

PLANT SCIENCE NEWSLETTER

March 2009, Vol. 20, Issue 03

Holding the Heartland Together

South Dakota State University

Announcements . . .

At a March 19, 2009, program held at the Innovation Campus SDSU and Monsanto Company announced a collaborative agreement to create a new Ph.D. research fellowship program in plant breeding. **Monsanto has committed \$1 million over five years for the program.** In 2008, Monsanto announced an ambitious goal to double yields in its core crops of corn, cotton and soybeans by 2030 from a base year of 2000, while reducing by one-third key inputs such as water and energy per unit produced. The fellowships will enhance the SDSU plant breeding program by helping recruit and train outstanding students from around the globe and that, in turn, helps agriculture in South Dakota. This program will help increase the available number of applied plant breeders from which the agriculture industry can recruit future employees.

James Doolittle and **Vance Owens** presented information on the Sun Grant Association's work in biomass feedstock partnerships during the Sun Grant Initiative Energy Conference March 11 in Washington, D. C. Owens discussed herbaceous energy crops and CRP land for biomass production across environmental gradients, explaining the accomplishments from last year and plans as the process continues in 2009. Doolittle served as a moderator and explained the importance of the regional biomass feedstock partnership.

There is opportunity to sponsor summer interns under the **Korean Chungnam National University internship program.** The internships are approximately 2 months (July-August) with a \$1700 stipend provided by research projects up front. Travel expenses between countries are paid by CNU or the interns. Projects interested in participating should send a short paragraph describing the proposed research and forward it to Tom Schumacher.

Earlier this semester, **David Clay** and **Cheryl Reese** were recognized with the "Patriotic Employer" award given through the South Dakota Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve program. The two faculty members were nominated for the award by Tech. Sgt. Terry Starkey of the South Dakota Air National Guard. Starkey is presently on a full-time deployment.

Did you know . . .?

About 60 pizzas were eaten at the recent Drought Center Roundtable discussions. The Center would like to thank all facilitators and participants.

90th Birthday Celebration for Paul Carson . . .

Please join us in greeting retired plant science soils professor **Paul Carson** on March 26 as he celebrates a special birthday milestone. The festivities will begin at 9:30 a.m. in the new Ag Hall conference room 238.

Recent new grant approvals . . .

K. Grady, T. Nleya, T. Hall, R. Fanning, R. Drown, D. Vander Vleit and M. Rosenberg. *National Sunflower Association, On-farm sunflower planting date study, \$13,316.*

K. Grady. *SD Oilseeds Council, SDSU oilseeds breeding program, \$15,000.*

The Drought Center Tolerance Center has approved grant projects for the following faculty:

W. Berzonsky, K. Glover, and J. Gonzalez (*Plant Science*). *Identifying genes and developing wheat/rye translocation germplasm to enhance drought tolerance in spring and winter wheat, \$10,000.*

J. Gonzalez and A. Boe (*Plant Science*). *Study the adaptation of prairie cordgrass, a biomass crop, to environmental stress (salt tolerance), \$10,000.*

K. Grady, X. Gu and J. Feng (*Plant Science*). *Identification of quantitative trait loci associated drought tolerance in sunflower, \$10,000.*

L. Hall and P. Krishnan (*Plant Science*). *Development of value-enhanced SD oats having high content of avenanthramides and enhanced food functional properties, \$10,000.*

X. Gu (*Plant Science*). *Develop a framework genetic map to identify genes enhancing resistance to abiotic and biotic stresses from wild soybean, \$10,000.*

Y. Yen, X. Ge and W. Li (*Biology-Microbiology*). *Constructing small RNA libraries and their target libraries for characterizing molecular mechanisms of wheat resistance to Fusarium head blight (FHB), \$10,000.*

The Drought Tolerance Center is in the process of preparing a proposal for the next fiscal year. If interested in participating, please contact David Clay at 688-5081.

Groundbreaking for the new Seed Technology Lab will take place the afternoon of April 24, 2009. More details to come later....

Joint CSREES-EPA Ecosystems Research Grant

Opportunity . . .

See CSREES announcement:

<http://www.csrees.usda.gov/fo/enhancingecosystemservice/esafri.cfm>

This program is offered in partnership with the Science to Achieve Results (STAR) program of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Closing date is May 26, 2009. Proposals must be submitted through EPA at the following website:

http://es.epa.gov/ncer/rfa/2009/2009_star_ecosystem_services.html

International Plant Nutrition Institute (IPNI) has announced its **Scholar Awards Program for 2009**.

Awards of \$2,000 each will be conferred to deserving graduate students in sciences relevant to plant nutrition and management of crop nutrients. Candidates for either the M.S. or Ph.D. degrees are eligible. Priority will be given to the relevance of the proposed research in support of IPNI's mission. The Application is only available on-line at www.ipni.net/scholar and the deadline for applications is June 30, 2009.

Graduate Student Research Award Contest . . .

Applications for the Sigma Xi annual Graduate Student Research Award are due March 30, 2009. The contest is open to any graduate student who is conducting research and who is eligible for membership in Sigma Xi. For application information contact Volker Brozel, Department of Biology/Microbiology, Volker.brozel@sdstate.edu

Schultz-Werth Award . . .

The Schultz-Werth Award Committee awards up to \$2,500 individually to senior students who submit research papers judged outstanding based upon originality, scholarship, and creativity. This year's application deadline is March 31. Complete information and application forms are available from the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs or the website at: <http://www3.sdstate.edu/Academics/AcademicAffairs/AwardsApplications/SchultzWerthAward/>

Congratulations . . .

Baby boy, Nilaya Raj Rosyara, was born March 3 to graduate assistant **Umesh Rosyara** and his wife Lata.

Karl Glover and Andrea Beedle tied the knot of matrimony on February 7, 2009. Following a honeymoon trip to Las Vegas, the couple is residing in Brookings.

A 3:00 p.m. reception is planned for March 30 in SAG 150 to recognize former PS secretary **Nancy Kleinjan** as Career Service Employee of the Month.

Plant Science/NCARL Spring 2009 Seminars . . .

Regular Monday seminars will be held 3:00-4:00 p.m. in SAG room 100B. Speaker schedule is as follows:

Mar 30 – Susan Moser, Iowa State University

Apr 06 – Matt Liebman, Iowa State University

Apr 13 – Easter Monday – NO SEMINAR

Apr 20 – George Heimpel, University of Minnesota

Apr 27 – Zuhair Masri, ICARDA

Staff Changes . . .

Bill Berzonsky has relocated to SNP office 245A. His telephone contact remains 5334.

Genomics professor **Senthil Subramanian** arrives April 22 and will office in SNP room 245D.

QUOTE OF THE DAY . . .

'If you will think about what you ought to do for other people, your character will take care of itself. Character is a by-product, and any man who devotes himself to its cultivation in his own case will become a selfish prig.'

-- Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924)--

Job Listings . . . (posted at each building)

SDSU Plant Science - Monsanto Graduate Fellowships, MS/PhD, 07/01/09

Texas A&M – Asst Prof-Entomology, AgriLife Research, PhD, 05/15/09

U of NE-Lincoln – Asst Prof-Weed Ecology, PhD, 05/15/09

SDSU Plant Science – Grad Res Asst-Entomology/Agron, BS/MS, Spring 09

Calendar Dates . . .

Mar 27-28 Little International

Mar 30 PS Faculty Meeting, SAG 107

Apr 03 Festival of Cultures; Frost Arena

Apr 10 Last day to take graduate Oral Exams

Apr 10-13 Easter Break

Apr 14-16 Provost Finalist Interviews

Apr 24 Seed Technology Lab Groundbreaking

Apr 24 PS Recognition Banquet, Volstorff

May 01 Senior Luncheon, USU Dakota Room 159

May 4-8 Final Exams

May 09 Commencement Ceremonies:

Undergrad, 10:00 am, Frost Arena

Grad, 2:30 pm, PAC

May 12 Big Sioux Water Festival

May 25 Memorial Day Holiday

You can take a lesson from the weather; it pays no attention to criticism.