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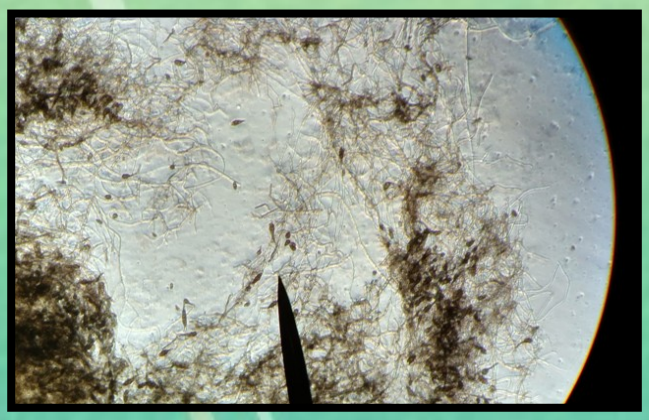

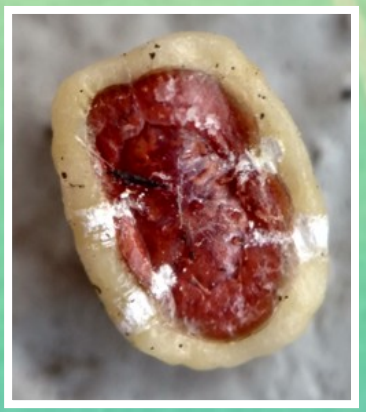

# NEWSLETTER

## Summer 2016

## Doctor of Plant Medicine Program

University of Florida Plant Medicine

## External Advisory Committee

Ben Bolusky, Chief Executive Officer, Florida Nursery, Growers and Landscape Association
Reggie Brown, Executive Vice President, Florida Tomato Exchange
Trevor Smith, State Plant Regulatory Official/Director, FDACS-Division of Plant Industry
Mary Hartney, President and Executive Director, Florida Fertilizer and Agrichemical Association, Committee Chair
Gary Hein, Doctor of Plant Health Director, University of Nebraska
Paul Hornby, Florida State Plant Health Director, USDA-APHIS-PPQ
Lisa Lochridge, Director of Public Affairs Division, Florida Fruit and Vegetable Association
Madeline Mellinger, President, Glades Crop Care
Clay Pederson, Managing Director, Agromillora Florida, Chair of the DPM Alumni Support Committee
Tim Durham, Assistant Professor of Agronomy, Ferrum College, Vice Chair of the DPM Alumni Support Committee
Martha Rhodes Roberts, Former FDACS, Deputy Commissioner of Agriculture, Adjunct Professor, University of Florida

## Faculty Advisory Committee

John Capinera, Entomology and Nematology Department
Billy Crow, Entomology and Nematology Department
Nick Dufault, Department of Plant Pathology
Norman Leppla, Entomology and Nematology Department
Oscar Liburd, Entomology and Nematology Department
Greg MacDonald, Agronomy Department
Heather McAuslane, Entomology and Nematology Department
Kimberly Moore, Environmental Horticulture Department, Ft. Lauderdale Research and Education Center
John Peterson, Environmental Horticulture Department
Diane Rowland, Agronomy Department
Aaron Palmateer, Department of Plant Pathology, Tropical Research and Education Center
Keith Schneider, Food Science and Human Nutrition Department
Jason Smith, School of Forest Resources and Conservation
J. Stacy Strickland, County Extension Director, Hernando County

## DPM Student Organization (DPMSO)

Nicole Casuso, President
Morgan Byron, Vice President
Kayla Thomason, Treasurer
Wael Elwakil, Historian
Ploy Kurdmongkoltham, Secretary
Amanda Hodges, Faculty Advisor

## DPM Program Staff

Amanda Hodges, DPM Director
Elena Alyanaya, Academic Advisor I

# DPM NEWS

*Volume VIII, Summer 2016*

## Greetings!

http://dpm.ifas.ufl.edu/

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## Welcoming Remarks!

Dear Students, Faculty, Alumni, and Friends:

Our Summer 2016 edition of *DPM News* includes the following highlights:

- A Faculty Highlight for Associate Professor and Extension Specialist in ornamental plant pathology at the UF/IFAS Tropical Research and Education Center (TREC), Dr. Aaron Palmateer
- **Featured Article** (pg 5)**: External Advisory Committee Meeting 2016**
- A welcome to our new students: Matt Borden, Craig Frey, and Brandon Jones!
- Information about the course in Tropical Fruit Production offered by Dr. Jonathan Crane, UF/IFAS TREC
- Congratulatory remarks for our Spring 2016 graduates, Dr. Rebecca Barocco and Dr. Keumchul Shin!
- Our Alumni Spotlight article featuring Dr. Clay Pederson!
- Student accomplishments, program news, and development, and much more!

I hope you enjoy reading DPM News, Volume 8, Summer 2016!

*- Amanda Hodges, DPM Program Director*

## Faculty Highlight: Dr. Aaron Palmateer

Dr. Aaron Palmateer (*see above photo left*) is an Associate Professor and Extension Specialist in ornamental plant pathology at the UF/IFAS Tropical Research and Education Center (TREC) in Homestead, FL. TREC is located in an area with a 12 month growing season that offers opportunities to conduct outdoor research trials year round. TREC has a diverse faculty group conducting research on numerous tropical and sub-tropical crops. This environment attracts students, postdocs, and visiting scientists from all over the world, especially those from tropical climates. When asked about what it is like to work at the TREC Dr. Palmateer stated: "I really enjoy working at the TREC because of the diversity and daily interaction with people from other disciplines."

Dr. Palmateer also serves as the director of the Plant Diagnostic Clinic at the TREC. Dr. Palmateer handles and diagnoses the ornamental and tropical fruit disease samples submitted to the TREC Plant Diagnostic Center. The Plant Diagnostic Center at TREC receives mostly ornamental plant samples from nursery producers or landscapes. "The diagnostic clinic is a valuable resource for the clientele, but at the same time allows for me to keep direct contact with the industry and learn about...

**"It's cool to go places where working people are happy."**
**-Neil Young**

UF UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

*Continued from page 3...*

…new and newly emerging disease issues" states Dr. Palmateer. Before starting in his current position in 2007, Dr. Palmateer was a post-doctoral associate at UF who researched alternatives to methyl bromide. In this role he worked on monitoring soilborne pathogen populations such as fungi, bacteria, and nematodes. He also worked with a vegetable seed company working with plant breeders to screen crops for disease resistance.


If you are a student working with Dr. Palmateer you will certainly be busy. Students in Dr. Palmateer's lab (*see photo left*) spend half of their time working on outdoor activities related to applied research and half of their time in the laboratory conducting routine diagnostic procedures for clinic samples or working with pathogens in culture. Students who work with Dr. Palamteer are immersed in all aspects of conducting experiments. Students are involved in the following: experimental design, treatment preparation and application, equipment calibration, collecting and analyzing data, processing diagnostic samples, laboratory specimens, and cultures, preparing media for isolation and identification of pathogens, routine transfers of fungal and bacterial cultures, molecular techniques, DNA extractions, conventional PCR, gel electrophoresis, and sequencing.

Dr. Palmateer is supportive of the DPM program and DPM students. Dr. Palmateer serves on several graduate student committees including current DPM students Theresa Chormanski, Cory Penca, Lanette Sobel, and Ariane McCorquodale. He also served on the committee of DPM alumnus Eric LeVeen. When asked to rate the effectiveness of the DPM program at training students for careers in disease diagnostics, Dr. Palmateer shared the following:

> "First, let me say that I've been very impressed with the caliber of students the DPM program attracts. I've interacted with many DPM students and graduates of the program and I always come away impressed with their broad depth of knowledge. I'm familiar with the DPM program of study and the extensive coursework that is required, which definitely helps build a strong foundation with courses covering agronomy and soils, horticulture, forestry, food and nutrition, entomology and plant pathology. This broad background is very useful for plant disease diagnostics, but DPM students specifically interested in disease diagnostics should focus on mycology and fungal plant pathogens, bacteriology, virology and nematology. These "ology's" along with coursework in molecular biology and internships in a diagnostic clinic are very important."

Dr. Palmateer also shared a few words of advice for our student readers:

**"I think it is very important that students identify what they enjoy the most and focus going in that direction. People are often the best at what they enjoy doing."**

# Plant, Pun, or Puzzle!

In the last edition of *DPM News*, we featured this new section as home to trivia, puns, or puzzles related to plant health topics. Turn to the last page of this newsletter for the answer!


**Methuselah, a bristlecone pine tree scientists estimate to be nearly 5,000 years old, is considered to be the oldest, named, living, non-clonal tree in the United States and in the world.**
**What is the name of the forest and in which state is this timeless tree located?**

# FEATURED ARTICLE:

## External Advisory Committee Meeting - 2016

*By Program Director Dr. Amanda Hodges*

Our deepest gratitude is especially extended to members of the *DPM External Advisory Committee*. On May 20, 2016, members of the *DPM External Advisory Committee* met in Gainesville, Florida in Steinmetz Hall at the University of Florida. Mary Hartney, President and Executive Director of the Florida Fertilizer and Agrichemical Association, began serving as the new committee chair. The *DPM External Advisory Committee* and *DPM Program* remain extremely grateful to Madeline Mellinger, President, Glades Crop Care for her long-term service as committee chair (1999-2016). Ms. Mellinger will continue to serve as an active and vital member of the *DPM External Advisory Committee*. Stay tuned for future editions of *DPM News* as we continue to highlight the outstanding accomplishments of both our past (Ms. Mellinger) and new (Ms. Hartney) *DPM External Advisory Committee Chair*. The agenda of the committee included the following items:

- Program Updates, Dr. Amanda Hodges, DPM Director
- UF, IFAS, CALS Mission and the DPM Program, Dr. Joel Brendemuhl, Associate Dean
- UF, IFAS Donor Opportunities, Julie Conn, Director of Corporate Relations
- Strategic Planning Discussion, Mary Hartney, DPM External Advisory Committee Chair and President and Executive Director of the Florida Fertilizer and Agrichemical Association

The *DPM External Advisory Committee* pursued the following outcomes as a result of the meeting:

- Development and release of a fundraising campaign in order to support student professional development travel to Ecuador (see pages 9-11 for more details)
- Reggie Brown, Executive Vice President of the Florida Tomato Exchange offered to provide two student hotel rooms for one night at the Florida Tomato Conference (http://www.floridatomatoes.org/) in Naples, Florida on September 6, 2016. Five students attended this conference and learned about the latest production concerns, including Food Safety issues, for Florida's tomatoes. Dr. Steven Sargent, Professor of Horticulture, also has provided DPM students with free registration specifically for his Food Safety workshop on September 6, 2016.
- Ben Bolusky, Chief Executive Officer of the Florida, Nursery, Growers, and Landscape Association (FNGLA) has provided free student registration for the FNGLA Landscape Show (https://www.fngla.org/thelandscapeshow/) that will be held in Orlando, Florida September 15-17, 2016. Two students are attending this event.

*Continued on next page...*

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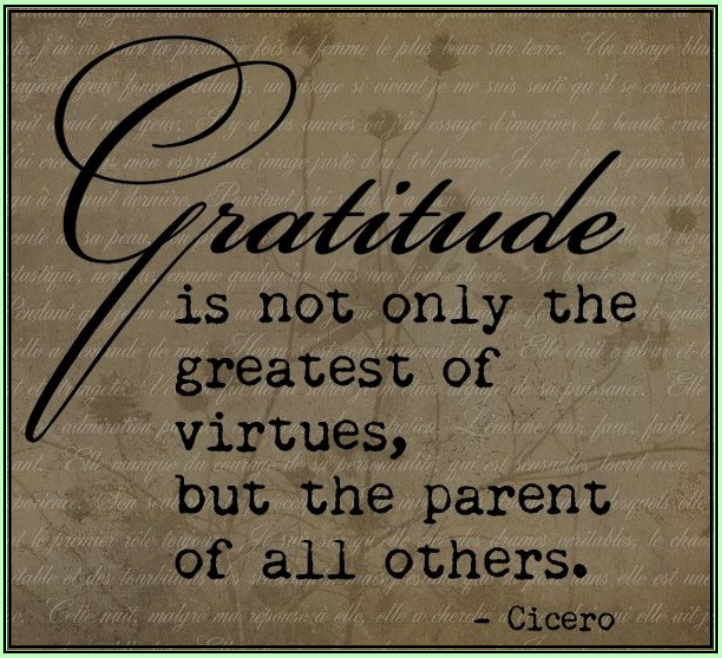
In addition to the business side of the meeting on May 20, 2016, committee members had an opportunity to meet with DPM students and affiliated faculty during a luncheon (*see photos above and left*). At the conclusion of the meeting, the *DPM External Advisory Committee* toured facilities at Steinmetz Hall currently used by students for office, lab, and greenhouse research and extension activities.




We sincerely appreciate all the continued support and dedication provided by the *DPM External Advisory Committee* for the DPM Program and its students!

# NEW STUDENT PROFILES

We would like to welcome our new Summer 2016 students!

## *Brandon Jones*

**"A table, a chair, a bowl of fruit and a violin; what else does a man need to be happy?"**
**- Albert Einstein**

**Academic Credentials:**

- B.S. in Natural Resource Conservation – University of Florida, Gainesville, FL
- Co-enrolled in M.S. Nematology and DPM

**Why DPM?**

My name is Brandon Jones and I am a Florida native. Being born and raised in Southwest Florida along the Gulf coast allowed me to gain an appreciation of the natural ecosystems encompassing the southern portion of the state. Much of my time was spent exploring the swamps and coastal ecosystems of the area. During this time, I began to also develop an interest in plant pathology and horticulture, and started focusing on how to pursue a career within the field.

I graduated with my BS in Natural Resource Conservation in 2015 from the University of Florida. The NRC degree interested me because I had the ability to work with an advisor and chose the majority of my coursework. Some of the most enjoyable and memorable courses were those that are applicable towards the DPM program.

After learning about the DPM program, I knew that was the direction I would like to pursue. Having a broad understanding of plant health and diagnostics intrigued me immensely. Being a dual enrolled MS Nematology/DPM student allows me to focus on a narrow subject while at the same time gaining a broad understanding of plant health. I look forward to what I can accomplish throughout my time in the DPM program and subsequent my completion.

## *Matt Borden*

**Academic Credentials:**

- B.S. in Biological Sciences – Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA.

**Why DPM?**

Originally born in Virginia, I grew up in rural Zimbabwe and then Cape Town, South Africa until returning to Virginia in 2010. I realized quite early on that I wanted to pursue a career in plant health care and focused my studies around horticulture and entomology. Work experiences in public garden IPM (production, landscape trees, and greenhouse ornamentals), tree fruit pathology, and a bit of IPM consulting were vital guides always pushing me towards more in-depth studies. After a lengthy search and concerns that I would have to sacrifice some areas of plant care in order to specialize in others, I was introduced to the DPM program. The vision of Dr. Agrios and the others who recognized the growing need for a highly skilled and yet multidisciplinary approach to plant health care described precisely the program of study for which I had been searching!

I thoroughly enjoy the program thus far and am so impressed by the scope of opportunities, coursework, and diagnostic lab experience available to the DPM students. Regarding future objectives upon completion of the DPM program, my childhood memories drive a goal to work in IPM development and consulting for rural agricultural, with a special interest in the future of tropical tree fruit crops. I also wish to learn more about arboriculture, and to continue current work in ornamental plant protection. I am very pleased to be here, and look forward to what the future may hold!

**"To know that we know what we know, and to know that we do not know what we do not know, that is true knowledge."**
**- Nicolaus Copernicus**

*Craig Frey*

**"There may be people that have more talent than you, but there's no excuse for anyone to work harder than you do."**

**– Derek Jeter**

**Academic Credentials:**

- B.S. in Mechanical Engineering at Messiah College
- Co-enrolled in M.S. in Horticulture and DPM

**Why DPM?**

I grew up in Baltimore, Maryland and completed a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering at Messiah College. It was through my senior project (building hand pumps for irrigating small vegetable gardens in Burkina Faso) that I became interested in agriculture. I approached it with one main question: what are some things (non capital-intensive) that can be done to improve production in rural communities in Africa? After undergrad I pursued an internship in Ft. Myers, FL, learning about tropical agricultural development. After a yearlong internship I had the privilege of spending a year and a half in Mozambique and Zimbabwe, living in community and working with small scale farmers.

The last 8 years have been pursuing a mix of different jobs and learning opportunities in hopes to return to southern Africa. I had the desire to return to school, but knew I would have to find a program that would provide me interdisciplinary training around plant health. When the timing was right for our family to make a move and doors opened to go to grad school, I stumbled upon the DPM program. I immediately I knew it was right for me. I arrived summer of 2016. I am currently working on a dual DPM/MS degree program with a MS in Horticultural Sciences. My research is analyzing high tunnel and open field organic production systems for both tomato and spinach, including the postharvest effects of each system. I'm excited to have my research in fruit and vegetable production in order to give me a strong foundation on which the DPM program will build. My dreams are to return to southern Africa in order to develop best management practices for rural farmers.

# *PROGRAM NEWS & DEVELOPMENT*


## 2016 APS Conference

The University of Nebraska, Doctor of Plant Health and the University of Florida, Doctor of Plant Medicine programs were represented in the Exhibit Hall at the American Phytopathological Society (APS) meeting in Tampa, FL, July 30 through August 3, 2016.

DPM students Kayla Thomason and Wael Elwakil attended the meeting with DPM Program Director, Dr. Amanda Hodges. DPM students had the opportunity to interact with alumnus Dr. Leroy Whilby of FDACS-DPI and DPH Director Dr. Gary Hein during the meeting's evening welcome reception.


University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

UF

# Study Abroad in Ecuador

## Doctor of Plant Medicine Program

**The next few pages discuss the importance of a unique educational endeavor and introduce the campaign that aims to help raise necessary funds. Individuals will have the opportunity to support not only the professional development of DPM students but also provide them an unforgettable experience.**





# UF/IFAS Doctor of Plant Medicine Program

## Support for Students

The Doctor of Plant Medicine (DPM) Program was established in 1999 by the University of Florida College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (UF, CALS), and is one of only two professional plant doctor programs in the entire U.S. The mission of the DPM Program is to provide premier professional doctoral training for plant scientists, and provide hands-on, practical, multi-disciplinary plant health training in plant pathology, entomology, nematology, horticultural sciences, soil sciences, and more. Our graduates are important team members and leaders in their industry, and go on to pursue careers as diagnosticians, crop consultants, plant inspectors, regulatory scientists, managers, and other plant health professions.

**In 2017, as part of the premier doctoral training, students have an opportunity to study abroad in Ecuador for the first time in this program's history. Students will enrich their knowledge about tropical crops, agricultural practices, and technologies.**





## Why Ecuador

Ecuador is one of the most biodiverse countries in the world, which allows students to improve their knowledge in tropical crops like cacao, banana, and coffee, among others. In addition, students can experience other agricultural practices and technologies applied in underdeveloped countries. Conversely, students can share technological and scientific advances in the U.S. with their Ecuadorian counterparts. This trip will also serve as an opportunity to strengthen relationships with faculty at the Escuela Superior Politécnicadel Litoral (ESPOL), a public university in Guayaquil, Ecuador.

## Your Support is Needed

Our goal is to raise **$20,000 for 15 students** to participate, which is roughly $1,333 per student. Your support will not only provide students with an opportunity to travel abroad and gain new perspectives in Plant Medicine, but provide a critical professional development component that strengthens their academic experience.

***Thank you for your consideration.***

Please visit

www.uff.ufl.edu/appeals/DPMabroad

to make a gift today!

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# Tropical Fruit Production - HOS5555 *(Article by Nicole Casuso, photos by Matt Borden)*

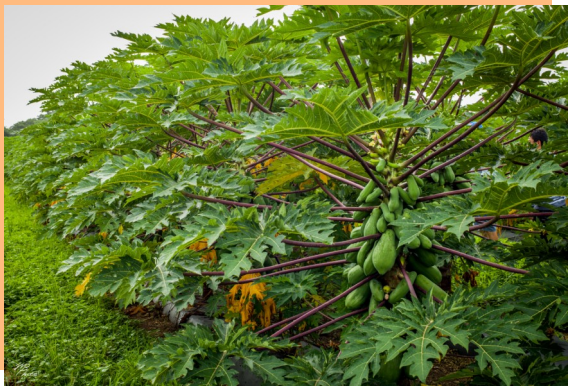
During the summer of alternating even years, DPM students have the opportunity to enroll in the Tropical Fruit Production (HOS5555) course offered at the Tropical Research and Education Center (TREC) in Homestead, Florida. The course takes place in the very heart of our state's tropical fruit industry within South Florida. The course instructor, Dr. Jonathan Crane, is the TREC Associate Director, a Professor, and a Tropical Fruit Crop Specialist.

**Above**: 2016 Tropical Fruit Production Class Group Picture. DPM students (left to right) Cory Penca, Matt Borden, and Ploy Kurdmongkoltham took the course this summer.

Graduate students, advanced undergraduate students, scientists, extension faculty, and other plant industry professionals interested in learning about applied research and horticultural production practices of tropical fruit production in Florida can benefit from this class. A typical day during this intensive 6-week course includes not only classroom lectures but also hands-on experiences and trips to the various nurseries, groves, and botanical gardens in the area. Other popular destinations include local packing-houses and research institutions. Students often consider these field trips to be the highlight of the course, where they are able to witness both the problems and solutions growers have for managing their prized tropical commodities.

The course provides students with insight on insect and disease management in tropical fruits while also highlighting plant physiology fundamentals, postharvest principles, biotechnology, and much more.

***For additional information on the course, please visit: http://trec.ifas.ufl.edu/crane/teaching.shtml***



"The option to work with tropical fruit production was a major reason why I wanted to study at UF, and this course did not disappoint. I loved the balance of lectures and then being able to go out see firsthand all the fruit crops in the groves, not to mention tasting them all. I hope to take what I learned and continue studying tropical fruit pests and diseases in the future."

– Matt Borden

**Top left:** Papaya grove visited by students in the course.

**Bottom left:** Students attended Farichild's International Mango Festival. Mango varieties on display at the festival are pictured.

**Right:** Students got to see the Laurel wilt sniffing dogs in action in an avocado grove.

# Student and Alumni Accomplishments

Students and Alumni of the DPM Program excel not only in their academic pursuits but also in professional development, extracurricular involvement, and their external work experiences. *DPM News* would like to acknowledge the achievements of the following students and alumni.

**Lisbeth Espinoza**

DPM/Master's-Nematology student Lisbeth Espinoza presented a poster, "The emergence of *Meloidogyne haplanaria* in Florida, and the effect of initial population densities on tomato" at the Society of Nematologist – Organization of Nematologist of Tropical America Meeting in Montreal, Canada, July 17-19, 2016.

Lisbeth was also recently published as the lead author of a EDIS publication titled: "The Green-Spore Poison Parasol Mushroom, *Chlorophyllum molybdites*". The EDIS publication was co-authored by Dr. Matthew Smith and can be found online at: http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pp324.

**Nicole Casuso**

DPM student Nicole Casuso was awarded the **William C. and Bertha M. Cornett Fellowship**. This is the third time Nicole has received this award. Congratulations Nicole!

Students interested in scholarships and awards provided by the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences at UF can learn about the application process and important deadlines for the next academic year by visiting this website: http://cals.ufl.edu/students/scholarships-awards.php.

**Cory Penca**

Congratulations to DPM/PhD-Entomology student Cory Penca regarding his recent publication in *Insecta Mundi* entitled "The Cuba-Florida Plant-Pest Pathway". Check out the article at: http://ojs.fcla.edu/mundi/article/view/88249

**Dr. Raj Singh**

DPM alumnus Dr. Raj Singh received the Gamma Sigma Delta Honor Society of Agriculture 2016 Faculty Distinguished Achievement in Agriculture Award. This award is presented to a Gamma Sigma Delta member who has made outstanding contribution to agriculture in the last five years in the form of teaching, research, extension, or other distinguished service.

Dr. Singh was also recognized at the 2016 National Association of County Agricultural Agents Annual Meeting and Professional Improvement Conference in Little Rock, Arkansas. Dr. Singh was one of four national finalists for the search for excellence in consumer/commercial horticulture award. This award is given to recognize a NACAA member who has developed and carried out an outstanding extension educational program in horticulture.


You can learn more about GSD at: http://www.gammasigmadelta.org/
Visit: http://www.nacaa.com/ for more information about the NACAA.

*Any current students or alumni interested in being featured in the next edition of DPM News can contact the student editors, Nicole Casuso at ncasuso@ufl.edu and Blaire Colvin at bcolvin14@ufl.edu or DPM Director Amanda Hodges at achodges@ufl.edu.*

***We would love to hear from you!***

# Oak Identification, Pest, and Pathogen Workshop

## Mufreesboro, TN | August 17-18, 2016

*(Article by Nicole Casuso, Photos by Morgan Pinkerton)*

DPM Program Director Dr. Amanda Hodges, DPM student Nicole Casuso, and UF Biosecurity Research and Extension (BRE) Lab students Morgan Pinkerton and Brianna Whitman, attended the **Oak Identification, Pest, and Pathogen Workshop** in Murfreesboro, TN, August 17-18, 2016. The event was an intensive two-day hands-on train-the-trainer session with participation from Cooperative Agriculture Pest Survey (CAPS) survey specialists, extension specialists, state plant survey specialists, and National Plant Diagnostic Network (NPDN) diagnosticians throughout the United States and parts of the Caribbean.

Workshop attendees were able to listen to several talks on oak identification, pests, and pathogens provided by:

- Dr. Frank Hale, Professor, University of Tennessee
- Dr. Larry Tankersley, Extension Specialist, University of Tennessee
- Dr. Alan Windham, Professor, University of Tennessee
- Dr. Jason Smith, Associate Professor of Forest Pathology State Forest Health Extension Specialist, University of Florida
- Katy Kilbourne, State Plant Pathologist, Tennessee Department of Agriculture
- Eric Day, Insect Identification Lab Manager, Virginia Tech
- Dr. Eric LeVeen, Florida State CAPS Coordinator, FDACS-DPI

Fresh oak tree samples, along with symptoms and signs of arthropod pests and diseases, and preserved target specimens were available for observation throughout the workshop. Additionally, attendees were able to tryout their tree, pest, and disease identification skills during a walking tour of Oaklands Park, Murfreesboro, TN.

BRE Lab students Morgan and Brianna along with BRE Lab Manager Jennifer Carr, developed educational materials such as PowerPoint presentations and an extensive Oak Pest and Disease Deck for the training. DPM student Nicole Casuso was granted opportunity to present on "Oak Decline, *Phytophthora quercina*" during the workshop as well.

For more information about the training visit: http://oakpestworkshop.com/

# Congratulatory Remarks for our Graduates

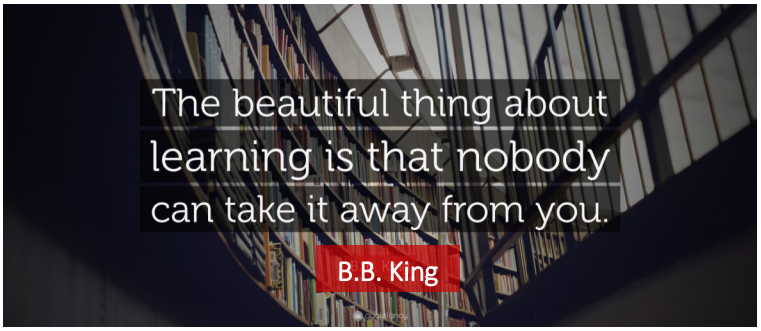
## Congratulations to our Spring 2016 Graduates! We wish you the best!

We asked our Spring 2016 graduates to share a few words regarding their recent graduation and current employment. Below are their replies:

### Dr. Rebecca Barocco

"The DPM program was a rich experience that I will cherish as I move forward with my career in crop management. I finished the program gaining field experience as a scouting and food safety intern at Glades Crop Care in south Florida this past spring semester.

After graduating this May, I was very fortunate to be hired as a Post Doctoral Associate in Dr. Nick Dufault's lab in the plant pathology department at UF. During this summer, I have been working on field research in peanut disease management and weather-based disease risk models. After peanut season, I look forward to continuing this position with potato field research and late blight forecasting. This position is the perfect stepping stone from the integrated DPM program into my desired career involving crop data management and analysis, decision support systems, scouting, and applied field management and research."




### Dr. Keumchul Shin

**DPM graduates from left to right:** Rebecca Barocco, Christopher Ferguson (summer 2016 graduate), and Keumchul Shin

"Since graduation I have been working with Dr. Ariena van Bruggen in the Plant Pathology department as a post doctoral associate. We are researching the effects of penicillin injections in Huanglongbing affected citrus trees, focusing on bacterial population changes, penicillin and glyphosate resistance, and Phytophthora root rot severity. We submitted a manuscript for the penicillin work to the Crop Protection journal and are waiting for the reviewers decision. My postdoc work will be focused on the effects of glyphosate and antibiotics applications on microbial community structures and their resistance to changes in organic and conventional citrus groves. I am also working on the decomposition of citrus leaf letter related to the citrus black spot pathogen (*Guignardia citricarpa*). This projects include several decay models and statistical analysis that I am currently familiarizing myself with. I am studying two different pathogens for citrus trees now and all the knowledge I gained and experiences I had during the DPM program have helped me tremendously in my research endeavors."

# DPM Blog & Social Media

*By Ploy Kurdmongkoltham*

My name is Ploy Kurdmongkoltham. I am in my second year in the DPM program. I am currently the secretary for DPMSO and I also maintain our social media sites which include Facebook and the UF/IFAS DPM Blog. I like to keep things lighthearted in my posts but still be able to highlight all the accomplishments of our current students and alumni.

My main goal is to give our prospective students a glimpse of our program by showing what our students do on the daily basis, which can include harvesting crops, going to conferences, flying drones, or just students and professors enjoying each other's company! I hope the social media sites will bring more interest and positive attention to our DPM program.

Be sure to subscribe to our Facebook page at:
https://www.facebook.com/UFPlantDoctors
and our UF/IFAS DPM Blog at:
http://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/plantmedicine/.

# DPM Welcome Back Fall BBQ

*By Blaire Colvin*

To celebrate summer and have some fun with fellow students our program director Dr. Hodges hosted a summer potluck BBQ at her house. Current DPM students, DPM alumni, and students in the UF Biosecurity Research and Extension Lab were in attendance. A fun evening of socializing, enjoying good food, and swimming was had by all. Since we are DPM students we of course also participated in some night time insect collecting as well! Thanks to Dr. Hodges for opening her home to us and hosting this event!

# DPMSO - Social and Fundraising

*The DPMSO Officers*

This summer, students in the Doctor of Plant Medicine Student Organization (DPMSO) attended a summer social at Swamp Head Brewery where students were able to play board games, enjoy local craft beverages, and learn more about each other!

Additionally, DPMSO will be releasing Florida-inspired aluminum water bottles, **three** new and improved T-shirt designs (featuring the artwork of our DPM students), and hand-made succulent planters from repurposed glass bottles. These items will be sold as an on-going fundraising effort this year. Keep an eye on your inboxes for future emails providing information about pricing and availability of these unique items!

Wine bottle turned into a nautical aloe and succulent planter!

# Alumni Spotlight - Dr. Clay Pederson

***Q: Please describe your academic background.***

***A:*** Being a Gator through and through, I received my undergraduate and DPM degree at The Great University of Florida. My undergrad studies were in Plant Science with an emphasis in Plant Pathology and a specialization in Biotechnology.

***Q: What is your current occupation and how has your DPM degree aided you in the tasks and responsibilities associated with your position?***

***A:*** Currently I am the Farm Manager for the Black Gold Farms' Florida location. The farm is in Live Oak, FL and is the largest chipping potato farm in the state. However, I just accepted a new job as Managing Director of Agromillora Florida, and will start this new endeavor on August 1st. Agromillora has a new citrus tissue culture lab and greenhouse that just became operational this year. The facility is located in Wildwood, FL. The all-encompassing interdisciplinary training by the DPM program provided me a tremendous leg up in the production Ag industry. Growing a successful crop requires knowledge in all aspects of plant care from soils, fertility, water and disease management and beyond. This type of education is exactly what the DPM program provides.

***Q: What prompted you to pursue your present career and where are you located?***

***A:*** I have always enjoyed growing a crop. The satisfaction of seeing something grow from a seed to a harvested product is a benefit you don't get in many careers. Through the years, however, I learned that I enjoyed helping people and a business grow just as much as growing a plant. This is what led me to my current position as well as my new job. I am still able to see plants grow and develop, but am able to have a greater impact on the big picture. I am currently moving to Ocala, FL.

***Q: What made you choose to enroll in the DPM program?***

***A:*** At the time it was the only interdisciplinary plant health practitioner program. The DPM program offered a course of training unlike anything else available.

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**"The ultimate goal of farming is not the growing of crops, but the cultivation and perfection of human beings."**
***–Masanobu Fukuoka***

***Q: From a personal standpoint, how has your DPM degree influenced you?***

***A:*** The education and training provided by the DPM program has provided me with a unique skill set that has opened many doors for me. Besides the education, the networking opportunities through internships, seminars, guest lectures and travel is actually how I received my first job offers after graduation. I would strongly encourage all current DPM students to take advantage of this great networking opportunity.

***Q: Are there any challenges that your DPM degree has helped you overcome?***

***A:*** There is a main theme that I learned from the program that has helped me in many situations. The DPM program taught me to look at problems from a wide angle view. Focusing on the whole picture/problem instead of one particular aspect of the problem mirrors the interdisciplinary education taught by the program.

***Q: What interested you to become part of the External Advisory Committee?***

***A:*** The chance to help the program that helped me get to where I am today is what interested me in participating. I truly believe in the DPM program and feel that it is an answer to many of the challenges the agricultural industry faces today. Being part of the DPM program does not stop when you graduate and for it to remain successful it is all of our duties to continue to promote our extraordinary degree.

# If the shoe fits... why DPM might be right for you!

*By Nicole Casuso*

We often find students wondering if the DPM program is the right choice for them. By answering this short quiz you can see if the shoe fits!

1. Do you seek knowledgeable in any one or several of these subject areas: plant disease control, arthropod pest or nematode management, crop nutrition and agronomy, or horticultural sciences?
2. Are you interested in hands-on curriculum that allows you to work in the field and/or in a lab, internships with local businesses or federal agencies, and interdisciplinary studies?
3. Do you aspire to work in academia, industry, extension, or regulatory?
4. Do you enjoy opportunities to get involved with community outreach, networking, and attending professional development workshops, seminars, and scientific conferences?
5. Do you prefer application-based science?

If you answered **yes** to most of the questions listed above, then we highly recommend that you explore your graduate career options with the University of Florida DPM Program!

# Plant, Pun, or Puzzle!

**Answer**:
**Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest in the California White Mountains**

***Already enrolled in a graduate degree program?***
Contact our program for more information about potential dual-enrollment!

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## DPM Students

Interested in learning more about our current DPM students?
Visit our website at: http://www.dpm.ifas.ufl.edu/current_students.html


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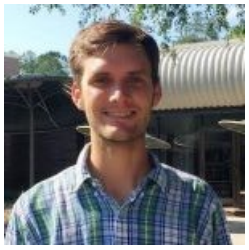
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# Thank you for reading.


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***Nicole Casuso, 4th Year DPM Student***