



Office of International Programs *Monthly Newsletter*

September 2011

Deadline for International Seed Grants Program

The Office of International Programs (OIP) is now soliciting proposals from faculty and staff in the College of ACES for the 2011 Seed Grant proposals. Applicants may request funds of up to \$2,500 per proposal to create or support international opportunities in research, teaching, and outreach. Submissions from faculty interested in developing international connections and interactions are highly encouraged.

Applications should emphasize the nature of the international activity that goes beyond merely attending international conferences or participating in international travel. We wish to fund international activities that build an international dimension into the respective departments of the College of ACES. Priority will be given to proposals that demonstrate how they further the mission of our office.

Applications must include the following:

- Completed 'Grant Application Form'
- Two-page project description proposal (12 point font; single-spaced)

Due to the limited availability of funds, successful recipients of OIP Awards in the previous funding cycle will not be considered at this time. For a listing of previously funded projects, please visit our website at: <http://intlprograms.aces.illinois.edu/SeedGrants>.

All applications should be e-mailed as a single PDF document to Ms. Suzana Palaska-Nicholson, spalaska@illinois.edu, by **October 5, 2011 at 5:00 p.m.**

Funding Updates on Website

Several new funding opportunities have been posted on our website, and deadlines are quickly approaching. Be sure to visit our [website](#) to see the latest additions.

Vietnamese Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) Visits ACES

The ACES Office of International Programs (OIP) welcomed a delegation from the Vietnamese Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) on September 18. The delegation included high-level officials within MARD who were interested in learning how to strengthen Vietnam's agricultural extension activities.

During their two-day visit at the University of Illinois, the group of eight delegates from MARD attended a number of presentations on the history and current activities in agricultural Extension in Illinois. During their first day, they met with Dr. Burt Swanson and Dr. Paul McNamara, leaders of MEAS (a USAID-funded project on modernizing extension in Feed the Future countries), and visited the university South Farms and discussed soybean production with Dr. Emerson Nafziger. They also visited the regional Extension office in Champaign and engaged in a constructive dialogue about Extension's reach and initiatives. The following day, delegates listened to presentations on dairy cow and swine management issues. The official portion of the program concluded with a great presentation on technology transfer, a topic of particular interest to the MARD delegates.



Photo courtesy of Suzana Palaska-Nicholson

In addition to program's focus on extension activities, the MARD visit included a few social meetings, including an hour long conversation with Dean Robert Hauser, and two lunch hours with administrators from the Center of East Asian and Pacific Studies as well as the Center for Global Studies.

Mr. Nguyen Minh Nhan, Ministry Administrative Office Manager of MARD and head of the delegation, recapped the visit positively, "We are extremely impressed by the program that OIP put together for us. We learned a lot, and it is clear that these types of visits need to be more frequent to strengthen our relationship."

Suzana Palaska-Nicholson, program coordinator in OIP, agrees the visit was a success and says that both parties are looking towards future collaboration. "The group left with specific ideas and plans for improving their country's Extension activities and also with great interest in future collaboration with U of I's College of ACES."

Moose of Crop Sciences Initiating Collaborative Research in India

Dr. Stephen Moose, Associate Professor of Maize Functional Genomics in the Department of Crop Sciences, has hosted a visiting scientist from the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) for a three-month training program funded through the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

Dr. Tapan Mondal, a senior scientist with a focus on plant biotechnology, is a member of the National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (ICAR). He is expanding his research expertise by collaborating with Moose on corn functional genomics.

Mondal worked with Moose in looking at what genetic attributes lead to higher corn yield under lower nitrogen conditions, which closely

relates to his research at the IARI.

Mondal has also had the opportunity to learn more about RNA sequencing, a new cutting-



Photo courtesy of Carly Rakes

edge technology that is just now being used in India.

“Going forward, this technology will be more and more important and is something that will help their institution,” said Moose. “I believe that this is the start of a valuable scientist exchange with this great institution in India.”

Dr. Shenggen Fan, Director General of IFPRI, to Deliver the ACES International Lecture

Mark your calendar for October 20 to attend the ACES International Lecture. OIP is excited to announce that our guest speaker will be Dr. Shenggen Fan, who serves as the Director General of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) in Washington, D.C. The lecture will be at noon in the Heritage Room at the College of ACES Library.

Leslie Sweet Myrick Joins Office of International Programs as Visiting Communications Specialist



Photo courtesy of Carly Rakes

We are delighted to announce that Ms. Leslie Sweet Myrick has joined our team as a Visiting Media Communications Specialist. She began her 50% appointment on September 16, 2011.

Leslie comes to us with 15 years of professional experience in developing communication and marketing strategies, including a focus on print, web, and multimedia. Leslie has a B.S. in Business Administration, with a marketing concentration, from the College of Business at UIUC and is only six credit hours shy of completing her M.A. in English at Eastern Illinois University.

Leslie is looking forward to her time here in OIP. “I’m so excited and honored to join OIP,” said Leslie. “There are so many interesting projects and collaborations going on in ACES, and I’m looking forward to using my experience in communications to promote our international activities.” Leslie’s office is located in 109 Mumford and can be reached at 217-244-2295 or via e-mail at lsweet@illinois.edu.

Rayburn Hosts Visiting Scientist from India

Dr. Lane Rayburn, Professor of Cytogenetics in the Department of Crop Sciences, has had the opportunity to host a visiting scientist from India’s University of Agricultural Sciences, Raichur, Karnataka. Dr. Amaregouda Patil, who works as an Associate Professor of Crop Physiology at the College of Agriculture, is receiving training in flow cytometry with Rayburn through the Indian Council of Agriculture Research, in part with the National Agriculture Innovative Project (NAIP).

“Having an international connection like this opens up more opportunities and helps you focus on the broader aspects of your research,” said Rayburn, whose research examines how DNA changes affect how plants adapt to various environments. Throughout Patil’s three-month stay on campus, he has collaborated on research with Rayburn to look at physiological adaptations of maize to predict how well various varieties will do in India.



Photo courtesy of Carly Rakes

Patil departs campus on September 27, but looks forward to maintaining his research connections at UIUC. “The techniques I learned here will be applied to screen the lines and germ plasm of different and locally important crops of my region,” said Patil.

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