

Hi, my name is Mark Lewis, and I recently traveled to Thailand to present my research with the Animal and Dairy Sciences Department. I attended the 44th Annual International Embryo Technology Society (IETS) Conference in Bangkok, Thailand to present my project titled "Investigating the Cryotolerance of Boar Spermatozoa Subjected to Prior Selection". This was a truly amazing experience, as I was able to meet with researchers and industry experts in the field of reproduction. Additionally, I got the chance to connect with several students at the conference and discuss our individual paths that landed us here. As I began to tell my story that led me to reproductive physiology research, all were extremely impressed with Mississippi State's focus on undergraduate research. Undergraduates in many other universities around the world do not get the chance to perform research, let alone get funding for a trip to Thailand. After taking in all of these stimulating conversations, I realized just how special MSU and its Department of Animal and Dairy Sciences. Their dedication to undergraduate research is seemingly unmatched when compared to other universities, and I am truly grateful to have been a part.

I have worked with my research mentor, Dr. Jean Feugang, for close to two years now, and we have had the chance to work on many projects that have been quite successful. These projects have ranged from sexing boar semen to our current work with cryopreservation of nanoselected spermatozoa. I have presented projects in conjunction with Dr. Feugang at two local symposia at MSU, one regional symposia at the Delta Research and Extension Center, and an international conference in Bangkok, Thailand. I have won third place awards at the regional symposium and one of the local symposiums at MSU. In what I believe to be my greatest accomplishment while working under Dr. Feugang, I was selected to present my research at the IETS Conference in Thailand as one of only four undergraduate students out of over 200 that applied. I was extremely fortunate to win the runner-up award for my poster presentation at this conference, which is quite an honor. I look forward to continuing my career in the sciences and utilizing everything that I have learned from Dr. Feugang and during my time with the Animal and Dairy Sciences Department. I am forever thankful for these opportunities that would not have been possible without the incredible support from my great university.