

PLANT BIOLOGY NEWSLETTER  
University of Minnesota  
Volume X Number 6

*Department of Plant Biology, 250 Biological Sciences Center  
1445 Gortner Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota 55108-1095  
612-625-1234  
June 20, 2005*

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1. Phytograd and Plant Biological Sciences Graduate Program

#### **APPLICATION SOLICITATION**

#### **Graduate Fellows and Environmental Biology, an NSF-funded GK-12 Project**

**12-month graduate fellowship opportunity (July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006).**

Join fellow Environmental Biology graduate students in a new NSF-funded project! Work with K-12 teachers and UM faculty and staff engaged in K-12 activities as you translate your research expertise into a K-12 learning environment. The goal of this project is to encourage science graduate students to connect with K-12 teachers and students throughout their careers. Benefits include experience in inquiry-based pedagogy that will be effective in university teaching, working with graduate students and faculty from across the University, and helping young students become engaged in science.

#### **Fellows will engage in the following activities**

- **Summer workshops:** Fellows, project PI's, Bell Museum education experts, and Minneapolis and St. Paul teachers will work together in a two week summer workshop during which teachers gain science content and fellows science pedagogy background.
- **Work in Minneapolis and St. Paul Schools:** Science activities in K-8 schools (Anne Sullivan and Tuttle in Minneapolis, and Battle Creek and Galtier in St. Paul) during the academic year include working with classroom teachers, running after-school science clubs, and coordinating a Natural History Student Research Fair.
- **On campus activities:** All Fellows will participate in an academic-year seminar course and activities that promote engagement of the scientific community with K-12 schools.

#### **Qualifications**

- University of Minnesota graduate student in good standing
- Strong knowledge of natural history
- Experience with or interest in working with diverse audiences
- Research experience in natural history or related environmental biology fields
- A schedule that will allow 20 hours of work during the academic year, and approximately 3 full weeks during summer 2005

### **Recommended background**

- Career goals for which this experience would be a benefit
- Relevant experience with K-12 students or teachers, or other community youth groups
- Graduate candidate status
- Members of groups traditionally underrepresented in natural history fields are especially encouraged to apply

### **To apply: By February 28**

- Fill out the on-line form at [www.gk12.umn.edu](http://www.gk12.umn.edu)
- Ask your advisor to fill out the recommender's form at [www.gk12.umn.edu](http://www.gk12.umn.edu)

Please contact Karen Oberhauser with questions or comments: [oberh001@umn.edu](mailto:oberh001@umn.edu)

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## 2. Committee News and Reminders

### **Consultative Committee Meeting**

Wednesday, February 9, 3:00 p.m., 242 BioSci

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## 3. Calendar of Events

**Friday, Feb. 11th, 2:30-3:30 p.m., Cowles Auditorium/Humphrey Center, Univ. of MN, Mnpls Campus**

### **Keeping American Colleges Competitive through International Education**

An open discussion with Senator Norm Coleman about the decline of international students in the U.S

For more information about the event, contact the Office of International Programs at 612-624-5580.

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### **AFSCME's Annual Day on the Hill, March 16, 2005 – Supported by the University**

This is an event where AFSCME members jointly visit the legislature in order to lobby for more money, or fewer budget cuts, for the University of Minnesota.

The University supports AFSCME in this effort of emphasizing the University's importance to the state of Minnesota. Therefore, the University has agreed to allow AFSCME Union members to participate in the "Day on the Hill" activities without loss of pay.

Supervisors of AFSCME employees are encouraged to work with their interested AFSCME employees to arrange for maximum participation in this day's events. Participating AFSCME employees shall be allowed time off with pay that is not subtracted from vacation, sick leave, or compensatory time balances.

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### **Veritas™ Laser Capture Microdissection (LCM) and Laser Cutting System**

Demonstration hosted by Arcturus and the CBS Imaging Center

**February 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup>, Room 23 Snyder Hall**

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**The University of Minnesota Largest Job & Internship Fair**  
**Monday, Feb. 14, 2005 – 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. – Minneapolis Convention Center**

Employers will be hiring students from a wide variety of majors for both internships and full-time work. Over 60 employers are currently registered for this event.

Online registration for students is encouraged, but not required. For more event details visit:  
<http://umjobfair.org/>

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**4. Faculty Meetings**

**Friday, February 11th: 1:00 p.m. Add PBio faculty meeting for this date. Strategic issues will be emphasized.**

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**5. Funding/Job Opportunities/Seekers**

**President's Emerging Leaders Program 2005-2006**

Applications are now being accepted and must be received by March 11, 2005

The President's Emerging Leaders Program develops the leadership skills of our very competent, high potential University staff, thereby building institutional talent. Consistent with the University Strategic Positioning document, this program is one way to mentor, reward, and retain outstanding staff. Eligible staff include P & A, civil service, and bargaining unit staff from all of our campuses.

The President's Emerging Leaders Program is designed to meet these goals:

- . Identify talented staff and further develop their readiness and skills for leadership roles
- . Build a larger pool of potential candidates for open University positions or other assignments that require leadership skills
- . Create the expectation that all university administrators must play a role in identifying and nurturing talented staff

We will accept up to 25 participants for the 2005-2006 year. A list of past and current participants is available on our web site: <http://www.umn.edu/ohr/pel>

Involvement in the President's Emerging Leaders Program necessitates a significant time commitment. Participants devote up to 8 hours a week on program activities.

Applicants may come from any of the staff groups named above. The ideal candidate is a mid-career professional who has been employed by the University for between 2 to 10 years, and who has the potential to make a broader leadership impact. In addition, the Program seeks staff who

have demonstrated a passion for the University of Minnesota, initiative-taking or risk taking, a willingness to tackle problems, the ability to positively influence the attitudes and behaviors of those with whom they work, the ability to work collaboratively and be a team player, and an eagerness to learn and improve things around them.

Each candidate is required to go through a five-step application process that will include a conversation with a PEL alumnus, completion of an application and an essay, submission of a letter of reference from a \*University leader, and endorsement from their supervisor. A Talent Selection Committee will then identify the participants for the 2005-2006 year. (For more information about the Application Process, go to <http://www.umn.edu/ohr/pel/applications.htm>)

If you have questions about the President's Emerging Leaders Program or the application process, please contact Beth Zemsky, 612-626-0561, or [zemsk002@umn.edu](mailto:zemsk002@umn.edu)

For more information about the President's Emerging Leader Program, visit this web site: <http://www.umn.edu/ohr/pel>

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**The COAFES Awards Committee** is soliciting nominations for the CSBU and P&A awards. Send nominations to: Erik Kattan, 277 Coffey Hall, by March 15, 2005. Criteria and procedures are posted outside the main office.

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**Council of Academic Professionals and Administrators  
Outstanding Unit Award 2005**

**Purpose:** The Council of Academic Professionals and Administrators (CAPA) would like to recognize units of the University of Minnesota that are exemplary in their support of P & A staff.

**Selection Criteria:** Units will be judged on outstanding achievement and contributions of their P&A staff and the practices used for enhancing the careers and morale of their P&A employees. Units should provide specific evidence of excellence worthy of this recognition and demonstrate that they have provided their staff some, if not all, of all of the following:

- \* Professional leave opportunities, especially those that come with unit funding
- \* Opportunities for professional development
- \* Multi-year contracts
- \* Appropriate and fair non-renewal practices
- \* Raises above the amount provided by Central Administration
- \* Staff awards and recognition within the unit
- \* A meaningful P&A role in unit decision-making such as opportunities to serve on assembly committees or other unit governing bodies
- \* Travel funds for attendance at professional conferences

**Recognition:** The selected unit will be awarded a certificate of appreciation at the annual CAPA Appreciation Event. In addition, CAPA will fund (\$500) a within-unit celebration, coordinated by the winning unit's CAPA representative.

**Procedure:**

- \* Units may self-nominate directly to the Selection Committee or via their elected CAPA representative.
- \* The nomination should be in the form of a one-or two-page letter endorsed by the unit's chief administrative officer, which specifically addresses how the nominated unit meets or exceeds the selection criteria.
- \* Previously nominated units may be re-nominated by submitting the original nomination letter with a brief (no more than one page, signed by the unit's chief administrative officer) update of unit practices that meet the selection criteria.
- \* Normally no more than one unit award will be granted per year. The award will not be granted if the Selection Committee fails to receive nominations for units that meet or exceed the selection criteria.

**Deadline: 4:30 on Thursday, March 24, 2005.** Nominations received after this date will be accepted at the discretion of the Selection Committee.

One copy of the nomination letter sent to Elaine M. Challacombe, Chair; Professional Development and Recognition Committee; Wangenstein Historical Library of Biology and Medicine; 568 Diehl Hall; 505 Essex St. SE; Minneapolis, MN 55455  
Phone: 612-626-4366                      Email: [e-chal@umn.edu](mailto:e-chal@umn.edu)

**Questions:** Contact Elaine Challacombe at 612-626-4366 or via email at [e-chal@umn.edu](mailto:e-chal@umn.edu).

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6. Seminars and Symposia

**PLANT BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES COLLOQUIUM SERIES**

Tuesdays, 3:30 PM, 335 Borlaug., St. Paul Campus  
(\*Unless Noted Otherwise)

**Feb. 15    Dr. Tom Sharkey**, Academic Program Director, Dept. of Botany, Univ. of WI/Madison  
*“The Role of Transitory Starch in Leaf Photosynthesis”*  
Host: Dr. Sue Gibson

**Feb. 22    Dr. Mark Edlund**, Assistant Scientist, St. Croix Watershed Research Station, Science Museum of Minnesota  
*“Nature’s jewels and scientific tools; Putting diatoms back to work in Minnesota”*  
Host: Dr. Florence Gleason

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**PMGI/CMPG SPRING 2005 DISCUSSIONS SCHEDULE**  
**WEDNESDAY, NOON - 105 CARGILL BLDG.**

**February 16    Dr. Anath Das**, Professor of BMBB  
*“Anatomy of Type IV Secretion”* and,

**Dr. Jeff Kahn**, Director Campus, Center for Bioethics  
*“Ethical and Policy Issues on Stem Cell Research”*

**Please notice that the discussions will be starting at 12:30 p.m. on this date.**

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**EEB Department**

**Wednesday, Feb. 9, 4:00 p.m., 335 Borlaug Hall, St. Paul Campus**

**Dr. George Weiblen**, Assistant Professor, Dept. Plant Biology & Bell Museum, Univ. of Minnesota

***“The Origin and Diversification of a Coevolved pollination Mutualism”***

Host: Dr. Jeannine Cavender-Bares

Coffee and cookies served at 3:30 p.m. outside 100 Ecology in lobby area.

## 7. Miscellaneous Announcements

### **H-1B Visa Alert - New Fees!!**

A bill signed recently by President Bush makes several changes to the H-1B visa category. One of those changes is a new "Fraud Prevention and Detection Fee" of \$500, which takes effect on **March 8, 2005**. This new fee applies to H-1B applications from all types of employers, including universities. Applications received at the US Citizenship & Immigration Services on and after March 8 must have the new fee. The new fee is in addition to the basic filing fee of \$185 required in each case, bringing filing fees to a total of \$685. The additional \$500 fee applies to the following types of cases:

initial H-1B applications (i.e. change from another type of visa to H-1B or where the employee is outside the United States and will make the initial entry in H-1B status)

H-1B transfers (H-1B employed with another employer moving to the University of Minnesota)

concurrent H-1B employment (H-1B employed elsewhere adding the University of Minnesota as an additional employer)

**If you are considering an H-1B for one of the above types of employee, I urge you to start the application process now in order to avoid the new fee.**

**We at ISSS will make every effort to submit the application before the fee takes effect, but we need time to prepare the application. Application forms and instructions are available at <><http://www.iss.umn.edu/forms/h1bforms.html>**

The new \$500 fee does not apply to other H-1B applications such as:

extensions of H-1B status for University of Minnesota employees

amendments of H-1B status for University of Minnesota employees (i.e. reporting a change in employment circumstances)

The required administrative fee of \$900 charged by International Student & Scholar Services remains unchanged. The optional "premium processing" fee of \$1000 charged by US Citizenship & Immigration Services for 15-day processing is also unchanged.

There were additional changes made by the bill which do not affect universities. Universities remain exempt from the annual limit of 65,000 new H-1B visas. Universities also remain exempt

from yet another fee of \$1500 which other large employers must pay (small employers with 25 employees or less pay \$750). So, while the new fee is an additional unwelcome burden for universities, other employers fared even worse in the bill.

Craig Peterson, J.D., Assistant Director  
Int'l Student & Scholar Services, University of Minnesota  
612-624-1478 (ph.)

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**Editors: Kate VandenBosch, Dept. Head; Anne Caton, Admin. Director;  
Odette Holter, Principal Administrative Specialist**

This publication is available in hard copy or email by request. Please contact Odette Holter via email (oholter@biosci.cbs.umn.edu) or call 625-1234 if you would like to receive a copy.

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