



## SOIL AND WATER SCIENCE GRADUATES

### SWS ALUMNI

In future newsletters, we would like to include news from our alumni and their success stories and accomplishments. Please provide highlights of your current activities, so that we can include them in future SWSD newsletters. Please e-mail information and a photograph to Pam Marlin at: pem@ufl.edu.



Recent MS graduates in the department, L to R Sue Simon (2004), Shannon Curtis (2005), Chakesha Martin (2004), Lynette Malecki (2003) and Erin Bostic Corstanje (2003)

The Soil and Water Science Department (SWSD) is one of the few academic departments in the world that offers comprehensive interdisciplinary research, teaching, and extension/outreach programs in soil, water and environmental sciences. The department offers graduate programs with an emphasis on soil science, environmental science, hydrologic science, and wetland science. In addition, the department also actively participates in the interdisciplinary ecology graduate program. Since its establishment in 1925, the SWSD has provided a home for a large number of post-doctoral associates, graduate and undergraduate students, visiting scientists, and staff. Graduates of our department are well-placed in academic institutions, industry, and government agencies. These graduates have advanced in their professional careers and now hold high-level positions. For example, our graduates with BS and MS degrees are employed by state and federal agencies, agricultural industry, and environmental consulting firms. A good number of these students have pursued advanced degrees. Our PhD graduates are employed as faculty members in universities, as senior scientists and managers in state and federal agencies and agricultural industry, and as environmental scientists with leading consulting firms. Several of our former students are now recognized as Fellows by the Soil Science Society of America and the American Society of Agronomy.

In this newsletter we highlight a few of our former students' success stories. In our future newsletters, we will continue to highlight our alumni including former students, post-doctoral fellows, and faculty. A complete list of our alumni will be made available on the SWSD web site. Our alumni serve as excellent ambassadors for the SWSD and for the University of Florida--we are proud of them and derive great satisfaction that the department has made a small difference in shaping their lives and careers.



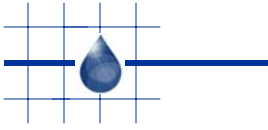
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# BS AND MS GRADUATES



### STEVE BARLOW MS 2004

Steve is currently working for the US Army Corps of Engineers as the Kansas area environmental compliance specialist. Duties include conducting environmental assessments on projects in Kansas, assisting with emergency spills or contaminant incidents, and serving as the Kansas area GIS coordinator.



### Josh Boan BS 1997

Josh works as a State Wetland Programs Administrator and Environmental Research Administrator at the Environmental Management Office of the Florida Department of Transportation.



### ROBIN BRYANT BS 1995

Robin (Hunt) Bryant is President of Magnolia Consulting Inc. based in Palmetto, FL. Magnolia Consulting specializes in innovative agricultural solutions for farmers, harvesters, and processors of tree and row crops.



### SHANNON CURTIS MS 2005

Shannon works as an Environmental Scientist III with the St. Johns River Water Management District. Duties include developing biological assessments for restoration projects and assisting with assessments of wildlife habitat and advanced data analysis.



### TOM DIEROLF MS 1986

In August 2004, after working and raising a family in Indonesia for 15 years, Tom returned to the US to work as a researcher and Co-Representative for Heifer International. He is currently an Appalachia Program Manager for Heifer International. He lives in Brevard, NC, with his two daughters and his wife, Kate.



### LAKEISHA HILL MS 2003

Lakeisha will be starting a new job in Florence, South Carolina as a Soil Conservationist for the United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service, USDA/NRCS.



### DEBBIE SEGAL BS 1983

Debbie is Senior Wetland Scientist and Ecology Department manager at Jones Edmunds and Associates in Gainesville. Her duties include environmental printing, wetland restoration design, environmental monitoring, reporting and document review.



### ALICIA STEINMETZ BS 1997

Alicia is employed by BCI Engineers and Scientists, Inc. as an on-site consultant at the St. Johns River Water Management District. She is currently working on projects for the Lower St. Johns River Agricultural Nonpoint Source Sub-program as an Environmental Scientist III.



### JOE SULLIVAN BS 1999

Joe is a wetland and soil scientist for Jones Edmunds and Associates here in Gainesville. His job responsibilities are extensive and include wetland delineations, wetland restoration design, seasonal high water determinations, soil characterizations, and environmental permitting.



### TODD TIMKO BS 2000

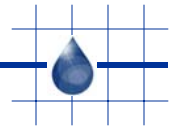
Todd graduated from the UF College of Dentistry in 2005 with a Doctor of Dental Medicine degree. He is currently in Chicago doing a residency in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery at Loyola University Medical Center. He will graduate in 2009 as a specialist in oral surgery.



### CARRIE MINER MS 2001

Carrie graduated with her Masters in 2001 and joined Peace Corps as a Sustainable Agriculture Extension Volunteer in Senegal, West Africa. During her 2 1/2 year service, Carrie lived and worked in a rural village with sustenance farmers. The major limitation to crop production is poor soil quality. Her degree in soil and water science complimented the endeavors of the agriculture program as she worked with farmers to implement cultural practices known to reduce soil erosion and replenish soil nutrients and organic matter content. She introduced a green manure crop, intercropping with legumes and zai holes (a technique concentrating nutrients directly in the plant root zone). Carrie also experimented with a rice farming technique to improve yields and worked with the farmers to implement this technique in their fields. During the dry season, Carrie enjoyed teaching lessons on health and the environment at 4 local schools. Peace Corps was an incredibly rewarding cultural experience as Carrie immersed in the local culture and became fluent in the local language.

Although she was the extension agent, Carrie strongly believes she gained as much or more from her villagers. Having recently returned to the states, Carrie is looking for the next step in her soil and water science career.



# PHD GRADUATES



## MARK BRUSSEAU PhD 1989

Mark Brusseau is a professor in the Soil, Water and Environmental Science Department and a joint faculty member of the Hydrology and Water Resources Department at the University of Arizona. He directs a research program on contaminant fate and transport in soils, waters, and aquifers.

## TAIT CHIRENJE PhD 2000

Tait is Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey with appointments in Environmental Studies and Chemistry. His research focus is on geochemical characterization (mostly trace metals), of streams, lakes and brownfields.

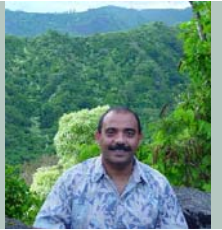


## ELISA D'ANGELO PhD 1998

Elisa is an Associate Professor, Department of Plant and Soil Sciences, University of Kentucky. Her research interests include: Aerobic and anaerobic microbial ecology and Fate of transformations of organic and inorganic pollutants; bioremediation; and biogeochemistry of wetlands.

## ALI FARES PhD 1996

Ali is an Associate Professor in the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Management, University of Hawaii-Manoa. He conducts research on watershed management using a combination of experimental, theoretical and numerical modeling across a wide range of temporal and spatial scales.



## LEWIS GASTON PhD 1987

Lewis is an Assistant Professor of Soil Chemistry, Agronomy and Environmental Management Department, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. He conducts research on the effects of tillage, cover crops and organic amendments on sustainable land use and water quality.

## TRAVIS HANSELMAN PhD 2003

Travis is working as Research Scientist for the Pioneer Hybrid International in Johnston, Iowa on their maize hybrid development research team.

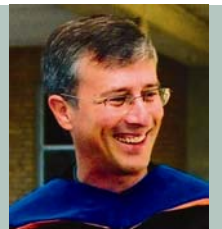


## LINDA LEE PhD 1993

Linda is Professor of Environmental Chemistry at Purdue University. Her current research projects include the fate of pharmaceuticals (PCE) and perfluorinated compounds in soils, PCE-contaminated soil remediation, and attenuation of constituents in fly ash leachate, and beneficial uses of fly ash.

## KEVIN MOORHEAD PhD 1986

Kevin is Professor and Chair, Department of Environmental Studies, University of North Carolina-Asheville. His research includes Landscape issues and restoration, soil properties and processes in wetlands. He also teaches the courses, Environmental Science, Environmental Restoration, Environmental Planning, and Soils.



## SUE NEWMAN PhD 1991

Sue is a Senior Supervising Environmental Scientist at the South Florida Water Management District. She conducts research on biogeochemical processes to assess hydrologic and nutrient needs of the Everglades, as related to establishing the phosphorus criterion for surface waters.

## KURT PENNELL PhD 1990

Curt is an Associate Professor in Civil and Environmental Engineering, Georgia Institute of Technology. His research includes physical, chemical and biological processes influencing the fate and transport of contaminants in the subsurface, and in-situ remediation technologies and bioremediation.



## WILLIAM PUCKETT PhD 1990

Bill is Deputy Chief for Soil Survey and Resource Assessment for the Natural Resources Conservation Service. His overall responsibility is for the National Cooperative Soil Survey Program, the National Resources Inventory Program, resource assessment and policy analysis, the agency's international programs, and homeland security.

## BRAJ K. SINGH PhD 1990

BK is a Professor of Soil Science at Earth University in Costa Rica. His research interests include: humic substances and plant nutrition; slow release fertilizers; precision agriculture and database management; characterization of medicinal plant extracts for potential drugs; farming systems research and extension.



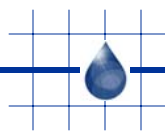
## JAMIE SANCHEZ PhD 2004

Jamie is currently working as a Research Scientist and Site Manager of Pioneer Hybrid-DuPont Agriculture and Nutrition company in Puerto Rico. Along with overseeing the center, his duties include conducting research studies on soil and crop management for nurseries, seed production and genetics improvement.

## KEN VAN REESE PhD 1989

Ken is a Professor in the Department of Soil Science at University of Saskatoon, Canada. His current research areas include: role of hybrid poplar plantations for farm diversification and fibre for the forest industry, root dynamics of boreal forest species, and root development for reclaimed mine spoils.





## AWARDS

**Rao Mylavarapu** was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure and **Vimala Nair** was promoted to Associate Professor. Congratulations to both of them for their outstanding professional accomplishments.

**Manhardeep Josan** was awarded an "Outstanding International Student Award" by the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences in April 2005.

**Konstantinos Makris** won the "2005 IFAS outstanding dissertation award" by the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

**Jeff Smith** received best student poster presentation award at the 2005 national meetings of the Society of Wetland Scientists. **Ed Dunne** received honorable mention for his poster paper at the same meeting.

### SPRING AND SUMMER 2005 GRADUATED STUDENTS

Shannon Curtis, MS, Advisor, Reddy  
Abioye Fayiga, PhD, Advisor, Ma  
Patrick Inglett, PhD, Advisor, Reddy  
Ioannis Ipsilantis, PhD, Advisor, Ogram  
Puja Jasrotia, MS, Advisor, Ogram  
Gina Kertulis, PhD, Advisor, Ma  
John Leader, PhD, Advisor, Reddy  
Atanu Mukherjee, MS, Advisor, Nair  
Todd Osborne, PhD, Advisor, Reddy  
Charles Trotman, MS, Advisor, Clark  
Ilker Uz, PhD, Advisor, Ogram

### NEW STUDENTS

Amanda Abell, MS, Advisor, Moore  
Jehangir Bhadha, PhD, Advisor, Jawitz  
Sarah Chinault, MS, Advisor, O'Connor  
Christopher Duerkes, MS, Advisor, Jawitz  
Kelly Fischler, MS, Advisor, Collins  
William Higgenbotham, MS, Advisor, Li  
John Katsantonis, MS, Advisor, He  
Qin Lu, PhD, Advisor, He  
Kirandeep Mann, PhD, Advisor, Schumann  
Jennifer Marriott, MS, Advisor, Sickman  
Henry Mayer, MS, Advisor, Li  
Richard Yudin, MS, Advisor, Li



#### BEN SKULNICK MS 2002

Ben graduated from the SWSD in 2002 and was hired as a Wetland Soil Scientist by Jones Edmunds & Associates Inc. Ben enthusiastically and competently performed many tasks including wetland delineations, wetland restoration monitoring, hydric soil assessments, environmental permitting, and GIS mapping. On a sad note, Ben was struck by lightning on Tuesday afternoon May 24, 2005 while conducting hydric soil assessment in NE Florida. Ben remains in a coma and has been transferred to the Kindred



Hospital in Ft. Lauderdale. Ben has shown remarkable improvement but there is still a very long and difficult road ahead. A web page (<http://www.benskulnick.com>) has been established so his family and friends can check the bulletin board and monitor his progress. Please keep Ben and his family in your thoughts and prayers.

### KIMBERLY EPPS RECEIVES FORD FOUNDATION FELLOWSHIP



*Kimberly in a cacao plantation with her sampling crew*

We are proud to announce that **Ms. Kimberly Epps**, Ph.D. candidate in our Department, has been awarded a **Ford Foundation Diversity Fellowship** in support of her doctoral program. This fellowship, which is managed by the **National Academies**, supports individuals with evidence of superior academic achievement and who are committed to continuing that level of excellence as scholars and teachers at the college and university level. Kimberly received her B.S. in Physics from Harvey Mudd College where she was a research assistant in stellar system modeling. She followed this by studying music at the Loyola University in New Orleans and the California Institute of the Arts, where she studied the violoncello while working for Warner Bros. Records. The following four years were spent as a Middle School teacher in San Francisco before spending two years as an



*Kimberly Epps with one of the owners (Aginaldo) of the property where she is doing her chemical diversity research*

agroforestry extension agent in Africa with the Peace Corps. Her Peace Corps experience confirmed her commitment to teaching, international work and natural resource management. Upon her return she enrolled at the University of California-Davis where she received a MS in Soil Science, while doing her research in Belize. She enrolled in the PhD program at the University of Florida under the guidance of **Dr. Nicholas Comerford**, with the support of a UF Presidential Fellowship. Kimberly is currently in northeastern Brazil doing field work in the Atlantic Forest, one of the well known biodiversity hotspots on the planet. While in Brazil, Kimberly is working closely with **Dr. Quintino Araújo** of the Comissão Executiva do Plano da Lavoura Cacaueira (**CEPLAC**) and the Universidade Estadual de Santa Cruz.

Open invitation to our alumni and friends

#### Annual Soil and Water Science Research Forum

The Sixth Annual Soil and Water Science Research Forum is scheduled for **September 2, 2005**, in Gainesville, Florida. The forum is designed to bring together representatives from state and federal agencies, private industry, faculty and graduate students, and prospective students interested in soil and water science. The forum will provide an opportunity for all interested in soil and water science to interact with our students, faculty and administrators on campus. We look forward to your participation in the forum. If you are planning to attend, please go to the following web site and register: <http://soils.ifas.ufl.edu/forum/> For additional information, please contact Pam Marlin: [pem@ufl.edu](mailto:pem@ufl.edu).