



NEWSLETTER

*Doctor of Plant
Medicine Program*

Fall 2016





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Amanda Hodges, DPM Director

Elena Alyanaya, Academic Advisor I

DPM NEWS

Volume IX, Fall 2016

Greetings!

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



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Welcoming Remarks!

Dear Students, Faculty, Alumni, and Friends,

Our Fall 2016 edition of DPM News includes the following highlights:

- A Faculty Highlight for Associate Extension Scientist in the UF Entomology and Nematology Department, Dr. Jennifer Gillett-Kaufman
- A welcome to our new students: Eleanor Phillips, Alex Gannon, and Rebecca Rabinowitz!
- Information about the course in Insect Toxicology offered by Dr. Jeffrey Bloomquist
- Congratulatory remarks for our Summer 2016 graduates, Dr. John Bonkowski and Dr. Chris Ferguson!
- Our Alumni Spotlight article featuring Dr. Stacy Strickland!
- Student accomplishments, volunteer work, program news, and development, and much more!

Finally, I hope that you will consider providing a tax-deductible donation to our DPM student's first study abroad opportunity in Ecuador (<http://www.ufl.edu/appeals/DPMabroad>). Based on donations and student organization fundraising, our current goal is \$8000. This is only 40% of our original goal of \$20,000! Our trip will occur May 2-10, 2017, and we need your help! The following students will be participating in the trip: Matt Borden, Nicole Casuso, Theresa Chormanski, Lisbeth Espinoza, Arjun Khadka, Ploy Kurdmongkoltbam, Daniel Mancero, Ariane McCorquodale, Blaire Colvin, Eleanor Phillips, Morgan Pinkerton, Rebecca Rabinowitz, Lanette Sobel, Kayla Thomason, and Benjamin Waldo. If you would like to support the travel of a specific student, please e-mail me (achodges@ufl.edu) with the subject heading-Ecuador student sponsorship. Otherwise, donated funds raised will be distributed to students based on volunteer work and participation in DPMSO activities.

The DPM program would like to acknowledge the following alumni donors during 2016: Dr. Clay Pederson and Dr. Tim Durham. We would also like to acknowledge and thank the following alumni who have donated within the last five years: Dr. Lacey Mount and Dr. Romy Basler. Thank you for your financial contributions to the DPM Program!

The DPM program would like to acknowledge the following corporate donation during 2016: Mr. William Hoffman on behalf of Syngenta.

The DPM program would also like to acknowledge the financial contributions or pledges of individual donors during 2016: Ms. Mary Hartney and Mr. Jeff Titus, Dr. Norman Leppla, Dr. Amanda C. Hodges and Dr. Greg S. Hodges.

Once the DPM students return from Ecuador, we plan to host a donor reception with the students. The students and I are grateful that you are considering a donation to their professional development. Will you consider helping us reach our current goal of \$8000? Every donation makes a difference for a student!

I hope you enjoy reading DPM News, Volume 9, Fall 2016!

-Amanda Hodges, DPM Program Director

Faculty Highlight: Dr. Gillett-Kaufman

Dr. Jennifer Gillett-Kaufman (see above photo left) is an Associate Extension Scientist in the UF Entomology and Nematology Department and has been working at UF for the past 12 years. Her appointment is 70% Extension, 20% teaching, and 10% research.

....Continued on next page

"Trees are poems the earth writes upon the sky, We fell them down and turn them into paper, That we may record our emptiness."
-Kahlil Gibran

Continued from page 3...

Dr. Gillett-Kaufman coordinates many of the online outreach activities in the Entomology and Nematology department including the department newsletter, social media pages, and the Featured Creatures website. In addition, Dr. Gillett-Kaufman teaches an undergraduate course, a study abroad course in Italy, and two graduate courses:

- IPM 4254: Landscape IPM: Ornamentals and Turf
- ALS 4404: Insects in Italy: The Role of Entomology in Art, History, and our Future (co-taught with Dr. Phillip Kaufman)
- ENY 5405: Insect Vectors of Plant Pathogens
- ALS 6046: Grant Writing (co-taught with Dr. Jaret Daniels)

Dr. Gillett-Kaufman's current research is focused on insect pests of olive in Florida and developing IPM programs for olive production in Florida. You can check out one of her EDIS publications on olive pests here: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/in1046>. When asked what she enjoys most about her job, Dr. Gillett-Kaufman replied, "Learning new things and meeting new people. In my position I get to learn about and work on new and different topics all the time, it keeps things interesting."

Before serving in her current role as Associate Extension Scientist, Dr. Gillett-Kaufman worked at the USDA-ARS Center for Medical, Agricultural, and Veterinary Entomology (CMAVE) in Gainesville as an insect molecular biologist. She worked at the USDA-ARS CMAVE while she was pursuing her undergraduate and graduate degrees at UF. She received her B.S. in Agricultural Education and Communication in 1998, an M.S. in Plant Pathology in 2001, and a Ph.D. in Plant Pathology with a specialization in entomology in 2003. When asked what inspired her to pursue a career in IPM/ Entomology Dr. Gillett-Kaufman shared the following, "I was involved in FFA and 4-H in high school and I always had an interest in agriculture and science, but what got me interested in IPM was an experience in an FFA extemporaneous public speaking event. I happened to pull out of a hat the topic IPM and through preparing my speech for the contest I learned about IPM and became really interested."



Dr. Gillett-Kaufman is supportive of the DPM program and DPM students. She currently serves on the committees of three DPM students: Morgan Byron, Eleanor Phillips, and Rebecca Rabinowitz. Dr. Gillett-Kaufman stated that she appreciates the interdisciplinary nature of the DPM program curriculum and believes that it provides students with a more holistic view of problems in the field. She thinks this type of training prepares students well for future careers in agriculture and being able to solve problems.

Dr. Gillett-Kaufman was asked to share a few words of advice for our student readers. She encourages all to, "Take as many opportunities as you can to be better writers and public speakers. Strong communication skills are extremely important and are always something that can be improved." She also advises students to participate in international travel like the upcoming DPM Program trip to Ecuador.

"Visiting other countries, especially developing countries helps you understand why your science is important and how your science contributes to others around the world."



This section of *DPM News* is home to trivia, puns, or puzzles related to plant health topics. Turn to page 12 of this newsletter for the answer!

PLANT-AGRAMS

Can you solve these plant-based anagrams to solve the riddle below? *Hint: Quercus fucus*

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. K ABUELJC | 8. UHAMRDS |
| 2. FLUBF | 9. HSOUNERT EVIL |
| 3. MDONDAI EALF | 10. RSONEUTH ERD |
| 4. CPKAHININ | 11. E TYUKR |
| 5. UREALL | 12. EWTRA |
| 6. O EURCVP | 13. IHTEW |
| 7. S TOP | 14. LIWLOW |

Unscramble to **BOLD LETTERS** to reveal the common name of a Phytophthora disease which poses a threat to our Southeastern trees!

We would like to welcome our
new Fall 2016 students!

NEW STUDENT PROFILES

Eleanor Phillips



“The lotus grows in muddy waters but this flower does not show any trace of it; so we have to live in the world ”
-BKS Lyengar

Academic Credentials:

- B.S. in Environmental Studies – University of San Diego, San Diego, CA
- M.S. in Sustainable Food Systems- Lipscomb University, Nashville, TN
- Co-enrolled M.S. in Entomology and Nematology and DPM

Why DPM?

I am from Nashville, Tennessee, where I grew up going to my family farm. I plan to eventually get the farm up and running again. I went to undergrad at the University of San Diego, where I swam Division I and majored in Environmental Studies and Spanish. My undergraduate studies had an emphasis on Marine Biology because we were so close to the ocean, but in many of my classes we discuss the affects of agriculture on the environment, which led me to go on to come back to Nashville to get my Masters in Sustainable Food Systems from Lipscomb University. I was very drawn to the DPM program’s holistic study of plant health, which is crucial to being able to help farmers and other food service stakeholders in the face of climate change. Along with the DPM program, I will be pursuing a Masters in Entomology and Nematology in which I hope to learn more about ways in which we can use integrated pest management to control pests, invasive species, and disease in important commercial crops. I hope that the knowledge I gain from the DPM program will help me gain the credentials to work with government entities, such as extension programs, help farmers directly through crop consulting and one day teach at the university level.

Alex Gannon

Academic Credentials:

- B.S. in Biology – University of Florida, Gainesville, FL

Why DPM?

I was an undergraduate student at the University of Florida and earned my B.S in Biology in 2016. I’m currently enrolled in the Doctor of Plant Medicine program and I would like to pursue a dual M.S degree in Entomology.

While acquiring my B.S, I worked in the Soil and Water Science Department for two years dealing with salmonella and tomatoes. This research propelled me forward into a DPM career. Different lab techniques, research proposals, and hands on experience allowed me to search for more knowledge and critical thinking for my graduate years. After attending a CALS career fair and learning about the Plant Medicine program, I applied and acquired an assistantship under Dr. Norman Leppla.

The DPM program will continue to assist my understanding and yearning for experience, real life situations, and issues arising in the agricultural field. This is a growing field and needs individuals who will be willing to think out of the box. I’m ready to take on that challenge and obtain a career in agriculture.



“All our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them.”
- Walt Disney



Rebecca Rabinowitz

Academic Credentials:

- B.S. in Horticultural Sciences - University of Florida, Gainesville, FL

Why DPM?

First and foremost, I am a proud 5th generation Sarasota County, Florida resident. My ancestors came to Florida after the Civil War from south central Georgia by way of Indian trails. My family has been farmers, fishermen, cattle ranchers and carpenters. The blood of farming runs deep in my veins. This is why I chose to study horticultural science with a track in organic crop production. I graduated this year and was accepted into the DPM program. I believe the DPM program can give me a thorough knowledge base of the tools I need in order to create the community farm I plan on building upon graduation.

"It matters not how strait the gate, How charged with punishments the scroll, I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul "
-William Ernest Henley

PROGRAM NEWS & DEVELOPMENT

You can stay informed of the most recent events and important announcements regarding the DPM Program by checking out our Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/UFPlantDoctors/>

You can also tune into our IFAS blog available at:

<http://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/plantmedicine/>.



2016 Florida Tomato Conference



Special thanks to Reggie Brown and the Florida Tomato Committee for sponsoring several DPM students to attend the annual Florida Tomato Conference in early September in Naples, FL. Kayla Thomason, Ploy Kurdmongkoltham, Arjun Khadka, Benjamin Waldo, Craig Frey and Program Director, Amanda Hodges, attended the conference. DPM students attended a tomato food safety workshop and many other educational sessions while attending the conference. This was a great learning and networking opportunity for DPM students!

Pictured Above from left to right: Kayla Thomason, Ploy Kurdmongkoltham, Arjun Khadka, Reggie Brown, Amanda Hodges, Benjamin Waldo, Craig Frey

Carrot Production Tour



This fall DPM students had the opportunity to tour Colvin Farms in Citra, FL during carrot season. Colvin Farms is owned and operated by current DPM student Blaire Colvin. DPM students had the opportunity to learn about carrot production in Florida and even had a chance to use their knowledge and scout the fields! GPS technology, irrigation management, integrated pest management, and fertility related to carrot production were discussed. This was a fun trip and a great hands on learning opportunity for DPM students!

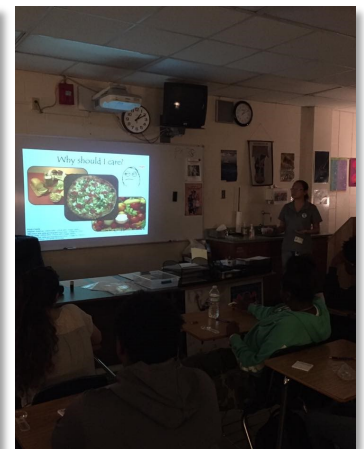
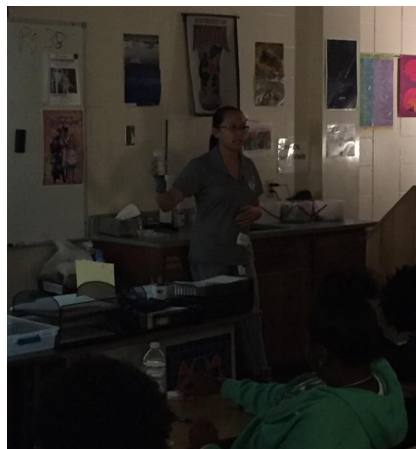
Ag in the Classroom



DPM students participated in the Marion County Ag Literacy Day organized by the Marion County Farm Bureau on Nov 29. DPM students read a book about Florida agriculture to students and taught elementary students about Florida Agriculture. DPM students even brought along a few insects which were a big hit with students!

Highschool Outreach Events

DPM Student Nicole Casuso organized several outreach events at high schools in Florida this semester. The goal of these events were to discuss and teach high school students about invasive species, plant biosecurity, and agriculture. Students were given a pre and post survey to test their knowledge after the presentation and activities. This was another new exciting event for DPM students!



Destination 2017



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 Politécnica del 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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Program Exhibits and Student Recruiting

- **September 6-11, 2016** - Thanks to Reggie Brown, a member of the DPM External Advisory Committee, and the Florida Tomato committee DPM students Kayla Thomason, Ploy Kurdmongkoltham, Arjun Khadka, Benjamin Waldo, and Craig Frey were able to attend the annual **Florida Tomato Conference** in Naples, FL. Program Director Amanda Hodges also attended. Students participated in a tomato food safety workshop and numerous other educational sessions while at the conference.
- **September 16, 2016** - DPM students Nicole Casuso and Matt Borden represented UF and the DPM program at the **Florida Nursery Growers and Landscape Association (FNGLA) Landscape Show** in Orlando, FL. This was a great event to get the word out about the DPM program and what it has to offer. This event has over 7000 attendees. To learn more visit: <http://www.fn gla.org/thelandscape show/>.
- **September 25-30, 2016** - The **International Congress of Entomology (ICE)** was held this year in Orlando, FL. The fact that this year's ICE was so close to UF was a very unique opportunity for students as ICE is a global conference and is held in locations around the world. Several DPM students and Program Director Amanda Hodges attended this conference. DPM students Cory Penca, Ariane McCorquodale, and Morgan Byron presented their research at this conference. In addition, the DPM program had a booth with information about the DPM program as well as an opportunity to sell our signature DPM fundraising items. To learn more about ICE visit: <http://ice2016orlando.org/about/>.
- **October 26-28, 2016** - Program Director Amanda Hodges and DPM students Kayla Thomason and Blaire Colvin attended the **75th Florida Farm Bureau annual meeting** held in Orlando, FL. This was a good networking opportunity for the DPM program. Florida Farm Bureau is recognized as "Florida's Voice for Agriculture." To learn more visit: <http://www.floridafarmbureau.org/>.
- **November 4, 2016** - Program Director Amanda Hodges and Elena Alyanaya, Academic Advisor, represented the DPM program at **Graduate School Information Day** held on campus. Both were able to speak to lots of potential students about the DPM program.
- **November 6-9, 2016** - Elena Alyanaya, Academic Advisor represented the DPM program at the **ASA (American Society of Agronomy), CSSA (Crop Science Society of America), and SSSA (Soil Science Society of America) International Annual Meeting** in Pheonix, AZ. Elena met with several potential applicants interested in the program during this meeting and arranged a campus visit for an interested student to visit the DPM program in Gainesville.
- **November 15, 2016** - Elena Alyanaya, Academic Advisor, and Program Director Amanda Hodges represented the DPM program at the **ABAC Career Connections Day** in Tifton, GA. This was an excellent opportunity to recruit students for the DPM program.
- **November 28, 2016** - DPM students Ploy Kurdmongkoltham, Blaire Colvin, and Ariane McCorquodale represented the DPM program at the **UF Plant Science Industry Night** held on campus. The Plant Science Industry Night allowed for plant science undergraduates to interact with representatives from industry and graduate programs. This was an excellent opportunity for student recruitment.



Pictured from left: Amanda Hodges, Kayla Thomason, Blaire Colvin at FFB Mtg



Pictured from left: Morgan Pinkerton, Amanda Hodges, Sage Thompson, Ariane McCorquodale, Cory Penca at ICE



Elena Alyanaya at Graduate School Information Day

Course Highlight: Insect Toxicology (ENY6651C)

This fall several DPM students had the opportunity to take Insect Toxicology (ENY 6651C) which is offered in the Fall semesters of even years. The course is offered live as well as in a distance format.

Insect Toxicology is taught by Dr. Jeffrey Bloomquist, a Professor in the Entomology and Nematology Department and at the Emerging Pathogens Institute (EPI) whose research focuses on new insecticides with new modes of action to control insect pests. Dr. Bloomquist's research primarily focuses on insects that vector diseases such as mosquitoes.

During the course students can expect to learn about topics such as: how insect physiological systems are affected by control agents, how to measure toxicity through bioassays and screening, insecticide modes of action, and insecticide resistance. By the end of the course students will be familiar with the basic topics of insect toxicology and be able to interpret and use the IRAC (Insecticide Resistance Action Committee) mode of action chart to manage insecticide resistance.

There is also a hands on lab component to the course where students have the opportunity to conduct a project of their choice related to an area of interest in insect toxicology. The research projects generally involve testing insecticidal compounds used to control insects. Students give an oral presentation on their research as well as a written report at the end of the course.

This is an excellent course to take if students are interested in careers in the chemical industry, insecticide resistance, or insecticide research. Entomology students, DPM students, and any students with an interest in insecticides are encouraged to take advantage of this course. Previous courses in organic chemistry and biochemistry are recommended but not required.

DPM student Kayla Thomason shared the following about her experience in the course, "I found insect toxicology to be an interesting and valuable addition to the DPM curriculum. The course covered relevant topics to students like me who want to pursue a career in industry. I especially enjoyed the lab project we got to do."



Pictured: Dr. Bloomquist in his lab

PLANT-AGRAMS ANSWER

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. BLUEJACK | 10. SOUTHERN RED |
| 2. BLUFF | 11. TURKEY |
| 3. DIAMOND LEAF | 12. WATER |
| 4. CHINKAPIN | 13. WHITE |
| 5. LAUREL | 14. WILLOW |
| 6. OVERCUP | |
| 7. POST | |
| 8. SHUMARD | |
| 9. SOUTHERN LIVE | |

SCRAMBLED BOLD LETTERS: KUDNAESDTDEAHO

RIDDLE ANSWER: SUDDEN OAK DEATH



Congratulatory Remarks for our Graduates

Congratulations to our Summer 2016 Graduates! We wish you the best!

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

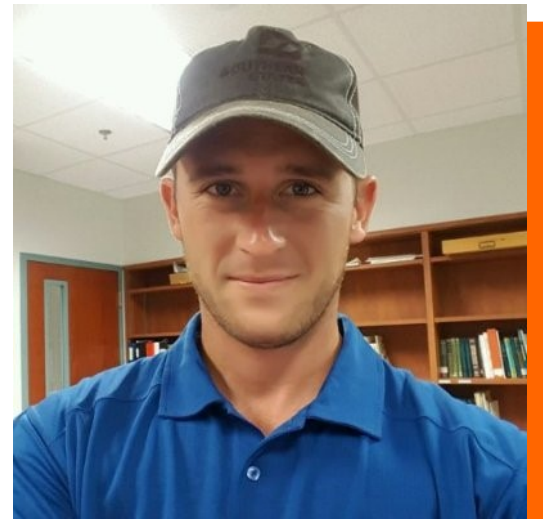
Dr. John Bonkowski

“I thoroughly enjoyed my time in the DPM program. I learned a staggering amount of information about crop protection and the identification of plant pests and am looking forward to employing that in my future employment. After graduation, I was hired at the UF Plant Diagnostic Center as a Post-Doctoral Associate where I have been diagnosing plant samples and working on developing and disseminating molecular methods for disease detection. Development and deployment of a ring-testing procedure will be employed for the validation and initial dissemination of new diagnostic protocols. I am also working on planned deviations for two USDA-APHIS-NPPLAP real-time PCR protocols: sudden oak death (SOD) and citrus greening (HLB). I have worked at the UF Plant Diagnostic Center since I started the DPM program and I have focused primarily on morphological and differential testing of bacterial and fungal organisms for disease diagnosis, but this post-doctoral position will improve my molecular skills and help become a well-rounded diagnostician.



Dr. Chris Ferguson

“My name is Chris Ferguson and I am from Franklin, KY. I received my BS in Agriculture and MS in Plant Science from Western Kentucky University and I am a summer 2016 graduate of the DPM program. I am currently employed as the agronomist for Black Gold Farms Live Oak, Florida location. We grow chipping potatoes primarily and the company is the largest producer of fresh chipping potatoes for Frito-Lay. My job is to evaluate and perform many aspects of growing potatoes from site selection and pesticide applications to sample digs and harvest. I feel that I was well prepared to step into a role such as this, thanks to the DPM program. The wide range of classes helped to make informed decisions on fertilizers, pesticides, scouting and pest identification as well as problem solving and thinking of alternate solutions to combat issues in the fields. The diversity of the program allowed me to tailor my classes to becoming a great scout while other DPM students tailored theirs to diagnose diseases, or work in agricultural research. In the future, I hope to expand my knowledge of potato planting and harvesting equipment and work into a managerial role.”



Student 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 an oral presentation entitled, "The emergence of *Meloidogyne haplanaria* in Florida, and the effect of initial population densities on tomato" at the Third International Congress of Biotechnology and Biodiversity in Guayaquil, Ecuador, October 10-13, 2016.

Lisbeth also received a \$500 student travel grant to attend the meeting from the Entomology and Nematology Student Organization. Congratulations Lisbeth!



Daniel Mancero

DPM/PhD –Horticulture student Daniel Mancero presented his research related to the genetic tolerance of fungal gummosis at the National Meeting of the American Society of Horticultural Sciences and the Southeastern Fruit Professional Workers Conference.

Matt Borden

DPM student Matt Borden published two Featured Creatures/EDIS articles this semester, one on Tuliptree Scale and one on Fourlined Plant Bug. You can check them out here:

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/IN/IN115000.pdf>,

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/IN/IN115100.pdf> . Congratulations Matt!



Kayla Thomason

DPM/MS - Agronomy student Kayla Thomason received the R. Eldred Carpenter, Jr. Memorial Scholarship from the Florida Fertilizer and Agrichemical Association Scholarship Fund for the 2016-2017 school year. Congratulations Kayla!

Blaire Colvin

DPM student Blaire Colvin also received the R. Eldred Carpenter, Jr. Memorial Scholarship from the Florida Fertilizer and Agrichemical Association Scholarship Fund for the 2016-2017 school year.

Blaire was appointed to the 2016-2018 Florida Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Leadership Group and the 2016-2018 Peanut Leadership Academy. Congratulations Blaire!



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

We would love to hear from you!

DPMSO News

Through the dedication of our Officers and fellow DPM students, this semester DPMSO held two new fundraisers. DPM students showcased our craftiness with both our fundraiser at the Brass Tap on November 18th and our Succulent Planter Sale on December 8th and 9th. These events were very successful due to our continued support by faculty, friends, and alumni.

Proceeds from these events will help support student travel to Ecuador for the Study Abroad Trip exploring tropical production in Latin America this upcoming May 2017.

For more information about the Ecuador Donation

Campaign check out the DPM Blog post at; <http://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/plantmedicine/2016/09/12/study-abroad-opportunity-dpm-students-ecuador/>

Also, don't forget about our on-going DPM t-shirt and water bottle Sale! A Fundraising Catalog of items can be found here: <http://dpm.ifas.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/DPMSOFundraising-Catalog.pdf>



Recycled glass bottles turned into succulent planters

Alumni Spotlight: Dr. Stacy Strickland



Q: Describe your academic background?

A: B.S. in biology and chemistry from Valdosta State University (GA). I grew up on a farm in Georgia. It was in my childhood that I learned animal husbandry. My work today includes, cow-calf management as well as crop production.

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

A: I'm currently the County Extension Director of Osceola County. I have been an Extension Agent since graduation also serving as the Extension Director of Hernando and Sumter Counties simultaneously. I would encourage DPM students to look at Extension as a potential career. I enjoy bringing the newest agricultural techniques and technologies to our producers in Florida. The training in the DPM program has proven extremely valuable to those producers. On a daily basis, I use the knowledge gained through the DPM program in plant pathology, entomology, and weed science. I currently supervise 35 individuals. You may think I didn't learn leadership in the DPM program, but there were always electives. As an elective, I had Extension Administration taught by Dr. Nick Place. Nick would later become the Dean of IFAS Extension.

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

A: My uncle was a County Agent in Georgia. As a young 4-H'er, I always admired the County Agent. This was an individual that was expected to be an agricultural know-it-all. They were highly regarded in the community as a source of information and a conduit to the Land-Grant University. After I graduated from UF, I was fortuitously selected as the Agriculture Agent in Hernando County. I would remain in Brooksville for 12 years.

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After five years, I was appointed as the County Extension Director. Later I became the Multi-County Extension Director for Hernando and Sumter Counties. I really enjoyed working with the producers of these Counties, and worked with wonderful County staffs and elected representatives to bring science to their policy decisions. I am extremely happy to be selected to be the Osceola County Extension Director. I look forward to establishing those same relationships with the County Government and strategic partners that I've been accustomed to in Brooksville and Bushnell.

Q: Why did you choose to enroll in the DPM program?

"My great concern is not whether you have failed, but whether you are content with your failure."

—A. Lincoln

A: The initial reason was definitely because of Dr. George Agrios. At least all of us in the first class knew the reputation that Dr. Agrios had within scientific community. After I started the program, I realized that George was the tip of the intellectual iceberg. I would be remised not to mention my committee chairman, Dr. Tom Kucharek, and how much I continue to learn from him today. That generation of teachers that I had were unrivalled in their knowledge and experience.

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

A: Being an Extension Agent is not a job, it is a lifestyle. When a farmer or rancher needs your help at night or on the weekends, that is part of the lifestyle. The life that I have today was completely influenced by that meeting with George Agrios in 2000.

Q: Do you have any advice or words of wisdom for current DPM students?

A: Learn about everything agricultural related that you can. Do not assume that you will be working with agronomic crops...take that tropical fruits course. If you choose a career in Extension, go to the in-service trainings (IST) to become a better Agent. Many ISTs are available to bring you up to speed very quickly if you take advantage of those.

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

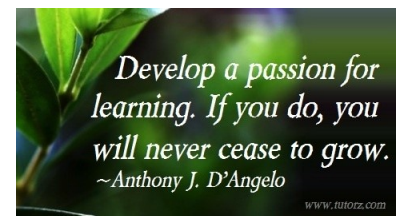
We often find students wondering if the DPM program is a good option for them. By answering this short quiz you can see if the shoe fits!

1. Do you seek knowledge in any 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 recommend that you explore your graduate career options with the UF DPM Program!

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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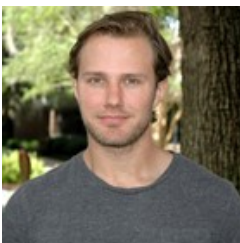
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