

PLANT BIOLOGY NEWSLETTER

University of Minnesota

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Department of Plant Biology, 250 Biological Sciences Center

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1. A Message from our Department Head, Kate VandenBosch

Two Workshops of Note

Recently, there has been much discussion in the department about emerging opportunities in bioinformatics and other areas of computational biology. Many students and researchers would like to make more extensive use of computational tools, but lack familiarity with their capabilities. A symposium entitled "**Bioinformatics: Building Bridges**" will be held in the Digital Technologies Center on the Minneapolis Campus on April 16th. Please note that participants must register by April 2nd. More information on registration and the schedule for the symposium is available at <http://www.binf.umn.edu/bisymp04/index.html>.

Scientific communication and the broader impacts of research are topics of on-going interest. For those interested in communicating research results to the public, a workshop sponsored by Writing-Intensive Outreach and The Center for Writing is highly recommended. The workshop, entitled "**Communicating Science to General Audiences**," will be held from 3:00 to 4:30 on Wednesday, April 7th, in the Minnesota Commons Room at the St. Paul Student Union.

2. Achievements

Congratulations to Joe Foley, CBS undergraduate in Professor Carolyn Silflow's lab for being a recipient of the 2004 ASPB Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship.

3. Teaching and Outreach

Preparing Future Faculty Retreat

For Graduate Students, Teaching Assistants, Postdoctoral Fellows

Tuesday, May 18, 2004 – 8:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., 274 McNeal Hall, St. Paul Campus

A \$10 registration fee includes morning beverages & snacks, lunch, workshop materials and a packet on job search tips and tools. A limited number of scholarships are available. Use check or Cash URL below to submit your request.

60 spaces available - to reserve go to the following addresses:

<http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/PFFretreat1.html> - **check or cash**

<http://www1.umn.edu/orh/teachlearn/PFFretreat2.html> - departmental CUFs

See posters for more information.

MAY SESSION COURSE

MOLECULAR PLANT-MICROBE INTERACTIONS – 1 credit

Sponsored by the Plant Molecular Genetics Institute

PBIO 5960: SPECIAL TOPICS IN PLANT BIOLOGY

MAY 24 – JUNE 11, 2004

An exciting multidisciplinary course featuring guest lectures by top scientists. Class discussions of current literature and opportunities for informal interactions with the guest lecturers. The faculty coordinators are Dr. Carroll Vance and Dr. Michael Sadowsky.

****Students will take the course during May Session but register for the course in the Fall Semester.****

Guest Lecturers

Turlough Finan, McMaster University - Molecular genetics of symbiotic nitrogen fixation and phosphate metabolism

Steve Winans, Cornell University - Cell signaling between *Agrobacterium tumefaciens* and its plant hosts

Vicki Vance, Washington University - Molecular basis of plant defense against viruses

Ann Hirsch, UCLA - Plant's role in establishing symbiosis with rhizobia

Stan Gelvin, Purdue University - Molecular mechanisms involved in crown gall tumorigenesis

4. Calendar of Events

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA INITIATIVE IN CHEMICAL BIOLOGY

Recently, the Office of the Provost, the AHC, the College of Pharmacy, the Institute of Technology and the College of Biological Sciences have come together to fund an exploratory multidisciplinary initiative in the exciting area of chemical biology. This initiative is currently focused on enhancing biomedical research and human health by the development and study of chemical probes of biological processes.

UPCOMING EVENTS

"Chemical Biology: A Multidisciplinary Approach Symposium" (May 25, 2004)
and

RFP, "Tackling Interdisciplinary Research Roadblocks in Chemical Biology" (TIRR)"
(Due May 30, 2004)

To find out more please go to the web site <http://www.chembio.umn.edu>

All College Meetings

Wednesday, April 7, Noon – 1 p.m., 239 Gortner, St. Paul Campus

Please attend as it is regarding the draft of the CS Compact for 2004-05. Discussions will be on the outcome of last year's compact and the major compact goals for the coming year. Your input is important.

PLANT SALE – Presented by the Plant Biology Phytograds and the CBS Greenhouse

Herbs, Orchids, Blooming Plants, Dorm Plants

Wednesday and Thursday

March 31 & April 1

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

St. Paul Student Center

5. Faculty Meetings

April 15 Faculty Meeting, 406A BSC, 10:30 a.m.

6. Funding/Job Opportunities/Seekers

Grants in Plant Genome Research

Announcement: NSF 04-563: Developing Country Collaborations in Plant Genome Research (DCC-PGR)

<http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2004/nsf04563/nsf04563.htm>><http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2004/nsf04563/nsf04563.htm>

USDA-ARS – Biological Science Lab Technician (Plants)

Temporary (2-6 year appointment with possible extension up to 4 years), full-time position at the USDA-ARS Plant Science Research Unit located on the St. Paul campus of the U of MN. Duties will involve conducting molecular and biochemical research on cell wall structure of herbaceous forages to be used as biofuel feedstocks.

Closing date: April 19, 2004

For more information, refer to the Employment Posting Board or go to www.ars.usda.gov (announcement # ARS-D4W-0214).

7. Seminars and Symposia

PLANT BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES COLLOQUIUM SERIES

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

April 06 Dr. Olga Danilevskaya, Research Scientist, Pioneer Hi-Bred Intl
“Genetic and genomic approaches for understanding complex agronomic traits”
Host: Dr. Nathan Springer

April 13 Dr. Patrick Schnable, Professor of Plant Genetics, Iowa State University
“Maize Genomics: New Tools and New Complexities”
Host: Dr. Sue Gibson

April 20 Dr. Elizabeth Kellogg – Hamm Memorial Lecture

Plant Molecular Genetics Institute & The Center for Microbial & Plant Genomics Discussion Series

Wednesdays, 12:00 noon, 105 Cargill Building, St. Paul Campus

April 07 Dr. Pete Lefebvre, Professor, Dept. of Plant Biology, UofM
“The role of kinases in the control of flagellar length in Chlamydomonas”

2004 PHILLIP C. HAMM MEMORIAL LECTURE

“Duplication of Genes, Divergence of Function, and Diverse Morphology in Cereals and Other Grasses”

Dr. Elizabeth A. Kellogg, Dept. of Biology, University of Missouri-St. Louis

Tuesday, April 20, 2004, 335 Borlaug Hall, St. Paul Campus

Reception: 3:45 – 4:00 p.m.

Awards Ceremony & Lecture: 4:00 – 5:30 p.m.

CBS Forum

Co-sponsored by the Dept. of Ecology, Evolution and Behavior and the College of Biological Sciences

Friday, April 16, 3:00 p.m. 105 Cargill Bldg for Microbial & Plant Genomics, SPC

“The Earth’s alchemists: Microbial regulation of and carbon and nutrient cycling in lakes and oceans”

Dr. James Cotner, Associate Professor in EEB

RESEARCH SEMINAR

Candidate for the Department of Forest Resources

Faculty Position: Assistant Professor in Forest Ecology

Thursday, April 1, 2004, 1:00 p.m., 100 Skok Hall, St. Paul Campus

“Anthropogenic Effects on Carbon Storage in Forest Soils”

Dr. Jennifer Powers, Dept. of Ecology and Evolution, State University of New York - Stony Brook

In general, forest soils contain large pools of organic carbon. Because of the large size of this carbon pool, there is much concern that global environmental changes like land-cover change, nitrogen deposition and increasing global temperatures may impact soil C storage, with feedbacks on atmospheric CO₂ concentrations. Much of my work addresses the effects of human activities such as land management activities and pollution on soil carbon storage and dynamics.

TEACHING SEMINAR

Friday, April 2, 2004, 1:00 p.m., 100 Skok Hall, St. Paul Campus

“A Case Study: The Guanacaste Conservation Area and its Neighbors^a Happy Story with a Sad Ending”

In this case study we will discuss a historical agreement between a Conservation Area and its industrial neighbor. An orange juice company adjacent to the Guanacaste Conservation Area in Costa Rica agreed to pay for ecosystem services provided by the store of biodiversity conserved in the Park. This case study highlights key issues that face resource managers, conservation biologists and foresters including ecosystem services, secondary forest succession, and restoration ecology.

8. Miscellaneous Announcements

Message from the Accounting Department

This is a reminder that you cannot order ethanol directly from USTORES. You must have an Alcohol Request form and it must be signed by Anne, Lori or Marilyn and then faxed to USTORES.

Here is a link to the Alcohol form as well as other forms used by the PBIO accounting office. Please contact us if you have any questions. Thank you.

<http://www.cbs.umn.edu/plantbio/pbio/forms.htm>

CBS Commencement and Gown Rental Information

This year's CBS Commencement will take place on May 15, 2004. The reception, with light refreshments, will begin at 6:30 p.m., in front of Northrup Auditorium. The Commencement ceremony will start promptly at 7:30 p.m. We encourage you to join us in congratulating our dedicated students of the Class of 2004. Formal commencement invitations will be sent out shortly.

The deadline for faculty gown rentals is April 1st. For further information on faculty gown rental information, please go to:

<http://www.bookstore.umn.edu/grad/faculty.html>

For questions about commencement, please contact Nikki Letawsky Shultz at nlshultz@umn.edu.

**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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