

# SPOREPRINTS



Department of Plant Pathology & Environmental Microbiology

OCTOBER 1, 2012


THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY

## WELCOME




### New PPATH Graduate Students

- **Freddy Magdama** is a new PhD graduate student working with Dr. Maria Jimenez-Gasco. Freddy was born in Ecuador and obtained his B.S. in Agricultural and Biological Engineering from the High Polytechnic School (ESPOL). He was employed by Biotechnological Research Center of Ecuador (CIBE), where he worked on the diagnosis and characterization of fungal pathogens in vegetables and woody crops, analysis of fungicide resistance and Integrated Pest Management. Freddy came to Penn State as an Ecuadorian Fellow under the "Universities of Excellence" scholarship program to pursue Ph.D. studies. His research interest is focused on the genetic diversity of *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *Cubense* populations in Ecuador and their interaction with non-pathogenic *Fusarium oxysporum* endophytes. 
- **Eric O'Neal** is working on a forest pathology project with Dr. Don Davis, researching biocontrol of invasive forest plants using soil-borne *Verticillium* species. Eric received a B.S. in Forest Science from Penn State, with a minor in Geographic Information Systems (GIS). As an undergraduate, he was a volunteer teaching assistant in Plant Pathology 318, Diseases of Forest and Shade Trees, and worked as a research assistant for Dr. Davis for more than two years. Eric is seeking his M.S. degree. 

### New PPATH Staff

- **Amy Spencer** is a new addition to the Plant Pathology staff. Amy and her family moved to the State College area approximately one year ago from the Ohio region (although she is originally from Mississippi). She is an avid "Buckeyes" fan – as she and her family lived in the Ohio area for 17 yrs. When you see Amy be sure to say "Hi" and listen for the southern accent. 

## CONGRATULATIONS!

- **Congratulations to Xin Lin**, she passed her candidacy exam in the Intercollege Graduate Program in Plant Biology on Friday, September 12, 2012. Xin is a second-year Ph.D. candidate in Dr. McNellis' lab, in a collaboration with Dr. Majid Foolad's lab in the Plant Science department. 
- **Congratulations to Dr. John Pecchia**. As of July 1, 2012, Dr. John Pecchia is the newest addition to the Faculty of Plant Pathology. Dr. Pecchia has been hired as a dual titled Assistant Professor/Research Associate and Manager of the redesigned Mushroom Research Center. John will have teaching responsibilities for PPATH 405 and will be designing a new undergraduate general education course in Mushroom Biology. He will also be the new Advisor for the Mushroom Science Minor in Plant Pathology. 
- **Congratulations to Dr. Scott Isard, who has recently received two grants...**
  - A one year project from the USDA NIFA Extension IPM Coordination and Support program entitled "Smartphone Application for the ipmPIPE"
  - A three year project from the United Soybean Board entitled "People Support for the Industry Pest Information Platform for Extension and Education"

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### APS Annual Meeting Notes...

- **The 2012 APS Annual Meeting was held in Providence, RI – August 4-8 – numerous PPATH faculty members and graduate students attended. Following are a few items...**
  - Anna Testen presented a poster entitled “Incidence and Detection of *Peronospora variabilis* in Quinoa Seeds and Plant Tissue”. Anna’s poster was awarded the APS Northeastern Division Graduate Student Presentation Award --- CONGRATULATIONS Anna! Other students who participated in the competition included Brian Aynardi, Alamgir Rahman, Emily Pfeufer and Yinfei Li. All did an excellent job presenting their research!
  - The Northeastern Division of APS held their divisional meeting in conjunction with the Annual meeting. The business meeting/awards luncheon held Wed was facilitated by Beth Gugino, NED-APS President 2011 – 2012. The luncheon ended with the ceremonial passing of the gavel to the incoming President, Andy Wyenandt from Rutgers.
  - Dr. Moorman thought it would be nice to share the following about the trees in Rhode Island...  
*Following the APS meetings in Providence, RI, Gary & Fran Moorman visited Newport to see how the 0.01% live. Many of the estates had numerous, VERY large beech trees that were dying. While some had cankers like those caused by Phytophthora, others did not. The risks inherent in planting numerous trees all of the same species, all of similar age, and planting in a regular geometric pattern in the most prominent part of a property will become apparent to the owners as they have these massive trees removed. Most of us plant pathologists deal with crops in which an individual plant is not particularly valuable. Here is the exception. Multi-thousands of dollars will be required to remove each tree from in front of the multi-million dollar mansions in order to avoid damage to the homes, power lines, and stone walls. But, maybe their homeowner insurance will defray the costs!*

### More noteworthy PPEM news...

- David Geiser and Seogchan Kang attended the first United States Culture Collection Network (USCCN) meeting (September 5-7, 2012) in Kansas City, MO and made presentations (“Private and university collections” by Geiser and “Data systems and culture collections” by Kang). This meeting was supported by a NSF Research Coordination Network grant and was held at University of Missouri- Kansas City.
- Dr. Nicole Clay in the Department of Molecular, Cellular & Developmental Biology at Yale gave a seminar titled “MAMP-triggered immunity in Arabidopsis: pathogen recognition and chemical defense systems” on Monday, Oct. 1. Dr. Clay focuses on understanding the molecular basis for the adaptive diversification of the plant innate immune system, which is based on the perception and production of small molecules, and rivals the mammalian innate immune system in combating pathogenic infections.
- Here’s an update on Marie Ebner, a familiar face in Buckhout from 2010-2012. Marie interacted with many programs in our Department during her Junior and Senior years at PSU. She completed two independent study courses in Tim McNellis’ lab, worked in the field and lab with Beth Gugino’s group, and in the Plant Disease Clinic with Sara May.

Marie graduated from PSU in May 2012 with dual degrees in Biology (Developmental Biology and Genetics option), and Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, with minors in Microbiology and Political Science. All of that and wedding planning too!

Marie is currently pursuing her doctorate in the Biomedical Sciences Training Program at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, OH. She is still deciding on a degree program, leaning toward either Pathology of Microbiology and Molecular Virology.

We miss Marie’s inquisitive nature, cheerful personality and friendly smile, and wish her much success!  
....submitted by Judy Sinn

***(PPEM News continued...)***

- Kristi Fenstenmacher attended the Peck Foray at Lock Haven University, September 14-16. Collectively they found over 300 species of fungi and listed to a talk about the white nose syndrome infecting bats, and George Hudler talked about how much of a hit his class “Magical Mushrooms, Mischievous Molds” has become among Cornell Undergraduates (400 students!). Some members of PPATH 425 came for the day on Saturday, including David Geiser, Kim Paley, Caroline Black and Ilse Huerta.
- PPATH Picnic was held on July 31 at the Research Farm. Covered dish items and desserts were provided by the staff/faculty/students - the department provided the hotdogs and hamburgers. A guided tour was provided by Randy Dreibelbis, Farm Manager. Everyone that attended had a great time!



**PPA Happenings...**

- PPA had its first members meeting of the semester on August 27<sup>th</sup>. Following are new officers and committee chairs...
  - President: Ilse Huerta Arredondo
  - Vice President: Emmie Warnstrom
  - Treasurer: Brian Aynardi
  - Secretary: Hilary Cheesman
    - Committee Chairs...
    - Fundraising: Hilary Cheesman
    - Outreach and Social: Sarah Bardsley
    - Seminar: Laura Ramos
    - Seminar Refreshments: Grace O’Keefe
    - Webpage: Doug Whalen
- PPA is in the process of updating the "Penn State Plant Pathology" group on Facebook where they can share pictures of events, short news of the department and other plant pathology related issues. You can find them by searching the name, or at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/57740999953/>  
Any member can post on the group but always in fulfillment with the University's social media guidelines (<http://socialmedia.psu.edu/guide.html>)
- A group of students went to visit Dr. Gildow at his house this week (Sept.19). He was very happy to see everyone and to talk; and they were happy to inform that he looked really good!! In name of PPA they gave him a flower arrangement and coffee. Alamgir and Brian planned the visit, which was really appreciated by Dr. Gildow during his recovery period.

## CALENDAR/UPCOMING EVENTS

- October 8 – PPATH 590 Colloquium – Anna Testen (PPATH Grad Stdnt)
- October 10 – PPATH Faculty Mtg
- October 11 – PPATH Staff Mtg
- October 15 – 2012 R.R. Nelson Memorial Seminar – Daniel Klessig, Scientist
- October 18/19 – James Moyer Outstanding Alumni Visit
- October 22 -- PPATH 590 Colloquium – Marilyn Roossinck, PhD
- October 29 – PPATH 590 Colloquium – John Gottula, Cornell Univ. (Visiting Grad Std)

## NAME THIS DISEASE AND ITS CAUSAL AGENT



This contest will appear in each issue of Spore Prints. If you are interested in competing, send both the common name of this disease and its causal agent to Sandy in an email with "Spore Prints Contest" on the Subject line. Only contestants who submit entries with both answers correct will be considered winners. Winners will be determined and their names posted on the Mail Room bulletin board one week after Spore Prints is distributed. At the Department Award Ceremony next year (winter 2013), the individual with the most wins, will receive recognition and a travel award. The host range for this pathogen includes most Allium crops. Photo courtesy of Beth Gugino.

