

DPM NEWS

Volume II, March 2014

Greetings!

<http://ufplantdoctors.org/>

Dear Students, Faculty, Alumni, and Friends:

The success of the DPM Program depends upon our outstanding students and faculty mentors. We are pleased to announce the new annual Faculty Highlight section of DPM News! We are also excited to share our welcome of new students, launch of a major curriculum revision, congratulations for our recent graduate, and latest events with you. Finally, we are proud to feature Dr. Raj Singh, Assistant Professor at Louisiana State University's Agriculture Center, in our Alumni Spotlight. Thank you for your support of the University of Florida, DPM Program!

- Amanda Hodges, DPM Program Director



Faculty Highlight:

Dr. Norman Leppla

When asked to reflect upon his personal involvement with the DPM Program, Dr. Leppla graciously agreed to provide our readers with insight about his professional background and role as an advisor for numerous students. He also shed light on a truly inspirational philosophy that illustrates his positive outlook on education and personal achievement.

“Steadily but almost imperceptibly, pest management has been transitioning to a new, exciting era that I can envision due to my 45 plus years in the field. Going fast are the days when someone could simply apply a series of broad-spectrum pesticides with minimal training and expect pest problems to miraculously disappear. Pest management has become too complex for that approach, requiring considerable education and technical training to be effective and sustainable...

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In Other News...

- Now accepting Graduate Assistantship Applications for Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 Admission! The deadline for full [application packets](#) has been extended to April 15, 2014. If you are interested, contact DPM Program Director Amanda Hodges (achodges@ufl.edu) today!
- Interested in learning more about DPM Faculty mentors, click here to link to Faculty Profiles! <http://dpm.ifas.ufl.edu/Faculty.html>
- Our current DPM students have updated their biographies, read more... http://www.dpm.ifas.ufl.edu/current_students.html
- We have recently updated our website information regarding the placement of DPM graduates. Visit the website for more details, http://www.dpm.ifas.ufl.edu/History_and_Mission.html.
- If you are a graduate of the DPM program and your employer is not listed, contact Program Assistant Elena Alyanaya (ealyanaya@ufl.edu).

NEW STUDENT PROFILES

The DPM Program would also like to welcome the following new Spring 2014 students!



Jamey Betts

Academic Credentials:

- B.S. in Science (General Studies) – Valdosta State University, Valdosta, GA
- M.S. in Plant Protection & Pest Management (MPPPM) – University of Georgia, Athens, GA

Why DPM?

To obtain a Doctorate degree in Agiculture has been a goal of mine for several years. After completing my MPPPM degree from UGA, I started looking at different Doctorate programs to determine which would best suit my future goals/plans. After speaking with Dr. Hodges concerning the DPM program, I knew this was what I wanted to do. The flexibility allowed by the DPM program to not only obtain the degree but to also continue my career with FMC was definitely the deciding factor on me choosing the University of Florida. Growing up in South Georgia and being around agriculture my whole life, it was an easy decision to base my educational goals around agriculture. With me being very interested in all the different facets of the DPM degree, this was an excellent opportunity for me to finally achieve a degree that will expand my knowledge in agriculture and give me the expertise to excel in my career.

"Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, today is a gift of God, which is why we call it the present."
– Bil Keane

Morgan Conn



Academic Credentials:

- B.S. in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation with a Specialization in Wildlife Ecology – University of Florida, Gainesville, FL
- Currently finishing my M.S. in Entomology while co-enrolled in DPM

Why DPM?

Although my bachelor's degree is in Wildlife Ecology, I have always been drawn more to ecosystem ecology, with a special interest in plant life. I began earning my master's degree in Entomology in the Summer 2013 and quickly grew to appreciate the fascinating relationships between insects, especially herbivorous insects, and their environment. This drew me to the DPM program, along with the practical knowledge and skills it offers. I especially like the interdisciplinary approach. There are so many elements involved in understanding ecological processes and I am looking forward to learning how to fit the pieces together. My overarching goal in life is to apply the knowledge I have gained to solving problems and helping others, all within the realm of plant medicine.

"Humanity is exalted not because we are so far above other living creatures, but because knowing them well elevates the very concept of life."
– E. O. Wilson

Bruce Stripling, Jr.



Academic Credentials:

- A.S. in Agriculture – Darton College, Albany, GA
- B.S. in Plant Protection & Pest Management – University of Georgia, Athens, GA
- M.S. in Plant Protection & Pest Management (MPPPM) – University of Georgia, Athens, GA

Why DPM?

I choose the DPM Program due to a need to further my education within the agricultural chemical industry. I spent five years as a County Extension Agent in Georgia before leaving for FMC in 2005. Since that time, I have been a Research Biologist at FMC's Sparks Research Station located in Sparks, Georgia. My master's degree has served me well as it covered the multi-disciplinary approach to pest systems and I have worked with insecticides, fungicides, herbicides and nematocides trials and assays at the station. The multi-disciplinary approach also helped with working with growers while I was in Extension but as you move up with-in industry there is a need to have a Doctorate. In industry, the landscape shifts and changes quickly so having a multi-disciplinary Doctorate is imperative to being adaptable and knowledgeable about all fields of pest control. In industry, Product Development Managers and Project Managers work on multi-disciplinary projects covering all aspects of pest control so this program will provide the foundation for my future growth in the chemical industry.

"An investment in knowledge pays the best interest."
– Benjamin Franklin

PROGRAM NEWS & DEVELOPMENT

For more details on each of the following stories and to stay informed of the most recent events and important announcements regarding the DPM program, be sure to check out our Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/UF-Doctor-of-Plant-Medicine-Program/179188882121511>



You can also tune into our IFAS blog, updated regularly by Dr. Amanda Hodges, available at: <http://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/plantmedicine/>.

Meetings

The DPM External Advisory Committee discussed program updates and various strategic planning efforts with DPM Director, Dr. Amanda Hodges, during a meeting on October 17, 2013. Key program areas of focus for the coming year include marketing and internships. Joe Hodges, Vice President of The Andersons, Inc., Plant Nutrient Group hosted the meeting at his office in Maitland, FL.



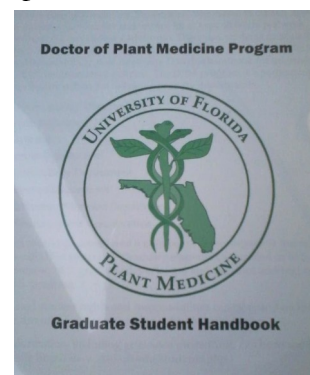
Above: Richard Gaskalla, Amanda Hodges, Mary Hartney, Madeline Mellinger, Joe Hodges, Ben Bolusky, and Lisa Lochridge (Lacey Mount, Gary Hein, and Martha Roberts also participated in the meeting via conference call.)

Revised Curriculum

During Fall Semester of 2013, the DPM Program received approval for a total credit hour reduction to 100 credits. The new curriculum includes increased flexibility in course enrollment for the core competency areas. A student's final program of study must be approved by his/her committee and the DPM Director. The student's committee and the DPM Director will consider the original curriculum and the written final exam guidelines in the program of study approval process. The program's multi-component internship requirement has been replaced with a requirement for two substantial 3-credit internships. At least one of the substantial internships must be in industry. The new DPM curriculum will officially begin during Fall Semester of 2014; however, students eligible for the curriculum may begin completion of his/her substantial internships during the Summer Semester of 2014.

More information on the DPM Program's Curriculum Change can be found at, http://dpm.ifas.ufl.edu/DPM_Curriculum.html

More on the DPM Program's Substantial Internship Requirement can be found at, [http://dpm.ifas.ufl.edu/Substantial%20 Internships.html](http://dpm.ifas.ufl.edu/Substantial%20Internships.html)



COURSES, FIELD TRIPS, & WORKSHOPS

The DPM Program takes pride in its ability to provide students with hands-on activities and field work opportunities. Several courses offered to DPM students require trips to various research education centers, private businesses, federal offices, and other locations. Faculty or adjunct faculty leaders are listed below each event.

- **November 22, 2013** - Greenhouse Ornamental Production
Dr. Lance Osborne of the Mid-Florida Research and Education Center, Apopka, FL.
- **November 15, 2013** - Citrus
Dr. Ron Brlansky of the Citrus Research and Education Center, Lake Alfred, FL
- **November 8, 2013** - Plant Pathogen Diagnosis,
Dr. Tim Schubert, FL Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Plant Industry, Gainesville, FL
- **October 24-25, 2013** - Tropical Production Tour
Dr. Aaron Palmateer of the Tropical Research and Education Center, Homestead, FL
- **October 4, 2013** - Regional Crops-Blueberries and Forage
Dr. J. Stacy Strickland, County Extension Director, UF/IFAS, Hernando and Sumter County
- **September 27, 2013** - Field Vegetable Crops
Dr. Hugh Smith of the Gulf Coast Research and Education Center, Wimauma, FL

Integrated Plant Medicine

Following completion of essential core courses, DPM students enroll in Integrated Plant Medicine (ALS 6925). Critical thinking and concept integration related to the core concepts of plant pathology, entomology, nematology, horticulture, agronomy, and soil science is an essential component of the course. Field trips to our Research and Education Centers and production regions provide additional hands-on learning opportunities for students.

Greenhouse Ornamental Production



Plant Pathogen Diagnosis



Regional Crops-Blueberries and Forage



Citrus Research



Tropical Production Tour



Field Vegetable Crops

Colloquium of Plant Pests of Regulatory Significance, *ALS 6921*



On Thursday, March 6, 2014, DPM alumni and Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Plant Industry employees Dr. Dyrana Russell and Dr. Leroy Whilby hosted a tour of the state of Florida Interdiction Station in Live Oak, Florida. The tour was officially a component of the DPM Seminar Class-Colloquium of Plant Pests of Regulatory Significance. UF Entomology and Nematology Department undergraduate major Kelly Dexter also joined the tour. Students had

the opportunity to assist Dr. Russell with an agricultural inspection (see photo at right).



Above Left: DPM students - Daniel Mancero, Chris Kerr, Morgan Conn, and Eric LeVeen; UF Ent. & Nem. Undergraduate, Biosecurity Specialization, Kelly Dexter; and DPM alumni - Dr. Dyrana Russell, Dr. Leroy Whilby

During Spring Semester 2014, DPM students Rebecca Barocco and Morgan Conn delivered presentations at an extension workshop for Master Gardeners in Hernando County, Florida. DPM alumnus Dr. Bill Lester hosted the workshop, and the event is part of the a USDA-APHIS-PPQ Farm Bill 10201 Project for a Collaborative and Enhanced First Detector Training for Florida project awarded to DPM Director Hodges. More information on the Florida segment of the project is available at: <http://flfirstdetector.com/> FDACS-DPI Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey Program (CAPS) State Coordinator and DPM Alumnus Dr. Leroy Whilby is a key project cooperator and co-coordinator.

Extension Workshops



In February of 2014, DPM student Carla Burkle delivered a presentation on the Bagrađa bug at the Everglades Research and Education Center (EREC) during a Collaborative and Enhanced First Detector Training for Florida. DPM student Carla Burkle also delivered numerous extension presentations during the launch of the project in 2013. Additionally, DPM alumni Bonnie Wells (*above*) and Annika Minott participated in the workshop series prior to graduating from the DPM program. DPM student Carla Burkle has co-authored or editing several of the scripted presentations and e-learning modules associated with the project. Other DPM students or alumni that have been involved in editing, e-learning development, or co-authorship of content include: Lanette Sobel, Keumchul Shin, and Annika Minott.



Above Speaker: Dr. Susan Halbert, FDACS-DPI, at the EREC First Detector Training

CONFERENCES

Nicole Casuso, 1st Year DPM Student

The mission of the University of Florida, Doctor of Plant Medicine program is “to provide premier professional doctoral training for plant scientists”. Considered to be one of the key components of the DPM program, our students and faculty aim to increase their involvement within the scientific community all the while keeping in mind the importance of networking and research. DPM has been well-represented at several conferences recently.

- Southeastern Branch of the Entomological Society of America Annual Meeting, Greenville, SC, March 2-4, 2014
- National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA, January 29 - February 1, 2014
- Entomological Society of America National Meeting, Austin, TX, November 9-14, 2013

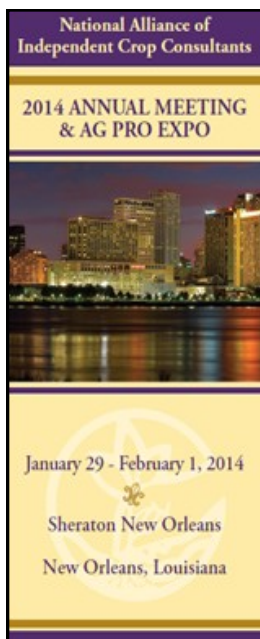


Above UF Linnean Games team from left to right: David Plotkin, John Zukowski, Lucas Carnohan, Garima Kakkar, Chris Holderman, and Dr. Amanda Hodges

ESA Southeastern Branch Meeting, Greenville, SC

The [University of Florida](#) now has five teams ranked first in the nation, and we can add one more Number One team: the University of Florida Linnean Team! UF's team is coached by Dr. Rebecca Baldwin and our own DPM Director Dr. Amanda Hodges. UF placed first at the Linnean Games at the Entomological Society of America Southeastern Branch meeting in Greenville, SC and are going to nationals in Portland, OR in November. Go Gators!

DPM students Carla Burkle and Nicole Casuso also attended the meeting and answered questions that students, university faculty, government and industry workers, and other entomologists had about the program.



National Alliance of Independent Crop Consultants, New Orleans, LA

Rebecca Barocco, third year DPM student, attended this year's NAICC meeting as a representative at the Doctor of Plant Health table. Due to industry and stakeholder needs related to multidisciplinary plant health training, the DPH program at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln is the second Plant Doctor practitioner-focused educational program formed in the U.S.



Entomological Society of America National Meeting, Austin, TX

DPM students Tamika Garrick and Nina Zagvazdina attended the meeting. The two, along with Director Hodges, represented the DPM program by maintaining a booth and providing information about the program's goals and achievements to conference attendees.

Faculty Highlight continued:

Dr. Norman Leppla

Below Dr. Leppla with DPM graduate Rafael Vega and DPM student Tatiana Sanchez



“...This new era in pest management also was recognized by Dr. George Agrios, so consequently he founded the University of Florida’s Plant Medicine Program to satisfy the critical need for professional plant health practitioners, “plant doctors.” My professional experience enabled me to quickly get involved by serving as an advisor and mentor for many of the Doctor of Plant Medicine (DPM) students. This experience included B.S. and M.S. degrees in zoology from Arizona State University, respectively in 1968 and 1970, and a Ph.D. degree in entomology with a minor in biological sciences from the University of Arizona in 1972. I served as a research entomologist with the USDA, Agricultural Research Service at Gainesville, Florida and Weslaco, Texas, Chief of Methods Development and Associate Director of the National Biological Control Institute, USDA, APHIS,

in Riverdale, Maryland; and Director of the UF, IFAS Research and Education Centers at Leesburg, Apopka and Sanford. I was honored to serve as president of the Florida Entomological Society and be recognized as Entomologist of the Year; be appointed chair of the Florida A&M University, Center for Biological Control Advisory Council and adjunct faculty member; and be elected Entomological Society of America, Southeastern Branch president and recipient of the Award for Excellence in integrated pest management (IPM). I am a Fellow of the Entomological Society of America. In 2001, I was given an opportunity to establish IPM Florida to provide statewide, interdisciplinary and inter-unit coordination and assistance in IPM to protect agriculture, communities and the environment. As Florida’s first comprehensive statewide IPM program, IPM Florida encourages collaboration in advancing IPM primarily through research and Cooperative Extension activities. However, as director I soon realized the importance of an educational component and the Plant Medicine Program was a perfect fit. A considerable amount of DPM education and training is in IPM, particularly under the outstanding leadership of Dr. Amanda Hodges, current director of the Plant Medicine Program.”

“See not only what is but also what could be. If you can’t do your best, then do the best you can.”

Dr. Leppla has been an important figure in the lives of many DPM students. He has served as the supervisory committee chair or co-chair of: Javier Garces, Dan Sonke, Esther Dunn, Denise Thomas, Joyce Merritt, Rafael Vega, Kirk Martin, Ken Johnson, Tatiana Sanchez, and Christopher Kerr. He has also served as a committee member for other DPM students: Rajya Pandey, John Porter, Brian Jackson, Leroy Whilby, Brian Jackson, Heidi Bowman, and Alicyn Ryan. To each student, Dr. Leppla imparts this philosophy:

Steven Covey’s “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.”

- 1: **Be Proactive** - Take initiative in life and assume responsibility for your choices and the consequences.
- 2: **Begin with the End in Mind** - Envision the ideal characteristics for each of your various roles and relationships.
- 3: **Put First Things First** - Have the judgment and discipline to focus on what is most important.
- 4: **Think Win-Win** - Genuinely strive for mutually beneficial solutions or agreements.
- 5: **Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood** - Use empathic listening to be genuinely influenced by a person.
- 6: **Synergize** - Combine the strengths of people through positive teamwork, so as to achieve goals no one person could have alone.
- 7: **Sharpen the Saw** - Balance and renew your resources, energy, and health to create a sustainable, long-term, effective lifestyle.

DPMSO: FUNDRAISING

The DPMSO Officers

This year we had our fourth annual Valentine's Day rose sale. It was a very successful event thanks to our dedicated students and supportive faculty and friends! The freedom red and bright pink long-stemmed roses were arranged into beautiful bouquets. These florist-grade flowers sold out fast! Over \$300 raised will help support students attend an educational field trip at the end of the semester. We will continue to improve this fundraiser in future years and aim to offer book awards and competitive travel grants for professional development.



Top (from left to right): DPMSO Officers
 Historian - Carla Burkle | President - Lisbeth Espinoza | Treasurer - Nicole Casuso | Vice President - Wael Elwakil
Left: DPM students at the Entomology building during our final sales



"Fundraisers are great interactive tools for the Doctor of Plant Medicine students for improving their communication skills, attending educational field trips, and expanding and updating their book library. In addition, students share different experiences and ideas that strengthen their knowledge."
 - Wael Elwakil, DPMSO Vice President



NEW T-SHIRTS!

The DPMSO Officers

Want to wear your very own DPM "swag"? Choose from the brand new ash grey t-shirts with a bold, green DPM logo or back by popular demand, the navy blue "Crop Scene Investigator" shirt. Stop by the front desk to visit Nancy Sanders and Elena Alyanaya and order one (or more) of these awesome t-shirts! Shirts are currently being sold for \$15 dollars. Cash and checks made payable to the Doctor of Plant Medicine Student Organization will be accepted. We anticipate these shirts to sell quick so be sure to swing by the front office or contact a DPMSO officer and claim yours today!

OTHER EVENTS

Nicole Casuso, 1st Year DPM Student



Florida State Fair, Tampa, FL, February 7, 2014

Top left: Director Hodges along with DPM students Eric LeVeen and Carla Burkle were invited by the Entomology and Nematology Dept. of UF to participate and answer general plant health questions on one day of the fair.



CALS Career Expo, J. Wayne Reitz

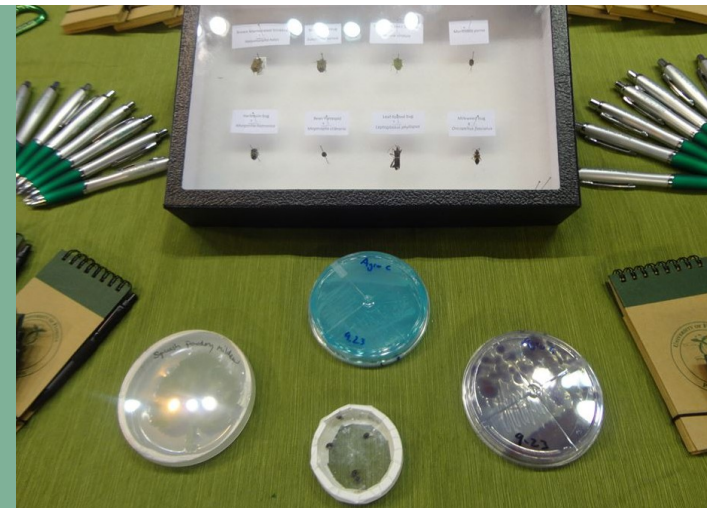
Union Grand Ballroom, February 5, 2014

DPM students interacted with both undergraduate and graduate students who showed strong interest in the program.

CALS TailGATOR, Stephen O'Connell Center,

October, 5, 2013

Bottom left: DPM students manned a booth at this tailgate-style event. In addition to the usual promotional materials for the program, the table displayed a box of pinned specimens of commonly found Florida stink bugs and some potentially invasive species, differential media used to diagnose Agrobacterium, a moist chamber holding a squash leaf infected with powdery mildew, live Madeira mealybugs and one of their predators, the mealybug destroyer lady beetle.



Congratulatory Remarks for our Graduate

Congratulations to our **Fall 2013** DPM Graduate Bonnie Wells!



We wish you the best of luck in your career as a plant doctor. We're proud of you!



Alumni Spotlight -



An interview with Dr. Raj Singh, by Nicole Casuso, 1st Year DPM Student



Q. Can you give us insight on your academic background?

A. I received a Bachelor's in Agricultural (Honors in Plant Protection) from Punjab Agricultural University, Punjab, India. The Punjab Agricultural University is Asia's leading Agricultural University and is responsible for bringing the 'Green Revolution' in India. I then moved to United Kingdom and obtained a Master's Degree in Crop Protection from University of Reading.

Q. What is your current profession?

A. I currently direct the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center's Plant Diagnostic Center. Everybody here calls me 'Plant Doctor'. I am an Assistant Professor of Plant Diagnostics and a State Plant Diagnostics Specialist. After being promoted to an Assistant Professor last year, I have become the first Tenure Track Assistant Professor in the United States with a Doctor of Plant Medicine degree.

Q. What previous involvement led to your present position?

A. I held an instructor position (2008-2013) and an extension associate position (2007-2008) with the LSU AgCenter. Prior to joining the LSU AgCenter, I held a Post-Doctoral Associate position (2005 -2007) in the Department of Entomology and

Nematology at the University of Florida. I became a Plant Doctor in 2004.

Q. So what made you choose DPM?

A. I never wanted to focus on just one area related to plant health such as Plant Pathology or Entomology. I always wanted to do something different, but was never sure. Then I came to know about the DPM program and without any hesitation I called Dr. Agrios and the next thing I know, I was accepted to the program. Truly the intensity and the inter-disciplinary nature of the program attracted me to become a Plant Doctor.

Q. How do you feel your DPM degree has influenced you?

A. I love my career and it is because of the DPM program that I have been able to achieve so much in such a short time. The newly advanced Plant Diagnostic Center was known as Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic. It is because of the DPM training and experience that I was able to convert the Clinic to the Plant Diagnostic Center and provide our clients a one-stop shopping for all their plant health problems. Every day, I work with something new and different. You never know what kind of plant sample will walk into the Center. I believe that DPM has provided me with the training and confidence to fulfill the mission of my program. **Go DPM!**

"You must be the change you wish to see in the world"
- Mahatma Gandhi

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

Nicole Casuso, 1st Year DPM Student

Want to know if the DPM program is the path you want to pursue? Ask yourself the following questions and see!

1. Are you passionate about the environment, agriculture, epidemiology, or insects?
2. Are you interested in hands-on experience, internships with local businesses or federal agencies, field work, and multidisciplinary studies?
3. Do you want to work in the field of academia, private industry, or government?
4. Do you like community outreach, networking, and attending scientific conferences?
5. Do you prefer application-based science?

If you answered **yes** to most of these questions, then we strongly encourage you to explore your options with the University of Florida DPM Program!

"THE SECRET OF CHANGE IS TO FOCUS ALL OF YOUR ENERGY, NOT ON FIGHTING THE OLD, BUT ON BUILDING THE NEW."

- SOCRATES

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