Weed Science Society of America Honors Outstanding Student Weed Scientists

The Weed Science Society of America (WSSA) recognized graduate and undergraduate students for outstanding research-related presentations and proposals.

WESTMINSTER, Colo. (PRWEB) May 13, 2019 -- Today the Weed Science Society of America (WSSA) announced it has recognized nearly four dozen graduate and undergraduate students from 27 universities for outstanding research-related presentations and proposals.

“It’s so exciting to see the work of a new generation of weed scientists,” says Pratap Devkota of the University of California, chair of the WSSA awards committee. “We can’t wait to see what they accomplish as their careers unfold.”

Winners in both the graduate and undergraduate categories are listed below.

Graduate Student Awards

During its recent 2019 annual meeting, WSSA evaluated 136 posters and oral presentations by graduate students – recognizing groups of winners at both the Master’s and Ph.D. levels. Those honored include:

Auburn University
- Frances Browne, first place, Ph.D. oral presentation

Colorado State University
- Olivia Todd, first place, Ph.D. oral presentation
- Mirella Ortiz, third place, Ph.D. oral presentation
- Hudson Takano, third place, Ph.D. oral presentation

Louisiana State University
- Samer Rustom, first place, Ph.D. oral presentation
- David Walker, third place, Ph.D. oral presentation

Montana State University
- Ramawatar Yadav, first place, Ph.D. poster presentation

Mississippi State University
- Lucas Franca, first place, Ph.D. poster presentation
- Savana Davis, third place, Master’s poster presentation

North Carolina State University
- Joseph Hunter, first place, Master’s poster presentation
- Eric Jones, second place, Ph.D. poster presentation
- Denis Mahoney, second place, Ph.D. oral presentation

Pennsylvania State University

- Haleigh Summers, first place, Master’s oral presentation
- Jess Bunchek, third place, Master’s oral presentation

Purdue University

- Nicholas Steppig, third place, Ph.D. poster presentation

Southern Illinois University

- Casey Bryan, first place, Master’s oral presentation

Texas A&M University

- Seth Abugho, second place, Ph.D. oral presentation
- Bishwa Sapkota, second place, Ph.D. poster presentation
- Cynthia Sias, third place, Master’s oral presentation

Texas Tech University

- Grace Ogden, second place, Master’s poster presentation
- Kyle Russell, second place, Master’s oral presentation

The Ohio State University

- Zachary Beres, second place, Ph.D. oral presentation
- Andrew Osburn, third place, Master’s poster presentation

University of Arkansas

- Zachary Lancaster, second place, Ph.D. oral presentation

University of California, Davis

- Katie Driver, third place, Ph.D. poster presentation

University of Florida

- Mackenzie Bell, second place, Master’s oral presentation

University of Georgia
- Kayla Eason, first place, Master’s poster presentation
- Nick Hurdle, second place, Master’s poster presentation
- Taylor Randell, second place, Master’s oral presentation
- Lavesta Hand, third place, Ph.D. oral presentation

University of Idaho
- Damilola Raiyemo, third place, Master’s poster presentation

University of Illinois
- Kathryn Lillie, third place, Master’s oral presentation

University of Missouri
- Eric Oseland, first place, Master’s oral presentation
- William Tubbs, second place, Master’s poster presentation

University of Nebraska
- Adam Striegel, first place, Master’s poster presentation

University of Wyoming
- Elizabeth G. Mosqueda, first place, Ph.D. oral presentation


Undergraduate Research Grants

Ten students were chosen to receive John Jachetta Undergraduate Research Awards that will fund their proposed research projects. Winners and their faculty sponsors are below:

Cornell University
- Aleah Butler-Jones will study the impact of deer browsing on the seed bank of abandoned agricultural fields. Sponsor: Antonio DiTommaso, Ph.D.

Mississippi State University
- Auriana Tucker plans to investigate the root system architecture and genes associated with allelopathy in weedy rice. Sponsor: Te-Ming Paul Tseng, Ph.D.

Missouri State University
- Darian Decker will study the mechanisms involved in cover crop suppression of two summer annual weed species. Sponsor: Sarah Lancaster, Ph.D.

Penn State University

- Jared Adam will explore horseweed management through integrated herbicide and cover cropping tactics. Sponsors: Barbara Baraibar, Ph.D., and John Wallace, Ph.D.

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

- Danielle McCormick will investigate the comparative resistance of three gene mutations to PPO-inhibiting herbicides. Sponsor: Patrick J. Tranel, Ph.D.
- Emily Eul will concentrate on fine mapping the gene responsible for 2,4-D resistance in waterhemp. Sponsor: Patrick J. Tranel, Ph.D.

University of New Hampshire

- Benjamin Fehr will explore whether pesticide seed treatments influence emergence periodicity of annual weed species. Sponsor: Richard G. Smith, Ph.D.

Virginia Tech

- Korinne Wills will focus on identifying and testing specific parasitic plant-inducible gene promoters. Sponsor: James H. Westwood, Ph.D.
- May Stevens will focus on identifying and testing the effect of killer mobile mRNA in parasitic plants. Sponsor: James H. Westwood, Ph.D.
- Shannen Kelly will survey the photosynthetic capacity of Johnsongrass. Sponsor: Jacob Barney, Ph.D.

About the Weed Science Society of America

The Weed Science Society of America, a nonprofit scientific society, was founded in 1956 to encourage and promote the development of knowledge concerning weeds and their impact on the environment. The Society promotes research, education and extension outreach activities related to weeds, provides science-based information to the public and policy makers, fosters awareness of weeds and their impact on managed and natural ecosystems, and promotes cooperation among weed science organizations across the nation and around the world. For more information, visit www.wssa.net.
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