Semester Review

Our semester meetings started off strong for TTU-TWS with special guest speaker, former TTU-TWS president Masi Mejia, and Jamie Allen with the USFWS and Canada Wildlife Services, who provided valuable information into their career fields. We had numerous activities lined up, but due to circumstances this semester came to an early close. However, we continued strong by transitioning online with Wildlife Semi-Filtered podcast, hosted by Dr. Blake Grisham and the TTU-TWS officers. Thank you to all of our speakers who could join us for our podcasts: Clint Perkins, Dr. John Tomeček, and Tiffany Lane. We look forward to all future guest speakers who will be joining us for our weekly podcast. Make sure to tune in at 7 p.m. every Friday on Twitch to enjoy new episodes of our podcast. Thank you to all our 2019-2020 officers who did a great job dedicating their time and effort into TTU-TWS: Micah Rainey, President; Olivia Gray, Vice President; Price Clayton, Treasurer; Ryan Lopez, Secretary; Abraham Garcia, Media Chair; Brandon Sagraves, Outreach Coordinator; and Logan Vollentine, Agricultural Council Representative. Congratulations to all our graduating seniors who really helped to make the most out of this society! TTU-TWS wishes you all the best in your future endeavors. We also welcome the new 2020-2021 officer team and are looking forward to what the future holds for TTU-TWS!

Queso Cook-Off/ Mr. CASNR Pageant

The third annual Queso Cook-off was once again a huge success for TTU-TWS. The 2019-2020 Vice President, Olivia Gray, and the 2020-2021 President, Sophie Morris, made a qeso that both the attendees and judges loved. It was such a fan favorite that many went back for seconds until there was no more. With their amazing qeso, they were able to woo the judges to win Best Presentation and won Judges Choice a second year in a row for TWS! After the Queso Cook-Off was the Mr. CASNR Pageant. During this event, Cameron Spradlin represented TTU-TWS. He showed his dancing and singing skills and demonstrated what it meant to be a student in CASNR. Although Cameron didn’t win Mr. CASNR, he won our hearts! Thank you to everyone who came out and voted for our chapter and cheered for us this year!

Top Picture: Queso Cook-Off and Mr. CASNR Pageant; we won best qeso and best presentation!

Bottom Picture: TTU-TWS members at 2020 TCTWS
Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society

The 2020 Annual Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society Meeting was held February 13-15 in Corpus Christi, Texas. Twenty of our members made the long drive to attend the annual meeting. During the TCTWS, meeting our chapter worked the TTU-TWS booth with other exhibitors, attended the TTU Alumni Event, and sat in on numerous research presentations. Then the chapter competed in and won the raffle basket competition, where we had 219 tickets in our basket, which was 151 more than second place. Olivia Gray and Sophie Morris, two of our undergrads, presented their undergraduate research. Olivia also won second place in the undergraduate poster competition. Our 2019-2020 president, Micah Rainey, also won the Colin Caruthers memorial undergraduate scholarship, awarded to the top wildlife student in the state! Thank you to everyone who put their tickets in our basket, and thank you to everyone who was able to attend this amazing event!

Alumni Spotlight

Masi Mejia
TTU Class of 2013 | East Foundation

As an educator for the East Foundation, Maria F. “Masi” Mejia, delivers natural resource education to the underserved communities of South Texas. She deploys educational programs on East Foundation lands, and takes the proven L.A.N.D.S. (Learning Across New Dimensions in Science) curriculum of our partner, the Texas Wildlife Association, into schools in Zapata, Jim Hogg, Brooks, Duval, Webb, Dimmit, and La Salle counties.

Masi aims to inform and engage diverse audiences in the importance of wildlife conservation. She currently serves as an outreach chair for Texas Chapter of The Wildlife Society and is member of the Diversity and Inclusion Council for the Aldo Leopold Foundation.

Masi received a Bachelor’s degree in Environmental Conservation of Natural Resources and a Master’s degree in Wildlife, Aquatic, and Wildlands Science and Management from Texas Tech University. While attending Texas Tech University, Masi conducted research on the factors that influence natural resource professionals and students to pursue careers in the field. Additionally, Masi conducted various educational events to inform the public about wildlife, conservation, and our natural resources.

Prior to working with the Foundation, Masi served as a mentor for the Doris Duke Conservation Scholars Program at the University of Idaho. She has also interned with The Nature Conservancy, Ogallala Commons, Texas Parks and Wildlife, the Texas Youth Hunting Program and Texas Brigades. Masi resides in Laredo, Texas.

I chose “environmental conservation of natural resources” now NRM because I wanted to make a difference in wildlife conservation (and one less chemistry than wildlife management).

Favorite moment: Maybe attending my first TCTWS meeting in San Antonio, I was the only freshman with a bunch of upperclassmen. Also going camping in Big Bend NP.

TTU-TWS Influence – Getting to hear from local professionals in the field and opportunities that stemmed from meeting with them and the professors within the department.