



Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture
"Growing in Excellence"

Dr. William J. Kenworthy, Interim Chair, PSLA

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The semester and school year are quickly coming to an end. As we prepare for final exams, it is appropriate to pause and look back on the year. We have accomplished much even though we have endured the challenges of budget reductions and fiscal uncertainty. We remain focused on our quest to build a Department that reflects excellence in our educational, research, and Extension programs.

PSLA experienced new people, new courses, and new ideas this year.

- Dr. Jianhua Zhu joined our faculty last August.
- Cindy Zhao joined our staff as our new webmaster and the look at www.psla.umd.edu is now vibrant and dynamic.
- Excitement is building in our new MLA program as we gain enrollment. We just completed our MLA accreditation candidacy review and are awaiting the final report.
- We are working on revisions of our undergraduate Plant Sciences program; and have developed a minor in plant protection.
- PSLA LARC students are being recognized for their exciting community design efforts. We are so proud that their hard work and enthusiasm bring a renewed sense of community pride for citizens across the region.

This newsletter and the next will highlight many of the recent faculty and student awards and student class accomplishments. It was great to see three of our PSLA faculty being honored at the AGNR Awards Convocation for their excellence and their contributions in PSLA teaching, research, and Extension programs. Congratulations to Dr. Steve Cohan, Dr. Jose Costa, and Dr. John Lea-Cox in receiving these top college awards! Congratulations also to Dr. Joe Sullivan on receiving news of his promotion to Professor!

We are pleased to share our news and accomplishments with you. I invite you to check in frequently via our website to see what is happening in PSLA. As you read this newsletter, I hope you enjoy learning more about our department's activities.

Regards, Bill



Join us
for the PSLA Awards
and Ice Cream Social
Event Wednesday,
May 13,
2:00 p.m.
in the
Critique Hall, Plant
Sciences Building to
Celebrate our
Outstanding Students
and Faculty!



Shelly Pridmore assists Maryland Day visitors at one of the PSLA events.

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Newest News!..

Maryland Day was a great success! On Saturday, April 24, over 77, 000 visitors enjoyed events and booths on campus. PSLA had interactive games to offer—mini golf and a contest wheel, as well as tours through the Research Greenhouse Complex. We also hosted a lovely orchid display in the lobby of Plant Sciences.

Many thanks to the faculty, staff, and students who contributed their time and efforts to make this event happen. It was a really great day for the Department and campus!



PSLA graduate students prepare for Maryland Day.



The Alumni Elm tree planting near Anne Arundel Hall

UM Arboretum Celebration and Tree Planting Ceremony

Friday, May 8, 2009, the University of Maryland Campus Arboretum and Botanical Garden hosted a gala event to celebrate trees, arboreta, gardens, and alumni. The University of Maryland campus has been designated an arboretum and botanical garden by the [American Public Gardens Association](http://www.americanpublicgardens.org) - and is the first campus in Maryland to be recognized as a "Tree Campus USA" by the [Arbor Day Foundation](http://www.arbor-day.org).

Three alumni were honored at the event for their public service and accomplishments related to public gardens and plant conservation. The alumni honored were: Scott Aker (Gardens Unit Leader, US National Arboretum); Holly Shimizu (Executive Director, US Botanic Garden); and Sara Tangren (President, Chesapeake Natives). During the ceremony, an "Alumni Elm" was planted near the Anne Arundel Hall patio garden.

Thank you to Dr. and Mrs. Mote for their presence and contributions to the ceremony. And, a special thank you to our alumni for their contributions to our department, students, and campus.



Honored alumni receive a gift from PSLA's Dr. Andrea Ottesen.



UM / APHIS MOU signing at AGNR Awards Ceremony.

MOU Signed with USDA-APHIS!

At the AGNR Convocation Awards Ceremony on Thursday, May 7, a significant Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the College and USDA-APHIS, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. The MOU provides for an APHIS employee to be placed with PSLA/ENTM to help with teaching responsibilities and facilitate student opportunities to work at APHIS. We look forward to working closely with APHIS in creating new and interesting possibilities for our students and faculty.

On-Line Knowledge Center Wins Educational Aids Award!

In April, the on-line Knowledge Center for Water and Nutrient Management was selected to receive the Educational Aids Award from the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers. The Knowledge Center is an educational tool developed by **Dr. John Lea-Cox, PSLA**; **Dr. David Ross, ENST**; **Dr. Andrew Ristvey, PSLA Affiliate Agent**; and **Cindy Zhao, PSLA Webmaster**; for both students and professionals in the Green Industry and provides 25 modules for instruction in water and nutrient management. Drs. Lea-Cox, Ross and Ristvey use 15 of the 25 modules to teach PLSC 461, 462, 463, and 464.



More Newest News...

PSLA LARC 471 Community Design Studio Raises High Interest from Multiple Government Agencies at Capitol Heights Presentation

Class of 2009 PSLA Landscape Architecture program students successfully presented their community design project to Mayor Miller and citizens of Capitol Heights on Thursday evening, April 23, 2009. This final presentation was the essential part of the Capstone Community Design Studio LARC 471, taught by **Dr. Shenglin Chang**. Students spent the entire semester working with communities in Prince George's County seeking design solutions to improve quality of life within the communities. The final presentation brought great attention from both Maryland state and Prince George's County government agencies, as well as the city of Capitol Heights. Inspired by the futuristic approach of building sustainable lifestyles within a 50 year timeframe, government agencies were interested in all the projects including the Marlboro Pike mixed use redevelopment, the Transit Oriented Development around Capitol Heights Metro, community trails and gardens, neighborhood hubs, and prefabricated housing development. Mayor Miller of Capitol Heights indicated he will present these projects at the United States Conference of Mayors on May 17, 2009 in Las Vegas to attract more developers' and investors' attention and, hopefully, participate in the process of making Capitol Heights a green city for the new century. Congratulations senior LARC 471 students on a job well done! We are proud of your efforts and accomplishments!

PSLA LARC 460 Recognized for Projects on Placemaking for the Green Multicultural Langley Park

Students in **Dr. Shenglin Chang's** Landscape and Identity class, LARC 460, were invited by the City of Takoma Park to present their placemaking study for the multicultural Langley Park area to planners of Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MN-CPPC) and city councils. Applying scenario planning methods, students provided plans for the future development of Langley Park for three timeframes: 5 year, 20 year, and 50 year. Socio-cultural programs (e.g., multicultural festivals, movies, dancing) and more identifiable building events were introduced by students. Green and sustainable lifestyles were the default scenarios in 20 and 50 year plans. Planners of the City of Takoma Park considered the students' studies critical for their sector plan study for the Langley Park area. Congratulations LARC 460! We take pride in your accomplishments to shape a better future for our local communities!

Within The Ranks...AGNR Excellence Award Winners and Promotion News!!!

At the annual AGNR Awards Convocation on May 7, three PSLA faculty were presented awards of excellence for their work and service.



Dr. Jose Costa was presented the AGNR Faculty Research Award. He has developed a leading plant breeding research program which contributes to the advancement of science, and provides direct benefits to our Maryland grain producers. He is nationally and internationally recognized as a leader in the identification of molecular markers and their use in selection programs. His research is primarily focused on wheat and barley improvement including the development of new disease-resistant cultivars for the mid-Atlantic region.

Dr. Costa has developed or co-developed five wheat and barley cultivars. His most notable wheat release, *Chesapeake*, is a high yielding cultivar with excellent test weight. *Chesapeake* is widely grown in the mid-Atlantic region.



Dr. John Lea-Cox was presented the AGNR Integrated Research and Extension Excellence Award. He has developed a dynamic research program to generate the research-based information needed to answer the nursery and greenhouse industry's questions on sustainable production issues. He has also demonstrated the ability to impart important and timely information using state-of-the-art unique delivery systems.

Dr. Lea-Cox has developed several web-based information systems for use by both students and green industry professionals. He has also established a grant-supported research program that is focused directly on nursery and greenhouse production issues including water and nutrient management. His unique investigations use wireless sensor networks to control real-time scheduling of irrigation and nutrient applications. These systems will enhance the sustainability and profitability of the green industry.



Dr. Steven Cohan was presented the Paul R. Poffenberger Excellence in Teaching and Advising Award. Dr. Cohan teaches and advises the students in the Landscape Management option in our Plant Sciences major. He serves as the lead instructor and curriculum developer for this academic program. He also coordinates PSLA's entire intern program and has built it into one of the best in the college.

Dr. Cohan is responsible for developing a professional leadership course and a course on communication within the green industry utilizing an on-line Spanish immersion course. He also serves as an adviser to the landscape management club; coaches the student team that participates in the PLANET activities each year; and leads fundraising to help with team travel expenses. He has coordinated a Green Industry Career Fair on campus for the last four years. Dr. Cohan was recently elected by his peers as a 2009 PLANET Trailblazer and will be mentoring new programs on other campuses.

Congratulations to **Dr. Joseph Sullivan** on his promotion to the rank of Professor. Dr. Sullivan has been with the University since 1985. Research in his laboratory centers on the responses of plants to various forms of environmental stress - both natural and anthropogenic. Dr. Sullivan investigates the physiological mechanisms that enable plants to exist in a wide range of environmental conditions and how human activities such as stratospheric ozone depletion, global climate change or urbanization may impact plant, agricultural or ecosystem productivity or ecosystem structure and functioning. Dr. Sullivan is the advisor for the PSLA Urban Forestry program. Congratulations, Dr. Sullivan! Your promotion is wonderful news and is much deserved.



Looking Ahead...

Tuesday, May 12— Last Day of Classes

Wednesday, May 13— PSLA Awards and Ice Cream Social, 2:00 p.m., Critique Hall, Room 0104, Plant Sciences Bldg.

Thursday, May 21 - Main Spring Commencement, 7:00 p.m., Comcast Center

Friday, May 22—AGNR Commencement, 4:00 p.m., University Memorial Chapel

Monday, June 1—Summer Term Begins