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KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY | Office of Governmental Relations

Kansas State University earns No. 4 spot in ranking of top veterinary schools

A national publication produced by students for students has recently placed the Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine in the upper half of a list of the top 10 veterinary colleges in the United States.

Citing what it calls an "I Kan(sas)" attitude toward solving problems, College Magazine lists several factors to support a No. 4 ranking for Kansas State University among U.S. veterinary colleges, including a high standard of excellence in patient care and scientific discovery in the area of infectious diseases. Further emphasis was placed on the university's large animal expertise, impact on the cattle industry, learning objectives, student proficiency and the ability to identify and treat diseases.

College Magazine specifically named the College of Veterinary Medicine's Center of Excellence for Emerging and Zoonotic Animal Diseases, the Rabies Laboratory and the Center for Epithelial Research as standouts in the program.

"We are honored to be ranked among these exceptional peer institutions and universities," said Bonnie Rush, interim dean of the college. "It is gratifying to be recognized for areas we have identified as our own strategic priorities: exceptional teaching, impactful research, outstanding service and extraordinary graduates."

Second-year veterinary student Maggie Massey was quoted by the magazine for expressing her appreciation of the large animal faculty, citing Kansas State University instructors raise students to a "different level" to groom them to be industry leaders.

College Magazine's ranking methodology is based on a variety of factors, such as data from the National Center of Education Statistics, news articles, university websites, course catalogs and student statements. The site also considers scholarship opportunities and noteworthy initiatives, and then applies a formal list of criterion scored on a 1-5 scale, with the lowest scores placing schools on top.

Computer scientists to study application of big data for improved disaster management and response

With the continuing threat of deadly disasters such as tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes and terrorist attacks striking communities, researchers at Kansas State University are looking to big data for its potential to become an integral source of information for response organizations in these situations.

Funded by $900,000 from the National Science Foundation Critical Techniques, Technologies and Methodolgies for Advancing Foundation and Applications of Big Data Sciences and Engineering program, three faculty members from the computer science department in the College of Engineering are set to explore this potential through the four-year project, "Domain Adaptation Approaches for Classifying Crisis-Related Data on Social Media."

"Big crisis data can help improve situational awareness and facilitate faster response where it's most needed," said Doina Caragea, associate professor and co-lead investigator on the project. "Manually sifting through voluminous steaming data to filter useful information in real time is inherently impossible."

The research, co-lead by Cornelia Caragea, associate professor, and co-investigated by Dan Andresen, professor, will produce a hybrid community-computational framework for real-time discovery of situational awareness information in social media platforms.

"This framework has the potential to transform the way in which response organizations operate by helping them identify more relevant information in a timely manner and in turn helping them provide better support to victims of disasters," Doina Caragea said.

Amazon Web Services provided an additional $768,916 in promotional credits for performing the large-scale computation involved with training neural network models, almost doubling the funding for the project.

With a combined involvement of graduate and undergraduate students, the project will make significant advances to the current state of the art in machine learning and its applications to disaster management and response.

USDA-funded multi-robot farming project to aid in increasing world's food supply

The world will be required to feed an estimated 9 billion people by 2050, but annual percentage crop yield increases are currently only half those required to meet these projected food needs. This pressing issue is being taken on by a team of researchers at Kansas State University whose aim is to increase arable land acreage considered too steep for use with conventional equipment.

Enter the robots.

K-State participates in Higher Education Day at the Statehouse

On January 18, 2018, Kansas State University joined the other 38 public higher education institutions for the 2nd annual Higher Education Day in the State Capitol. The day kicked off with a breakfast for all legislators and members of the Kansas Board of

"Multi-Robert Farming on Marginal, Highly Sloped Lands" is a three-year, $1,178,191 grant project from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Robotics Initiative 2.0: Ubiquitous Collaborative Robots. Headed by Dan Flippo, assistant professor in K-State's biological and agricultural engineering department.

This project will explore use of multiple small robots to farm highly sloped land. The robots, the size of a common wheelchair, will work in groups to accomplish fieldwork by unconventional means. Strap-on hardware modules will be designed to allow the small vehicles to plant, manage and harvest wheat on hills with slopes as great as 55 percent, or 30 degrees.

Joining Flippo in the endeavor at K-State are Stephen Welch, professor, and Antonio Asebedo, assistant professor, both in agronomy; Arnaud Temme, associate professor of geography; and Sanjoy Das, associate professor of electrical and computer engineering.

"The outcome will be a total agriculture farming system melding unmanned aerial flyovers of the field and robotic planting-management-harvest systems to provide the extra yield needed to meet the 2050 dilemma," Flippo said. "The system will be scalable, configurable and foreshadow the future of agricultural automation."

The small autonomous vehicle farming concept is brand-new, allowing engineers and scientists to rethink cropping operations. It has the potential of not only increasing yield for an enlarging population but to do so in a sustainable way that will allow continued feeding of the world.

An intensive geographic analysis has shown an additional 4 percent of the Great Plains could be brought into production using this farming technology. Though a seemingly small increase, the area is a global power in wheat production and currently hits those production rates on not quite 7 percent of its land.

DID YOU KNOW?

Regents. Displays were set up around the rotunda for legislators, staff and visitors to learn more about the mission and work of all the public higher education institutions in Kansas. K-State President Richard Myers spent the day in the Statehouse meeting with legislative leadership and hosting a lunch for alumni and legislators in the Wildcat Caucus. Willie the Wildcat joined mascots from other institutions and everyone enjoyed Call Hall ice cream to celebrate the day.

University's online degree programs rise in U.S. News & World Report annual rankings

In its latest set of annual college rankings released Jan. 9, U.S. News & World Report recognized 19 of Kansas State University's online degree programs for excellence as Best Online Programs for 2018.

U.S. News & World Report recognizes five major areas of study in its 2018 listing of Best Online Programs ranking. Online programs that are ranked in the top 100 in the country include four of K-State's online bachelor's programs, four online master's in education programs, nine engineering master's programs, the professional business administration master's and a computer information technology graduate degree.

Online programs at the university are offered through a partnership between each college or department and Kansas State University Global Campus.

K-State has been ranked for many years in U.S. News & World Report's annual listing, but the number and level of the rankings continue to increase for all programs. In addition to its overall rankings, the publication also ranks its Best Online Programs for Veterans, and Kansas State University's eligible programs fared even better.

K-State also has a number of online graduate programs ranked among the top 50 in the country.

In creating its rankings, U.S. News & World Report analyzes program effectiveness in a variety of ways, including student engagement, admissions selectivity,

Livability ranked Manhattan, Kansas No. 2 in their 2018 list of Top 100 Best Places to Live.

peer reputation, faculty credentials and training, and student services and technology.

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