

PLANT & MICROBIAL BIOLOGY



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Research. Academics. Discoveries.

In This Issue ...

Michi Taga Granted Tenure

Rocio Sanchez Receives Award

Sydney Glassman -- the Forest Reborn

Chelsea Specht Podcast

William Laetsch Named to AAAS

Python Bootcamp

Help for Students During Holidays

Immunology Symposium

Genomics of Energy & Environment Meeting

Quick Links

[Undergraduate Program](#)

[Graduate Program](#)

[Give to PMB](#)

[Our Faculty](#)

[College of Natural Resources](#)

[PMB on Facebook](#)

[PMB on Twitter](#)

Michi Taga Granted Tenure

Michi Taga has been promoted to associate professor, with tenure.

"Please join us in congratulating Michi on reaching this milestone," said Kris Niyogi, chair of the department, in an announcement December 7, 2015.

Taga researches nutritional interactions in microbial communities by investigating how bacteria share vitamin B12 and B12-like compounds.

Taga was awarded a National Institutes of Health Director's New Innovator Award in October of 2014.

To find out more please visit:

tagalab.berkeley.edu

pmb.berkeley.edu/news/michi-tag-granted-innovator-award-biomedical-research



Michi Taga maintains a busy lab in Koshland Hall

newscenter.berkeley.edu/2014/10/06/berkeley-faculty-receive-nih-innovator-award/

Rocio Sanchez Recognized for Outstanding Work

Rocío Sanchez, graduate academic and student advisor for the Department of Plant & Microbial Biology, has received an award for "excellence in advising" after being nominated by graduate students in the department.

Graduate Student Christopher Hann-Soden said he is part of the group that nominated Rocío for the award because, "she is engaged with the department, is highly knowledgeable, has a compassionate ear and is devoted to us students."



Rocio Sanchez

Full article: pmb.berkeley.edu/news/rocio-sanchez-recognized-outstanding-work

Fungal Spore Bank Regenerates Forests

An extensive study by UC Berkeley graduate student Sydney Glassman has found that a rich, fungal spore bank under the devastating Rim Fire remained intact and sparked the rebirth of new plants,



The forest reborn -- two years after Rim Fire

trees and seedlings.

Spore bank fungi are adapted to disturbances to serve as partners for regenerating trees; there were even some fire-adapted fungi that increased in abundance following the blaze.

Glassman and her colleagues in Tom Bruns' lab in the Department of Plant & Microbial Biology had already been researching and observing long-term

plant and fungal diversity in the area, and the symbiotic interplay between mycorrhizal fungi and trees. When the Rim Fire came along and destroyed their long-term study plots, Glassman took that opportunity to check the viability of the fungal spore bank just underneath the fire, and test the potential for rebirth.

Full article: pmb.berkeley.edu/news/fungal-spore-bank-regenerates-forests

Chelsea Specht: People Behind the Science



Chelsea Specht

Associate Professor Chelsea Specht recently completed a wide-ranging interview with the popular podcast series "People Behind the Science."

In the October 2015 podcast, she talks about the development of her research interests and how she followed the path that ultimately led to the work she is doing today.

In addition to being Associate Professor and Organismal Biologist in the Department of Plant and Microbial Biology, Specht is also Associate Professor in

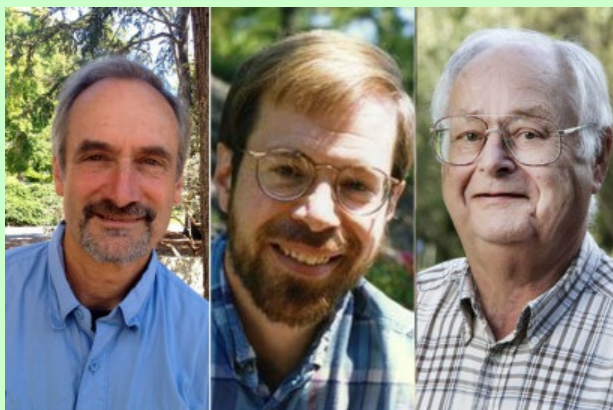
Integrative Biology at UC Berkeley and Curator of Monocots at the University and Jepson Herbaria.

[Link to podcast and full article](#)

William Laetsch Named to Prestigious Group

Three UC Berkeley faculty members, including PMB Emeritus Professor William Laetsch, are among 347 new fellows named to the American Association for the Advancement of

Science (AAAS) on November 23, 2015. Election as a AAAS Fellow is an honor bestowed upon AAAS members by their peers in recognition of their achievements in advancing science or its applications.



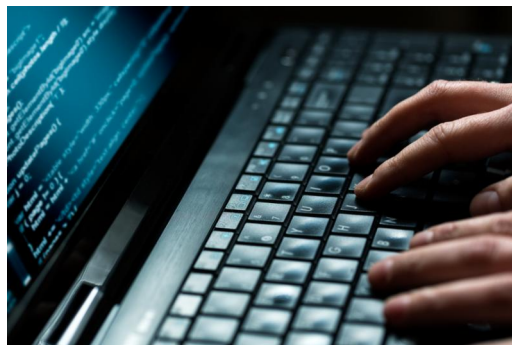
*Left to right: Steven Beissinger, James Demmel,
William Laetsch*

Full article: pmb.berkeley.edu/news/william-laetsch-named-prestigious-group

2016 Winter Python Bootcamp

A five-day condensed winter "Introduction to Programming for Bioinformatics" bootcamp will take place January 11th - 15th, 2016.

The course covers essential Python programming with particular focus on bioinformatics problems and applications. Each 8-hour day includes two-hour lectures and approximately six hours of programming exercises guided by the instructors. The course assumes no programming experience, and there are no prerequisites. Students must furnish their own laptops.



Space in the class is limited and attendees must commit to 9 am-5 pm for the entire week; 45 spots are available. Registration is first-come, first-served, with a \$100 registration fee for UC graduate students and postdocs and \$300 for UC visiting scholars and affiliates.

Registration: regonline.com/builder/site/?eventid=1787793

New Building Next to Energy Biosciences Institute

A new building to house the School of Education, Department of Psychology and School of

Public Health will be going up soon at the Berkeley Way parking lot located next to the Energy Biosciences Building.

The parking lot is scheduled to close on Sunday, December 20. The new building will be called Berkeley Way West.

[More about the new academic building Berkeley Way West](#)

UC Berkeley Food Pantry

If you are looking for an outlet for holiday giving and want to support our students at the same time, the UC Berkeley Food Pantry provides an emergency relief food supply for all UC Berkeley undergraduate and graduate students.



UC Berkeley Food Pantry at Stiles Hall

Located in Stiles Hall (2400 Bancroft Way), the Food Pantry carries nonperishable items, including cereal, canned fruits and other packaged foods, and operates five days a week. Any UC Berkeley student - undergraduate or graduate - lacking the financial means of obtaining food can stop by with his or her student ID card during its open hours.

Food pantry website: pantry.berkeley.edu

Article about food pantry: dailycal.org/2014/04/23/uc-berkeley-food-pantry-seeks-alleviate-food-insecurity-campus/

8th Annual Immunology Symposium

Henry Wheeler



The Center for Emerging and Neglected Diseases is joining with UC Berkeley's Cancer Research Laboratory to bring you leading figures in immunology and vaccinology who are at the forefront of developing immune based science to tackle the twin scourges of cancer

and infectious diseases, and to bring on a revolution in science and medicine.

Invited speakers include:

- Rafi Ahmed, Emory University
- James P. Allison, MD Anderson Cancer Center
- Nina Bhardwaj, Icahn School of Medicine
- Ira Mellman, Genentech
- Louis J. Picker, Oregon Health and Sciences University

Time: March 25, 2016, 9-5 pm

Location: 245 Li Ka Shing Building, UC Berkeley

To view the event webpage and RSVP: [More Information](#)

Genomics of Energy & Environment Meeting

More than 450 researchers from throughout the world will come together at the Department of Energy's Joint Genome Institute (JGI) 11th Annual Genomics of Energy & Environment Meeting March 22-24, 2016.

Presentation topics include

- Microbial genomics, fungal genomics, metagenomics, and plant genomics
- Genome editing, secondary metabolites, pathway engineering
- Synthetic biology, high-throughput functional genomics, and high-performance computing applications.

Additional short talks will be selected from poster abstracts. Abstracts are due March 7, 2016. Workshops precede the main meeting on Fungal Genomics, NERSC: Reproducible Bioinformatics Pipelines, Synthetic Biology, Genomic Technologies, Sample QC, and KBase.

See the program and RSVP: [Reg Online](#)

Important Dates | Upcoming Events

Fall 2015

12/11 - College of Natural Resources Holiday Party, 3-5 pm, Giannini Hall Atrium

PMB Holiday Party-open to department faculty, students and staff, 4-7 pm, Alumni House.

12/14 to 12/18/15 - Finals Week

12/24/15 to 1/1/16 - Winter Holiday, University Offices Closed



Spring 2016

111 Koshland Hall | Berkeley, California 94720 | 510.642.9999

1/19 - Instruction Begins pmb.berkeley.edu | pmbinfo@berkeley.edu

3/21 to 3/25 The PMB newsletter is produced by the Department of Plant & Microbial Biology, UC Berkeley.

5/15 - College of Natural Resources Commencement
Professor Kris Niyogi, Chair
Professor Pat Zambryski, Associate Chair

Dana Jantz, Chief Operating Officer
Karyn Houston, Communications / Webmaster / Newsletter Editor
Rocio Sanchez, Graduate Program
Jennifer Halpert and Ricky Vides, Undergraduate Majors Advisors