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All CALS Faculty:

Engagement is critical to CALS' future success. As state support diminishes, as it seems to be for the foreseeable future, engaged alumni become ever more important. CALS' Development & Alumni office's Strategic Plan includes the goal of "Developing new strategies to engage a broader base of alumni" and one of their strategies is to start with first year students.

This afternoon, the CALS Alumni Council, the Development & Alumni department and the department of Career and Academic Services co-hosted the very first CALS Alumni Welcome Celebration. The purpose of this event was to welcome every CALS freshman and transfer student to the college and to engage them as assumed alumni from their "first day" on campus.

This exciting event took place on the lawn of the Arizona State Museum immediately following the mandatory UA Clicks meeting. Dr. Winzerling and I officially welcomed our students. College alumni and Agvisors mingled with the students. Dr. John Marchello and his staff prepared and served a terrific lunch to 400 students, alumni and faculty/staff; music by a DJ, tailgate games, a photo booth to commemorate each student's first day on campus, and CALS club representatives encouraged participation. The AG100 Council donated \$500, which was given to five students to help with their first semester expenses. Thanks to the generosity of alumni sponsors, each student was given a T-shirt with the new CALS logo and "Alumni for Life" on the front.

Faculty members play the instrumental role in establishing each student's initial engagement with, and affinity to, CALS—beginning with their first class. When you welcome the students to their classes for the first time, I would like to ask you to take 30 seconds to include the following statement (or something similar) in your welcome:

"Welcome freshmen and congratulations! You have just become part of an elite group of people at the best college on campus – we all expect that you will become an alumnus of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences!"

Please understand that since 1885 only 22,500 CALS alumni have come before you. Many of those alumni have helped pay it forward for your education with scholarship support and supported faculty members, and some of you may be the recipients. How many of you have scholarships?"

Remember, we know that engaged students become engaged alumni who, when they can, provide the support for future endowed chairs and scholarships. They also run and work in the companies we turn to for funding of our programs and research.

Thank you for your anticipated support in this endeavor.

Shane