

# ***SporePrints***

May 22, 2007



Department of Plant Pathology  
The Pennsylvania State  
University

## **Congratulations!**

Spring 2007 graduate **Julio Molineros**, who received a Ph.D. in Plant Pathology (Dr. Erick De Wolf and Dr. Scott Isard, co-advisors).

**Damithe Wickramasinghe**, who completed her M.S. thesis defense on May 4th (Dr. Barbara Christ, advisor).

**Jodi Reed**, who recently completed a comprehensive, two-year certificate program on research administration, sponsored by the Penn State Office for Research.

## **Spring Potluck Lunch**

Thanks to the Social Committee for helping make the spring 2007 potluck lunch a success.



**Spring 2007 Potluck Lunch**  
(Photo by Nancy Wenner)

## **Kudos to**

**Fred Gildow**, recipient of the 2007 Gamma Sigma Delta Teaching Award.

**Gary Moorman**, recipient of the 2007 Gamma Sigma Delta Extension Award.

## **Welcome!**

**Charity Mutegi**, a doctoral candidate in Food Science at KwaZulu Natal University in South Africa and the recipient of a LEAP Borlaug Fellowship. She is working in Gretchen Kuldau's lab for about six weeks and will be working with Henry Ngugi at the Fruit Research and Extension Center, Biglerville, after that until about the end of August.



**Charity Mutegi** (Photo by Nancy Wenner)

**Dr. Mei-Chun Xiang**, visiting scholar from the Key Laboratory of Systematic Mycology and Lichenology, Chinese Academy of Sciences. Mei-Chun is doing research in Seogchan Kang's lab on the identification of genes important for controlling plant parasitic nematodes.

## Farewell and Best Wishes

**Tom Rhodes**, Manager of the Mushroom Test-Demonstration Facility and Mushroom Research Center, retired on March 31, 2007 after 35 years of service to Penn State and the mushroom program.

**Gnana Viji**, a post-doc in Maria del Mar Jimenez Gasco's lab, resigned on May 15, 2007 after many years of service to the department. She and her family are relocating to Georgia.



**Maria del Mar Jimenez Gasco** (left) and **Gnana Viji** (right) (Photo by Nancy Wenner)

## Student Achievements

**Katelyn Elizabeth Tilley** won second place in the Health and Life Sciences, Agricultural Sciences/Plant Pathology Division at Penn State's 2007 Graduate Research Exhibition for "Fusarium Head Blight Epidemics: The Results from an Infection-timing Study;" **Damitha Wickramasinge** won third place in the same division for "Linkage Analysis,

QTL Mapping and Identifying Markers Associated with Late Blight Resistance in a Diploid Potato Family for Marker Assisted Selection."

**Rachel Melnick** won second place in the Graduate Division, Environmental and Natural Resource Sciences, at the 2007 Gamma Sigma Delta Research Exhibition for "Bacillus spp. as Biocontrol Agents for Black Pod Rot of Cacao."

**Mark Schall** won the "Runner Up" award for student presentations at the American Phytopathological Society (APS) Potomac Division Meetings at Virginia Tech for "Verticillium Wilt of Tree-of-Heaven—Identifying the Pathogen."

## News from Alumni and Friends

**Jerry Haas (Ph.D. '62)** visited the department on May 7, 2007. His Ph.D. advisor, **Jim Tammen**, hosted Jerry and his wife, **Ilana**, on a tour of the department. Members of the department had a chance to visit with Jerry and Ilana at a special coffee hour.



Left to right: **Jim Tammen**, **Ilana Haas**, and **Jerry Haas** (Photo by Nancy Wenner)

## Richard R. Nelson Memorial Lecture



Dr. Jan Leach (left) and Dr. Barbara Christ (right)

**Dr. Jan Leach**, University Distinguished Professor of Plant Pathology in the Department of Bioagricultural Sciences and Pest Management, Colorado State University, presented the first annual Richard R. Nelson Memorial Lecture, “Approaches to Broad-spectrum, Durable Plant Disease Resistance,” on April 16, 2007. Dr. Leach’s research focuses on understanding the molecular basis for durable resistance.

The Richard R. Nelson Memorial Lectures were established in memory of **Dr. Richard R. Nelson** (1926–1991). Dr. Nelson joined Penn State’s Plant Pathology faculty in 1966 and was named Evan Pugh Professor in 1974. He retired with Emeritus rank in 1985. This lecture was the first in an annual series that will focus on host-pathogen genetics.

## Also of Note

During their spring meeting, the Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association formally announced that **Alan MacNab** was the recipient of their 2007 Award. The Association selected him for the award last fall and presented a certificate to Alan prior to his death in November 2006.

## Upcoming Events

**June 8–11, 2007**

*Aerobiology 2007: Symposium of the Pan-American Association of Aerobiology*

Huck Institutes of the Life Sciences Building

**June 10–12, 2007**

*49<sup>th</sup> Mushroom Industry Short Course*  
Nittany Lion Inn

*SporePrints* is the monthly newsletter of the Department of Plant Pathology, College of Agricultural Sciences, University Park, PA; <http://www.ppath.cas.psu.edu/>. Please send newsletter items and photos to Marsha Ann Tate at [mat1@psu.edu](mailto:mat1@psu.edu).