

PLANT & MICROBIAL BIOLOGY



Issue No. 45

May 5, 2016

Research. Academics. Discoveries.

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Kris Niyogi Elected to the National Academy of Sciences

Kris Niyogi, professor and chair of Plant & Microbial Biology, has been elected to the National Academy of Sciences, one of the highest honors a scientist can achieve.

Niyogi studies photosynthetic energy conversion and its

regulation in algae and plants. He has one of the largest labs in the department, and is also a Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator. Niyogi also was recently elected to the American Society of Plant Biologists.

Niyogi's long-term research goals include understanding how photosynthetic energy conversion works, how it is regulated and how it might be improved to help meet the world's needs for food and fuel.

Full article: pmb.berkeley.edu/news/kris-niyogi-elected-national-academy-sciences



Kris Niyogi

Department Citation to Outstanding Students



Manraj Sekhon (Mei Mei photo)

Manraj Sekhon, a microbial biology undergraduate student, enjoys working in a research lab because it enables him to explore science in a way that "reinforces and enriches the concepts learned in the classroom."

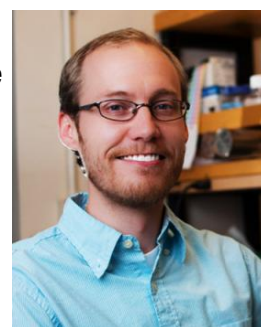
Along with Noah Gardner, Sekhon was awarded the Plant & Microbial Biology Citation in recognition of outstanding academic work at UC Berkeley. Each student will receive \$500.

Every year, PMB awards the major citation to the top graduating undergraduate student in the Genetics and Plant Biology major, and the top student in the Microbial Biology major. The recipients are selected by the faculty for academic excellence and contributions to UC Berkeley and the community.

Full PMB article: pmb.berkeley.edu/news/department-citation-outstanding-students

Matt Traxler - 2016 Searle Scholar

Matt Traxler, assistant professor in the Department of Plant and Microbial Biology, has been named a 2016 Searle Scholar. The Searle Scholars Program supports the independent research of exceptional young faculty in the biomedical sciences and chemistry.



Traxler will receive \$300,000 in flexible funding over the next three years to fund his research investigating the role of specialized metabolites in mediating bacterial interactions. Specialized metabolites include antibiotics, antifungals, and anti-cancer agents. The Traxler lab aims to use knowledge about how these metabolites function in natural settings for leveraging the discovery of novel, potentially useful microbial compounds.

Read more:

<http://plantandmicrobiology.berkeley.edu/news/matt-traxler-2016-searle-scholar>

The Secret Language of Microbes

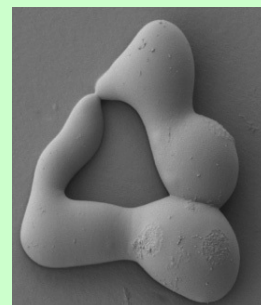
By Robert Sanders, UC Berkeley

Fungi communicate by chemical signals only, but they, like humans, appear to use different dialects.

This discovery came from a UC Berkeley study by PMB Professor N. Louise Glass of the filamentous fungus *Neurospora crassa*, a red bread mold that has been studied in the laboratory for nearly 100 years.

Many fungi, including *N. crassa*, grow as filaments or hyphae that often fuse to form an interconnected network. Hyphal networks have been shown to be important to many fungi, including the mycorrhizal fungi that form associations with plant roots, sharing nutrients.

Full article: pmb.berkeley.edu/news/secret-language-microbes



Fusion of two fungus germlings. (N. Louise Glass photo)

N. Louise Glass Receives Award

UC Berkeley was well represented at the 44th Symposium for Research Award Winners of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation held in Bamberg, Germany between March 17th-20th, 2016.

Awardees included UC Berkeley Professors Jeffrey A. Reimer, Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering; Ulrike M. Malmendier, Economics; Daniel Tataru, Mathematics; and N. Louise Glass, Plant and Microbial



Helmut Schwarz giving award to N. Louise Glass

Biology.

Glass is shown in the photo receiving her award from Professor Helmut Schwarz, president of the Humboldt Foundation. Each of the awardees will spend six to 12 months working with colleagues in Germany.

College Campuses Take on Food Waste

If you piled up all the perfectly edible food that Americans throw away each day, it would fill the Rose Bowl, twice. Put another way, about 40 percent of food in the United States goes uneaten - Americans toss out \$165 billion worth of food each year.



Fresh produce delivered to UCLA
University Village

"It's a really huge number," said UC Berkeley graduate student Becky Mackelprang. "Reducing that number could make a very big impact on society."

At college campuses around the country, students like Mackelprang are at the forefront of the fight against food waste.

Full article: universityofcalifornia.edu/news/college-campuses-take-food-waste

Taylor-White Lecture Video Now Available

For those who missed it, the 2016 Taylor-White Lecture, which took place on March 30th, is now online. Featured speaker was David Hibbett of Clark University: *"Getting to the Roots of Rot: Fungal Phylogenomics and the 'End of the Carboniferous Period.'"*

Youtube video link here: youtube.com/watch?v=P8DWM7JmB6I

Upcoming Symposia, Events and Dates to Remember

PMB Social - Open to Department Students, Faculty, and Staff Only

Please join us for a PMB Picnic on the Pat Brown Lawn from
4 pm - 7 pm Thursday 5/12/16.

Bring your appetite, your playful spirit and a blanket or lawn chair.

Food: Venga Paella. Come watch them prepare, cook and serve onsite. Cooking will start at 4 pm and food will be served at 5 pm. All paella is gluten-free.

Menu will include:

- Traditional Paella: Mixed seafood (mussels, clams, calamari, prawns) with chorizo.
- Vegetarian Paella: Butternut squash, leeks and wild mushrooms
- Organic spring mix salad with cranberries, nuts and strawberry vinaigrette
- Cookies and brownies
- Beer, wine and soft drinks

For event information, contact mayradelacruz@berkeley.edu or call 510.642.9999.

Save the Date -- PMB Retreat 2016 at Marconi Conference Center

WHO: PMB Students, Faculty, Postdocs and Staff

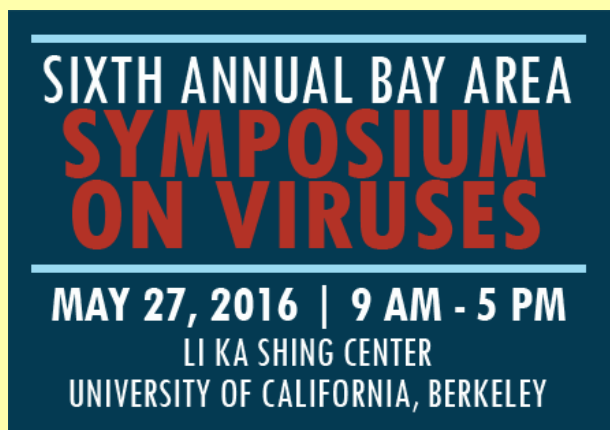
WHAT: Our off-campus Annual Retreat

WHEN: Friday, August 26-28, 2016

WHERE: Marconi Conference Center, Tomales Bay

Additional information available at ipmb.berkeley.edu/events/pmb-retreat-2016

Questions? Please contact Karyn Houston | 510.643.7614 | karyn@berkeley.edu



Sixth Annual Bay Area Symposium on Viruses

WHO: Bay Area Symposium on Viruses

WHEN: Friday, May 27, 2016, 9 am - 6 pm

WHERE: Li Ka Shing Center Auditorium (Room 245), University of California, Berkeley

Confirmed speakers:

- Amy Kistler - Novartis Institutes for Biomedical Research

- Christine Livingston - Gilead Sciences
- Jonna Mazet - UC Davis
- Steven Deeks - Gladstone Institutes/UC San Francisco
- James Hurley - UC Berkeley
- Marion Lanteri - Blood Systems Research Institute
- Yvonne Maldonado - Stanford University

Please register at bayviro.org

The 6th Annual Bay Area Symposium on Viruses is sponsored by the Henry Wheeler Center for Emerging & Neglected Diseases (CEND).

Microbiology Student Symposium

The Microbiology Student Group at UC Berkeley invites you to join us for the 17th Annual Microbiology Student Symposium on Friday, May 6, 2016 at the David Brower Center in Berkeley.

This year, keynote speakers are Victoria Orphan from Caltech and Micheal Laub from MIT.

Registration is now open:

microstudentgroup.weebly.com/2016-microbiology-student-symposium.html

PMB Article:

pmb.berkeley.edu/news/17th-annual-microbiology-student-symposium-0

2016 Summer Bioinformatics Workshops

Registration is now open for two bioinformatics workshops:

June 13-17, 2016 | [Using Galaxy for Analysis of RNA-Seq and ChIP-Seq Data](#)

Aug 29 - Sept. 2, 2016 | [Using Galaxy for Analysis of RNA-Seq, Exome-Seq, and Variants](#)

The workshops will be held on the UC Davis campus and will run from 9 am to 5 pm each day.

Prior course participants have included faculty, post docs, grad students, staff, and industry researchers. There are no prerequisites other than basic familiarity with genomic concepts. Anyone with an interest in sequence analysis is welcome.

For more information, visit the links above or contact training.bioinformatics@ucdavis.edu

Calendar

Spring 2016

5/6 - Last Day of Instruction

5/9 - Finals Begin

5/12 - PMB Social, Genetics & Plant Biology Lawn

5/15 - [College of Natural Resources Commencement](#)

5/23 - Instruction Begins

5/30 - Memorial Day

Summer / Fall 2016

7/4/16 - Fourth of July Holiday

8/24/16 - Instruction Begins Fall 2016 Semester

8/26 - 8/28 - PMB Retreat, [Marconi Conference Center](#)



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The PMB newsletter is produced by the Department of Plant & Microbial Biology, UC Berkeley.

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