

The 14th I. E. Melhus Graduate Student Symposium 2014 Awardees

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Congratulations to **Anna O. Conrad**, **Ian M. Small**, **Matthew A. Tancos**, and **Sierra N. Wolfenbarger** on being selected as speakers for the 14th I. E. Melhus Graduate Student Symposium to take place during the APS-CPS Joint Meeting in Minneapolis, MN.

The 14th I. E. Melhus Symposium—New Contributions to Plant Disease Epidemiology and Plant Health—is sponsored by the APS Epidemiology Committee and the APS Foundation. Awardees will receive a \$1,250 travel award from funds provided by the I. E. Melhus Fund, as well as contributions from private industry sponsors, including Agdia, Inc., BASF Corporation, Monsanto, Syngenta, and Valent USA.

Graduate student speakers for the 14th I. E. Melhus Symposium were selected by an expert panel of judges who evaluated a five-page research summary written by each applicant and three letters of support. The APS Epidemiology Committee and the APS Foundation wish to extend a special thanks to **David Gent** (USDA ARS Forage Seed and Cereal Research Unit, Corvallis, OR), **William Turecheck** (USDA ARS, Horticultural Research Lab, Fort Pierce, FL), **Alissa Kris** (USDA ARS Horticultural Research Laboratory, Fort Pierce, FL), and **Sarah Pethybridge** (Plant and Food Research, Lincoln, New Zealand) for serving as judges for the symposium.

Conrad is currently working on a Ph.D. degree in plant pathology at The Ohio State University with **Pierluigi Bonello**. Conrad's presentation is entitled "New approaches to assess coast live oak resistance before infection by the invasive pathogen *Phytophthora ramorum*." Conrad's research focuses on understanding mechanisms of oak resistance to this invasive pathogen.

Small is working on a Ph.D. degree at Cornell University under the guidance of **William E. Fry**. Small's presentation is entitled "Forecasting infection risk—A tool for late blight management." Small's research utilizes a systems approach involving several disciplines, including plant pathology, plant breeding, statistics, and applied economics.

Tancos is a Ph.D. candidate at Cornell University, working with **Christine Smart** in the Department of Plant Pathology and Plant-Microbe Interactions. His research is entitled "Modes of seed infection by *Clavibacter michiganensis* subsp. *michiganensis* and its population diversity in New York." His research is primarily focused on the biology of *Clavibacter michiganensis* subsp. *michiganensis* and its interactions with tomato.



Anna O. Conrad



Ian M. Small



Matthew A. Tancos



Sierra N. Wolfenbarger

Wolfenbarger is currently working on an M.Sc. degree in the Department Botany and Plant Pathology at Oregon State University under the direction of **David Gent**. Wolfenbarger's Melhus presentation is entitled "Staying one step ahead of a pathogen: Hop powdery mildew in the Pacific Northwest." Her research focuses on the characterization and distribution of mating types of the pathogen that causes powdery mildew of hops. Other research interests include the population biology and integrated management of both powdery mildew and downy mildew on hops.

Honorable Mention Awards

Robin Choudhury, **David Cruz-Jimenez**, and **Abraham Fulmer** will receive Honorable Mention Awards during the symposium. Choudhury received an honorable mention for her research on the "Epidemiology and control of spinach downy mildew in California." Choudhury's graduate research program was supervised by **Neil McRoberts** at the University of California-Davis. Cruz-Jimenez received an honorable mention for his research

on "Biology of *Fusarium oxysporum* of soybean and its interaction with biotic and abiotic factors in Iowa." His research was conducted under the direction of **Leonor Leandro** and **Gary Munkvold**, Iowa State University. Fulmer received an honorable mention for his research on "A tale of two leaf spots: Comparing the prediction and management of early and late leaf spot of peanut via peanut Rx." Fulmer's graduate research was conducted under the direction of **Robert Kemmerait** at the University of Georgia.

The Irving E. Melhus Graduate Student Symposium Fund was established in Melhus' honor with the goal of enhancing graduate student professionalism, as well as to memorialize this influential plant disease epidemiologist. Melhus was elected into the first class of APS Fellows in 1965 and served as APS President in 1926. APS gratefully acknowledges financial support for the 14th I. E. Melhus Graduate Student Symposium from Agdia Inc.; BASF Corp.; Monsanto Company, Syngenta Corp., Valent USA, and the APS Foundation. ■