

N.C. State University's Department of Crop and Soil Sciences recently announced the creation of a new full-ride undergraduate scholarship in agronomy. The scholarship endowment was created by Connie and Durwood Laughinghouse to celebrate the future of North Carolina farming and to honor their background on the farm.

The Laughinghouse Scholarship will be available to an undergraduate sophomore specializing in agronomy. Funds will cover full tuition and attendance expenses as well as experiential learning potentially from study abroad, internships, research, and/or work-study programs. The scholarship will be available to current NCSU students and those transferring from another college or university. Preference will be given to students who are North Carolina residents who have a demonstrated farming background. It is the first full-ride scholarship in the department.

"We are immensely grateful for this vital gift from Connie and Durwood Laughinghouse. Their generous support of our academic programs brings renewed energy to our department and to the study of agronomy. The students who benefit from this scholarship will profoundly influence the future of NC's agricultural science," said Jeff Mullahey, head of the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences.

The scholarship will fund agronomy students who are interested in precision agriculture, spatial agronomy, and/or crop improvement such as higher yields, new plant varieties, and soil microbiome, all of which are elements of the NC Plant Sciences Initiative. The scholarship is expected to be awarded for the first time in 2022.

"Many of our undergraduate students, especially from rural counties, depend on the availability of financial assistance to attend NC State. The Laughinghouse Scholarship will ensure access opportunity to any student with a heart for agriculture. We are excited to see its impact on our students' futures," said David Crouse, director of undergraduate programs for the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences.