

AUGUST 2023  
EDITION

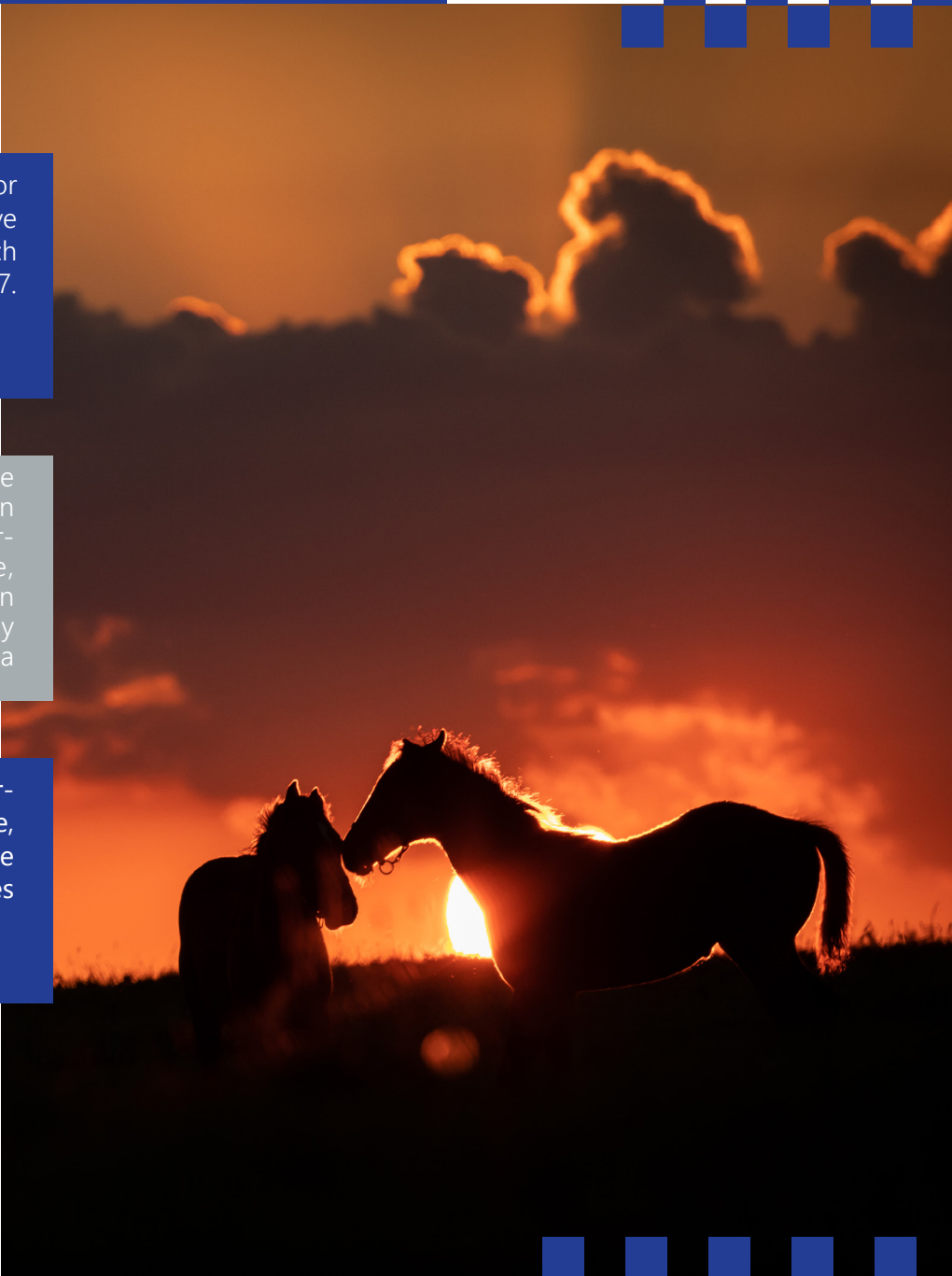
# WILDCAT CANTER

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY AG EQUINE PROGRAMS NEWSLETTER

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# HIGHLIGHTS



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## UPCOMING EVENTS AND IMPORTANT DEADLINES

Sept. 28 - Kentucky Signature Industries Career Fair featuring Equine and Bourbon, 2-5 p.m.  
Oct. 8-14 - UK Equine Week of Service

Full event listings and details can be found [here](#).

# WELCOME

Mid-August in Lexington always carries a special “buzz,” with tailgating tents and trailers poised for the first kickoff and the bustle of students returning to the dorms and classrooms. Whether you are stepping onto campus for the first time or returning to familiar surroundings, we are thrilled to welcome you here!

For me, the commencement of the fall term also marks a decade in higher education. In these 10 years, I’ve had the privilege of supporting and engaging with students throughout their academic journeys. Working with students is an immensely rewarding aspect of my role as an Academic Coordinator, and it’s what makes being part of the higher education field exceptionally meaningful to me.

Throughout this past decade, I have witnessed students expand their horizons, establish new connections and uncover their true potential. Yet, these moments in a student’s journey often come with some “growing pains.” I can remember my time as an undergraduate and the many instances when I had to step beyond my comfort zone – reaching out to industry professionals for class assignments or attending events where I didn’t know a single person. Each of these experiences, however, transformed my college and professional journey. The industry professional I interviewed? She later became the host of my internship, leading me to Kentucky and the Thoroughbred industry. The unfamiliar event? There, I met two individuals who became pillars of friendship and support through college and are now lifelong friends.

To explore what’s out there, I had to put myself out there. At times this was uncomfortable; it would have been far easier not to have attended that event or connected with a professional I already knew and was familiar with. However, every successful step beyond your comfort zone makes the next one a little easier. The more you challenge yourself, the more confidence you’ll build in your abilities. And if things don’t go as planned? That’s perfectly fine! Take a moment to regroup, refocus and move forward. Because you know what? You took action, and that was the toughest part.

As you embark on a new semester, I encourage you to find a way to put yourself out there this academic year. By pushing your boundaries and embracing new opportunities, you have the power to transform your college experience from ordinary to extraordinary. Whether you join a club or team, reach out to a potential internship or introduce yourself to at least one employer at our Signature Industries Career Fair, I urge you to venture beyond your comfort zone. Your college years are a time for growth and exploration. You never know what interests or passions you may unearth by trying something uncharted.

Most importantly, recognize that you’re not embarking on this journey alone. UK Ag Equine Programs is here to both support you and link you with the many opportunities available, not only within the Equine Science and Management major but also throughout the college, university and beyond. Utilize the wealth of knowledge and expertise that surrounds you in the program, and remember that our doors are always open.

Your college voyage is shaped by your actions and what you put into it. We’re eager to witness your journey in the upcoming year. Let this year be one of boundless opportunities!



ALICIA BENBEN,  
ACADEMIC COORDINATOR, EQUINE  
SCIENCE AND MANAGEMENT



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# Annie Martin joins UK in equine philanthropy role

*By Holly Wiemers*

Annie Martin has been named director of equine philanthropy and executive director of the Gluck Equine Research Foundation. She began her role Aug. 7.

A 2015 graduate of UK's equine science and management undergraduate degree program, she was most recently the event sales and development manager for Keeneland. Prior to that role, she worked for the Kentucky Horse Park Foundation in several capacities, including programs director and volunteer and outreach coordinator. She was also event coordinator for the High Hope Steeplechase.



Martin currently serves on the board for the Kentucky Horse Council and is a past board member of EQAAN, the alumni organization of UK's equine undergraduate program, having led the outreach committee that connected students with alumni of the program.

"I am honored and excited to be back at the Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment," Martin said. "The program has grown so much since I graduated and although I have a lot to learn, I am truly fueled by supporting the horse industry through education, research and conservation and am looking forward to working with our partners in the industry."

Martin grew up in Atlanta, riding and showing hunter/jumpers. As a teen, she began exercising polo ponies, leading to her managing the Atlanta Polo Club during high school. She chose UK for its equine undergraduate program and its nationally winning women's polo team.

In her current role, she will support UK Ag Equine Programs and the research, students and faculty in UK's Veterinary Science Department through fundraising efforts and participation. She will also serve as executive director of the college's equine boards.

"As a horse owner, I appreciate how UK impacts my horses directly. As a horse boarding business owner, I am thankful for how UK impacts my business directly. And, as a steward of the equine industry, I am looking forward to advancing this important work to benefit all horse owners and enthusiasts" she said.



# University of Kentucky's Aged Horse Care and Education Facility marks official opening, launching new possibilities for research and training



THE LINDA MARS AGED HORSE CARE AND EDUCATION FACILITY WILL HELP LEAD BREAKTHROUGHS IN CARE FOR OLDER HORSES. PHOTO BY MATT BARTON, UK AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS.

*by Holly Wiemers*

The Linda Mars Aged Horse Care and Education Facility, located on the University of Kentucky Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment's C. Oran Little Research Farm, recently marked its official opening with a ribbon-cutting ceremony — unlocking future training and research innovations in care for revered, older horses.

The new center will help lead breakthroughs in care for older horses, a demographic making up approximately one-third of the worldwide horse population. Additionally, the space will help train the next generation of scientists and serve as an important resource for the university's equine undergraduate students.

Support from Linda Mars, philanthropist and avid horsewoman, made the facility possible.

"By supporting the enhancement of our scientific knowledge, I hope more horses around the world will be able to grow old gracefully, remain healthy, active and enjoy a high quality of life in their older years," Mars said.

Gluck Equine Research Center associate professor Amanda Adams, established the University of Kentucky's Aged Horse Research Program. Adams, who specializes in caring for senior horses, is also an adjunct faculty member at Lincoln Memorial University College of Veterinary Medicine. She established and supports a herd of aged horses with conditions ranging from pituitary pars intermedia dysfunction (more commonly known as Cushing's disease), to obesity, equine metabolic syndrome and insulin dysregulation.

"We are thrilled that the facility is now open and that we can put it to good use. We need this space to support our efforts and in training the next generation of scientists," Adams said. "The best part of the ceremony was Linda Mars leading the first senior horse into the new facility. I am incredibly thankful for her dedication and love of senior horses."

The new facility features state-of-the-art laboratory space to support Adams' onsite research program, allowing previously unfeasible studies. The facility will also house teaching and workshop space for 40 graduate and undergraduate students and serve as home to the MARS EQUESTRIAN™ Scholar program. The space will host small public workshops focusing initially on topics such as the care of aging horses, nutrition, management and endocrine diseases.

"For the past 20 years Mars Horsecare, via the WALTHAM™ Equine Studies Group, has been proudly helping to lead the way with numerous global research collaborations to support the wellbeing, performance and longevity of senior horses and ponies," said Pat Harris, head of the WALTHAM™ Equine Studies Group, "The new the Linda Mars Aged Horse Care and Education Facility is an extremely exciting addition to our resources, to help us expand and share knowledge to support our mission to make the world a better place for horses."

*The mission of the Gluck Center is scientific discovery, education and dissemination of knowledge for the benefit of the health and well-being of horses. Gluck Center faculty conduct equine research in seven targeted areas: genetics and genomics, immunology, infectious diseases, musculoskeletal science, parasitology, pharmacology, therapeutics and toxicology and reproductive health. The Gluck Equine Research Center, a UK Ag Equine Program, is part of the Department of Veterinary Science in the Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment at the University of Kentucky.*

*MARS EQUESTRIAN Sponsorship by Mars, Incorporated is the link between our iconic brands and the equestrian community. For generations, Mars has celebrated a rich equestrian heritage, and through purposeful partnerships, MARS EQUESTRIAN is committed to the sport and building an enduring legacy. From world-class competitions across all equestrian disciplines, to stewarding the power of horses on society and sustainability, MARS EQUESTRIAN is dedicated to our purpose to improve the lives of horses, pets, and the people who love them. For more information, please visit our website at [www.marsequestrian.com](http://www.marsequestrian.com) and follow us on social media @marsequestrian.*

*The Waltham Petcare Science Institute is Mars Petcare's pet research center. Our work focuses on the nutritional and behavioral needs of pets, as well as preventive health. We use this knowledge to support development of innovative products and services, advancing science to deliver our Purpose: A BETTER WORLD FOR PETS™. The WALTHAM™ Equine Studies Group, which is headed by Pat Harris, MA, PhD, VetMB, DipECVCN, MRCVS, is dedicated to advancing the science of horse nutrition and provides the scientific support for MARS Horsecare globally including the BUCKEYE™ Nutrition, SPILLERS™, and WINER-GY™ brands. By collaborating with key research institutes and universities around the world its work remains at the forefront of equine nutritional science.*



# UK TO HOST SIGNATURE INDUSTRIES CAREER FAIR IN SEPTEMBER



*By Jordan Strickler*

The University of Kentucky Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment will host the 2023 Kentucky Signature Industries Career Fair. The Sept. 28 event highlights two of the state's most iconic industries, equine and bourbon.

UK Ag Equine Programs has held an annual career fair for over a decade. In 2022, the program initiated a partnership with the James B. Beam Institute for Kentucky Spirits to create the Kentucky Signature Industries concept. This year's fair will continue the collaboration to expose students to part- and full-time jobs, internships and volunteer opportunities in both industries.

"The Signature Industries Career Fair is a pivotal event that brings together job seekers and employers with a common mission, to help the equine and distilling industries continue to thrive," said Savannah Robin, internship coordinator for UK Ag Equine Programs. "We are excited to host an event of this magnitude again this year and eager to see our students and alumni continue to shine as they display their professionalism in this capacity."

The fair will take place in the UK Gatton Student Center from 2-5 p.m. EDT. The event is open to any college student in the state interested in the equine, distilling, wine and brewing industries, as well as related areas such as finance, hospitality, supply chain, engineering, accounting, tourism, communication and more. Last year's fair drew 60 employers and more than 300 students.

"The many professional opportunities and exciting career paths in Kentucky's equine and bourbon industries make this a very special event for all participants; students and employers alike," said James MacLeod, director of UK Ag Equine Programs. "The success of last year's inaugural Signature Industries Career Fair exceeded expectations and there is every indication that this year will be even better."

The impact of both industries on the state is significant. The most recent Kentucky Equine Survey reported that the state is home to 209,500 horses on 31,000 operations. The bourbon industry generates more than 22,500 jobs with an annual payroll topping \$1.23 billion. The impact goes further with more than \$286 million in annual tax revenue in the commonwealth attributed to bourbon, combined with both industries generating substantial tourism revenue and visitors to Kentucky from around the world.

"Completing the Beam Institute ushers in an unparalleled time in Kentucky bourbon workforce development," said Seth DeBolt, director of the Beam Institute and the Distillation, Wine and Brewing Studies undergraduate certificate program. "With 95% of bourbon distilled and matured in our state, the Signature Industries Career Fair is set to be bigger and better than ever for the next generation of distillers and for employers."

Registration is free for all students. Employers and student attendees may register via Handshake based on their industry association: <https://students.ca.uky.edu/KY-signature-industries>.



# UK AG EQUINE PROGRAMS HOSTS WELCOME BACK BBQ

More than 200 students, alumni, faculty and staff attended UK Ag Equine Programs' Welcome Back BBQ event Aug. 24. Attendees had the opportunity to learn more about various clubs and teams and welcome back a new academic year.



## *Welcome Incoming* **EQUINE SCIENCE & MANAGEMENT STUDENTS**





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College of Agriculture,  
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