

## AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH DIVISION GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENTS FOR 2012 - 2013

The Al Moseman International Studies Fund was established through a trust to support students with the potential to contribute to international development of future agricultural development programs requiring leadership in identifying and creating initiatives to achieve cooperation among multi-disciplinary teams. This award is designated for graduate students in the Agronomy Graduate Program with interests in international agriculture and world food development, with preference given to students who are working in plant breeding or genetics. The award recipient receives a \$2,500 stipend to their assistantship.

This year's recipient is **Mon-Ray Shao** from the Agronomy and Horticulture Department who will continue his PhD thesis on breeding for epigenetic improvement in sorghum to improve yield and growth patterns. He is a former Chancellor's Fellowship recipient and National Merit Scholars semi-finalist. His advisor is Sally Mackenzie.

The Hardin Trust Distinguished Graduate Fellowship was made possible by an endowment established at the University of Nebraska Foundation by former University of Nebraska Chancellor Clifford Hardin to support outstanding graduate students doing research in plant physiology. Each student will receive a \$3,000 supplement to their graduate assistantship and their respective departments will receive \$2,000 of operational support for each of their students' research programs.

This year's recipients are **Malachy Campbell** in the Agronomy and Horticulture Department and **Jessie Fernandez**, in the Plant Pathology Department. **Malachy Campbell** is working on his Masters focusing on genetics and physiology of root responses during water and nitrogen limitation in wheat. **Malachy** is advised by Harkamal Walia and Greg Kruger and is a former recipient of the Widaman Fellowship. **Jessie Fernandez** is working towards her PhD where her research focuses on the signaling pathway of rice blast fungus considered one of the most serious threats to global rice. She is advised by Richard Wilson and is a former Moseman, Shear-Miles, Mohr and Widaman Fellowship recipient.

The J. M. Fellowship was established through a trust in the University of Nebraska Foundation to recognize exceptional graduate students engaged in research in areas relating to foods, biomass, biomaterials, bioenergy and biomedical research. These funds are to be used to supplement existing assistantships with awards of \$500. This year's recipient is Chandirasegaran (Chandy) Masilamany working on his PhD in the School of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences. He is a former Widaman, Mohr and Shear-Miles recipient, is dedicated to a biomedical research career delineating the contribution of environmental factors in the mediation of autoimmune diseases in humans. and is advised by Jay Reddy.

The Shear-Miles Agricultural Scholarship and Fellowship was established at the University of Nebraska Foundation with a gift from the estate of Dorothy S. Miles to memorialize both her father and father-in-law, Cornelius Lott Shear and George Miles, who both graduated from the College of Agriculture at the University of Nebraska. This fund provides scholarships and fellowships to benefit the Agricultural Research Division and the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. The fellowship provides a \$2,000 stipend added to each student's assistantship for the year. This year's recipients are:

1. Maria Arellano working towards her Masters of Science degree in water resources planning in agricultural engineering with Suat Irmak in the Department of Biological Systems Engineering;
2. Christina Bavoujian working towards her PhD focusing on vineyard sustainability while reducing emphasis on chemical applications with Paul Read in the Agronomy and Horticulture Department;
3. Arunakuma Gangaplara working towards his PhD in integrative biomedical science with a focus on immunology with Jay Reddy in the School of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences. He is a former recipient of the Mohr Fellowship;
4. Jeremy Howard working towards his Masters of Science on animal breeding genetics with Matthew Spangler in the Animal Sciences Department;
5. Tadele Tadesse Kumssa working on his PhD in plant breeding and genetics specializing in cereal crops with Stephen Baenziger in the Agronomy and Horticulture Department. He is a former recipient of both the Widaman and Hardin Fellowships; and
6. Kentaro Miwa working towards his PhD on the pest potential of a specific species of beetle with Lance Meinke in the Entomology Department and formerly received the Mohr Fellowship.

The John and Louise Skala Fellowship was established in 1990 to commemorate the life of the donor's parents, John and Louise Skala. This fellowship is granted annually to full-time graduate students in the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources engaged in research for new industrial uses of agricultural products. The fellowship provides a \$3,000 stipend to masters' students and a \$5,000 stipend to doctoral students. This year's recipients are:

1. Shaobo Cai working towards a Masters in Human Sciences in the Textiles, Merchandising and Design Department on developing a novel method of producing 3D electrospun scaffolds using plant proteins for biomedical industrial applications. His advisor is Yiqi Yang.
2. Konda Anji Reddy working towards a PhD in the Department of Biochemistry on engineering the seed oil of camelina

- for new industrial uses. Reddy is a past recipient of the Skala fellowship and is advised by Ed Cahoon.
3. Helan Xu working towards a PhD in the Textiles, Merchandising and Fashion Design Department on fabricating regenerated protein fibers using agricultural byproducts and exploring their applications in various fields including textiles, medical applications and composites. She has successfully developed regenerated protein fibers from chicken feathers, the major waste product of the poultry industry. Xu is a past recipient of the Skala fellowship and is advised by Yiqi Yang.
  4. Yi Zhao working towards her PhD in the Textiles, Merchandising and Fashion Design Department focusing on the development of a plant protein film from camalina to use in high value medical applications. She is advised by Yiqi Yang.

**The Widaman Trust Distinguished Graduate Assistant Award** was established in 1975 through a generous gift provided to the University of Nebraska Foundation by Ms. Blanch Widaman. Ms. Widaman asked that the income from the trust be used by UNL for basic research in agriculture and that the funds support people rather than purchase supplies and/or equipment. She suggested that the money be used for scholarships or fellowships for graduate students conducting basic research in agriculture. The fellowship provides a \$2,000 stipend added to each student's assistantship for the year. This year's recipients are:

1. Scott Baier, a PhD student with Nutrition and Health Sciences studying a bioreactive food compound highly touted for cancer protection. His advisor is Janos Zempleni.
2. Anshuman Das, a PhD student with the School of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences working on identifying unique host genes affecting viral replication. His advisor is Asit Pattnaik.
3. Scott Dworak, a PhD student with the Agronomy and Horticulture Department working on the identification of drought-resistant turf grasses and management practices using reduced irrigation. His advisor is Roch Gaussoin and is a former recipient of the Mohr Fellowship.
4. Dante Placido, a PhD student with the Agronomy and Horticulture Department working in the area of basic understanding of drought stress of agricultural crop plants. He is a former recipient of the Hardin Fellowship and is advised by Harkamal Walia.
5. Christopher Proctor, a PhD student with the Agronomy and Horticulture Department, focusing on common purslane as a weedy species in turfgrass, determining effective herbicide controls for purslane in turfgrass systems and evaluating the vegetative reproductive potential of purslane. He is a former recipient of both the Mohr and Hardin Fellowships and his advisor is Zac Reichter.
6. Kevin Sargent, a PhD student with the Animal Sciences Department who is working on the characterization of resistance to Bt toxins in the Fall Armyworm, a major pest of many crops in both North and South America. His advisor is Andrea Cupp.
7. Frederico Trindade, a PhD student with the Agricultural Economics Department who is working with agricultural productivity analysis in various international regions. He is a former recipient of the Curtis Fellowship and his advisor is Lilyan Fulginiti.

The Agricultural Research Division congratulates all of these students for their outstanding scholastic achievements.