

ACES Global Academy: Visit to National Taiwan University strengthens strategic partnerships in Asia



Global Academy at NTU.

To reinforce ACES' long-standing partnerships in East Asia, the ACES Academy for Global Engagement traveled to Taiwan from March 20-30, 2014. The National Taiwan University (NTU), a comprehensive university operating for eight decades, hosted this year's immersion program. The University of Illinois has many ties with this institution, and the link with the College of

ACES is particularly strong.

This partnership grew from several individual faculty connections, none of which was more important than the one held by Professor Kuan Chong (K.C) Ting. Dr. Ting, Department Head of Agricultural and Biological Engineering, is an NTU alumnus and a true champion of the ACES-NTU partnership. NTU's College of BioResources and Agriculture (CBA) structurally closely resembles ACES, which will allow for even greater research and exchange collaborations in the future. Tasked with a mission of exploring these possibilities, the eight member group of ACES faculty and staff included Young-Su Jin, Assistant Professor (FSHN), DoKyoung Lee, Assistant Professor (Crop Science), Gary Letterly, Energy and Environmental Stewardship Educator (Extension), Jeffrey Matthews, Assistant Professor (NRES), Alfred Roca, Assistant Professor (Animal Science), K.C. Ting, Professor and Senior Fellow (ABE), Suzana Palaska-Nicholson, Associate Director (OIP), and Alex Winter-Nelson, Director (OIP).

The 7th Global Academy cohort engaged their NTU colleagues on issues of biodiversity, energy and the environment. In addition to spending time learning about NTU's capacities in agricultural research and teaching, the Global Academy was invited to a high-level meeting at Taiwan's Council of Agriculture. The meeting was hosted by the minister himself, Dr. Bao-ji Chen, and included deputy ministers Dr. Wen-Deh Chen and Dr. Huu-Sheng Lur, as well as few university administrators. Issues of great interest to Taiwan and Illinois were discussed, including sustainable agricultural practices, renewable sources of energy, and prevention of post-harvest losses. The 2013 Global Academy immersion program was highly successful in achieving its primary objective, which was to connect NTU and ACES researchers and educators with similar interests and identify areas for future new collaborations. The Office of International Programs looks forward to witnessing the outcomes of the initiatives which were seeded during this memorable visit to Taiwan.

Article submitted by Suzana Palaska-Nicholson, OIP Associate Director

OIP announces winners of inaugural graduate student international research grants

The Office of International Programs (OIP) is pleased to announce the winners of the inaugural Graduate Student International Research Grants Program. After a competitive call for proposals, funds of \$3,000 were awarded to each of five graduate students in the College of ACES who requested financial support for international research activities involving international travel. These awards were made possible through a generous donation from Bill and Mary Lee Dimond. The grant winners and their topics include:

Jessica Hekman, Ph.D. student in Animal Sciences advised by Dr. Anna Kukekova, "Implications of intra-uterine environment on fearfulness in later life: sample collection." Jessica will use the funds for travel, lodging, and supplies for a trip to Novosibirsk, Russia to collect samples and preliminary data on a population of foxes that is critical to the success of her project.

Katherine Magerko, MD/Ph.D student in Human Community Development and the College of Medicine advised by Dr. Angela Wiley, "The role of adiponectin in obesity and diabetes in Mexican young adults." Katherine will use the funds to travel to San Luis Potosi, Mexico to analyze samples that cannot be safely transported to the United States.

Heejin Kim, Ph.D. student in Food Science and Human Nutrition advised by Dr. Yong-Su Jin, "Understanding the genetic basis of yeast: identification of factors that elicit drastic changes in sugar metabolism through metabolomics study." Heejin will use the funds to travel to South Korea to use specialized equipment that is optimized for yeast metabolism.

Annabel Biruete, Ph.D. student in the Division of Nutritional Sciences advised by Dr. Kenneth Wilund, "Differences in dietary patterns between hemodialysis patients from the United Kingdom and the United States and association with nutritional status and food security." Annabel will use the funds to travel to the University of Leicester in the U.K. to collect samples from hemodialysis patients.

Atul Nepal, Ph.D. student advised by Dr. Barrett Kirwan, "Foreign employment and use of remittance in Nepalese household." Atul will use the funds to travel to Nepal to conduct interviews and gather existing survey data that is not available electronically.

Lenton stresses holistic approach to solve issues of water and food insecurity



OIP Director Dr. Alex Winter-Nelson with Dr. Roberto Lenton

The ACES Office of International Programs welcomed one of the world's foremost experts in water management and development, Dr. Roberto Lenton, as its distinguished international speaker on April 17, 2014.

Lenton, who spoke about his experiences at the intersection of science and practice for water, food, and international development, serves as the

founding executive director of the Water for Food Institute at the University of Nebraska.

Lenton highlighted the "big dualities" he has found in most every discussion that includes water, food, and development. "There is always one obvious or visible aspect, the 'principal aspect' and another aspect that is less visible, the 'shadow aspect.' Which is the 'principal' and which is the 'shadow' usually depends on your disciplinary background. Most people are trained to look at one side and not the other. For example, engineers may see the supply side issue, but economists see the demand side issue. What we need is a more holistic approach. In most cases, we need to capture the whole. You must force yourself to capture the full dimension of the issue. There is a great need for integrated approaches, and people should think broadly but act specifically," he said.

You can view the Lenton lecture in its entirety on the OIP website at: http://intlprograms.aces.illinois.edu/lenton_highlight

Michelson returns to ACE with diverse international portfolio



Bringing an extensive international portfolio including two new grants that focus on soil fertility in Sub-Saharan Africa, Dr. Hope Michelson has joined the Department of ACE as an assistant professor.

Michelson, who describes her current research focus as "at the intersection of food security, market participation and soil fertility" returned in

January 2014 to ACE where she earned her M.Sc. in 2004. She earned a Ph.D. in applied economics from Cornell in 2010 and then spent three years as a post-doctoral fellow at Columbia University's Earth Institute working with the Agriculture and Food Security Center. In a new project set to start this summer funded by a USAID Assets and Market Access Innovation Lab research grant, Michelson will be working with a team from Columbia and Tanzania's Sokoine Universities to study the effects of the provision of soil assessments to maize farmers in Tanzania. In a second project also starting this summer, Michelson will work with a team of researchers to study the scale-up of an NGO project working with small farmers growing soy in Malawi.

OIP announces recipients of Spring 2014 International Seed Grants

The Office of International Programs (OIP) congratulates its International Seed Grant winners for Spring 2014. The goal of the Seed Grant program is to support awardees in establishing a strong international relationship that will continue to expand and flourish into a larger and substantial international collaborative effort that will ultimately benefit departments, programs, the College of ACES, and the University of Illinois.

The funding of the International Seed Grants program is made possible through support provided by the Arlys Conrad Endowment Fund, and the applications are reviewed by the College of ACES International Programs and Policy Committee. This semester's winners are:

Dr. Patrick Brown, Crop Sciences: "Genomics-accelerated breeding of multipurpose edible *Jatropha* for smallholders' perennial hillside agriculture in Haiti"

Drs. Richard Cooke and Alan Hansen, Agricultural and Biological Engineering: "Fabrication and field testing of a manual grain planter for Sierra Leone"

Dr. Gail Ferguson, Human and Community Development, Family Resiliency Center: "Americanization, Health Habits, and Family Life in Jamaica"

Dr. Cory Suski, Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences: "Impacts of growth and climate change on mangrove fishes in The Bahamas"

Drs. Yilan Xu and Angela Lyons, Agricultural and Consumer Economics: "Shadow Banking in China: Demand for Formal and Informal Financial Markets"

Rausch and Danao address post-harvest storage losses and build relationships at several universities in India



Using seed grant funds from the Office of International Programs, Dr. Kent Rausch and Dr. Grace Danao visited India in early March to develop and expand research collaborations in the areas of food engineering, bioprocessing, and postharvest technologies.

Rausch, an associate professor in the Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering (ABE), said, "The faculty at the universities we visited are eager to continue our collaborative relationships and do larger-scale projects together. Specifically, India needs unbiased evaluation of technologies that address postharvest loss of grain, and this is the expertise we have been providing, but after this recent trip, we see many additional opportunities to work together."

Save the date: Dr. Don Van Atta will speak on "From cotton colony to crony capitalism: Agricultural and policy dilemmas in the Republic of Tajikistan" on Wednesday May 14, 2014, from 12-1 in 350B ERML. Sandwiches provided. RSVP to Karen Driscoll at kdriscoll@illinois.edu.