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College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Students,

Everyone, please accept my very warmest welcome to the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences family in this fall 2011 semester!

Returning students: be proud of your achievements to date, and continue to make everyone who has helped get you this far proud.

Transferring students: we appreciate that you have selected us and I assure you that thousands before you can attest that you will be happy with your decision.

Freshmen: We have something in common—we are both on the UA campus for the first time.

Graduate Students: We are proud that we can facilitate the next state of your careers.

As you progress in your studies, and afterwards in your careers, remember that you are essential to our state and nation, and to our world. You will be essential net contributors of new value in the economy and an essential component of our national security. Millions of people will have you to thank for their most basic of needs: food, shelter, energy and a cycling economy. People like you are charged with the stewardship our environment and our national assets. Our CALS family supports the health and well-being our country's most precious but fragile assets—its families.

Those that came before you have been the backbone of our economy since before America was a country. Today our economy would be far worse than it is without the skills of people from colleges like ours. What we do has been a primary support for our state's and nation's economy when all around it was crashing into the worst recession in living memory. What we do every day has likely stopped our country going into a depression and it is leading us to future prosperity.

I want to share three quotes with you. Please read the word "agriculture" in all of the broadest senses that we represent in our college; it is simply shorthand for what we do everyday.

"Agriculture not only gives riches to a nation, but the only riches she can call her own." Samuel Johnson

"Agriculture is the backbone of our economy." Congressman John Salazar (D)

"Security for agriculture merits serious concern by not only the agricultural community but our nation as a whole. The risk to the U.S. food supply and overall economy is real." Senator Pat Roberts (R)

Your college faculty, staff and I are dedicated to your success. Be serious when it matters and also make sure you are always having fun. I look forward especially to your graduations when I will proudly address you as colleagues.

Bear Down!

Shane Burgess, Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

