

SPOREPRINTS

Department of Plant Pathology & Environmental Microbiology

JANUARY, 2013

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY

CONGRATULATIONS

Fall 2012 PPENVMB Graduates...



- **Matt Kasson**, Ph.D. in Plant Pathology (supervised by Dr. Don Davis) “*Verticillium nonalfalfae*: A potential biological control of the invasive *Ailanthus altissima* in Pennsylvania” was the title of his thesis. Dr. Kasson currently works as a Forest Pathologist/Research Scientist in the Dept. of Plant Pathology, Physiology and Weed Science at Virginia Tech.



- **Anna Testen**, M.S. in Plant Pathology (supervised by Dr. Paul Bachman) “Microbial strategies for sustainable quinoa production”. Anna has accepted an offer from Ohio State to pursue her Ph.D., with Dr. Sally Miller. She will focus on researching soil health as it relates to management of root knot nematode and bacterial spot on pepper and tomato in Tanzania.

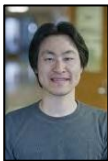
The following PPENVMB graduates passed their doctoral defenses...



- **Maria Burgos**, Ph.D. in Plant Biology (supervised by Dr. Gary Moorman). She defended her thesis entitled “Effect of heterotrophic bacterial communities on *Pythium* spp. in recycled irrigation water” on Dec 20th. Dr. Burgos will be continuing her studies on *Pythium* while working on post-doctoral research with Dr. Gary Moorman next year.



- **Emily Helliwell**, Ph.D. successfully defended her thesis on Dec 18th entitled “The role of ethylene biosynthesis and signaling in rice resistance to fungal diseases”. Emily’s advisor was Dr. Yinong Yang.



- **Bongsoo Park**, Ph.D. passed his doctoral defense on Dec 18th. Bongsoo was a Ph.D. student in the Intercollege IBIOS program thru HUCK. His dissertation was entitled “Cyber-infrastructure supporting fungal and oomycete phylogenetics and genomics”. Dr. Seogchan Kang was Bongsoo’s advisor. He plans to continue his research as a post-doc in the BMMB Department at Penn State.

- Congratulations to **Doug Whalen**, who passed his Candidacy Exam on Dec 21st!



CONGRATULATIONS (CONT'D)



- Sara May and Sarah Bardsley, Ph.D. Candidates in Plant Pathology, have been selected for funding by the College of Agricultural Sciences Graduate Student Competitive Grants Program. Each will receive \$2,000 from the Alex and Jessie C. Black Research Fund Endowment to support their dissertation research projects.

- The Department of Plant Pathology and Environmental Microbiology honored three 25-year employees in November...Randy Dreibelbis, Vija Wilkinson, Douglas Keith (*absent*).



R. Dreibelbis, B. Christ



V. Wilkinson, B. Christ



- In January, Ilse Alejandra Huerta Arredondo received a Graduate Student Travel Assistance Award from the Department to visit the lab of Dr. Bill Fry at Cornell this spring to learn the techniques and protocols associated with genotyping *Phytophthora infestans*, the causal agent of late blight. We look forward to hearing about her visit in an upcoming issue of SporePrints!

WELCOME



Welcome **Maliheh!** In January, Maliheh Safari joined PPENVMB, with Marilyn Roossinck as her advisor. Maliheh is a new Ph.D. graduate student from Iran.

PPENVMB HOLIDAY PARTY CLIPS (2012)



The Holiday Party was held on Dec 13th at the Hilton Garden.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Brian Aynardi, a PhD Candidate, diligently promotes cultural diversity at Penn State...

At the most recent Student Leader's Roundtable meeting, students from numerous culturally diverse backgrounds expressed great anger not only towards the recent actions of a Penn State sorority that brought negative national attention to the Penn State community once again, but to the overall problems at Penn State regarding the inadequate education with regards to cultural diversity. During the discussion, President Rodney Erickson suggested that the students also raise their concerns about racism and ignorance towards culturally diverse groups with the Faculty Senate. As a member of the Faculty Senate, Brian offered to address the Faculty Senate on behalf of the students. In conjunction, Brian will offer concrete suggestions for the implementation of curriculum changes to teach cultural diversity to all new incoming students. He also was named the chair of the Policy Committee at the recent, first ever, meeting of the UPUA Diversity Task Force, a group of students who have gathered to change the way Penn State students treat one another from culturally diverse backgrounds. The recommendations from dialogue within this group and that of the conversation at the Student Leader's Roundtable meeting will be the focal point of his address to the Senate on January 29, 2013.

PPENVMB T-Shirt Design Contest...

The PPA has organized a t-shirt design contest! Creations have been submitted and are currently posted in the mailroom. Please cast your vote by January 24th – the winner will be announced at the January 25th birthday celebration and will receive *two* free t-shirts!! The “blue” voting box is located in the mailroom by the copier.

CALENDAR/UPCOMING EVENTS

Dept. Award Ceremony

- 2/28 – 3:00pm – 4:30pm (***Faculty & Staff Award Nominations Deadline - 2/13***)

Faculty Meetings (208A BL...thru February)

- 1/24 – 1:30pm – 3:30pm
- 2/21 – 1:30pm – 3:30pm

Seminars (PPATH – Spring 2013...thru February)

- 1/28 – 3:35pm (Sara May)
- 2/4 – 3:35pm (David Hughes)
- 2/8 – 3:30pm (Mark Gleason)
- 2/11 – 3:35pm (John (Jay) Regan)
- 2/18 – 3:35pm (Peter Horevaj)
- 2/25 – 3:35pm (Kate Freeman)

Faculty Luncheons (every Wednesday – 208A BL...thru February)

- 1/30, 2/6, 2/13, 2/20 and 2/27 – Noon – 1pm

Thesis Office Deadlines...

- 2/18 - Submit doctoral dissertation for format review
- 2/20 - Submit master's thesis for format review
- 3/1 - Pass doctoral defense
- 4/5 - Submit final thesis or dissertation and supporting materials
- 5/5 - Commencement (at 4:30PM, Bryce Jordan Center)

NAME THIS DISEASE AND CASUAL AGENT



If you are interested in competing, send both the common name of this disease and its causal agent to Sandy in an e-mail with “SporePrints 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 Mailroom bulletin board one week after Sporeprints is distributed. At the Dept. Award Ceremony (winter 2013), the individual with the most wins, will receive recognition and a travel award. Host...Zinnia. Photo courtesy of Jill Pollock.