

ADVOCATING *for* AGRICULTURE

STORY AND PHOTO BY ***ELIZABETH CHAMBERS***

Stewarding relationships with alumni, industry partners and donors is a central part of Dan Moser's role as dean of Kansas State University's College of Agriculture. Working alongside him is his wife, Lisa, a college faculty member, who helps connect those relationships to students and the broader story of agriculture.

Before becoming dean, Dan held leadership roles in academia and industry. Those experiences continue to shape his approach, as much of his time is spent meeting with alumni, attending industry events and engaging with stakeholders who influence and support the college.

"We're truly interested in their (alumni) success and want their feedback on how our students are prepared," Dan says. "That feedback guides how our programs change over time."

Those conversations help connect individuals to a broader network tied to the college, strengthening relationships that support research, teaching and student opportunities.

"Our faculty, students and staff are really integrated into the industries we serve," he says. "That connection helps guide what we do."

Lisa's role adds another layer to those interactions. As an agricultural and natural resources communications instructor, she is closely connected to students.

One of her classes creates the Kansas State Agriculturist magazine, which, Lisa says, enables her to highlight many of the exciting initiatives that the college's faculty, staff and students are involved with.

"I get to share what our students are doing in the classroom," Lisa says. "When I'm talking with alumni or stakeholders, that helps show the impact of the college in a way people can connect to."

Those conversations often lead to discussions about how alumni and donors can stay involved and support the college.

"People really want to make a difference," Dan says. "Many of them want to make sure the college continues to grow. Our role is to help them understand where they can have the biggest impact."

For Lisa, that process begins with understanding what matters to each individual and how they connect to agriculture.

"I want to know their story and what they care about," Lisa says. "Everyone has a different reason for wanting to stay connected and understanding that helps us find the right way for them to be involved."

Together, those approaches help connect alumni and industry partners to opportunities within the college, from supporting programs to creating pathways for students through internships and careers.

"We have such a great alumni base, and those partnerships help place students in internships and careers," Lisa says. "It's about connecting students to people who want to invest in their future."

For Dan and Lisa, external relations are rooted in building partnerships and representing the people and work of the college, a role they describe as both meaningful and rewarding.

Lisa says, "It's a joy and privilege for us to represent the College of Agriculture."