



# Monthly Newsletter

**June 2019**



Happy summer!

Special points of interest:

- MSU postdocs attend NPA conference
- MSU postdocs organize Fascination of Plants Day

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## Steering Committee Updates

### June Social Event; Lansing Beer Fest, June 15th

**Who:** All MSU postdocs, friends, and families 21 and over and with valid ID

**What:** Food, drinks, drinks, more drinks, and fun!

**When:** Saturday, June 15th from 4 – 9 pm

**Where:** Washington Ave. between South St. and Elm St. in REO Town, Lansing

We will be carrying an “MSU-PDA” sign near the ticket purchasing area so you can easily look for us. Questions? Contact [pda@grd.msu.edu](mailto:pda@grd.msu.edu).

Tickets at <http://www.lansingbeerfest.com>

Drinks and food are at own expense. Please RSVP [here](#).

### MSU-PDA Postdoc survey: your feedback is needed to prepare for the upcoming MSU Office for Postdoctoral Affairs!

We need your help guiding the new Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPA), your participation in [this quick survey](#) (5-7min) will help us set the responsibilities and expectations for the MSU-OPA.

You can find the survey here: [https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_eICjAulh6ZCwLGt](https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eICjAulh6ZCwLGt)

### The MSU PDA is still recruiting postdocs to join the PDA steering committee for 2019-2020!

We are actively looking for postdocs interested in:

- organizing professional development workshops,
- managing and reviewing travel award applications,
- maintaining social media accounts,
- organizing social events,
- serving as a department liaison to the PDA.

If any of these topics sound interesting to you please let us know at [pda@grd.msu.edu](mailto:pda@grd.msu.edu)!

## Postdoc accomplishments

-**ReAnna S. Roby** named 2019 Curriculum Inquiry Fellow. Each year the Editors of *Curriculum Inquiry* select early career scholars for the Curriculum Inquiry Writing Fellowship and Writers' Retreat to be held at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, June 17 to the 22. This year, MSU Postdoc, ReAnna S. Roby was named one of 8 fellows. As a fellow, she'll work with a group of established faculty mentors and members of the CI Editorial Team toward the development of an article for publication in a Special Issue of the journal. Roby's scholarship is concerned with the Critical Race Theorizing Curriculum Studies of Science and Science Education.

-**Christian Danve Castoverde**, a postdoc in the lab of Sheng Yang He, has joined as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Biology at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Canada.

-**Anne-Sophie Bohrer**, postdoc in the Takahashi lab working for the Great Lakes Bioenergy Research Center at MSU, won the 2019 Early Career Woman in Bioenergy Science Award. This award recognizes her exemplary contribution to bioenergy research and the work she is doing in promoting the message of the GLBRC to the public through her role as the lead event coordinator for the Fascination of Plants Day at MSU. Anne-Sophie received her award during the 2019 GLBRC Annual Science Meeting that took place in Lake Geneva May 22-25.



Anne-Sophie Bohrer pictured with the Director of the GLBRC, Tim Donahue.

Published a paper? Awarded a grant? Have something else to celebrate? Let us know! Email the PDA Newsletter ([grad.newsletter.pda@msu.edu](mailto:grad.newsletter.pda@msu.edu)) your accomplishment and we will feature it in our next newsletter.



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MSU-PDA Steering Committee—Nov. 2018

The MSU PDA is an association of postdoctoral fellows from all disciplines across the Michigan State University campus.

## Postdoc news and activities

### MSU postdocs attend National Postdoctoral Association Conference

By CJ Reppucci

The 17<sup>th</sup> [Annual National Postdoctoral Association](#) Conference took place April 12-14<sup>th</sup> in Orlando, FL. I was one of three attendees representing Michigan State, all of whom were former or current members of the [MSU Postdoctoral Association Steering Committee](#). It was my first experience attending a conference that wasn't research-focused— it was so different, but was also such an amazing experience. The meeting consisted of breakout workshop sessions targeting different populations (e.g., postdocs, administrators), Keynote and Plenary speakers, a poster session highlighting the work that Postdoc Associations and Postdoc Offices across the country are doing, and ample opportunities for networking. I came back to MSU invigorated and excited to implement new ideas sprouting from the workshops I attended and conversations I had. I would highly recommend this conference to senior graduate students considering a postdoc position, all postdocs, as well as faculty and administrative staff who works with postdocs. Hope to see you at the 2020 meeting in [San Diego](#)!



Natalia Martin (former PDA steering committee co-chair, left), Christina Reppucci (current PDA steering committee co-chair, middle), and ReAnna S Roby (Award committee member, right)

Christina Reppucci is a postdoctoral researcher in the [Neurobiology of Social Behavior Lab](#) at MSU.

### Third Fascination of Plants Day @ MSU: Arts Go Green increases community reach

By Igor Houwat

Michigan State University plant biologists hosted the third [Fascination of Plants Day @ MSU](#) on Saturday, May 18<sup>th</sup> at the [MSU Broad Art Lab](#) and the [East Lansing Art Festival](#).

This year, plant science met the arts in a first collaboration involving MSU plant scientists, the MSU Broad Museum, and the East Lansing Art Festival. It turned out really well.

Over 500 participants—more than double the attendees last year—came to experience the world of plants and algae through family-friendly **science and art activities** where they **learned about plant medicinal benefits and industrial applications** and **interacted with MSU scientists**.

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## Third Fascination of Plants Day @ MSU: Arts Go Green increases community reach *continued...*

Highlights included a virtual reality display where viewers could dissect crops to see their insides (sunflowers, lime, etc.); extracting DNA from bananas and strawberries; a display of moss evolution and how it could help feed astronauts colonizing Mars; and multiple hands-on activities, such as painting leaves using pigments extracted from plants, identifying seeds and plant smells, making DNA out of gummy bears, or drawing fungi and other crops.

Anne-Sophie Bohrer-Cognon, a post-doc for the Great Lakes Bioenergy Research Center (GLBRC) at MSU and lead event coordinator says, “The event this year was the best yet! Our partnership with the MSU Broad Art Lab and the East Lansing Arts Festival allowed us to reach a broader audience and attract more visitors. It is a great feeling to see whole families discover all the amazing, interesting aspects of plant sciences, and interact directly with scientists.”

Well over 50 volunteers from the College of Natural Sciences, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and from the Broad Museum led the demonstrations.

Bohrer-Cognon adds, “The volunteers did a fantastic job engaging children and parents all day long, which is a great reward for the organizing team after months of planning!”

Björn Hamberger, co-event coordinator and Assistant Professor at MSU, says, “This year’s event attracted a very diverse crowd of parents with kids, excited adults and people generally interested in our programs and how they connect with the art festival. It is noteworthy that the volunteers at the kid’s tent at our Art Festival site felt overwhelmed by the public’s interest. We will certainly need more presence there next time. Way to go, curious kids!”

“Much of what we do at the MSU Broad Art Lab is born from a belief that we all have something valuable to share,” says Michelle Word, Director of Education at the MSU Broad Art Museum. “When we bring our knowledge together, well that’s the space great ideas are born! Fascination of Plants day was just such a moment. It was collaborative and interdisciplinary, bring together campus and the community in celebration of creative and scientific inquiry in all its forms.”

Bohrer-Cognon concludes, “Bridging science and art in the context of Fascination of Plants Day was a really interesting addition this year, as science is a creative process on its own. I am eager to see how we will make Fascination of Plants Day even better and bigger in 2020!”

*This article was originally published at: <https://mps.natsci.msu.edu/news-events/news/third-fascination-of-plants-day-msu-arts-go-green-increases-community-reach/>*

## Job opportunity

### **6-year Post Doc / University Assistant, Department of Botany and Biodiversity Research, Faculty of Life Sciences, University of Vienna, Austria**

A 6-year post-doctoral position is available at Department of Botany & Biodiversity Research, Faculty of Life Sciences, University of Vienna, to work on the ecological & evolutionary genomics of plant adaptation, speciation and species radiation with Christian Lexer and colleagues (<https://evolgenomics.univie.ac.at/>). We are looking for a person with experience in the use of current DNA / RNA sequencing approaches to address fundamental questions in population genetics, evolutionary biology and / or biogeography in plants. This includes a keen interest in integrative approaches towards understanding the origin, maintenance, and functioning of biological diversity.

University of Vienna offers an attractive and dynamic research location in a city with exceptional quality of life and in a country with excellent research infrastructure and funding provision.

**Extent of Employment:** 40 hours/week. Salary grading in accordance with relevant work experience.

**Job Description:** Participation in research projects in the group, including co-supervision / mentoring of PhD and MSc students – International publication and presentation activities – Contribution to high-quality external (third-party) research grant applications – Freedom to develop high-quality external (third-party) research grant applications as main applicant – Opportunity to participate in teaching topics of shared interest.

**Profile:** Doctoral degree in biology or equivalent field / Focus on molecular evolutionary biology or biogeography of plants - Experience in population genetics, evolutionary genomics, and/or evolutionary systems biology, especially the use of current DNA / RNA sequencing approaches and associated analytical tools - Excellent written and oral communication skills in English - Computer literacy, including experience with Unix / Linux based analysis software and R - Ability to work in teams - Experience in teaching. Duration of the contract: 6 years.

**To apply:** Your application must include the following documents: motivation letter (<1 page)- Scientific CV - List of publications – Brief draft of research interests – Contact details of three references. Please see full job description and submit your application via the website of the Job Center at the University of Vienna (<http://jobcenter.univie.ac.at>; email: [jobcenter@univie.ac.at](mailto:jobcenter@univie.ac.at)) no later than 16.06.2019, mentioning job reference no. 9678.

For more information please contact: Christian Lexer, [christian.lexer@univie.ac.at](mailto:christian.lexer@univie.ac.at)

## Science communication opportunity

**Do you want to learn to communicate your science more effectively? Are you interested in learning how to write about science, develop exciting graphics about your work, or engage diverse audiences?**

We are excited to announce the second annual Communicating Science Conference for Graduate Students and Postdocs (ComSciCon) in the Michigan region, which will take place on Michigan State University's campus in East Lansing, MI from August 17-18th, 2019! The [ComSciCon workshop series](#) is designed to empower graduate students and postdocs to communicate the complex and technical concepts that arise in research in science, engineering and other technical fields to broad and diverse audiences, beyond fellow practitioners in the field.

We have an exciting program of events planned. Attendees will network with fellow graduate student leaders in science communication, produce original writing for publication, and learn from expert writers and communicators, including **keynote speaker Dr. Samantha Yamine (@heysciencesam)**.

ComSciCon-MI 2019 will be held over two full days on August 17-18th, 2019. [Applications are open NOW](#) and **the application period will close at 11:59pm EDT on May 31st, 2019. (\*\*THIS DEADLINE HAS BEEN EXTENDED TO Friday, June 14th at 11:59pm EDT\*\*)**. There will be no registration fee (only a refundable deposit) for graduate student and postdoc attendees, but only a limited number of spots are available. We will also have some travel funds available for attendees coming from outside East Lansing and the surrounding areas. Attendees will be selected through a competitive application process. The application consists of only a few short answer questions, outlined at <https://comscicon.com/comscicon-michigan-2019-application>.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to email us ([michigan@comscicon.org](mailto:michigan@comscicon.org)) or find us on Twitter ([@ComSciConMI](#))! Additional information can also be found [on our website](#).

We look forward to your applications!

*ComSciCon-MI 2019 is organized by graduate students at the University of Michigan and Michigan State University. We are grateful for contributions from the following sponsors, without whom we couldn't offer this workshop:*

*MSU Physics and Astronomy, UofM Program in Biomedical Sciences, UofM Physics, UofM Astronomy (MIRA), MSU Office of the Senior Vice President for Research and Innovation, MSU Microbiology and Molecular Genetics, MSU Pharmacology and Toxicology, MSU Graduate School, MSU Ecology/Evolutionary Biology/Behavior, UofM Michigan Science Writers, MSU Genetics, UofM Life Sciences Institute, MSU Animal Science, MSU Council of Graduate Students, UofM Neuroscience, UofM Bioartography, MSU Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, and UofM Society for Women in Physics.*