

Candidate Statements – President



Dragan Miljkovic,
North Dakota State
University

Background

Dragan Miljkovic is professor in the Department of Agribusiness and Applied Economics at

North Dakota State University. Before that, he had faculty appointments at Southwest Missouri State University (SMSU), Montana State University, and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC). Dr. Miljkovic holds Ph.D. in agricultural economics from the UIUC, and M.S. and B.S. in economics from the School of Economics at the University of Belgrade.

There are three main thrusts to Dr. Miljkovic's research program. The first relates to agricultural, food and trade policy. The second is related to agricultural marketing including demand analysis and price interrelations in domestic and international commodity markets including agricultural commodities, oil, coal, and natural gas prices. The third concerns developing and empirically testing various behavioral models explaining the increase in obesity in the United States and internationally, and policy implications of this trend. Dr. Miljkovic published more than 100 peer-reviewed publications including over 90 journal articles plus several books and book chapters. For his research accomplishments, he has been recognized by the Southern Agricultural Economics Association in 2008; by North Dakota State University Agriculture and Extension as a recipient of the 2009 Larson/Yaggie Excellence in Research Award; by being the recipient of the Excellence in Research Award at the College of Natural and Applied Sciences, Southwest Missouri State University (SMSU) in 2001; and, by being selected to serve on the Executive Board of the International Agricultural Trade Research Consortium (IATRC) as the representative of all American universities, along with representatives of all non-American Universities, USDA, AG Canada,

OECD, The World Bank, and the WTO between 2017-2019.

Dr. Miljkovic served as the Associate Editor of the Journal of Agricultural and Applied Economics, the journal of the SAEA, between 2005-2007. He also founded and served as the Founding and Managing Editor of the Journal of International Agricultural Trade and Development between 2005 and 2016. Finally, Dr. Miljkovic served as the Managing Editor of the Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics, the journal of the Western Agricultural Economics Association (WAEA) between 2018-2020. For his overall professional contributions, Dr. Miljkovic was named the Fellow of the WAEA in 2021.

In his over 25 years of teaching experience, Dr. Miljkovic has taught 15 different courses at graduate or undergraduate level. He was actively involved in committee services, supervising graduate students, and advising undergraduate students. Dr. Miljkovic supervised 25 MS students at NDSU and SMSU and served on the committee for 40 Graduate (MS and PhD) students. He is also the faculty adviser of the Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity of the NDSU Chapter (2016-current) and served as the faculty mentor for 7 Assistant Professors at NDSU.

WAEA Vision Statement

I am honored to have the opportunity to be considered for the position of President of the WAEA. As the world continues to recover from COVID-19 pandemic, it also moved into an era of extreme international economic and political instability. Record levels of inflation and even more extreme increases of both energy and agricultural commodity and food prices; unprecedented demographic shifts worldwide; shortages of labor disrupting supply chain in agribusiness sector; and major dysfunctionality and declining confidence in existing financial, international trade, and other global economic institutions are just a few examples of today's complex global economic and agribusiness landscape. These new challenges imply that much of our thinking, as a profession, needs to be adjusted to

new realities around us. Moreover, to be intellectual leaders, we need to consider not just responding to these arising challenges, but to anticipate the new ones and, accordingly, provide scholarly and intellectual leadership to our constituency and all other interested parties.

More specifically, it is important to have the WAEA presence throughout the academic year and not only at the WAEA meetings. I would engage in establishing of online research and outreach seminar series, organized by the WAEA. Similar idea has been suggested by Dr. Karina Schoengold, current President Elect, in her WAEA vision statement. I take this a step further. Regular, possibly monthly webinars, could reach large audience during the entire academic year. Topics and speakers chosen should reflect the vision of the President and the Executive Council about most urgent current and future agriculture and agribusiness pertinent topics, as well as most state of the art research developments. Feedback from the membership would then be solicited to follow-up with most interesting topics at

the following WAEA annual meeting.

As the WAEA president, I would try to continue promoting diversification of the membership, and to recruit more actively researchers and practitioners from all around the world. While WAEA has regional prefix to its name, global economy and agriculture imply interconnectedness among scholars from around the world.

Next, it is important to preempt the “aging” of the membership. Hence, I would actively facilitate recruitment of younger professionals including young assistant professors, postdocs, and graduate students. I also believe how it is important to have a more permanent outlet for papers presented at the WAEA meetings to provide a participation incentive to younger professionals. A possible way to accomplish that is to have a JARE issue dedicated to proceedings from the WAEA Annual Meeting, or to add sections of proceedings to one of the issues of both the JARE and Western Economics Forum.

Candidate Statements – President



Dustin Pendell, Kansas State University

Background

Dustin Pendell is a Professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics at Kansas State University where he has been a faculty member with a research, extension, and teaching appointment since 2015. He received his B.S. and M.S. degrees from Illinois State University and Southern Illinois University, respectively, and Ph.D. from Kansas State University in 2006. He was an Assistant/Associate Professor at Colorado State University between 2006 and 2015.

Dustin's broad research and extension interests include economic issues in livestock and animal health that span from the producer throughout the entire meat supply chain to the final consumer. He has taught undergraduate and graduate courses in agricultural marketing, production economics, farm management, and data analysis and optimization. He has been a WAEA member since first presenting at the 2003 annual meeting while in graduate school. Dustin has served WAEA as: Director, Executive Council, *JARE* Editorial Council, Chair of Outstanding Published Research Award, Distinguished Scholar Award Committee, Reviewer for *JARE* and *WEF*, and Selected Paper Abstract Reviewer.

WAEA Vision Statement

It is a privilege and honor to be nominated to serve as President of WAEA. Since participating in my first WAEA annual meeting in Denver in 2003, this association has become my favorite professional organization. During my time as a graduate student and now as faculty, I have found the WAEA annual meetings provide excellent opportunities not only for scholarly engagement and professional development,

but also in networking with fellow agricultural and resource economists that are interested in similar Western agricultural issues like water and livestock/meat production and marketing. I have been fortunate to receive many benefits from WAEA and its members over the past 19 years and this position of President would provide me an opportunity to give back.

Graduate education and early career success are personal passions of mine. I have spent the past 14 years as the director of graduate studies or a member of the graduate committee at both Kansas State and Colorado State. One challenge (and opportunity) facing WAEA is to continue adapting its activities to create value to its members, especially to graduate students and early career economists. I am committed to exploring and implementing innovative opportunities that attract new members, all the while maintaining successful incentive programs (e.g., graduate student paper competition). As one example to increase participation, I would explore ways to increase younger faculty and graduate student involvement in Organized Symposia. While continuing to encourage extension faculty/staff involvement in our meetings (e.g., Western Extension Committee), I would make an intentional effort to involve more teaching scholars in our annual meetings. I would visit with current and non-current members, including graduate students and younger faculty, to solicit new ideas to increase participation and visibility of the Association. As we expand membership and increase member involvement, we need to continue with our current successes, including attractive family-oriented meeting locations, diverse Western agricultural topics, and strong reputation of *JARE*. In summary, I truly believe in investing in our future and am looking forward to serving the Association and contributing to the success of the WAEA for years to come.

Candidate Statements – Director



Kate Brooks, University of Nebraska

Background

Kate Brooks is an Associate Professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Kate received her B.S. in Agribusiness from Kansas State University, her M.S. in Agribusiness from Illinois State University, and her Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics from Oklahoma State University. Prior to joining the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Brooks served as a faculty member at West Texas A&M University.

Brooks teaches the agribusiness management sequence as well as a sophomore level class on the food marketing system. Her research interests span throughout the livestock industry as well as research on impacts of agribusinesses in the United States.

Brooks has served on various committees at UNL both at the department and college level. She served as the chair of WERA-72 (Western Education and Research Activities Committee on Agribusiness) and is currently serving as the past-chair of the AEM Section of the AAEA. Brooks is an active member of the WAEA. Brooks and her graduate students have presented at WAEA annual meetings, she reviewed selected papers and JARE submissions served as topic leader for the teaching submissions to the annual meetings and served on the outstanding extension award committee.

WAEA Vision Statement

Thank you for considering me for the WAEA director position. My current research and teaching efforts along with my previous leadership positions make me an ideal candidate.

I appreciate the many opportunities WAEA provides for faculty and graduate students at the annual meeting and through the various WAEA publications. As a member of the WAEA, I have

enjoyed the opportunities to present new and ongoing research at the meetings and the opportunities to build collaborations with a diverse group of faculty and graduate students. WAEA continues to be a relevant source for discussing new ideas in extension, teaching and research. The annual meeting is a great opportunity for graduate students not only to present their research but to gain valuable feedback from the very active participants and gain new knowledge and ideas from others as well as build their own confidence and presentation skills.

If elected as a WAEA director, I would like to continue to help grow the WAEA with young professionals as well as graduate students and increase our membership of industry leaders. I would be committed to finding avenues to better reach graduate students and increasing opportunities for those student members. Increasing our engagement with graduate students beyond the research paper competition may include extension or teaching based competitions. We could further increase student engagement at the annual meetings by creating more direct networking opportunities for graduate students as well as young professionals with industry professionals. Further, we could look into a special issue of the JARE that highlights graduate student work. This special issue may be tied with the research paper competition. WAEA has many opportunities to support students and faculty with collaborations and presentations of research, teaching, and extension activities beyond the annual meeting and publications. As we are all becoming more comfortable with technology, it opens the opportunity for potential seminars and discussions throughout the year and not just limited to the annual meetings. These online seminars allow us to also increase our outreach to industry stakeholders that may not be able to travel during our annual meeting. Finally, I would continue to encourage members to publish in JARE through special issues that are timely to the profession. Thank you again for considering me for this role.

Candidate Statements – Director



Brian Coffey, Kansas State University

Background

Brian Coffey received a PhD in Agricultural Economics from Kansas State University and a BS and MS in Agricultural Economics from the University of Kentucky. He is currently an

Associate Professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics at Kansas State University. He joined the K-State faculty in 2015 with an 80% Teaching/20% Research appointment. Brian teaches an intermediate microeconomic theory course which is required of all Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness majors and minors. This course provides the great opportunity to teach almost every undergraduate student in the department. Additionally, Brian facilitates a unique futures and options trading class that allows students to trade using their own money. Brian's research is mostly focused on livestock/meat economics, risk management, and scholarship of teaching and learning. Brian enjoys teaching others about markets and regularly provides outreach to various stakeholder groups regarding how to use futures and options to manage price risk in agriculture. Over the years, he has been involved in WAEA annual meetings as a selected paper presenter; symposium organizer/presenter; and judge of the graduate paper competition. He has also published in WAEA journal, JARE, and served as a reviewer of several manuscripts for JARE and WEF.

WAEA Vision Statement

I am thankful for the opportunity to be nominated for one of the WAEA Director spots. WAEA provides a valuable community for applied agricultural and natural resource economists and I am happy to support that mission. I see the relevance of the applied economic work of its members as the primary strength of WAEA. We have members engaged in applied research, extension education, on-campus instruction, government, and the private sector. In all cases, the ability to conduct sound analysis and clearly

communicate the findings to the appropriate audience is key. My efforts, as a director, would be to focus on that linkage between the expertise of our members and stakeholders who stand to benefit from this expertise. Specifically, I would seek to create opportunities to equip members in the areas of: 1) classroom instruction and 2) communicating with non-academic audiences. I think the impact of the annual meeting could be enhanced by encouraging symposia and pre/post-conference workshops focused on teaching and learning. Training undergraduate students in economic thinking is incredibly valuable today, as economic literacy seems on the decline. Bringing together seasoned instructors with those early in their career for dialogue, training, and networking can leverage the immense professional capital in our membership to set up early career academics to be more effective instructors. Communicating effectively with non-academic audiences requires a varied skillset that most of us do not learn in typical academic training. I would focus attention on efforts to improve the capacity of our members to make their work and expertise accessible to farmers, business people, and policy makers who can use them to make better decisions. We have many members who are tremendously skilled in communicating with various audiences. The annual meeting would be an excellent venue to offer intentional training and mentoring opportunities where we can learn from each other regarding best practices of communicating with media, engaging with industry, publicizing research findings, and packaging research results for different audiences.

Candidate Statements – Director



Amy Hagerman,
Oklahoma State University

Background

Amy D. Hagerman is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics at Oklahoma State University working

on issues related to Agriculture and Food Policy.

Amy completed Agricultural Economics degrees at Oklahoma State University (B.S. 2004) and Texas A&M University (M.S. 2005 and PhD 2009) as well as a post-doctoral program in animal health economics. She joined the United States Department of Agriculture, spending two years with the Economic Research Service in Washington, DC, and then 5 years with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service in Fort Collins, Colorado, working on economic consequence assessments of trade and animal disease policies on US agricultural industries. She joined the faculty at Oklahoma State University in June 2018 (75% Extension/25% Research). Amy focuses her integrated extension and research program on the understanding and management of the risks of agriculture, including animal health, extreme weather, and market fluctuations. Amy has served the profession as a reviewer, a guest editor for special journal issues, a grant panelist, and helped launch the AAEE Health Economics Section. Amy has been involved in WAEA since 2009 as a member and participated in Western Extension Committee activities since 2018. In 2020, Amy served on the Outstanding Published Research Award committee, and in 2022 was awarded the “JARE Outstanding Journal Reviewer Award, less than 10 Years Experience”.

WAEA Vision Statement

I am honored to have the opportunity to serve as a WAEA Director. This organization has a unique role in fostering collaboration and innovation in research/teaching/extension and enhancing professional development. The expanding breadth and scope of the challenges faced by our profession in North America and in the rest of the world makes

WAEA more critical than ever. In addition to the continuation of an engaging annual meeting and successful publication outlets, I would seek possible opportunities to reach broader audiences, highlight cross-disciplinary work, and enhance professional development and mentoring.

When a disaster occurs one of the most important steps in the aftermath is to evaluate what went well and where processes can be improved. Most of us experienced at least one instance of virtual or hybrid professional engagement in the last 3 years with varying levels of success. I would explore ways to use collective lessons learned from virtual and hybrid events to develop cost-effective avenues of reaching audiences that may not have the time or funds to travel to the WAEA Annual Meeting every year. For example, a virtual track session during the in-person meeting, livestreamed keynote presentations, or a virtual pre- or post-conference.

Economics has a great deal to contribute to cross-disciplinary topic areas. A ‘big picture’ symposium each year could highlight cross-disciplinary projects, with topics selected by the Executive Committee, beyond the typical tracks. This symposium could bring in speakers from within and outside of the agricultural and applied economics community to share innovations and information on key timely topics. Recent topics that could be examples include antimicrobial resistance, scientific communication, carbon markets, and forest management for wildfire prevention/response/recovery.

Finally, I would support the continued enhancement of mentoring and awards activities that encourage and inspire WAEA members. This includes exploring opportunities for new awards that highlight contributions by members in industry, non-profit and governmental positions and highlighting service and mentoring by mid- and late-career members. It may also include highlighting exemplary examples of integrated extension-research-teaching programs that have fully embraced the land grant mission.

It would be a pleasure to play a role in the continued development of WAEA as a Director. I believe our

organization will continue to play a vital role in professional development and personal engagement among members, and that we will continue to bring in new members interested in topics facing the West.

Candidate Statements – Director

William Ridley, University of Illinois

Background

William (Bill) Ridley is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Agricultural and Consumer Economics at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. He

obtained a PhD in Economics from the University of Colorado and an MS in Applied Economics from the University of Idaho. His research focuses on international trade, trade policy in food and agriculture, and applied econometrics. His latest research examines trade policy issues in international food and commodity markets, as well as the impacts of the US-China trade war. He is also currently engaged in work that explores the relationship between climate change and the agri-food supply chain at both the domestic and international levels. Bill teaches courses on international trade in food and agriculture and applied microeconomic theory at the University of Illinois.

Bill first joined the WAEA in 2012 as a graduate student and attended his first WAEA meeting in 2013 in Monterey, California. Since then, he has been an active participant in WAEA meetings, having been the beneficiary of WAEA Graduate Student Travel Grants in 2013 and 2015. He has also been active in publishing and reviewing submissions at JARE.

WAEA Vision Statement

I am grateful to be nominated for the role of WAEA Director, and I would be honored to serve in this position. Having now been involved in the WAEA for 10 years, I am deeply appreciative of the many opportunities for professional growth, networking, and engagement that WAEA membership has provided me. I am excited about the possibility of serving the WAEA in this leadership role and ensuring that the Association continues to provide the same opportunities for graduate students, faculty, and the agricultural economics discipline at large, and also working to move the association forward and

help it thrive.

If elected, I look forward to supporting the WAEA's current programs and working to develop and promote initiatives that foster the success of the Association and serve the needs of its members. To do this, I will work to make sure that the core functions of the Association are managed efficiently. This will include contributing to the planning and administration of the WAEA's annual meetings, helping to manage the Association's professional development opportunities and awards programs, recruiting new members, and sustaining the vibrant relationships that the WAEA maintains with agricultural and applied economics departments in the western United States and Canada. I will also work to maximize the WAEA's outreach efforts with graduate students and faculty in order to enhance the Association's visibility and engagement within the discipline. Moreover, I intend to actively work with WAEA leadership and members to identify avenues for improvement and growth. Thank you very much for your consideration.