

Notes from the Director

Readers of this newsletter will see that international engagement is thriving in the ACES community. The great intensity of international work in the college came clear to me this past month as I joined with committees reviewing the internal grants competitions of the Office of International Programs. Recipients of ACES International Seed Grants and the ACES International Joint Research Awards are listed below. Those scholars represent a range of disciplines, and they are applying their expertise to real world problems in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Not listed in this newsletter is information on the many excellent proposals that could not be funded. Neither of these award programs had capacity to fund even half of the projects that were proposed, but all applications had merit. I want to thank those colleagues whose proposals were not funded and express my hopes that they continue to pursue their international efforts.

As we look to the end of another semester and the close of 2017, I am grateful for the abundance of international activity in the Colleges of ACES. On behalf of the staff of the Office of International Programs, I will close this note with thanks and best wishes to all our readers for good fortune in the coming year.

Alex Winter-Nelson

ACES hosts Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform from the Province of Bhisho, South Africa

The College of ACES hosted a delegation from the Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform (DRDAR) based in Bhisho, South Africa. A Memoranda of Understanding was signed by DRDAR and the University of Illinois to establish an official cooperative relationship.

DRDAR is particularly interested in Illinois' expertise in implementing a land-grant-style system of services throughout the province, and in developing improved training systems to support veterinary services. A relationship with DRDAR can offer Illinois the opportunity to create new experiential learning activities for students, new research partnerships for scientists, and an enlarged platform for global public engagement.

Fulbright Scholars and Illinois gain much from each other

For the third summer in a row, the Office of International Programs in the College of ACES hosted the Fulbright Junior Faculty Development Program from Lebanon for a 10-week training

program in rural and economic development.

Beyond the research conducted and teaching skills gained, the scholars noted the hospitality extended by the University of Illinois community. "It felt like we were in a family not a university," one scholar said.

The feeling is mutual, as Director of ACES OIP, Dr. Alex Winter-Nelson, expressed:

"When I'm asked why we do this program – because it is not a profit center – I say we do it because it is enriching for us. We have a mandate to solve international challenges and a strong international network strengthens the university as an institution trying to address issues that span national borders. Beyond helping build our institutions, these guests enrich our community. They, for example, are on WEFT radio sharing their musical culture, at the library giving presentations, and interacting with many people in this community. We gain much from this program, and we hope that these relationships are mutually beneficial and that they will last," he said.

Possibilities for continued engagement are already emerging from the program; one scholar is planning to co-teaching a course with an Illinois professor in the spring and another is planning to apply for a PhD program here.

ACES International Joint Research Grant Awardees for Fall 2017

The Office of International Programs with the support of the ACES Office of Research congratulates the most recent awardees of the International Joint Research Program. This program, in its fourth year, supports ACES faculty who work jointly with researchers who are based at approved peer institutions abroad and are funded at a matching level by their own institution or another agency. **The researchers/partners/projects listed below were awarded funding in late 2017:**

Brian Diers (Crop Sciences) with University of Ghana at Legon: “Soybean Improvement Initiative for Increased Productivity at WACCI”

Yuji Arai (NRES) with China Agricultural University: “Understanding Iron Oxide Colloid Facilitated Transport of Phosphorus in Illinois Agricultural Soils”

Zeynep Madak-Erdogan (FSHN) with Bogazici University in Turkey: “Biomarker Validation for Developing Raman Spectroscopy-Based Cancer Diagnostics”

Maria Cattai de Godoy (Animal Sciences) with The Federal University of Lavras in Brazil: “Use of Insect Meals as Alternative and Sustainable Protein Sources in Canine and Feline Nutrition”

OIP announces seed grant recipients for Fall 2017

The Office of International Programs congratulates its International Seed Grant recipients for Fall 2017. The Seed Grant program supports awardees in establishing a strong international relationship that will continue to expand and flourish into a larger and substantial international collaborative effort. The funding of the International Seed Grants program is made possible through support provided by the Arlys Conrad Endowment Fund. **This semester’s recipients, projects, and countries of collaboration are:**

Dr. Kathy Baylis (Agricultural and Consumer Economics): “Effects of irrigation on smallholder welfare: Evidence from Haiti”

Dr. Andrew Margenot (Crop Sciences): “Developing novel approaches to assess and manage soil heavy metal contamination in Ecuadorian cacao production”

Dr. Andrew Steelman (Animal Sciences): “Neuro-aggregate culture model to study oligodendrocyte plasticity” (Japan)

Dr. Anthony Studer (Crop Sciences): “Dissection of photosynthetic evolution using C3-C4 intermediates and interspecies” (Argentina)

Dr. Frank Zhao (Crop Sciences): “Minimize the threat to the apple and pear industries in China due to recent discovery of the fire blight disease in surrounding countries”

ADM Institute for the Prevention of Postharvest Loss transferred to ACES International Programs

As of October 1, 2017, oversight of the ADM Institute for the Prevention of Postharvest Loss (ADMI) program was transferred from the Office of Research in ACES to the Office of International Programs (OIP) in ACES. Dr. Alex Winter-Nelson will serve as the Director of ADMI.

Dean Kim Kidwell said, “Integrating ADMI into OIP is a natural fit considering the goals of the Institute, the breadth and depth of current projects in OIP, and the overlapping network that supports both units.”

In January 2011, the Archer Daniel Midlands Company (ADM) provided a \$10 million gift to the University of Illinois to establish the institute in response to the rising amounts of staple crops lost each year in food chains around the world. The institute is an international information and technology hub for evaluating, creating and disseminating economically viable technologies, practices, and systems that reduce postharvest losses of commodities, including rice, wheat, maize, and oilseeds.

Illinois student delegation participates in World Food Prize



Nineteen undergraduate students from the University of Illinois who are passionate about food security attended the annual World Food Prize in Des Moines, Iowa during October.

This year’s student delegation to the prestigious three-day event known as “the premier conference in the world on global agriculture” was sponsored by the ACES Office of International Programs and ACES Office of Academic Programs.

“Our undergraduate delegation exhibited diversity in both academic concentration and cultural background. Whether be from the southside of Chicago or southern Brazil, all were united to further expand their understanding of global food security,” said Thomas Poole, senior in crop sciences and founder and president of Unify, a student organization focused on food security, who led the student delegation along with Xavier Morgan, senior in agricultural communications.

For more news items on international activities in the College of ACES, visit <http://intlprograms.aces.edu>. To receive an electronic version of this newsletter, visit <http://illinois.edu/gm/subscribe/7045>