

NUTRITION NEWS

JUNE 2024

Department of Nutrition Monthly Update



SAVE THE DATE

Please plan to join the Department of Nutrition at the following events or deadlines to add to your calendars.

June

- 29 American Society for Nutrition annual conference. Chicago, Illinois
<https://nutrition.org/N24/>

July

- 1 Summer I last day
3 Summer II first day
4 Independence Day - University Closed
12 Deadline for FY24 for purchases exceeding \$25,000
22 Operation Border Health Preparedness

August

- 6 Summer II last day
10 Commencements. Bachelor's 9:00 AM, Master's and Doctoral 2:00 PM
12 New Graduate Student Orientation
16 NUTR Faculty Retreat - Thomas Ranch (faculty only)
19 First Day of Classes - Fall 2024

Award Winning Faculty



Dr. David Threadgill

Dr. David Threadgill, Distinguished Professor and Department Head, has been awarded the 2024 Association of Former Students (ASF) Distinguished Achievement Award in Research. This is the most prestigious recognition of research excellence at TAMU, with only six awards granted annually across the entire A&M system. The award honors individuals whose research is extraordinarily significant and outstanding, recognized locally, nationally, and internationally. The results of their research have had substantial impacts, enriching the basic body of knowledge and/or inspiring the discipline to explore new research directions.

Learn more about Dr. Threadgill's research at <https://www.mouselab.org/>

Additional awardees are:

- Research: Dr. Rodolfo Nayga, Department of Agricultural Economics
- Teaching: Dr. Barry Boyd, Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communications
- Individual Student Engagement: Dr. Jennifer Rhinesmith-Carranza, Office of the Dean



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Nutrition



The Catharine Ross Award in Experimental Nutrition



Dr. Catharine (Cathy) Ross

Dr. Catharine Ross, Professor, Department of Nutrition is being honored by the **American Society for Nutrition** for her outstanding leadership as Editor-in-Chief of The Journal of Nutrition from 2004 to 2013 and for her excellent contribution to experimental nutrition research and education as a leading nutrition scientist and educator. A new award, named after her, will recognize outstanding nutrition research that applies animal models and experimental diets. The award will be given annually to the first author and the corresponding author of an outstanding research paper of experimental nutrition published in The Journal of Nutrition during the preceding year.

The lead author will receive a \$1,000 honorarium, Sponsored by Research Diets, Inc., and be recognized at NUTRITION, the American Society for Nutrition's annual scientific meeting.

Congratulations Dr. Ross, this is a great honor!

Learn more at
<https://jn.nutrition.org/tjnut-catharine-ross-award-in-experimental-nutrition>

<https://jn.nutrition.org/tjnut-catharine-ross-bio>

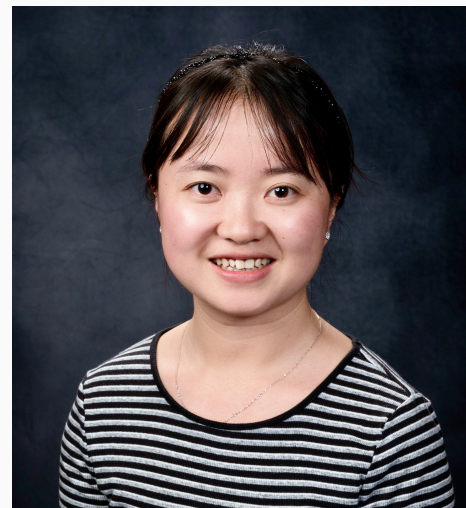
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics



Dr. Lauren Coheley-Spain

Dr. Lauren Coheley-Spain was selected to serve as a member of the house of delegates to the **Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics** for the Nutrition and Dietetics Educators and Preceptors practice group. Congratulations on this accolade Dr. Coheley!

Pilot Grant Awadee



Dr. Hongying Wang

Dr. Hongying Wang (Sun laboratory) received a nationally competitive pilot grant of \$30,000 from the National Institute on Aging Nathan Shock Center of Excellence in the Basic Biology of Aging. Congratulations Dr. Wang and good luck with your project: "Ghrelin receptor in microglia mediates the pathology of Alzheimer's disease in an age-dependent manner"



Grant for the Bailey Lab

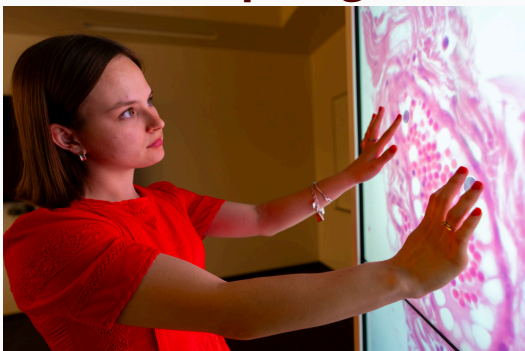


Dr. Regan Bailey

Dr. Regan Bailey was re-awarded funding for the next four years by NIH National Cancer Institute. The R01 grant is titled, "Development of the Total Nutrient Index". Dietary supplements are an important contributor to overall micronutrient exposures for a large proportion of the population. The Regan lab has developed and validated a metric, the total nutrient index (TNI), that captures multiple micronutrient exposures inclusive of supplements for use in research, clinical, and monitoring settings.

This current project will update the TNI to identify critical micronutrients and in what combinations optimally benefit the health and nutrition of individuals across the life course, and relate the TNI to risk factors, health outcomes, and mortality. Congratulations to Regan Bailey, Alexandra Cowan-Pyle, Diane Mitchell, and Kelly Fisher!

Student spotlights



Ellie Goen, Photo by Michael Miller/Texas A&M AgriLife

Vanden Brink lab undergraduate research assistants **Ellie Goen** and **Savli Patel** have been selected as scholars for the COALS Undergraduate Research Scholars Program. Ellie is a senior Nutrition major and her project title is "Impact of meal timing on PCOS risk during adolescence". You can learn more about Ellie Goen at [AgriLife Today](https://agrilifetoday.tamu.edu/2024/05/21/new-horizons-with-the-department-of-nutrition/) <https://agrilifetoday.tamu.edu/2024/05/21/new-horizons-with-the-department-of-nutrition/>

Student spotlights



Savli Patel
LinkedIn

Savli is a senior Nutrition major and her project title is "Impact of sleep quality on PCOS risk in adolescence".

Vanden Brink Lab presents at ISBNPA



The Vanden Brink lab traveled to Omaha, Nebraska to attend the annual International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity (ISBNPA) conference held on May 20-23. ISBNPA "aims to stimulate and promote innovative and impactful research in behavioral nutrition and physical activity to improve human and planetary health and well-being worldwide". Dr. Vanden Brink and senior research associate Joy Kim collaborated on a symposium session on "Lifestyle Strategies for the Early Treatment and Prevention of Adolescent PCOS", along with fellow speaker Dr. Lisa Moran of Monash University and co-chair Dr. Melissa Olfert of West Virginia University.

Dr. Vanden Brink co-chaired the session, opening the symposium with an introduction to PCOS and how adolescence is an ideal window for intervention. She also presented on nutrition, food security, and PCOS risk in adolescents. Joy presented on barriers and facilitators to lifestyle change in adolescents newly diagnosed with PCOS and goal setting with the registered dietitian.



Welcome to the Department!

Hastings to Join Faculty



Dr. Waylon Hastings

Dr. Waylon Hastings accepted an Assistant Professor position and will be joining the faculty in the Department of Nutrition on August 1st.

Dr. Hastings is a National Institute on Aging supported Postdoctoral Research Scientist in the Behavioral and Neurogenetics Laboratory at Tulane University School of Medicine. After completing undergraduate degrees in Biochemistry, Genetics, and Mathematics from Texas A&M University (2013), he obtained a Ph.D. in Biobehavioral Health and Bioethics from Pennsylvania State University (2020). Collaborating with the Telomere Research Network, CALERIE™ Clinical Trial, and Consortium of METabolomics Studies (COMETS), he is working to develop, improve, and validate methods to measure 'biological age' and functional decline in humans. His mission is to develop efficient methods to measure individual differences in aging.

Dr. Hastings will return to Aggieland with his wife and young daughter.

Read more here:
<https://www.eurekalert.org/news-releases/1041676>

Three additional faculty members, **Alicia Gilmore**, **Meghan Windham**, and **Sylvie Estrela** will be joining us between this summer and January 2025. Stay tuned in the next edition for their information!

New member in the Bailey Lab



Dr. Alexandra Cowan-Pyle

Dr. Alexandra Cowan-Pyle started a new role in Precision Nutrition as a Research Scientist. Prior to her role at IHA, Dr. Cowan-Pyle received her M.S. and her Ph.D. in Nutrition Science from Purdue University and completed an Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education fellowship at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Center for Health Statistics, in the Division of NHANES, and a USDA-ARS postdoctoral fellowship at IHA.

Her research is predominantly focused on assessing micronutrient exposures in relation to human health across the life course, improving quantitative methods of dietary assessment to optimize human health, and dietary supplement research.

New member in the Vanden Brink Lab



Hannah Lamar, [LinkedIn](#)

Aggie Hannah Lamar joined the Vanden Brink lab as a full-time research assistant in June. Hannah recently graduated from Texas A&M University with her Bachelor's degree in Nutrition and has joined the lab with her passion for integrating endocrinology, metabolism, and nutrition.



Undergrad Recruitment

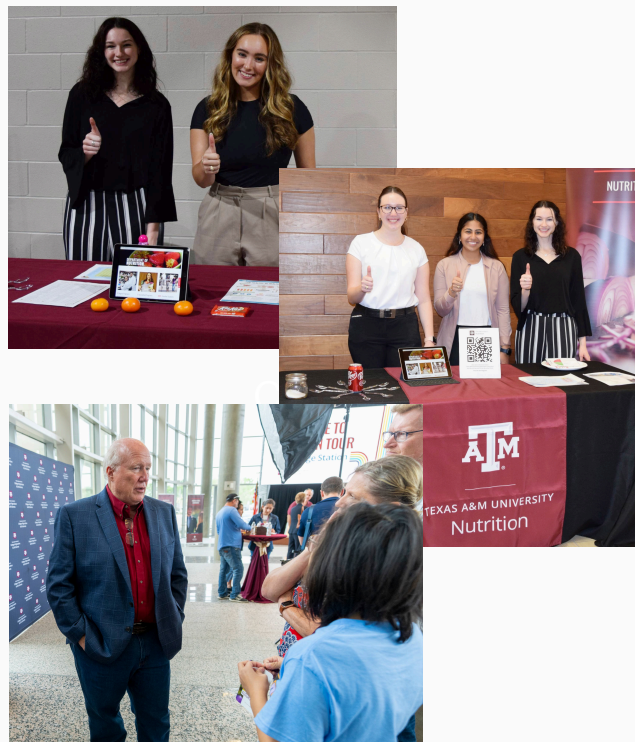
Spreadheaded by Dr. Lauren Coheley-Spain, the Department of Nutrition launched the Department of Nutrition Ambassador Program (DNAP) in the fall 2023.

The five undergraduate ambassadors attended several recruiting events including the Chemistry Open House, HYPE Career Fair, Aggieland Saturday, Department Overviews and AGLS on Tour stops.

Nutrition faculty and staff members attended the seven AGLS on Tour stops -- McAllen, San Antonio, Katy, Aggieland, Fort Worth, Dallas and Amarillo -- meeting with incoming freshmen Aggies and prospective students.

The recruiting efforts are paying dividends as **the current Nutrition Class of 2028 includes 130 students!**

Plans are underway to host tutoring sessions and other events to foster a welcoming and supportive environment for our undergraduate students.



Around the world

Dr. Catharine (Cathy) Ross visited Tokyo University of Agriculture ("NODAI") as a visiting professor from May 10-31 where she gave guest lectures to undergraduate student and master's degree students in Nutrition, Food Science, and Agricultural and Fermentation Science. She also met with faculty about various research topics and potential interactions. While in Tokyo she had a wonderful reunion with 5 of her former postdocs who have gone on to independent careers in academia and/or medicine.



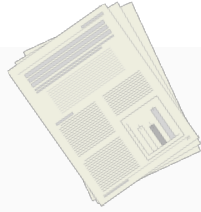
Dr. Ross on Kagurazaka street following a group of traditional Japanese musicians.



Dr. Ross on rooftop rose garden of science building with NODAI faculty.



Publications



Catharine Ross contributed to Diet-Induced Severe Hyperhomocysteinemia Promotes Atherosclerosis Progression and Dysregulates the Plasma Metabolome in Apolipoprotein-E-Deficient Mice.
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10856797/>

David Threadgill contributed to Genetic and microbial determinants of azoxymethane-induced colorectal tumor susceptibility in Collaborative Cross mice and their implication in human cancer.
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38659246/>

Hongying Wang, Zheng Shen, Chia-Shan Wu, Pengfei Ji, Ji Yeon Noh, Cédric G Geoffroy, Sunja Kim, David Threadgill, Jianrong Li, Yu Zhou, Xiaoqiu Xiao, Hui Zheng, Yuxiang Sun published Neuronal ablation of GHSR mitigates diet-induced depression and memory impairment via AMPK-autophagy signaling-mediated inflammation.
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38464534/>

Bradley Johnston contributed to Understanding effect size: an international online survey among psychiatrists, psychologists, physicians from other medical specialties, dentists and other health professionals by Ferdinand Heimke, Yuki Furukawa, Spyridon Sifas, Bradley C Johnston, Rolf R Engel, Toshi A Furukawa, Stefan Leucht
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38388002/>

PhD student Nirjhar (Ruth) Gosh is the first author of Evidence-Based Practice Competencies among Nutrition Professionals and Students: A Systematic Review along with PhD student Zahra Esmaeilinezhad and Nutrition faculty members Sandra Lorenz, Karen Beathard and corresponding author Bradley Johnson.
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38159813/>

The Vanden Brink Lab published this spring: The efficacy of sleep lifestyle interventions for the management of overweight or obesity in children: a systematic review and meta-analysis in BMC Public Health. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38287352/>

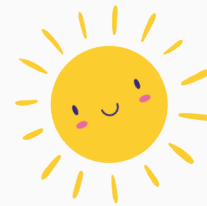
Heidi Vanden Brink also published Ovarian Morphology in Girls Longitudinal Cohort Study: Pilot Evaluation of Ovarian Morphology as a Biomarker of Reproductive and Metabolic Features during the First Gynecological Year in the Journal of Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology.
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38395192/>

Abstracts

ENDO Late Breaking Abstracts From the Vanden Brink Lab

McCormick K, Lujan ME, Chang C, Ipp L, Alladeen A, Lamar H, Mendle J*, Vanden Brink H*. Objective Versus Subjective Measures of Reproductive Development and Psychological Well-Being in Peri-Menarcheal Adolescents: A Pilot Study. Proceedings of the Endocrine Society Annual Meeting, Boston, MA, June 1-4. Abstract: SUN-703 *co-corresponding authors

Vanden Brink H*, McCormick K, Lujan ME, Chang J, Ipp L, Alladeen A, Mendle J*. Association Between AMH and Psychological Symptoms Across the BMI Spectrum in Peri-Menarcheal Adolescents: Preliminary Findings. Proceedings of the Endocrine Society Annual Meeting, Boston, MA, June 1-4. Abstract: MON-706
*co-corresponding authors



HAPPY AND SAFE SUMMER EVERYONE

Got news? Send photos and information to
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