degree, I plan on obtaining a Doctor of Philosophy in Reproductive Physiology. With these degrees I plan on having a career as a research scientist apart of a reproductive research unit. I plan on conducting research on swine, bovine, and ovine



**Name:** Jacqueline Cruz  
**Hometown:** San Benito, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS, NRCS  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2018 I interned with a nutrition professor at Texas A&M University in Kingsville with the title of student researcher.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with the hands on experience in a wide variety of skills necessary for running a USDA nutrition research project. I gained experience in farm management, record keeping, and nutrition while also learning how to network, teamwork, and communicate through out my time in the field.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Once I complete my Bachelor's degree in December 2020, I will continue to further my education in either Texas A&M University in Kingsville or at the University of Puerto Rico. I will be pursuing a Master's Degree in Animal Science. With this degree, I hope to gain knowledge and experience that will give me the opportunity to work with research animals. My aspiration is to ultimately be in a position where I can be trusted with research work and discover new supplements, vaccines, feed, etc.

**Name:** Suyin Davison  
**Hometown:** Dallas, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science, Pre-Veterinary  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2020  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**Grant:** STEP2

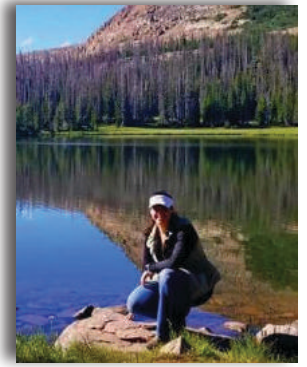


**Career Experience/Location:** During the summer of 2018 I interned in Botswana for the conservation and rehabilitation center known as CARACAL.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship taught me about animal husbandry and wildlife medicine by providing me with hands on experience in caring for the wildlife common to southern Africa. I also was able to learn and educate others in conservation and wildlife ecology in order to improve the local economy.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After completing my Bachelor of Science in Animal science in May of 2020 I plan to earn a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine. By becoming a veterinarian, I hope to use the knowledge I gained from this experience as well as my education to better the lives of animals and humans alike. My hope as a veterinarian is to make advancements in the field of animal medicine that are able to improve the care given to animals and by doing so increase their value to humans.

**Name:** Rae Deherrera  
**Hometown:** Bloomfield, New Mexico  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Pre-Veterinary Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Animal Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA, APHIS  
**Grant:** NRCDP

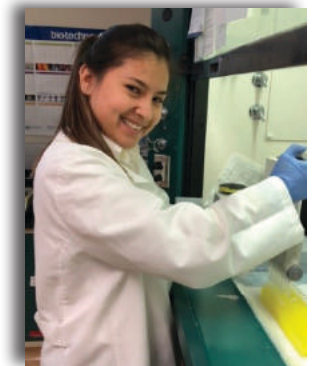


**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2018 I interned for the USDA with the NRCS in Logan, Utah under the title Conservational Planner.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This agency provided me hands on experience with conservation technical assistance to private landowners, conservation districts and other organizations. I gained experience in natural resource management as well as agricultural production.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** By completing my Bachelor`s in May 2019, I will continue to further my education at Ross University in Veterinarian Science. With this degree, I plan on gaining more Knowledge about the USDA and for the department of APHIS. Because NRCS and APHIS are different, I do not regret doing this internship because of the amount of education I can provide to my fellow agriculture producers and colleges. These experiences have broadened my options and opportunities in my future career search. My goal is to be in a position where I can use the skills I have gained and educate my peers to what to expect in the NRCS or other departments as well.

**Name:** Kendrah Michelle De Leon  
**Hometown:** Brownsville, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** August 10, 2018  
**Degree:** B.S. in Animal Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** Agriculture Research Service (ARS) – Beltsville, MD  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE



**Career Experience/Location:** I had the opportunity to experience a summer internship with the Agriculture Research Service agency of the United States Department of Agriculture located in Beltsville, Maryland.

**About my Career Experience:** Within the span of my eight week internship I proficiently gained the experience of doing molecular work in a laboratory setting. I performed procedures for two different on-going projects on tissue samples. For one project, the Krill Oil experiment, I ran forty tissue samples and followed protocols for RNA extraction, DRNA, CDNA, and PCR. As for the second project, the Toxoplasma experiment, I ran thirty samples and accomplished RNA extractions, DRNA, CDNA, PCR, and additionally extracted DNA from stool samples.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Returning from the summer internship, I will start my master`s degree at Texas A&M-Kingsville (TAMUK) in Animal Science working under Dr. Bell. After the exciting two years of research, I only dream admission into a veterinary school to begin my veterinary career. I am an aspiring Veterinarian and my ultimate career goal is to practice mix animal medicine.

**Name:** Leslie Dominguez  
**Hometown:** Laredo, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** START NOW



**Career experience/location:** In summer of 2018 I interned for the USDA with the NIFA under the HSI in Costa Rica.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience in a tropical agriculture setting. I gained experience in practices used in the tropics to produce crops, and in practices using sustainability.

**Career and research aspirations:** After completing my bachelor's degree in December 2019, I will continue to further my education at Texas A&M University- Kingsville with a degree in plant soil science. With this degree, I will gain knowledge and experience that will give me opportunities in my future career search. My career goal is to gain a position with USDA in the APHIS program.

**Name:** Michaela Elbert  
**Hometown:** Brownsville, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Biology  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2020  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** Agricultural Research Service  
**Grant:** START NOW



**Career Experience/Location:** In summer of 2018 I interned for the USDA with the Agricultural Research Service. I assisted a plant virologist with her research.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with a wide variety of skills needed to pursue a Biology degree and beyond. I gained knowledge in plant biology, molecular biology, and plant virology while also learning necessary laboratory practice skills and techniques as well as communication skills.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** As of now, I plan to complete my bachelor's degree in Biology and then attend graduate school. I am keeping my options open on where to attend graduate school and what I want to do with my degree. After working this summer participating in research that is a career choice that I am considering for the future. I enjoyed working in a lab and upon completion of graduate school that is a choice I am considering.

**Name:** David Adan Esparza  
**Hometown:** Edinburg, Tx.  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agronomy Plant & Soil Science / Minor Agriculture Business  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelors Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** AgriLife Research Centers  
**Grant:** UAS



**Career Experience/Location:** In summer of 2018 I interned for the AgriLife Research Center in Corpus Christi under the Director of Operations and as well the Supervising of Drone Operations from Texas A&M University of Corpus Christi.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience in drone operations, and data collection processing comparison of different data rates of air to ground data. I was able to gain experience with learning how to develop data sheets to explain comparison data collections from the drone and interns averaging heights of sorghum and cotton crops throughout the season of development.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in December 2018, I will be pursuing a position of Supervisor or Assistant Manager in an industry of crop or citrus line of work. With this degree, I hope to gain be able to show all the knowledge that I have gained and experience that I have endure to show in my work now where it may take me. I believe I have had many mentors that have taught me from scratch and I have been able to learn every step in the 4 different internships I have obtained.

**Name:** Isabella Farias  
**Hometown:** Mission, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science- Teaching Certification  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2020  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS.  
**Grant:** NRCDP



**Career experience/location:** In summer of 2018 I interned for the USDA with the NRCS in Sioux City, Iowa under the title of a Soil Conservationist.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience in a wide variety of skills necessary to perform proper NRCS (National Resource Conservation Service) practices. I gained experience in soil health, soil physiology, and conservation practices while also learning a great deal about public relations and working in an office environment.

**Career and research aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in May 2020, I will continue to further my education at Texas A&M University- Kingsville in the Master's of Agricultural Education program. With this degree, I hope to gain knowledge and experience that will broaden my options and opportunities in my future career search. My goal is to ultimately be in a position where I can advocate education to younger generations and to the general public about the importance of conservation, soil health, and soil physiology.



**Name:** Miranda Farias  
**Hometown:** Mission, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS, USDA  
**Grant:** NRCDP



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2018, I interned for the USDA with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Boise, Idaho.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship has given me the opportunity to acquire a variety of skills in multiple areas of my desired interests through the Idaho state office and its personnel. Through this internship, I have learned about different range and wildlife species, how to perform multiple evaluation tests, how to use equipment to survey desired land areas, and how to use Customer Service Toolkit, GIS and ArcMap to complete HEL determinations, SISL, and WEPS evaluations and determinations.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in May of 2019, I have decided to further my education at The University of Idaho in the Master's program of Soil & Land Resources. With this degree, I plan to expand my knowledge and experience that will lead me to specialize in these desired areas of study. My goal is to become a Soil Conservationist for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

**Name:** Christopher Matthew Flores-Lopez  
**Hometown:** Houston, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** General Agriculture Science/Agriculture Business  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2020  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** FSA, AMS, GIPSA, RD  
**Grant:** START NOW



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2018, I traveled to Costa Rica with students and faculty from my university and several other institutions. We went to a number of seminars and farm tours throughout the trip. Afterward I traveled to Washington, D.C. with Dr. Ruppert and a few of his colleagues to collect soil samples and infiltration data for the National Botanic Garden.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This experience allowed me to obtain new insights and perspectives of fields that I have not considered before. The trip to Costa Rica allowed me to get an up-close and personal look into how produce is grown outside of the United States. That invaluable experience coupled with the time I spent in the field with Dr. Ruppert will allow me to decide which career path I am most suited for in the future.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** As of me writing this paragraph, I do not know what the future holds for me after I obtain my bachelor's degree. While I would be open to going into the work force after graduation, I do not know what my future career would be. With that being said, I have been considering graduate school within the last year and a half. I enjoy some of the mental challenges associated with research and would not mind striving for a master's degree in an agriculture related field.

**Name:** Guadalupe Garza  
**Hometown:** Rio Hondo, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** General Agriculture Science/Agriculture Business  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** AMS  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE

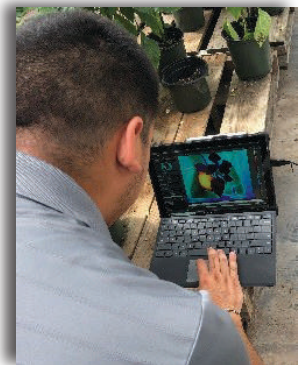


**Career Experience/location:** In the summer of 2018 I completed an internship for the USDA/AMS as a red meat grader in the location of Grand Island Nebraska, using the grant of the Texas under the title of student intern.

**About my career experience (what I learned):** The internship taught me a variety of things that will be very helpful in the real world that I will be planning on going into when I graduate with my bachelors. I gained knowledge on the way a beef carcass is supposed to be graded and more. Coming into the red meat grading, I wasn't too sure what to expect. It was intense hand on training as well as intense paper work-book training.

**Career and research aspirations:** After graduation I really want to apply with the USDA/AMS agency or I also plan to apply for the meat industry as long as it has to do with cattle or beef. This internship was an eye opener for me as well as for anyone else I assume, especially when you really aren't sure what you want to get into. A career choice is a very big step in life because it's a job I might keep for the rest of my work career.

**Name:** Matthew Garza  
**Hometown:** La Blanca, TX  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2020  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** AMS, APHIS  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE

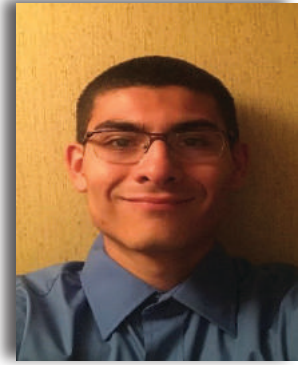


**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2018 I did an internship with the Texas A&M Kingsville Citrus Center.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** During my time at the Citrus Center I was able get hands on experience with the Physiology department. It allowed me to learn different skills within the lab, gain knowledge of the different kinds of management practices need and the impact of the abiotic and biotic stress on trees and plants.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After graduation in May of 2020 with a Bachelor in Science with a Teacher Certification, I plan to apply to either to Texas State University or Texas A&M University in the Master program of Agriculture Education. I plan to become an Agriculture Science teacher at a local high school and impact the lives of our future generation. I know that with getting my masters it would broaden my opportunities in finding my future career job. Also it would just focus on the teaching aspects, which would help my in impacting the youth and allow me to learn how to educate them the right way and make an everlasting impact in their lives.

**Name:** Joe Gonzalez  
**Hometown:** Crystal City, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range & Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science in Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA-APHIS  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2018 I interned for USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services at the National Wildlife Research Center in Fort Collins, Colorado. I interned under the title of research technician.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship gave me the hands on experience needed to succeed inside the workplace and outside during fieldwork. During my time at the NWRC, I gained experience through proper training, guidance, and repeated practices. This internship also provided me with a higher knowledge in wildlife sciences while learning a about ways to resolve human-wildlife conflicts through research.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree I plan on pursuing a career under USDA-APHIS Wildlife Services. With the information and experience I gained from this internship, I hope it will open up more options and opportunities for my future career. My goal is to help reduce the spread of potential diseases that may cause serious harm to animals or people whom has been in contact.

**Name:** Michael Gonzales  
**Hometown:** San Antonio, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Plant and Soil Science - Horticulture  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** START NOW



**Career experience/location:** In summer of 2018 I interned for the Brookwood Community Horticulture Department in Brookshire, Texas under the title of Assistant Grower.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience in a wide variety of skills necessary for running a horticulture greenhouse business. I gained experience in pest management, plant production and management while also learning a great deal about plant physiology and chemicals involved in production.

**Career and research aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in May 2018, I will continue to further my education at Texas A&M Kingsville in the Masters of Agricultural horticulture program. With this degree, I hope to gain knowledge and experience that will broaden my options and opportunities in my future career search. My goal is to ultimately be in a position where I can have a wide skill set and in-depth knowledge about the production of ornamentals, trees and shrubs allowing me to get a head growers position in a major producer.

**Name:** Julio Gutierrez  
**Hometown:** Mission, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agriculture science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2018  
**Degree:** Agriculture Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** Texas A&M AgriLife Research Center  
**Grant:** UAS

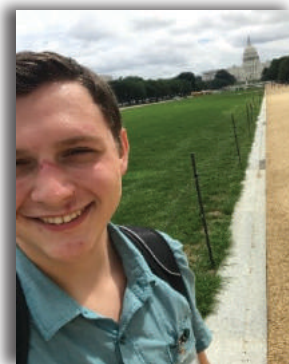


**Career Experience/Location:** During the summer of 2018, I interned for Texas A&M AgriLife research and extension center at corpus Christy. Under the title of and with drone operations

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship with Texas A&M AgriLife helped me having more experience with crops production such as sorghum, cotton, corn, etc. I also learn how to operate the Drones that we use on the research.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After I graduate from Texas A&M Kingsville with an Agriculture science degree and minor on plant science, I would like to look for a job that satisfy my expectations could be something with crops or livestock. That is the other branch I would like to work in.

**Name:** Zachary Hamaker  
**Hometown:** Harleysville, PA  
**Institution:** Texas A&M  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agribusiness  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science in Agriculture-Concentration in Agribusiness  
**USDA Agency of interest:** Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)  
**Grant:** START NOW



**Career Experience/Location:** Country of Origin Labeling Program (COOL) in the Food Disclosure and Labeling Division (FDLD) in the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) located in Washington DC.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I learned COOL rules and regulations that are to be complied with by all retail stores, how to conduct a retail surveillance survey in the field to investigate for COOL regulation noncompliance codes, a better understanding by which a bill is passed, how day-to-day work goes for USDA employees located in Washington DC, what the mission is for Rural Development and how they play a major role in the general infrastructure for rural communities and small businesses, and I also learned more on how USDA promotional videos are cut and edited.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Working for the USDA would only be interesting for me if I was working at the main headquarters in DC. It seems like a career I would thoroughly enjoy.



**Name:** Cody Hay  
**Hometown:** Spring Branch, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range & Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** August 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA APHIS, USFS  
**Grant:** STEP2



**Career experience/location:** In summer of 2018 I interned for the USDA with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection in Corpus Christi, Texas under the title of Summer Intern.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience in a wide variety of skills necessary for working with Corpus Christi District. I gained experience in trapping wild animals, hunting wild animals, and building traps while also learning a great deal about surveying wildlife and public relations.

**Career and research aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in August 2018, I will begin searching for position with USDA Wildlife Services, or US Fish and Wildlife, or Texas Parks and Wildlife. From the experience, I gained from the internship I'm hoping this will get my foot in the door with any of these agencies as a technician and work my way up to my ultimate goal of becoming a Biologist.

**Name:** Recca Heiner  
**Hometown:** Banquete, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Vet-Tech  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2020  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** Not Applicable  
**Grant:** STEP2



**Career experience/location:** In summer of 2018 I interned at the Center for the Conservation of African Resources, Communities and Land Use in Kasane, Botswana.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** This Internship allowed me to work under 2 licensed wildlife veterinarians and obtain experience with African Wildlife. I learned handling techniques for raptors of all sizes as well as basic care. I gained experience preparing meals for the animals on site and interpersonal skill while giving tours to people from all over the world. I learned the basics of telemetry while tracking wild banded mongoose troupes and performed field work. I also assisted with necropsies of different species of mammals.

**Career and research aspirations:** After I complete my bachelor's degree and receive my Vet-Tech license I hope to work at a zoo. With my first-hand experience with exotic wildlife, I believe that my chances of being given an interview for this position are increased. Eventually I want to move into the conservation aspect of being a vet-tech. Maybe even going back to Botswana and working as a vet-tech under the Chobe National Park Head Veterinarian.

**Name:** Nathanael Hernandez  
**Hometown:** La Feria, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science- Pre-Vet  
**Expected date of graduation:** August 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Animal Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE



**Career Experience/Location:** I interned with the USDA Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Air and Sea Port Services at the Houston Bush Intercontinental Airport as a USDA Student Intern

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with experience to be an animal Health Technician along side a Veterinary Medical Officer or VMO. VMO's and AHT work along side brokers and the Institution of trading and sell of animal and animal by-products. The role that I was exposed to, taught me about infectious diseases and our duty is to guard our precious animal reservoirs from infectious diseases and stop the spread of them by verifying valid health certificates as the animals leave our borders.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After graduation, my aspirations are to go on and work at pharmaceutical development firm in Houston which will allow me to earn a Laboratory Animal Technician (LAT), all the while working on my master's in public health or microbiology. After Completion of a master's in public health or Microbiology, I would hopefully like to pursue admission into Veterinary school at Colorado State University

**Name:** Gilberto Hurtado  
**Hometown:** Zapata, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Range/Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2021  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USFWS, FS  
**Grant:** NRCDP

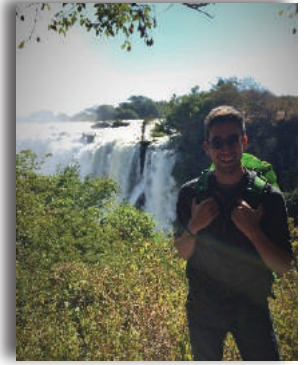


**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2018, I interned with the USDA under the NRCS branch in Afton, Wyoming as a District Conservationist assistant

**About my Career Experience, (what I learned):** This internship gave me an insight of what working under NRCS is like and what kind of work is to be expected from a job with this department. Through my time working, I learned the different programs that NRCS offers and the qualifications need to apply to each on. I also learned some of the native grasses and various weeds of Wyoming as well.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After earning my Bachelor's degree in Range/Wildlife Management, I wish to apply to further my education and study for my Master's degree in Wildlife Management here at TAMUK. With a master's degree, I hope that I can be a wildlife biologist and work for Texas Parks and Wildlife. I want this job, because if we do not take care of our wildlife, then we will lose it all before we even realize it.

**Name:** Richard Kaiser  
**Hometown:** Rowlett, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science Pre-Veterinary  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2020  
**Degree:** Bachelors of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS, FS  
**Grant:** STEP2



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2018 I interned at the Center for the Conservation of African Resources, Animals, Communities, and Land use (CARACAL) located in Kasane, Botswana.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** Participating in this internship gave me a variety of experience. Such as, assisting with necropsies on some of the local wildlife in order to collect samples that will be used for further research. Or educating the local people about the animals that are often associated with a bad omen in their culture. So, they can realize they have nothing to fear from these animals and therefore should not purposefully harm them.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Once I complete my Bachelor's degree in May 2020 I plan on enrolling into the Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Science in order to obtain a Doctoral in Veterinary Medicine. Once I have a DVM I plan to specialize in both Wildlife and Exotics so I can assist national parks, and conservation centers around the world with brainstorming new conservation methods to protect their animals from the apex predator, us.

**Name:** Hayden Kovar  
**Hometown:** Snook, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range and Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS  
**Grant:**



**Career Experience/Location:** During the summer of 2018, I interned for the USDA with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Wildlife Services, as well as, a field technician for several Grad Students at Texas A&M University- Kingsville.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience on the destruction that feral hogs have on agriculture, how often Nilgai will visit a Latrine and use fence crossings, and how different treatments on woody plants can help bring back ocelot habitat. I gained experience in crop damage assessment, wildlife biology, and vegetation assessment.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in December 2019, I plan on obtaining work within the Wildlife field. With my Range and Wildlife degree and the connections I have made throughout the duration of my internship, I hope to be in a position where I can share my knowledge with the general public. I hope that the hands on experience I have gained will help expand my options in my future career search.

**Name:** Nina Lazaro  
**Hometown:** La Feria, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2021  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS, FSIS, FAS  
**Grant:** STEP2



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2018, I interned for Texas A&M University-Kingsville within the Department of Animal, Rangeland, and Wildlife sciences where I worked under the supervision of Dr. Tanner Machado as a research intern.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me the learning opportunity to explore meat science while grasping skills necessary to work in a research laboratory. Also, I learned the processes of how to think like a scientist and the steps that go into creating a research project.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After graduation, I hope to attend a veterinary medicine program to become a veterinary scientist. With this degree, I hope to gain knowledge to enter a research profession where I can further increase the public's understanding in agricultural disciplines. My main aspiration is to become a researcher who studies meat science or another subject within the animal science field.

**Name:** Lupita Leon  
**Hometown:** Corpus Christi, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Sophomore  
**Major:** Animal Science-Vet Tech  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2021  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** APHIS, FNS  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2018, I interned at Cross Point Veterinary Clinic in Taft, Texas. I worked under the title of “in training” veterinary technician.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** Through this experience, I acquired knowledge and a new perspective of veterinary medicine. Along with learning the fundamentals of veterinary medicine, this internship provided me with much hands-on work. I learned practical methods of holding and restraining animals, pre and post-operative care, how to identify parasites through microscopy, and ways of determining diseases through analysis.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I aspire to become a veterinary technician with a specialization in nutrition. I plan to further studying animal nutrition and apply to the Academy of Veterinary Nutrition Technicians (AVNT). With this specialization, I hope to conduct research along with other veterinarians on improving fertility in large animals through nutrition.



**Name:** Taylor McKinney  
**Hometown:** Montgomery, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agricultural Business  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2020  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science in Ag  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** NRCDP



**Career Experience/Location:** During the summer of 2018 I interned for the USDA working with the NRCS in Liberal, Kansas. I am working under the title of Soil Conservationist working mainly in Seward County.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** During this internship I learned a wide variety of skills that will benefit me in my future with NRCS. I learned the importance of conserving the land, helping people help the land, and how to plan and implement our most important practices in this area of Kansas.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** I will be graduating with my Bachelor's degree in the spring of 2020. I plan to intern with other companies to help expand my knowledge and open up many career opportunities for my future. I am willing to take on new challenges in future opportunities to help broaden my skill set. I would like to work mostly outside of an office setting to help educate people about the importance of conserving the land and natural resources.

**Name:** Ashley Mondragon  
**Hometown:** Houston, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** Fall 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** START NOW



**Career experience/location:** In the summer of 2018 I interned for the USDA as part of the START NOW 2018 program located in Costa Rica. To complete my internship, I worked as an intern for Dr. Schuster.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** During my time in Costa Rica, I was able to participate in many hands-on activities and tours. I learned about a variety of topics relating to agriculture including; hydroponics, sustainability, and overall methods of agriculture in Costa Rica. I was able to participate in a research project involving the colonization of mycorrhizal and gain knowledge from it.

**Career and research aspirations:** I plan to graduate fall 2019 with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture Science and a minor in Plant Soil Science from Texas A&M University Kingsville. Upon completion of my degree, I plan on continuing my education by pursuing a master's degree in Plant and Soil Science. With both degrees I aspire to hopefully work under the USDA, in agencies such as APHIS or NRCS.

**Name:** Travis Opiela  
**Hometown:** Hobson, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agriculture-Agronomy  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2018  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** NRCDP

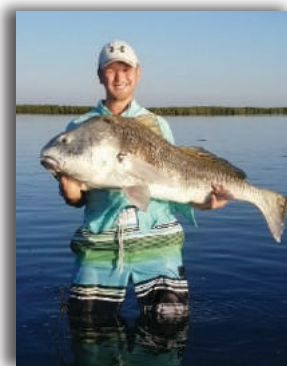


**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2018, I interned for the USDA with the Natural Resource Conservation Service in Scottsbluff, Nebraska.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** The internship that I worked on gave me experiences in many different fields in the agency that are required to be successful. Experiences in civil engineering, global information systems, plant identification, and learning about all of the different programs offered to producers by the agency.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in December of 2018, I plan on applying to work for the federal government with the USDA - NRCS as a Soil Conversationalist. With the pursuit of this job, I hope to broaden my knowledge, gain experiences, and educate the public on how to conserve natural resources. Educating producers about getting compensated for the conservation practice today and to help them continue the practice after the contracted period has ended.

**Name:** Michael Page  
**Hometown:** Kennedale, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range and Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS, USFS  
**Grant:** UAS

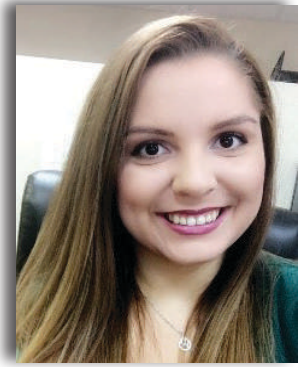


**Career Experience/Location:** In summer of 2018 I interned for the USDA with the NRCS in Fort Worth, Texas under the title of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Technician. The location is the National Central Technology Support Center.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with hands on experience working with analyzing watersheds, creating predictive models to look at ecological sites, learning about soils and their characteristics, and become more proficient with GIS software. I learned how the NRCS works and the hierarchy that the organization in comprised of.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree I plan to further my education with a Master's degree in Wildlife Management or Natural Resource Management incorporating GIS. With this degree, I hope to gain knowledge and experience that will prepare me to be an exceptional employee who is skilled and be able to provide substance to my organization that I will be a part of.

**Name:** Erika Lynn Rodriguez  
**Hometown:** Laredo, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Range and Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2020  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** NRCDP



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2018 I interned for the USDA with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Casper, Wyoming under the supervision of Brian Jenson, state wildlife biologist.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** I have gained experience in many different skills needed to work within the NRCS, and skills that will be useful to me in my future endeavors such as natural resource management, wildlife biology, range and soil conservation, and much more. The skills and experience I have learned during this internship range from being useful in the job itself to everyday life.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** After earning my bachelor's degree at Texas A&M University Kingsville I plan to pursue a master's degree in zoology at Texas A&M University in college station. In my future endeavors I hope to pursue a career as a wildlife rehabilitator, but I do have other options to consider. My ultimate goal is to gain as much knowledge as possible about my field so that I could share my information with the general public about the importance of mother nature and all its qualities and needs.

**Name:** Valerie Ruiz  
**Hometown:** San Antonio, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University Kingsville  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science Pre-vet  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2020  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS  
**Grant:** STEP2

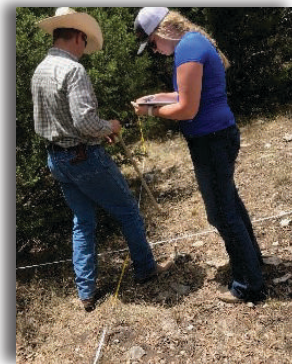


**Career Experience/Location:** I interned for USDA's Animal Research Services (ARS) Beltsville this summer.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** Throughout this internship, I was able to learn about and take part in numerous hands-on, research practices, mainly focused Dairy Cows. This involved assisting in surgeries, taking biopsies, sampling tissue, inserting rumen cannulas, as well as working in laboratory settings.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** My ARS internship introduced me to the many different employment positions within the agency, as well as agriculture related jobs that exist overall. I plan to continue my pre-vet Animal Science studies. However, I'd like to become more involved with animal nutrition, and focus my studies to other parts that relate to the health and well-being of animals. Following, I strive to study Veterinary Medicine, or another, animal nutrition-related Masters.

**Name:** Nikki Sandidge  
**Hometown:** Bandera, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS  
**Grant:** START NOW



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2018 I interned for the USDA with the Natural Resource Conservation Service under Soil Conservationist in Kerrville, Texas,

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** My internship provided me with a first-hand experience of a Soil Conservationist. From doing ranch visits, helping with conservation plans and with community outreach events. I gained experience in soil conservation, native grass identification, natural resource management all while serving the agricultural community of Kerr County.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Once I complete my Bachelor's degree I look to continue my education with working on my Masters in Agriculture Science. I feel like going on and getting my Master's degree will give me a more competitive edge when competing for in demand jobs. I am unsure what type of career I am looking to get into at the moment.

**Name:** Miranda Tellez  
**Hometown:** Dallas, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Animal Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** Spring 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** ARS.  
**Grant:** STEP2



**Career Experience/Location:** In the summer of 2018 I interned for USDA ARS in Fort Collins, Colorado. It was a focus in sperm quality/motility.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship allowed me to have a better understanding of male reproduction and how valuable semen is. I've gained so much experience in identifying good semen quality and how to prepare a semen same for cryopreservation.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completing my bachelor's degree in May 2019, I will continue to further my education at Colorado State University in their one-year Master's program in Assisted Reproductive Technologies. With this degree I hope to work in Dallas Texas hopefully in animal IVF or in a human IVF clinic as an embryologist. I am still undecided on which path to take or if it's possible to both.



**Name:** Jonah Trevino  
**Hometown:** La Feria, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Plant and Soil Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** Spring 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS, USFS  
**Grant:** START NOW

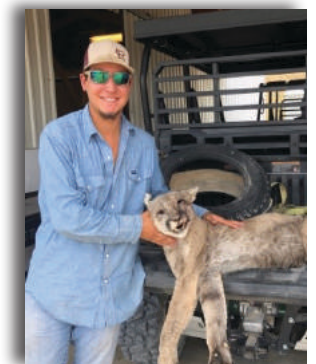


**Career Experience/Location:** During summer of 2018 I interned for the United States Botanical Garden in Washington DC. There I was an outside grounds keeper in the National Gardens and Bartholdi Park.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** The internship bestowed upon me provided me with hands on experience in Washington DC by conducting various tasks. These tasks include constructing an irrigation system, basic weed identification, plant identification, transplants, tree maintenance, major plant removals, weekly watering cycles, editing plants and beds, dead heading various flowers, bio control, amending soil, mulching, etc.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelor's degree in Plant and Soil science with an emphasis in Horticulture in 2019, I plan on staying here at Texas A&M University Kingsville for graduate school to achieve a Master's in Environmental Science. I hope to do graduate research that would reflect both my interest in horticulture and the environment being an experiment that tests conventional agriculture and its practices.

**Name:** Marco A Urive Jr  
**Hometown:** Mission, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Senior  
**Major:** Range and Wildlife Management  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science in Range and Wildlife Management  
**USDA Agency of interest:** Texas Parks and Wildlife Department



**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE

**Career experience/location:** In the summer of 2018 I interned for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department at Black Gap Wildlife Management Area (WMA) south of Marathon, Texas under the title of a Technician.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me the opportunity to further my knowledge in arid wildlife habitats, obtain several hours of hands on experience, and practice some of my old skills such as welding and operating heavy machinery. Along with regular hands-on knowledge, I was also allowed to connect with District 1 project and program leaders and discuss past/future events and projects on WMA lands.

**Career and research aspirations:** After the completion of my Bachelors of Science in Range and Wildlife Management in May of 2019 at Texas A&M University-Kingsville, I hope to head back to the Trans-Pecos district taking a technician position at Black Gap WMA. Along with that position, I plan to also propose a research topic to TPWD and Sul Ross State University that I may expand on to develop a thesis for graduate school. Finally, I hope to move up to a biologist (NRS) position with TPWD at a WMA, specifically in the Trans-Pecos or Edwards Plateau ecoregion of Texas.

**Name:** Lorena Villanueva  
**Hometown:** San Benito, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Animal Science- Pre-Vet  
**Expected date of graduation:** December 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science  
**USDA Agency of interest:** NRCS- BARC  
**Grant:** WHEELS OF CHANGE



**Career experience/ location:** During the summer of 2018 I interned with the USDA as part of the Tick Control Project in Beltsville, Maryland under the supervision of Dr. Andrew Li.

**Description of career experience (what I learned):** While participating in this internship I was able to learn more about ticks and the importance of trying to maintain the population down to avoid them transmitting diseases to humans. Since mice are the main carriers of lime disease, it is good to treat them and prevent further transmission.

**Career and research aspirations:** After completing the bachelor's degree in December 2019, I plan to continue my education at Texas A&M- College Station and pursue my education as a veterinarian. With this degree, I hope to gain more knowledge in animal care and provide adequate care for future patients. My goal is to open my own clinic in my hometown and provide service to my community at reasonable prices.

**Name:** Elsa Wiley  
**Hometown:** Brownsville, Texas  
**Institution:** Texas A&M University  
**Campus:** Kingsville  
**Rank:** Junior  
**Major:** Agriculture Science  
**Expected date of graduation:** May 2019  
**Degree:** Bachelor of Science in Agriculture  
**USDA Agency of interest:** USDA, NRCS, US Customs & Border Protection  
**Grant:** UAS



**Career Experience/Location:** In summer of 2018 I completed an internship for the AgriLife Research Center located in Weslaco, Texas under the title of Student Intern.

**About my Career Experience (what I learned):** This internship provided me with vigorous hands-on experience in a wide variety of skills and methods on carrying on research related to different concerns on crops. I especially gained immense knowledge specifically on topics related to planting dates for tomatoes in South Texas and how they affected the quality of the produce.

**Career and Research Aspirations:** Upon completion of my Bachelors of Agriculture Science in May 2019, I plan to apply for a job with either the USDA agency or the US Customs & Border Protection. This internship really helped me widen my knowledge on crops, and I believe that getting a job with any of these agencies will help me be able to not only put my new abilities and knowledge at work, but it will also help me gain even more knowledge and experience from new things that could be learned from there. After, I plan to go back to school and get into grad school.

# All Graduate Students

## Grant: STEP UP

### Master Degree

Luis Ayala  
Liliana Cantu  
Corina Fuentes  
Amanda Garcia  
Diego Garza  
Carlos Martinez  
Francisco Melgoza  
Alinna Lopez  
Ana Olivares  
Cynthia Parra  
Benjamin Perea  
Jennifer Trevino

### PhD

Consuelo Donato

## Grant: BGREEN

### Masters Degree

Reynaldo Munoz  
Krystal Montemayor  
Travis Trevino  
Julian Gonzales  
Pallavi Vedasharan  
Sri Telagamsetty  
Siddhi Jadhav

### PhD

Stephen Reyna  
Raul Rivas  
Madahy Romero

## Grant: STEP2

### Masters Degree

Gustavo Faz  
Juan Martinez  
Karelys Labrador  
Gabriel Odreman

## Grant: WHEELS of CHANGE

### Master Degree

Kassandra Gonzalez  
Erika Ramos

## Grant: START NOW

### Masters Degree

Julissa Rodriguez  
Gregory Lujano

### PhD

Amanda Lewis

## Grant: UAS

### Masters Degree

George Thomas











Thanks to Texas A & M Kingsville, Dr. Nelson, Dr. Machado, Dr. Consuelo, Rick Tafoya for the assistance in completing an internship with NRCS.

The block contains the Texas A&M University Kingsville logo at the top. Below it is a thank-you message. At the bottom are the logos for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).





TEXAS A&M  
UNIVERSITY  
KINGSVILLE®

