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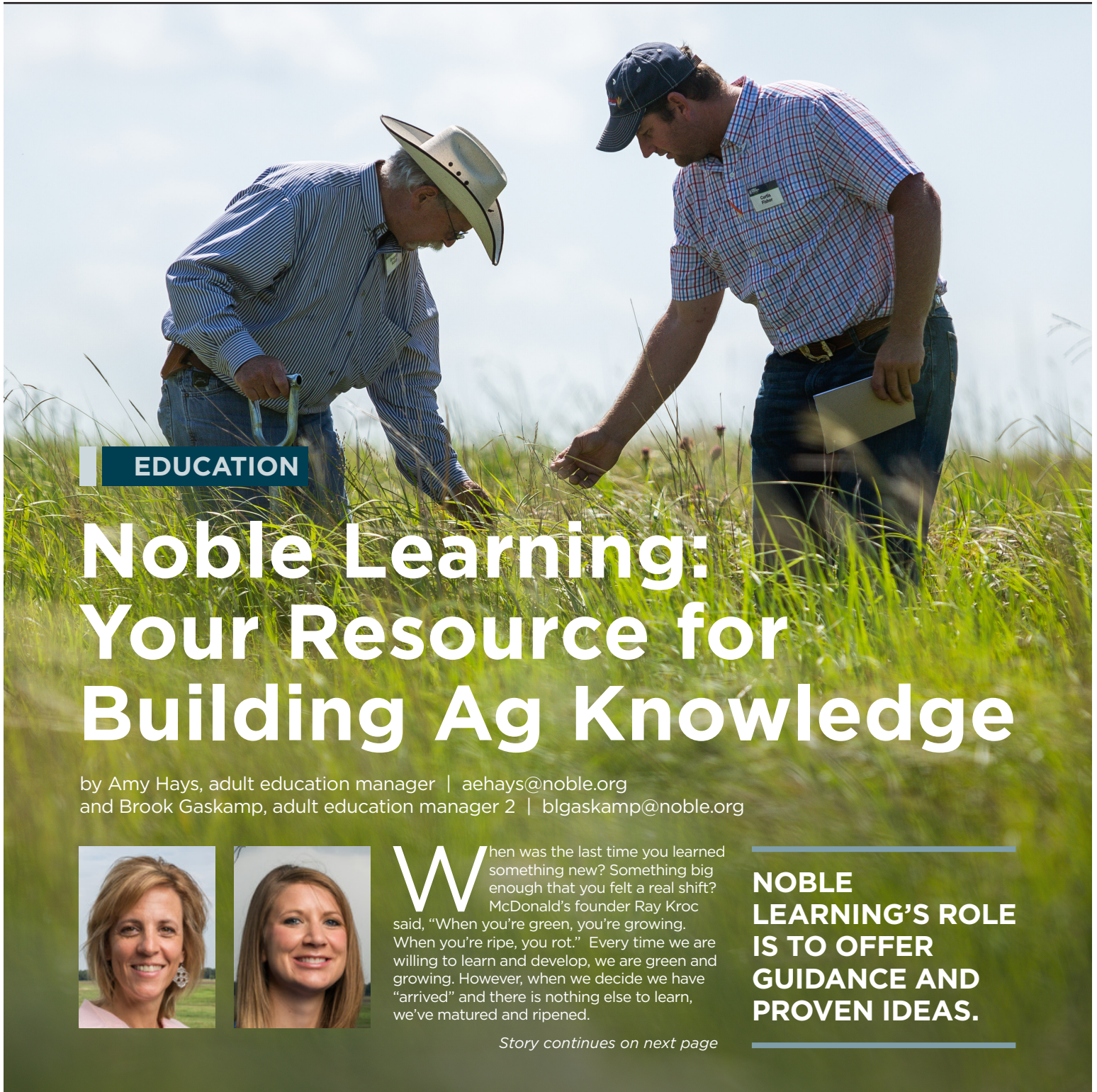


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NOBLE NEWS & VIEWS



EDUCATION

Noble Learning: Your Resource for Building Ag Knowledge

by Amy Hays, adult education manager | ahays@noble.org
and Brook Gaskamp, adult education manager 2 | blgaskamp@noble.org



When was the last time you learned something new? Something big enough that you felt a real shift? McDonald's founder Ray Kroc said, "When you're green, you're growing. When you're ripe, you rot." Every time we are willing to learn and develop, we are green and growing. However, when we decide we have "arrived" and there is nothing else to learn, we've matured and ripened.

**NOBLE
LEARNING'S ROLE
IS TO OFFER
GUIDANCE AND
PROVEN IDEAS.**

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WHAT NOBLE LEARNING LOOKS LIKE

When you look at the Noble Research Institute events page (www.noble.org/events), you will see several changes to our traditional outreach programs. You will find:

1

Offerings designed as education progressions, a series of connected and interrelated learning opportunities spanning two to five years.

2

Education events listed with new labels to help you find what level of knowledge the event delivers.



One of the things you probably feel when you are opening the door to “greenness” again is that it’s a great feeling. A challenge. There is something to look forward to: growth and the potential to build. For Noble Learning, there is nothing more important than serving producers who are seeking growth and “greenness.” Our challenge is how can we help you keep green and growing? We are seeking the learner who wants to learn.

In 2019, Noble Learning will fully introduce education progressions as a service to learners to build their skills and abilities to manage production systems.

WE ARE HERE FOR YOU

Stewardship of the soil and resources is the story of the steward, not the story of the practice. We serve and work with producers so they can maximize their operations and build profitable, innovative and resilient systems. The ability of only 2 percent of us to provide food and fiber for everyone is a great challenge. Noble Learning’s role is to offer

SHOULD YOU ATTEND?

New, transparent event descriptions will give you the information you need to decide whether to take time away from work and spend it with us. Understanding what experience level is needed for each event and knowing what you will learn will help you choose courses that best fit your needs as a producer.

BROOK GASKAMP,
education associate

guidance and proven ideas — things we see on our own farms and from our own pastures and livestock at the Noble Research Institute — that enable you to successfully move forward. In 2019, we invite you to work with us and utilize Noble Learning’s offerings to build and work toward achieving your production, stewardship and financial goals.

WHAT IS THE GOAL?

The goal is that you will be able to pick and select the education events that best suit your operation or goals at your skill level and with others who are experiencing the same challenges. An evolving list of education events will be added to the website so you can see all the courses that will be offered and what courses complement each other.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRODUCER NETWORKING

Perfection is unachievable, but we all can get better every day. Our goal is to provide you with relevant and resourceful educational events that foster your learning and ultimately your success. We also want to provide you with interactions and networking opportunities with like-minded and like-sized producers to explore ideas or practices. We look forward to serving you and to learning and sharing things that allow us to get better every day. 🐾

COMMUNICATIONS

Connecting With You: About the New Educational Event Progression Levels

by J. Adam Calaway, director of communications and public relations | jacalaway@noble.org



At the heart of Noble's new educational progressions is a simple idea: We want to better serve you.

The process began by asking ourselves some pointed questions: What information is most valuable to you? What problems are you experiencing that we could help overcome? Do our educational courses provide quality information in the best possible learning environment? And — most importantly for this article — how do we improve our communication so you receive timely, relevant information?

This is about a relationship between Noble and you. Some relationships may

only be a few months old; some are generational, passed down from parent to child. But every relationship is important to us. We know that good communication is the bedrock for building stronger bonds.

As we unveil these new educational opportunities, it is critical that everyone can easily understand the changes and access the necessary information.

ABOUT THE EVENT LEVELS

The first step is to understand the educational event levels.

Each educational event will be assigned one of five designations: Introduction, Level 1: Essentials,

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PROGRESSION LEVELS

Each educational event will be assigned one of five designations below. The assigned level will be based on the content of the class.

INTRODUCTION

Introductory courses are designed to provide you with basic concepts, definitions and introductory information on a topic related to production agriculture. These courses are generally offered as a seminar.

LEVEL 1 ESSENTIALS

Level 1 courses provide you with information on the core basics of a production management topic. Essential courses are intended to provide you with strong foundational knowledge. These courses are generally offered in a classroom setting.

LEVEL 2 BUILDING

Level 2 courses build on the knowledge that you receive in Level 1 courses. These courses will provide you with necessary information that will help you begin to build toward a management plan. These courses are generally offered in the field and provide demonstration of tools, techniques and equipment.

LEVEL 3 ADVANCED

Level 3 courses help you begin to manage your operation as a system. Advanced learning will provide you with confidence to make more informed decisions. These courses are generally offered in a production operation setting and are hands-on.

LEVEL 4 MASTER

Level 4 courses meet the needs of highly skilled and operating producers. These classes will provide you with the most advanced content available in each discipline. These courses are designed to be intensive and will have a limited number of participants.

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK

You can always connect with the Noble Research Institute through our various social media platforms. Each day on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn, we highlight upcoming events, offer useful tidbits to improve your operation, and feature Noble's work to provide solutions to great agricultural challenges. To provide feedback, you can visit the website (www.noble.org/contact), comment or message us through any social media platform, or call/email a Noble communications/adult education team member.

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Level 2: Building, Level 3: Advanced and Level 4: Master. (We also offer some “general public” courses, which do not fit into an educational progression. These courses offer information about agriculture-based hobbies and natural resource topics relevant to anyone.) See the sidebar for a description of each level. These descriptions will help you determine where you fit into the progressions. As participants gain competencies, they can progress to the next level.

WHY THE CHANGE?

We know that learning happens in pieces and builds over time, and research validates this as a more effective learning environment for producers. Therefore, you will see a course listing that spans an entire year, and you can anticipate future events to build competencies during the next several years. We hope you will plan to join us for many of these new events throughout the coming years.

BROOK GASKAMP,
education associate

The transition from individual educational programs to educational progressions will happen throughout 2019, which means our website will be changing.

Continue to check www.noble.org/events to keep track of all the upcoming offerings. Each educational event listed online now has an official level assigned to it. If you'd like to see the level descriptions again, you can always visit www.noble.org/events/course-levels.

Soon each educational event will have a list of related courses that will help you move through the educational progressions. For example, if you sign up for a Level 1: Essentials livestock seminar, you will see upcoming educational opportunities that relate to the livestock progression.

In the near future, there will be a course catalog dedicated to each educational progression. These catalogs will provide visual maps of the interconnected classes and the learning objectives for each educational event. 🐾



EDUCATION

Mending the Disconnect: Teaching the Next Generation About Agriculture

by Frank Hardin, Ph.D., youth education manager | cfhardin@noble.org



Who taught you about agriculture? A parent or grandparent? Your high school agriculture teacher?

For some of you, agriculture may have been part of your life since you were born. Others of you perhaps learned about agriculture later in life. I

was 12 year old when I began working on Ms. Fannie Mae Smith's small farm in an Atlanta suburb.

I don't recall learning about agriculture in school. And although we were only an hour away from the apple orchards of North Georgia and the pecan groves of South Georgia, my family was completely removed from agriculture when I was growing up 30 years ago.

Story continues on next page

I learned more about agriculture from Ms. Smith than any other person to date. And now, I not only continue to learn about and appreciate agriculture; I also have the opportunity to share my appreciation and knowledge of agriculture with students.



I consider myself lucky to have had the opportunity to work on Ms. Smith's farm. During my time there, I learned to appreciate agriculture; the taste of a freshly picked pear, fig or tomato; and the value of hard work. I learned to appreciate all that goes into the meals we so often take for granted. We also somehow managed to squeeze in a lifetime's worth of Sunday school classes as I worked and Ms. Smith taught.

As I moved on through college, I eventually stopped working with Ms. Smith. Unable to keep up the farm on her own, she sold. But every time I go home, all I have to do is look out the kitchen window to where the farm once was and I'm immediately taken back. I never thought I'd appreciate those times as much as I do today.

I learned more about agriculture from Ms. Smith than any other person to date.

And now, at the Noble Research Institute, I not only continue to learn about and appreciate agriculture; I also have the opportunity to share my appreciation and knowledge of agriculture with students who are the age I was when I began working on the farm.

REACHING THE NEXT GENERATION FOR AG

Today, I lead the Noble Research Institute's youth education program and, in a way, am following in Ms. Smith's footsteps. I am teaching today's youth about the value of agriculture and the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) behind it.

Inundated with mobile phones, computers, tablets and gaming consoles, today's youth are more removed from agriculture than ever. These students are our future policymakers, educators and decision-makers.

If we don't do something to mend this disconnect, agriculture will suffer consequences in the future.

To help solve this challenge, our program targets sixth through 12th graders and introduces them to agriculture and ag careers via a variety of programs, including hands-on science experiments, robotics programs, internships, youth hunts and teacher workshops. We deliver our message to more than 7,000 recipients per year with the hope that they learn to appreciate agriculture a little more than they did before we walked in the room.

To Ms. Smith, I want to say "thank you" for teaching me about agriculture. We are working to make sure other young people have the opportunity to understand and appreciate agriculture's importance to society. 🐾



LLOYD NOBLE SCHOLARS

Scholars Program Puts Students on Path to Pursue Their Passions



By Brenna Gaik, education associate | bcaik@noble.org



Three years ago, the Noble Research Institute enhanced its commitment to developing better prepared leaders in the agriculture industry. By modifying the already successful Lloyd Noble Scholars in Agriculture program, we built a unique experience that bridged textbook learning and the future needs of agriculture.

Noble Learning committed to taking a more managed approach with this program by incorporating professional development and cross-training within all disciplines represented here at Noble and by using industry partnerships to broaden scholars' horizons. In addition to developing the program itself, Noble allowed my duties to become more heavily dedicated to the scholars and their summer experience.

Story continues on next page

PASSION, COMMITMENT AND CONNECTIONS

Today I serve as the program coordinator and am blessed to see students pursue and realize their future in the professional world.

Passion for a specific issue or discipline in young professionals is not often found inside a textbook. More so, it exists in experiences and connections made throughout a student's time as an undergraduate. Throughout the year, I have aimed to give students meaningful experiences that help them develop a passion and direction for their future careers.

LEARN MORE

Interested students should research the program before applying. The best way to learn more is to hear directly from alumni on the *One Noble Summer* blog at www.noble.org/blog/one-noble-summer, where students write about their experiences each year. For more information, visit www.noble.org/scholar-program. Applications for summer 2019 will close Feb. 6. Direct any questions or inquiries about the program to bcgaik@noble.org.

Unlike most traditional internships, this scholars program is a combination of traditionally focused projects and broad exposure to professional development, cross-discipline training and mentorship. Students and mentors (often agricultural consultants) alike develop professionally, enhance their leadership skills and make long-lasting connections throughout the summer program.

A true commitment to the future of agriculture can be found in our committee of Noble staff, who spend a year preparing for the pursuit of qualified, enthusiastic students who are looking for the opportunity to develop and explore their passions.

When the commitment of our mentors and education staff is met with the enthusiasm of an incoming scholar, the opportunities are endless. After completing the program, scholars often have a clearer idea of the path they intend to take for their future and are equipped with connections to make the necessary next steps possible. Oftentimes, relationships formed during a student's experience benefit them in the job market and connect them to the Noble family indefinitely. I certainly have made connections that I hope to keep long into the future. 🐾



PRODUCER RELATIONS

Welcome to Noble Learning: A Critical Complement to Consultation

by Hugh Aljoe, director of producer relations | hdaljoe@noble.org



Several years back, the producer relations effort realized that, although we provide many educational presentations for producers at Noble and as guest speakers at regional and national seminars and conferences, there was much room for improving our educational efforts. Educational events were a complement to consultation activities, a critical complement but not given the same priority as consultation. We needed some people who were as passionate about education and education delivery as consultants were at consulting to help lead our educational efforts and expand the reach and effectiveness of our educational events and activities.

BUILDING BLOCKS

We now offer courses that build on one another and increase your knowledge in a subject area from basic to advanced levels. This means that instead of one long course, educational material is broken down into more digestible and manageable chunks of information.

BROOK GASKAMP,
education associate

A NEW, TRUE EDUCATION TEAM

In 2016, we hired Amy Hays, an education manager, to begin building an education team focused on producer/adult education.

Story continues on next page



We have since hired two others, Brenna Gaik and Brook Gaskamp, to help with the adult education efforts. In 2017, the Noble Research Institute made education a priority effort and called it Noble Learning, which combines adult education with our youth education program that brings agricultural science into the classrooms of middle and high school youth. We now have a true education team, thus lifting Noble education to new heights.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRODUCERS

So what is new about Noble Learning that is important for regional producers to know?

You now have the opportunity to participate in a structured curriculum of learning progressions across each area of expertise represented by the consultation efforts. Those areas of expertise are: soils and crops, pasture and range, livestock (beef cattle) wildlife and fisheries, agricultural economics, pecans and horticulture. There is considerable interaction between these expertise areas in the education progressions just as there is in our integrated consultation approach, but we will be much more intentional about specific learning objectives for each event and their presentations.

With input from the consultants, each progression follows a track that begins with an introduction (such as “So You Want to Raise Cattle” in the livestock progression) and progresses through Level 1: Essentials, Level 2: Building, Level 3: Advanced and Level 4: Master. We will continue to provide both seminar and field programs with greater emphasis on hands-on

HOW YOU LEARN

As educators, we know some information is best learned in a classroom, but we have a vast set of resources and expertise to offer you the chance to learn in the environment you work in. That’s why we shifting to offer more learning opportunities through demonstrations, through hands-on activities and in the field.

BROOK GASKAMP,
education associate

demonstrations, seeking to expand our curriculum offering based on producer input and needs.

EDUCATION TAILORED TO YOU

One of the most exciting developments will be the ability for you (or us, if requested) to tailor the education programming to your individual interests or needs. You will be able to readily identify the learning objectives for each presentation and event before attending, building upon existing knowledge and skills with each event.

In addition, we will be able to track your participation through the progressions, and we can recommend upcoming and new events that complement your curriculum history. In the future, we hope to be able to offer more online

events and educational videos that can be viewed and reviewed as desired on the Noble Research Institute website, www.noble.org.

FOR LONG-TIME ATTENDEES

The question that I am sure many of you who have attended past Noble events are asking is, “How does this affect me if I have already attended some of these events?”

We do not have a record of what events you have attended in the past, so we want to start anew with everyone. We encourage you to investigate the educational progressions and associated events on our website at www.noble.org/events. Make plans to attend again and begin moving through the progressions, and this time we will be monitoring your attendance and providing you with opportunities to participate more actively in the learning objectives.

If you have an existing relationship with Noble Research Institute consultants, visit with them to determine which level is most appropriate for you to enter into again. We suspect there will be new materials offered and new approaches to presentations that should enhance the events and educational experience for everyone.

You will also help us build a better educational offering for the future. Who better to do that than those of you who have attended our programs in the past? So we encourage those of you who have attended in the past to start anew with us, the Noble Research Institute and our Noble Learning team. 🐮

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MARCH 26

Planting Vegetable and Fruit Crops

1-4 p.m.
Noble Research Institute
Small-Scale Ag Demonstration Area,
Entry 2; No Registration Fee

This event will showcase the various tools and techniques used in seeding and transplanting vegetable crops. You will also see a demonstration of the proper way to plant small fruit and tree fruit. This course is intended for backyard and commercial-scale plantings.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

For more information or to register, visit www.noble.org/events or call 580-223-5810. Preregistration is requested. For other agricultural questions, please call our Ag Helpline at 580-224-6500.

JANUARY | 29

So You Want to Grow Fruit in Your Backyard?

Producing fruit in your backyard presents special challenges, including limited space and lack of resources available to commercial growers. This course is designed to help you maximize resources available to you in order to grow small and tree fruits in your backyard.

6:30-8:30 p.m.
Kruse Auditorium,
Entry 5
No Registration Fee

JANUARY | 31

So You Want to Grow Vegetables in Your Backyard?

6:30-8:30 p.m.
Kruse Auditorium, Entry 5
No Registration Fee

FEBRUARY | 12

Pruning Pecan Trees for Improved Production

1-4 p.m.
See noble.org/events for location directions and details

FEBRUARY | 22

Developing Your Replacement Heifers

9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Oswalt Ranch
\$25, Includes Lunch

MARCH | 5

Managing Soil Nutrients for Pastures and Hayfields

1-4 p.m.
Kruse Auditorium, Entry 5
No Registration Fee