

# COLLEGE OF ACES Office of International Programs



Newsletter

September 2016

## Notes from the Director

Greetings! I write this note while visiting Mexico for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT). Thanks to CIMMYT Board Member and University of Illinois Professor Emerita Rita Mumm for ensuring a University of Illinois presence at this important event. CIMMYT has been a tremendous force in international agricultural development, and my visit here reinforces to me the great potential for University of Illinois scholars to increase the scope and impact of our work through partnerships with international institutions.

We are fortunate to have vibrant relationships with great partners. In recent months, 14 ACES faculty and administrators visited CIMMYT to explore potential for collaboration and CIMMYT staff participated in a symposium on our campus; other faculty members and graduate students visited the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in The Philippines to conduct research and to work to extend our efforts to train the next generation of rice scientists; and still other faculty and staff members pursued research and training at top universities in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America while scientists from around the world visited our college.

In this newsletter, I am pleased to draw attention to this office's summer projects that deepened our partnerships with Zhejiang University in China and with a set of universities in Lebanon. Through these programs we help build capacity at other institutions and here at the University of Illinois. At the same time, we make good friends around the world. Those institutional and personal relationships facilitate the impressive research that faculty members highlighted in this issue are completing.

Partnerships are built in many ways. At ACES we are fortunate to have the opportunity to build them through relationships with our distinguished alumni, like Dr. Jimmy Smith who serves as the Director General of the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI). Dr. Smith completed his Ph.D. in Animal Sciences at the University of Illinois and is scheduled to give this year's International Food Security at Illinois Distinguished Lecture on October 11. I encourage you to come to the lecture and also to consider how engagement with partners like ILRI could promote greater impact from your own activities.

*Alex Winter-Nelson, Director, ACES Office of International Programs*

## Global Academy goes full circle



*Academy members at UASLP campus in Mexico.*

Before the first ACES Global Academy visited Mexico 10 years ago, only 1 in 5 ACES faculty was engaged internationally. Today, more than half collaborate internationally, thanks in part to a program that has positioned ACES to help solve the world's biggest challenges.

Each fall, the ACES Global Academy inducts a new cohort of scholars with a desire to gain significant international experience. To commemorate the program's 10-year anniversary, last year's Global Academy group returned to Mexico, with an ambitious itinerary that included visits to four strategic partners. Read more here: [https://aces.illinois.edu/files/Fall-Issue\\_2016\\_web.pdf#page=26](https://aces.illinois.edu/files/Fall-Issue_2016_web.pdf#page=26).

## ACES hosts eight Fulbright Scholars from Lebanon



*Fulbright scholars visit Washington D.C.*

The College of ACES hosted eight Fulbright Scholars from Lebanon for a 10-week training program in rural and economic development during summer 2016. The scholars' visit and program was coordinated by the Office of International Programs.

The junior faculty level scholars benefited from research mentoring, cultural events, and interaction with campus administration and community groups to gain a fuller understanding of American society and of our institutions of higher education.

The scholars, who departed September 14, said they now consider themselves "ambassadors for the University of Illinois."

## Borlaug Graduate Student Fellowships in Global Food Security: Experiences of ACES awardees



*L to R: Liana Acevedo-Siaca, Alex Park, and Anna Fairbairn.*

A panel presentation sponsored by the ACES Office of International Programs featured three recent recipients of Borlaug Global Food Security graduate research grants. The three panel members, all graduate students in the College of ACES, shared their experiences and advice for applying for these coveted

fellowships. The panel included: Liana Acevedo-Siaca (Crop Sciences); Anna Fairbairn (Agricultural and Consumer Economics); and Alex Park (Crop Sciences).

The U.S. Borlaug Fellows in Global Food Security graduate research grant program supports exceptional graduate students who are interested in developing a component of their graduate research in a developing country setting and in collaboration with a mentor from an International Agricultural Research Center (IARC), or a qualifying National Agricultural Research System (NARS) unit. The grants have a maximum value of \$15,000 for students applying for 6-month long international research stays; \$20,000 for 1-year long international research stays; and \$40,000 for 2-year long international research stays. Currently this program is only open to U.S. citizens. Visit the application website for more information on how to apply: <http://www.purdue.edu/discoverypark/food/borlaugfellows/research-fellowship/index.php>. The three awardees offered valuable advice for applying for these fellowships:

- Allow 2-4 months to prepare your application, and especially allow time to identify an onsite mentor. The annual deadline generally falls in mid-April.
- Do your homework to find ongoing Feed-the-Future projects in the country you have identified. Ideally align your proposed project to these existing projects.
- Be strategic about your onsite mentor (required for application).
- Use your contacts at Illinois to help identify onsite mentors.
- Make sure your project aligns with the potential mentor's existing work.
- Look for a higher ranking mentor to help you work through bureaucracy.
- Strongly consider first applying for the Summer Food Security Institute: <http://www.purdue.edu/discoverypark/food/borlaugfellows/summer-institute/>. Many of the students who attend the institute end up being awarded graduate research grants. The application deadline for each summer is generally Feb. 1.

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>

## International Summer Immersion Program completes seventh year



*ISIP program participants with mentors and staff.*

Twelve students from China's Zhejiang University successfully completed the 2016 International Summer Immersion Program (ISIP) on August 12.

The six-week ISIP program coordinated by the ACES Office of International Programs included a research apprenticeship with an ACES faculty

member as well as a series of educational seminars and cultural field trips. The program culminated with a poster session, where the students had the opportunity to showcase a research project, and a celebratory luncheon and certificate presentation. The students, many of whom hope to return to the University of Illinois for graduate study, left with new skills, fond memories, and strong friendships.

Fangying Qui, a participant, said, "The ISIP program will benefit my future educational and career prospects. I worked with Prof. Margarita Teran-Garcia to study childhood obesity and the difference in recommended dietary guidelines in China compared to America. I improved my communication and professional skills."

Yuefan Wu, who worked with Dr. Yilan Xu, said, "The program not only taught me how to think critically but also educated me how about research can make changes possible."

In addition to the research work, the students enjoyed an active social program that included cultural activities in Springfield, Chicago, St. Louis, and on campus.

In the past seven years, more than 130 students have graduated from this unique program.

OIP is thankful for our ACES faculty mentors and their graduate students without whom this program would not be possible:

**Crop Sciences:** Dr. Matthew Hudson, Dr. Gustavo Caetano-Anolles, and Dr. Alexander Lipka

**Agricultural & Consumer Economics:** Dr. Yilan Xu

**Agricultural & Biological Engineering:** Dr. Xinlei Wang and Dr. Luis Rodriguez

**Animal Sciences:** Dr. Megan Dailey

**Food Science and Human Nutrition:** Dr. Hannah Holscher, Dr. Margarita Teran-Garcia, Dr. Hao Feng, Dr. Keith Cadwallader, Dr. Yong-Su Jin

For more information about the ISIP, visit: <http://intlprograms.aces.illinois.edu/content/international-summer-immersion-program>.