



WSSA

GRADUATE STUDENT
ORGANIZATION

VOLUME 3

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PAGE 1

January 2024

64th Annual Meeting of WSSA: January 22-25, 2024

The WSSA/SWSS Graduate Student Organizations will host their annual **student business meeting and student luncheon on Monday, January 22nd from 11-1 PM**. The SWSS officer elections will take place during this time. The announcement of the elected WSSA officers will also occur. During our business meeting in San Antonio, the Graduate Student Luncheon will focus on the “**Perspectives of a Hiring Manager**”. Our panelists include Dr. Aman Chandi (FMC-Philadelphia, PA), Dr. Krishna N. Reddy (USDA-ARS-Stoneville, MS), Dr. Lindsay Roe (EPA-Washington, DC), and Dr. Scott Senseman (Oklahoma State University-Stillwater, OK). In this panel, students will have the opportunity to hear directly from hiring managers, from three different branches, what they are looking for in a candidate, tips to secure an interview and more. This event and the speakers have been thoughtfully chosen by the WSSA and SWSS Graduate Student Organizations to ensure that students would have the best experience possible! On behalf of both organizations, we want to thank each of our panelists for accepting this invitation, as well as Dr. Lee Van Wychen and Eric Gustafson for their support in organizing it!

Following the tradition started last year, we invite the students to get together for the “**Overcoming Hurdles in Graduate School**” on **Tuesday January 23rd from 7-8 AM**. This is an event to incentivize the network among us, share experiences, and build lasting connections within our society.

We cannot wait to see all of you at the annual meeting in San Antonio, TX.

Kindly,

Pamela, Isabel, Navdeep, and Annu

Weed Science Society of America Graduate Student Organization 2023/2024 Officers

WSSA GSO Officer Highlight!

PAGE 2

President – Pamela Carvalho-Moore

What University do you attend and what is your research focus?

I am a Ph.D. Candidate at the University of Arkansas. My dissertation research focuses on the addition of metabolic inhibitors as an approach to improve the efficacy of glufosinate, as well as understanding the mechanism of glufosinate resistance in Palmer amaranth-resistant populations from Arkansas.

How do you manage the time requested to serve the society? How many hours do you spend in a month?

Overall, I would say I spend around 3-4 hours per week dealing with matters related to the organization which might change depending on the time of the year. The key for time management for me is to delegate and seek help when needed. I could not do half without all the work, support, and input that I have from Isabel, Navdeep and Annu. It has been an honor to serve the organization, but this team has definitely made it easy for me. Another tip to manage time is to try to set deadlines and share them with the team. In this way, one can prioritize what needs to be done first, and you can have others helping you to meet these deadlines.



Pamela – PhD candidate,
University of Arkansas

Tell us about different events that your society utilizes to increase student involvement.

The WSSA and its GSO have a few events aiming to increase student involvement. At the annual meeting, there is the student luncheon, the "Overcoming the hurdles in graduate school" breakfast, and the student contests. The society, along with universities and companies, also organizes the National Weed Contest in which students from several universities of the US and Canada get together to apply their scientific knowledge to solve different problems and socialize with the weed science community. Additionally, the WSSA and the CWSS GSO organize the online mentorship event in which experts from both the academic and industrial sectors discuss the advantages and disadvantages of their respective career paths with our students.

What advice would you give to someone interested in getting more involved in your society?

I think the easiest way is by nominating others or self-nominating to serve as one of the WSSA Graduate Student Organization Officers and participating in WSSA committees. Another great opportunity of involvement is to apply for the Science Policy Fellowship. In this program, fellows will assist the WSSA Executive Director of Science Policy, Dr. Lee Van Wychen, while receiving a short-term, robust experience dealing with a broad array of weed science policy issues.

Are there any socials or events at your upcoming annual meeting that students should join?

Absolutely! The WSSA/SWSS GSO will host their annual student business meeting and student luncheon on Monday, January 22nd from 11-1 PM. The Graduate Student Luncheon will focus on the "Perspectives of a Hiring Manager". Our panelists include Dr. Aman Chandi (FMC), Dr. Krishna Reddy (USDA), Dr. Lindsay Roe (EPA), and Dr. Scott Senseman (Oklahoma State University). In this panel, students will have the opportunity to hear directly from hiring managers, from three different branches, what they are looking for in a candidate, tips to secure an interview and other topics. Following the tradition started last year, we will also host the "Overcoming Hurdles in Graduate School" on Tuesday, January 23rd from 7-8 AM. This is an event to incentivize networking among us, sharing of experiences, and building of lasting connections within our society.

Society social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram)

Instagram: @WSSAGSO; Twitter: @WSSA_GSO; Facebook: @WSSAGSO

WSSA GSO Officer Highlight!

Vice President – Isabel Werle

PAGE 3

What University do you attend and what is your research focus?

I am a Ph.D. student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. My research project focuses on the characterization of herbicide resistance traits in waterhemp populations using linkage mapping and transcriptomics approaches.



Isabel - Ph.D. student,
University of Illinois

How do you manage the time requested to serve the society? How many hours do you spend in a month?

I served as Vice President for the WSSA GSO and Vice Chair for the NCWSS GSO in the 2023 academic year. My role was to assist in a variety of tasks, including editing newsletters and social media content, organizing student events, and attending virtual meetings as needed. The time spent on these activities varies but it is usually three or four hours per month. The time to complete most tasks is pretty flexible and easy to accommodate in my schedule.

Tell us about different events that your society utilizes to increase student involvement.

At the NCWSS annual meeting, students can participate in mentoring workshops and panel discussions that provide perspectives on networking and mentoring opportunities. The Grad Student Mixer, Grad Student Luncheon, and Women in Science Breakfast are great for connecting and interacting with other students and professionals. The WSSA and CWSS GSOs hold a yearly virtual mentorship event for students, where professionals share their experiences in transitioning from grad school into academic and industry career paths. Students can also experience a variety of events at the WSSA Annual Meeting, and the agenda is full of special activities for students this year! Check out question #5 for details on these events!

What advice would you give to someone interested in getting more involved in your society?

One of the best ways to get involved with your Society is by getting hands-on experience and volunteering. For students, serving as a GSO representative within the national or regional Weed Science Societies is a great way to engage in activities. In addition to helping the society, being a student representative also offers a great opportunity to network and make connections that can contribute to your career growth.

Are there any socials or events at your upcoming annual meeting that students should join?

There are several student events at the WSSA Annual Meeting this year including the Top Golf Grad Student Mixer (January 21st, 6-9 pm), the Grad Student Meeting and Luncheon (January 22nd, 11-1 pm), the Women in Weed Science Event (January 22nd, 2-3:30 pm), and the Grad Student Mixer (January 23rd, 5-7 pm). Make sure to add these to your calendar!

Society social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram)

WSSA: Twitter: @WSSA_GSO

Facebook and Instagram: @WSSAGSO

NCWSS: Twitter: @NCWeedScience

WSSA GSO Officer Highlight!

Secretary – Navdeep Godara

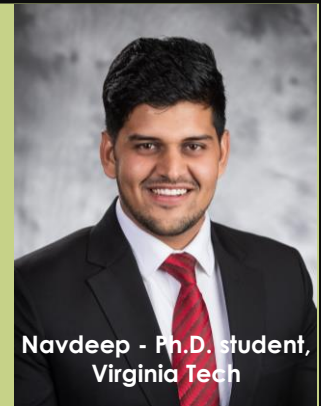
PAGE 4

What University do you attend and what is your research focus?

I am a Ph.D. student at Virginia Tech. My research focuses on developing best management practices for preventing pollinator exposure to harmful insecticides using weed management strategies.

How do you manage the time requested to serve the society? How many hours do you spend in a month?

I served as a Secretary for WSSA GSO and Vice-President for SWSS GSO (2023-24). I enjoy my engagement in GSO's as I get a chance to network with my peers and fellow representatives from national and regional GSOs. I typically spend 6-8 hours per month in assisting SWSS GSO team, making newsletters for WSSA GSO, help our WSSA GSO team to organize student events and assist in social media content. WSSA and SWSS GSO teams are wonderful and always support each other to accomplish GSO objectives. So, support from our team and networking opportunities serve as fuel to manage the service to the societies.



Navdeep - Ph.D. student,
Virginia Tech

Tell us about different events that your society utilizes to increase student involvement.

WSSA & SWSS supports travel enrichment scholarships for student members to support a week-long immersion with an academic, government, or industry host. WSSA also supports travel awards for students to attend annual meeting. During annual meetings, societies host student oral or poster contests with monetary rewards to encourage student participation. National and regional societies also host weed contests annually. WSSA GSO hosts an online mentorship event with CWSS GSO. I would say societies offer a lot to students for their personal and professional growth.

What advice would you give to someone interested in getting more involved in your society?

WSSA and SWSS committees offer several opportunities to volunteer and students can also join GSOs. Getting involved is a great way to network with future employers, reviewers, and mentors and also to advocate for your peers. WSSA GSO will have virtual nomination and voting for 2024-25 officers. SWSS GSO will have in-person elections during the annual student business meeting on Jan 22, 2024 (11-1 PM). Don't be shy to nominate yourself or a deserving colleague during the business meeting.

Are there any socials or events at your upcoming annual meeting that students should join?

WSSA & SWSS joint annual meeting has several events for students which include

- Top Golf Graduate Student Mixer: January 21st, 6-9 pm
- WSSA/SWSS Graduate Student Meeting and Luncheon: January 22nd, 11-1 pm
- Women in Weed Science Event: January 22nd, 2-3:30 pm
- Overcoming Hurdles in Graduate School: January 23rd, 7-8 am
- Graduate Student Quiz Bowl/ Mixer (January 23rd, 5-7 pm).

Society social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram)

Twitter: @WSSA_GSO & @SouthWeedSciSoc

Facebook: @WSSAGSO

Instagram: @WSSAGSO

What University do you attend and what is your research focus?

I'm a PhD candidate at Auburn University, working with Dr. Andrew Price. My research focuses on integrating cover crops and herbicides to manage troublesome weeds in the southern United States, as well as estimating the effects of cover crops on the critical period for weed control.

How do you manage the time requested to serve the society? How many hours do you spend in a month?

I spend around 6 hours per month preparing graduate student and alumni spotlights and other weed science-related advertisements on social media platforms, in addition to sparing some time to retweet posts. The supportive team at WSSA GSO has helped me manage my time, and the real motivation at our GSO meetings has indeed been a support for me. Serving the GSO has been a distinct privilege, and I aspire to continue serving in the WSSA throughout my graduate career and beyond because this society holds great significance for me.



Annu - Ph.D. Candidate
Auburn University

Tell us about different events that your society utilizes to increase student involvement.

The student event, "Overcoming the hurdles in graduate school" during the annual meeting and the CWSS/WSSA joint mentorship event "A talk with professionals from industry and academy".

What advice would you give to someone interested in getting more involved in your society?

Nominate yourself to serve in the WSSA GSO and to participate in WSSA committees. Additionally, there are other opportunities to serve and get involved in the Weed Science Society, such as the Science Policy Fellowship.

Are there any socials or events at your upcoming annual meeting that students should join?

During the WSSA GSO business meeting, there will be an event focusing on the "Perspectives of a Hiring Manager." During this panel session, students will get the chance to receive insights directly from hiring managers from academia, government and industry.

Society social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram)

Instagram: @WSSA_GSO

Twitter: @WSSAGSO

Facebook: @WSSAGSO

NEWSS Officer Highlight!

President – Katherine Diehl, Vice President – Eli Russell

PAGE 6

What University do you attend and what is your research focus?

Rutgers University studying weed science in turfgrass

How do you manage the time requested to serve society? How many hours you spend in a month?

I try to work on society admin during research downtime throughout the year-- just a few hours here and there every few months—so things are organized enough that I don't get overloaded as the annual meeting approaches.

Tell us about different events (throughout the year or at the annual meeting) that your society utilizes to increase student involvement.

The annual NEWSS meeting and summer weed contest are great.

What advice would you give to someone interested in getting more involved in your society?

Do it! You will learn so much and get invaluable facetime and networking opportunities; it is not often you get a chance to sit at 'the table'- I'd recommend taking advantage of the opportunity.

Are there any socials or events at your upcoming annual meeting that students should join?

The graduate weed contest this summer, date and location coming soon.

What University do you attend and what is your research focus?

I am currently a PhD Candidate at Virginia Tech. My research is centered on harvest weed seed control (HWSC), with a specific focus on seed impact mills. I am currently testing the efficacy of two different mills in wheat and soybean production systems in Virginia.

How do you manage the time requested to serve the society? How many hours do you spend in a month?

Managing the time required to serve the society can be tricky. What is very nice about serving in the NEWSS GSO is that almost all of our time requirements are known about well in advance. This provides ample time to create work schedule that includes my responsibilities as a student and to NEWSS without being overwhelming. I would say that I devote around 5 hr/month, with some months being more demanding.



Eli - Ph.D. Candidate,
Virginia Tech

Tell us about different events that your society utilizes to increase student involvement.

The NEWSS tries to increase student involvement in two ways, the annual meeting and the weed contest. At the annual meeting there are socials and workshops that give graduate students the opportunity to get involved with other students and with other members of the society. The weed contest offers students the chance to learn and bond with other students within the society. Personally, the weed contest is my favorite way of being involved within the society. It is a great opportunity to easily connect with all of the students in the NEWSS.

What advice would you give to someone interested in getting more involved in your society?

Get to know people outside of your university! If you want to get involved in a society it is important to know its members. Additionally, getting to know members can result in friendships, future collaborations, or job opportunities. So, get out there and meet some new people this conference season!

Are there any socials or events at your upcoming annual meeting that students should join?

Yes, there are 2 events at the 2024 NEWSS meeting in Boston! We have a Workshop and lunch planned for the graduate students on Jan. 9th. We also have a Social/Student Quiz Bowl the night on Jan. 10th.

Society social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram)

Sadly, the NEWSS GSO does not have a social media chair to manage a social media account. However, this is a potential need that the NEWSS GSO has discussed.

NCWSS GSO Officer Highlight!

Chair – Claudia Rose Bland, Vice Chair – Isabel Werle

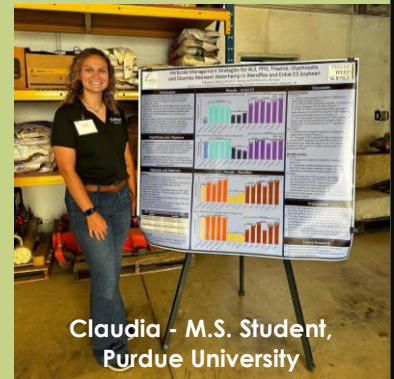
PAGE 7

What University do you attend and what is your research focus?

I am currently a master's student with Dr. Bill Johnson at Purdue University. My research focuses on identifying dicamba-resistant waterhemp across the state of Indiana, evaluating growth characteristics of one particular multiple resistant waterhemp population, and evaluating herbicide programs in soybean for control of multiple resistant waterhemp.

How do you manage the time requested to serve society? How many hours you spend in a month?

The time commitment varied from month to month. I was involved in planning two symposiums this year for the annual meeting, so I had to dedicate time to making sure both of those ran efficiently. In the fall months leading up to the annual meeting, I probably spent an hour or so a week to make sure I was well prepared!



Claudia - M.S. Student,
Purdue University

Tell us about different events that your society utilizes to increase student involvement.

Throughout the year and at the annual meeting, there are many events targeted at students to get them involved in the society. There are takeover weeks on the NCWSS twitter, which show what a typical week looks like for either a company or university that may peak student's interest. There were webinars focusing on different areas of weed science that students could tune into and learn. At the annual meeting this year, we had multiple opportunities for students to connect and build their network. There was a student mixer, a graduate student symposia that focused on networking and mentorship, and a symposia focused around video building and production.

What advice would you give to someone interested in getting more involved in your society?

Take the step and reach out to whatever committee you are interested in! The society really wants to help graduate students get the most out of their experience at not only the annual meeting, but overall involvement in the society. They want your opinion! I currently serve on two committees now after my year as the graduate student chair, so just taking the first step is the hardest part!

Are there any socials or events at your upcoming annual meeting that students should join?

We already had our annual meeting, but be on the lookout for events on the Twitter page or website!

Society social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram)

Twitter: @NCWeedScience

Isabel Werle also served WSSA GSO as a Vice-President. Please see page 3 for more details.

SWSS GSO Officer Highlight!

President – Mason Castner, Vice President – Navdeep Godara

PAGE 8

What University do you attend and what is your research focus?

Ph.D. Candidate, University of Arkansas. My research is focused on evaluating tetflupyrolimet for use in Midsouth rice production.

How do you manage the time requested to serve society? How many hours you spend in a month?

For the initial planning of graduate student events, such as the GSO luncheon or collaboration with the Top Golf mixer, there is a substantial time commitment to ensure that the speakers are secured and the graduate events are organized properly (approximately 8 hours per month). Monthly, the officers stay in communication to ensure that we are staying up to date on social media platforms with current events and student highlights. The officer team will also help serve at the meetings when appropriate.



Mason – Ph.D. Candidate,
University of Arkansas

Tell us about different events that your society utilizes to increase student involvement.

For the third year in a row, our graduate student organization has collaborated with the SWSS Endowment committee to host a conference-wide mixer at Top Golf before commencement of the annual meeting. The Top Golf mixer has been very successful, not only by generating funding for the Endowment Enrichment scholarship, but also serving as an opportunity for fellow graduate students to network with peers, academia, and industry representatives. We also encourage participation at the annual weed team contest in the summer as well as our graduate student luncheon at our meeting.

What advice would you give to someone interested in getting more involved in your society?

I think the best ways to get involved in the society(ies) is to 1) Get out of your comfort zone and meet new people at the regional and national meetings. Weed science is a relatively “small world” and fellow peers, academia, and industry representatives that you meet along the way will likely be some of the best relationships you make and potentially be part of your career 2) Run for an officer position and remember that you can always run again as long as you are a student 3) Go to as many graduate student events as possible.

Are there any socials or events at your upcoming annual meeting that students should join?

- We Graduate student mixer/Endowment Enrichment scholarship event at Top Golf (1/21/24 (6:00 pm – 9:00 pm)
- Graduate student luncheon/SWSS officer elections (1/22/24 from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm). The luncheon will include three speakers: One from academia, government, and industry to discuss “Perspectives of a Hiring Manager.”
- “Overcoming Hurdles in Graduate School” student breakfast (1/23/24 from 7:00 am – 8:00 am)
- Quiz Bowl/mixer (1/23/24 from 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm)
- Silent auction for students (throughout the meeting)

Society social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram)

Be sure to follow @SouthWeedSciSoc on X for upcoming events, student highlights, and other important information regarding the Southern Weed Science Society!

SWSS GSO Officers:

- Vice-President – Navdeep Godara (Please see page 4 for more details)
- Secretary – Annu Kumari
- Social Media Chair – Meghan Mills
- Endowment Foundation Chair – Pamela Carvalho-Moore
- Herbicide – Jake Patterson
- Program – Kayla Broster

WSWS GSO Officer Highlight!

President – Aaron Becerra-Alvarez, Vice President – McKenzie Barth

PAGE 9

What University do you attend and what is your research focus?

I attend the University of California, Davis. My research focus is in the plant-management-environment-interactions and how we can use that knowledge to develop integrated weed management in cropping systems. My research is on weed management in California water-seeded rice production.

How do you manage the time requested to serve society? How many hours you spend in a month?

I enjoy being part of the WSWS board and the time requested to serve the society is a privilege. It's been manageable for me to make time for the online meetings, summer board meeting, newsletters and email interactions, since the board is well managed. The hours requested are not demanding and the board is empathetic of everyone's busy schedules. The benefit is that you get to meet and interact with various members and expand your network.



Aaron – Ph.D. student,
University of California

Tell us about different events that your society utilizes to increase student involvement.

Throughout the year we present any updates in our society relevant to students in the WSWS quarterly newsletters under the Student Liaison Report. Apart from that we try to keep up with any relevant posts on X (formerly Twitter) that may be of interest to the students or highlighting any of the student posts regarding weed science in the west. The WSWS also have a unique tradition of the Student Night-Out during the annual meeting, where students are paired with various professionals to network over dinner in the host city. This is always an event that many members applaud and enjoy. There are also opportunities for students to participate on committees for the society. This gives students the opportunity to provide input toward the society's activities. Additionally, there are travel scholarships available that students can apply for. These include the Elena Sanchez Memorial Outstanding Student Scholarship and the Rita Beard Endowment Scholarship.

What advice would you give to someone interested in getting more involved in your society?

I would say jump on any opportunity that comes available. I believe being part of a society like WSWS and WSSA are important for professionals and scientists, no matter where you end up after your education, because they help foster the field of weed science. Being involved gives you the opportunity to provide your input and outline the future of weed science.

Are there any socials or events at your upcoming annual meeting that students should join?

2024 WSWS Annual Meeting March 4-7, 2024 in Denver, CO

At the meeting, we will have various events for students including a luncheon, a social hour and the Student Night-Out. We also have a Silent Auction which benefits the Elena Sanchez Memorial Outstanding Student Scholarship. If you have any ideas or items for the silent auction, feel free to reach out. We will also be electing a new Student-Liaison Chair-elect and I will pass the baton to McKenzie Barth from the University of Wyoming, your WSWS 2024-2025 Student Liaison.

Society social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram)

@WSWSstudents on X (formally Twitter)

Check out our website for resources and scholarship opportunities <https://wsweedscience.org/student-resources/>

WSWS GSO Officer Highlight!

Vice President – McKenzie Barth

What University do you attend and what is your research focus?

I am a Ph.D. student at the University of Wyoming evaluating herbicides for use in Kernza intermediate wheatgrass production.

How do you manage the time requested to serve society? How many hours you spend in a month?

I prioritize my time to serve the society as Graduate Student Representative-Elect, and spend about 5 hours a month working on WSWS business. I expect to spend more time serving WSWS graduate students when I become a full member of the WSWS Board of Directors at the annual meeting this spring.

Tell us about different events that your society utilizes to increase student involvement.

WSWS member universities send students to the WSSA Student Competition every year. WSWS also has a student night out during our annual meeting so that students can connect with academic and industry professionals.

What advice would you give to someone interested in getting more involved in your society?

I'd advise anyone interested in getting involved with WSWS to run for Graduate Student Representative and to inquire about student positions open on WSWS committees - the Society loves having students represented and involved however we can. If students have new ideas about increasing student involvement, we'd love to hear it!

Are there any socials or events at your upcoming annual meeting that students should join?

I hope to see all of our students at the Western Society of Weed Science Annual Meeting at our student night out, stay tuned for more details about that! It's a wonderful opportunity and I had a great time meeting faculty and industry professionals last year.

Society social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram)

<https://www.facebook.com/WSWSStudentSection/>

<https://twitter.com/WSWeedSci>

<https://www.instagram.com/wsweedsci?igsh=ZDIseGRreXZ2bDFm>

WSSA GSO Contact Info

Pâmela Carvalho-Moore

President – pcarvalh@uark.edu

Isabel Werle

Vice President – isabels6@illinois.edu

Navdeep Godara

Secretary – ngodara@vt.edu

Annu Kumari

Social Media Chair – azk0132@auburn.edu

Important Events & Dates

Jan 22-25, 2024

WSSA & SWSS – San Antonio TX

Mar 4-7, 2024

WSWS – Denver CO

Follow us on Social Media!



@WSSA_GSO



@WSSAGSO



Graduate Student of the Month

Deniz Inci, Ph.D. Candidate, University of California, Davis

What university do you attend and what is your research focus?

I am at the University of California, Davis, where I have focused on evaluating a suite of tools to improve season-long weed management in California rice while providing best management practices to control herbicide-resistant weeds. I am also involved in characterizing novel herbicides and assessing their off-target impacts on fruit, nut, and vine crops.



What drew you to weed science?

I have always been interested in weeds in agronomical, horticultural, and rural settings. During my first weed science course as an undergraduate, I realized that weed science was the career pathway I wanted to pursue. Since then, nearly all growers I have met have told me that weeds are their biggest challenges, which fascinates me and has led to my decision to study weed science.

What is your favorite thing about the WSSA or your regional society?

My favorite thing about the WSSA is networking with peers, colleagues, and friends who are ambitious about weed science. Meeting with folks from public and private industries who speak the same scientific language is always great.

What is your favorite weed and why?

My favorite weed is barnyardgrass, one of the most significant challenges of rice systems worldwide, including California. Since the beginning of my Ph.D., I have been dedicated to sustainable watergrass management, focusing on barnyardgrass in the Sacramento Valley. I cannot express how beautiful looking a barnyardgrass-free rice field is.

What is your long-term goal?

I am highly interested in herbicide discovery, development, and stewardship processes. My long-term goal is to have a career in an industry that allows me to be part of innovative solutions for growers and stakeholders. I feel honored to be part of the University of California, where stakeholders from diverse backgrounds collaborate to address challenges in California agriculture. As an applied science person, I would be happy to be part of an innovative team that brings solutions to modern agriculture, which would be my dream job.

If you would like to be featured in the WSSA Graduate Student Organization newsletter or know an outstanding graduate student and want to nominate them, please send your suggestion to ykumar4@huskers.unl.edu.

WSSA Alumni Spotlight

Dr. Rui Liu, Assistant Professor, Washington State University

What Universities did you attend/ degrees did you earn?

B.S. Biotechnology and M.S. Developmental Biology, Nanjing Agricultural University, Nanjing, China
Ph.D. Agronomy (Weed Science), Texas A&M University, College Station, TX



What is your current job title and how long have you been with your current employer?

Assistant professor- Weed Science, Washington State University, Irrigated Agricultural Research & Extension Center, Prosser, WA. I joined WSU in November 2022. It's been a little over a year.

What is the favorite thing about your job so far?

I enjoyed working with different specialty crops in WA, learning from growers, and seeing weed science research directly impact the production of commodities.

What is something you wished you knew as a student that you know now?

Maybe on the communication part, take the opportunities to communicate research findings to different audiences, e.g., present at field days, extension meetings, industry workshops, etc. It's a bit nerve-racking at first, but it does get better.

What is the biggest piece of advice you'd give students searching for a job?

If a job is open and sounds good to you, apply, and try your best at the interviews. Be patient before the right one comes along. Maybe the final thought would be: count your blessings and lean on your support group during difficult times.

WSSA GSO Contact Info

Isabel Werle

President – isabels6@illinois.edu

Navdeep Godara

Vice-President – ngodara@vt.edu

Vipin Kumar

Secretary – vkumar4@huskers.unl.edu

Ryan Hamberg

Social Media – ryan.hamberg@ag.tamu.edu

Important Events & Dates

March 4-7, 2024

WSWS Annual Meeting,
Denver, CO

April 1, 2024

WSSA Science Policy Fellow (SPF)
Application Due

The SPF application packet requires resume, one writing sample on science policy issue, and two letters of reference and submit it to Dr. Lee (Lee.VanWychen@wssa.net)

Follow us on Social Media!



@WSSA_GSO

@WSSAGSO

If you would like to nominate a WSSA alumni to be spotlighted in the WSSA Graduate Student Organization newsletter, send your suggestion to vkumar4@huskers.unl.edu.

Graduate Student of the Month

Daewon Koo, Ph.D. Candidate, Virginia Tech

What university do you attend and what is your research focus?

I am a Ph.D. candidate at Virginia Tech under the guidance of Dr. Shawn Askew. My research focuses on evaluating the effectiveness of spray drone technology for pesticide applications in managed turfgrass systems, as well as developing a novel image analysis technique for spray deposition pattern and droplet spectra analysis.

What drew you to weed science?

I grew up admiring Dr. SJ Koo, a weed scientist who dedicated over 30 years to discovering new herbicides, and also my father. However, I never seriously considered it as a career option until after college graduation. I earned a BS in business administration and started working for the marketing team at Moghu Research Center, an agrichemical company based in South Korea focused on discovering new herbicides. During my time there, I got exposed to biological studies for early-stage herbicide candidate screening, which led me to pursue a higher degree in weed science.



What is your favorite thing about the WSSA or your regional society?

My favorite aspect of the WSSA and regional society is the weed contest. I consider it to be one of the most valuable learning experiences available to graduate students studying weed science. I appreciate the intense competition and passion displayed by my peers and colleagues, and I value the opportunity to interact with industry professionals.

What is your favorite weed and why?

My favorite weed is annual bluegrass (*Poa annua*), which was the very first weed I ever worked on. You can find it everywhere, and it is a prolific seeder, probably providing job security for turf weed scientists.

What is your long-term goal?

I am passionate about finding solutions for weed management through herbicide discovery and development, as well as adopting new technologies. I hope that the knowledge and research skills gained during my time here at Virginia Tech will lead me to a unique career path, combining my background in business with my interests in weed science.

If you want to add Daewon Koo to your network, connect with Daewon on:

LinkedIn: Daewon Koo; Twitter: daewon_koo; E-mail: dwkoo@vt.edu

If you would like to be featured in the WSSA Graduate Student Organization newsletter or know an outstanding graduate student and want to nominate them, please send your suggestion to WSSA.GSO@gmail.com.

WSSA Alumni Spotlight

Milos Zaric, Assistant Professor, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

What Universities did you attend/ degrees did you earn?

Ph.D. in Weed Science, Department of Agronomy and Horticulture, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2023. MSc in Weed Science, Department of Agronomy and Horticulture, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2020. MSc in Weed Science, Department for Plant Protection, University of Belgrade, Faculty of Agriculture, Republic of Serbia, 2017. BSc in Agronomy, Department for Plant Protection, University of Belgrade, Faculty of Agriculture, Republic of Serbia, 2016.



What is your current job title and how long have you been with your current employer?

Assistant Professor, Department of Agronomy and Horticulture at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in the PAT Lab in North Platte, NE. I officially started this position in January 2024.

What is the favorite thing about your job so far?

My favorite part is exploring and integrating global pesticide technologies into practical farming, developing sustainable, cost-effective solutions, and enhancing decision-making processes.

What is something you wished you knew as a student that you know now?

Mistakes are inevitable, and being too hard on yourself only slows you down. The learning from mistakes is invaluable and what makes the difference, strengthening us in the long run.

What is the biggest piece of advice you'd give students searching for a job?

Be open to opportunities and willing to diverge from your planned path if it leads you closer to achieving your dream goals.

If you want to add Dr. Milos Zaric to your network, connect with Dr. Zaric on:

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Secretary – vkumar4@huskers.unl.edu

Ryan Hamberg

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Important Events & Dates

April 1, 2024

Science Policy Fellow (SPF)
Application Due

SPF application packet requires resume, one writing sample on science policy issue, and two letters of reference and submit it to Lee.VanWychen@wssa.net

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Graduate Student of the Month

Ankit Yadav, MS Student, Auburn University

What university do you attend and what is your research focus?

I am a MS student at Auburn university under the guidance of Dr. Aniruddha Maity. My primary research revolves around Italian ryegrass (*Lolium multiflorum*), conducting a statewide survey for this weed, screening it against herbicides recommended by the Alabama Cooperative Extension Services, and investigating its morphophysiological properties. Additionally, I aim to optimize row orientation for peanuts in Alabama for optimal weed control.



What drew you to weed science?

I hail from an agriculture-dominant state in India and have been involved in my family's farm operations, which motivated me to pursue higher studies in agriculture. Upon enrollment at Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agriculture University, I came across the specialization in weed science. During my undergraduate studies, I was inspired by seniors who had chosen weed science as their field of focus, leading me to follow in their footsteps.

What is your favorite thing about the WSSA or your regional society?

My favorite aspect of the society is the abundance of opportunities it provides through annual meetings and weed contests, facilitating interaction with peers, academics, and industry professionals. These engagements offer invaluable insights from individuals who have achieved the positions I aspire to reach.

What is your favorite weed and why?

My favorite weed is Italian ryegrass (*Lolium multiflorum*), which played a significant role in my master's research. This weed is prevalent in both crop and non-crop areas and, interestingly, serves as an excellent forage crop in the southeastern United States. Its ability to hybridize and adapt continues to intrigue me.

What is your long-term goal?

I am passionate about addressing the day-to-day challenges encountered in weed science research and overcoming adoption hurdles for new technologies. As a second-year master's student at Auburn, I aspire to pursue a Ph.D. in weed science. I hope that the diverse experiences gained during my time at Auburn have equipped me with the skills necessary to excel in future endeavors.

If you want to add Ankit Yadav to your network, connect with Ankit on:

LinkedIn: ANKIT YADAV; Twitter: ankityadav8474; E-mail: azy0033@auburn.edu

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WSSA Alumni Spotlight

Garret Montgomery, Technical Development REP – North Delta, Bayer Crop Science

What Universities did you attend/ degrees did you earn?

I went to Mississippi State and got a masters degree under Dr. Jason Bond, and then I went to the University of Tennessee and got a PhD with Dr. Larry Steckel. I finished my PhD with Dr. Steckel in December of 2017, and in the spring of 2017 I started working for Monsanto in my current position.

What is your current job title and how long have you been with your current employer?

I am now a Technology Development Representative for Bayer, since Bayer acquired Monsanto.



What is the favorite thing about your job so far?

My favorite thing about my job is the freedom I have and the work I get to do. My research program with Bayer is full of using cutting edge technology on brand new traits in novel ways.

What is something you wished you knew as a student that you know now?

I enjoy my freedom, because outside of work, I still have the ability to devote enough time to my family (wife and 2 kids) and my hobbies (hunting, mostly duck hunting)..

What is the biggest piece of advice you'd give students searching for a job?

I would have studied more on how to be a salesman. Not because I sell anything, but because salesmen are experts and engaging with a wide variety of people, and that is key to everything I do.

If you want to add Dr. Garret Montgomery to your network, connect with Garret on:

LinkedIn: Garret Montgomery; E-mail: garret.montgomery@bayer.com

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WSSA

GRADUATE STUDENT
ORGANIZATION

VOLUME 4

ISSUE 4

PAGE 1

May 2024

Graduate Student of the Month

Emmanuel Cooper, MS Student, Purdue University

What university do you attend and what is your research focus?

I am a MS student at Purdue university under the mentorship of Dr. Stephen Meyers. My thesis research, titled "A Multifaceted Approach to Weed Management in Organic Sweetpotato Systems," addresses weed management techniques in organic production systems. Recognizing the limited research in organic systems compared to conventional sweetpotato production, my work examines cultural practices and other production methods for effective weed control. Since 2022, I have conducted over twelve field trials and two greenhouse studies at multiple locations in Indiana, to enhance weed management in organic production.



What drew you to weed science?

My introduction to farming began at a young age, as my father cultivated sweetpotatoes, corn, bananas, sugarcane, cassava, mangoes, and more in their yard garden. I also spent most of my vacations at my uncle's farmhouse, where I developed an appreciation for food production. My passion for weed science blossomed during my undergraduate studies at EARTH University in Costa Rica, where I observed how farmers in my home country of Liberia faced low yields due to weed interference. My goal is to provide cost-effective solutions for weed control, especially for local farmers.

What is your favorite thing about the WSSA or your regional society?

My favorite thing about the WSSA is the sense of community. Moreover, winning third place with my single-slide thesis (SST) presentation at the 2024 WSSA conference was a significant achievement, validating my hard work and expertise while fostering a supportive environment within the society.

What is your favorite weed and why?

My favorite weed is velvetleaf, as I find the feel of its leaves comforting.

What is your long-term goal?

I will graduate this year and has been offered an internship with Corteva Agriscience in Johnston, Iowa. I am excited to learn about industry work and explore how I can enrich lives through research. I am driven by the desire to positively impact the lives of growers and farmers daily.

If you want to add Emmanuel Cooper to your network, connect with Emmanuel on:

LinkedIn: Emmanuel Cooper; Twitter: gonfatee22; E-mail: coope392@purdue.edu

If you would like to be featured in the WSSA Graduate Student Organization newsletter or know an outstanding graduate student and want to nominate them, please send your suggestion to vkumar4@huskers.unl.edu

WSSA Alumni Spotlight

Eugene Law, Assistant Professor of Weed Ecology, The Ohio State University

What Universities did you attend/ degrees did you earn?

B.S. Environmental Engineering and Environmental Biology, and M.S. Environmental Science, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Syracuse

Ph.D. Agronomy, Crop Science, and Applied Economics, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

What is your current job title and how long have you been with your current employer?

Assistant Professor of Weed Ecology, Department of Horticulture and Crop Science, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH. I started this position in March 2024.



What is the favorite thing about your job so far?

The people that I'm working with are definitely the best part. This includes the faculty, staff, and students in the department, and all of the farmers, ag industry professionals, and extension educators that I've already had the pleasure to get to know over the last few months as I start to explore where I can best support the agricultural community in Ohio.

What is something you wished you knew as a student that you know now?

Don't be afraid to ask questions about things that aren't clear to you as a student, because no one expects a student to know everything right away – what would be the point of your graduate program if you did?

What is the biggest piece of advice you'd give students searching for a job?

If you know where you want to be career-wise at this time in one, five, or even ten years, take a look at the profiles of people that are doing that type of job now, and then be intentional with how you dedicate your time to some combination of research/teaching/extension/internships/professional development/networking/etc. activities that will make it obvious to a hiring manager/committee that you are qualified for the job that you want.

If you want to add Dr. Eugene Law to your network, connect with Dr. Law on:

LinkedIn: Eugene Law; Twitter: AgSystemScience; E-mail: law.262@osu.edu

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Ryan Hamberg

Social Media –
ryan.hamberg@ag.tamu.edu

Important Events & Dates

2024 WSSA TEE Award

Applications are due on May 31
Email the application packet to
cara.mccauley@corteva.com

NCWSS Student Weed Contest

July 25 – Sheridan, IN

NEWSS Student Weed Contest

July 30 – Raleigh, NC

SWSS Student Weed Contest

August 7 – Blacksburg, VA

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