

AGR ACTION

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AGR to offer Dave Ramsey's Foundations in Personal Finance: College Edition to members through AGRconnect

Alpha Gamma Rho will soon be offering Dave Ramsey's Foundations in Personal Finance: College Edition to all of its collegiate members and chapters.

Foundations in Personal Finance: College Edition was created to challenge the way students view money and encourage them to make better financial decisions by teaching them the basics of saving, giving and spending. Personal finance expert Dave Ramsey, along with Rachel Cruze, teaches students the basics of managing money, saving for emergencies and getting out of debt.

"Alpha Gamma Rho is pleased to work with Dave Ramsey and his team to provide Foundations in Personal Finance – College Edition to our collegiate members," said Phil Josephson, Executive Director of the Fraternity. "We are proud to add this high-quality and valuable content to AGRconnect™. The course will, without a doubt, enhance our collegiates' experience and have a lasting positive impact. We believe this relationship will be transformational, paying great dividends for AGRconnect™ and throughout the entire Fraternity."

For more information about the Foundations in Personal Finance: College Edition, visit www.daveramsey.com/school.

FOUNDATIONS
in PERSONAL FINANCE®
college edition

About Dave Ramsey

Dave Ramsey is America's trusted voice on money and business. He's authored five New York Times best-selling books: Financial Peace, More Than Enough, The Total Money Makeover, EntreLeadership and Smart Money Smart Kids. "The Dave Ramsey Show" is heard by more than 8.5 million listeners each week on more than 550 radio stations, "The Dave Ramsey Show" channel on iHeartRadio and a 24-hour online streaming video channel. Ramsey Solutions offers a suite of products and services to help people get control of their finances and other aspects of their lives. Follow Ramsey on Twitter at @DaveRamsey and on the web at www.daveramsey.com.

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Adam Donkers and many of his friends at the University of Minnesota don't need to worry about jobs after graduating.

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With courses one through 13 complete, and courses 14 and 15 now in final testing, we can see the light at the end of the tunnel!

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Ag grads are finding a bumper crop of job opportunities

Adam Donkers and many of his friends at the University of Minnesota don't need to worry about jobs after graduating. They're majoring in agricultural sciences or agricultural business, and large and small companies are eager to hire them.

"Pretty much every member [of AGR] has a full-time job when they're graduating," Donkers said. "Every junior has an internship, most of the sophomores have internships and a good handful of freshmen have internships."

Job posting boards, on-campus interviews and a special annual career fair for ag students show much the same trend, according to Sara Newberg, director of the university career center that assists ag majors.

"We have a limited number of students with an interest in that career direction and far more employers interested in hiring them," Newberg said.

Donkers, raised on a family farm near Faribault, Minn., is a junior majoring in agricultural business. He'll learn about agricultural lending this summer at CoBank, a co-op that specializes in farm credit. It will be Donkers' third internship in three years, and he's interested in grain merchandising as a career.

In addition to serving as Lambda's VNR Finance, Donkers is also president of the Gopher Crops and Soils Club, and he said his peers are ma-

joring in fields from ag business and agronomy to plant science, marketing and animal science.

Agribusiness firms are invited to attend club meetings, especially in the fall, he said, and are happy to oblige.



"They have the earlier internships so that they can snatch up people and see if they would work out well for full-time employment," Donkers said.

The big picture

Purdue University and the U.S. Department of Agriculture studied the shortfall in agricultural jobs on a national basis, and estimated that from 2010 to 2015 there would be about 54,400 openings each year in agriculture and natural resource jobs, and about 29,300 graduates from specialized colleges and university departments to fill them.

One of the bigger gaps was in science and engineering, according to the Purdue report, with more than

14,000 jobs available to those with baccalaureate or higher degrees each year and only 6,200 specialized graduates.

The shortage is being filled by graduates recruited from "allied disciplines," the study said — schools of engineering, health sciences and business.

Brian Buhr, dean of the U's College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences, said there's clearly a need for more ag students in the pipeline, and he's not surprised that companies are doubling down to find newly trained scientists.

"There's a whole high-tech side of ag that's really booming," he said. "It's everything

from robotics and sensors in harvesting equipment or livestock production systems, or even managing soil and drainage issues, all the way over to the genetics and genomics side of the world."

Buhr said the college has established a working group with representatives from Cargill, CHS Inc., Land O'Lakes Inc. and other companies to discuss the issue.

"They're expressing this question of where does the next-generation workforce come from," he said.

Going upstream for workers

Some additional graduates may come from community and four-year colleges in farm country.

Ag grads are finding a bumper crop of job opportunities (cont.)

Earlier this month, three schools in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system announced that they will team up and pool resources to address the shortage of skilled workers in the ag industry. The effort, called AgCentric, will begin in September and includes Central Lakes College in Staples, Ridgewater College in Willmar and Northland Community and Technical College in Thief River Falls. Northland already offers a program in unmanned aerial systems, or drones, that will be increasingly used by farmers to detect pest infestations, dry areas and other field problems.

Adam Holton, CHS senior vice president of human resources, said the shortage of trained students is not a crisis, but that it has become more difficult to find and attract the best candidates in some areas.

"In our case, that runs the gamut on the pure engineering side with our energy business to our agriculture side to our processing and food ingredients," he said. CHS is the nation's largest farmer-owned cooperative. "There is a challenge, and as we go into the future it will get harder."

To recruit the best people for its needs, Holton said, CHS has heightened its efforts to go "upstream" and contact undergraduate and community college students early in their studies to inform them about ag-related fields and careers. The company also maintains strong partner-

ships with colleges and universities, he said.

Larry Meadows, Land O'Lakes' senior communications manager, said one problem for agribusinesses is that many people, including students, don't realize the complexity and sophisticated knowledge needed to grow crops, process and transport food, and compete globally.

"People think about the farm and that's it," he said. "They don't think about the opportunity in IT, the opportunity in commodity risk, the opportunity from an investment and finance standpoint."

Land O'Lakes recruits on many campuses each year, Meadows said, and last fall pledged \$1 million to the U's College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences for ag-related programs and scholarships.

Swing back to basics

Don Wyse, a professor in the Department of Agronomy and Plant Genetics at the U, has watched the number of students in agricultural sciences fluctuate over the past four decades, and has supervised graduate students who took their advanced degrees into plant breeding and genetics labs at Monsanto, Syngenta and other companies.

Those jobs were in demand during the past decade, Wyse said, and students lost interest in basic agronomy — the science of growing crops for production — because there were fewer opportunities.

Now the pendulum is swinging back, said Wyse, because companies have determined that their future profits may depend less on new genetics, and more on improved crop systems that increase yields by using precision agriculture.

"So now the companies are stepping up and saying, where in the world are all the agronomists? And where are all the applied cropping systems people?" he said.

That might include people to analyze chlorophyll in plants to see how well they're growing, Wyse said, or specialists to design precision planting equipment, or analysts to study soil chemistry and crop history to predict which varieties to plant and how far apart to space them.

"It's a wide array of opportunities," he said.

Holton, of CHS, agrees, and said basic agronomy knowledge coupled with the latest technical skills will be a winning combination for job seekers.

"The needs continue to grow to feed a hungry world with the same amount or less of acreage, and that's all coming through technology: environmental sciences and agricultural sciences," he said. "My guess is there are jobs that will exist in precision ag 10 years from now that we're not even thinking about right now."

*Article courtesy of Tom Meersman,
Star Tribune*

Course development nearing completion, two new courses now available in AGRconnect

The first phase of AGRconnect course development is nearing completion. With courses one through 13 complete, and courses 14 and 15 now in final testing, we can see the



light at the end of the tunnel!

Also, course 16, Dave Ramsey's Foundations in Personal Finance: College Edition, will be available in AGRconnect within a matter of weeks.

Most recently, two new modules have been added to the portal, House Operations & Management module two and the Leadership course. Module two of House Operations & Management covers:

- Chapter house code of conduct
- safety measures
- preparing the Chapter house for breaks
- compliance with Fraternity, university, local, state and national regulations

The Leadership course covers the seven soft skill clusters that employers look for in candidates and why these soft skills are just as important

as—if not more than—hard skills and work experience.

For a chance to win your choice of several AGR prizes, sign into AGRconnect and complete the second House Operations & Management module or the Leadership course between now and the next issue of AGR Action. Send a comment about your experience to [AGRconnect@](mailto:AGRconnect@alphagammarho.org)

alphagammarho.org to be entered.

In addition to the development of courseware, the AGRconnect system has gotten several key updates in the last month. One of the most important and noticeable updates has been to the login process. Remember how you used to need those preceding zeros in your chapter code to log in? But, you didn't need them in your pin/roll number (making the login process a bit cumbersome and confusing). The login process has been made easier, and now, the system will accept member numbers with or without preceding zeros!

If you experience any problems using AGRconnect or have questions about logging in, call the Home Office at 816-891-9200. We look forward to hearing your feedback!

Upcoming events...

Feb. 27-28, 2015
Leadership Seminar
Reno, Nevada

March 6-7, 2015
Leadership Seminar
Baltimore, Maryland

April 17-18, 2015
AGR National BBQ
Lebanon, Tennessee

July 24-25, 2015
Adviser Forum
Kansas City, Missouri