ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA
PACIFIC BRANCH

2026 Pacific Branch Meeting

April 12-15, 2026

Spokane, Washington

The Centennial Hotel

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ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA
PACIFIC BRANCH

Table of Contents

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Armando Falcon-Brindis, University of Idaho

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The Officers, Committee Chairs, and Members of the Pacific Branch of the Entomological Society of America wish to thank our sponsors, without whom our annual meeting would not be possible.

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Special thanks to Collins Agricultural Consultants Inc. and Syngenta for sponsoring the PB-ESA Student Activities!

Meeting Information

Location

Centennial Hotel Spokane
303 W North River Dr, Spokane, WA 99201
844-733-3305
https://www.davenporthotelcollection.com/the-centennial/

Code of Conduct

By attending the 2026 Pacific Branch Meeting, you agree voluntarily to abide by our ethics policy. The full policy may be found online at https://entsoc.org/conduct. If you need to file a complaint, please contact Stacie East, Director of Grants and Equity at +1 (301) 731-4535 x3030 or seast@entsoc.org.

Registration

All participants must register for the meeting. Registration badges are required for admission to all conference functions. The meeting registration desk is located at the Ballroom (Pre-Function).

Sunday . . . . . 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM
Monday . . . . . .7:30 AM – 4:00 PM
Tuesday . . . . . 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM
Wednesday . . . . . .7:30 AM – 9:00 AM

For more information, please visit the PBESA 2026 Conference website.

Schedule

Schedule changes and other information of general interest will be posted at the PBESA registration desk. Refer to the on-line program for the current schedule.

Employment Opportunity Center

Employers are invited to post job announcements and job seekers are encouraged to post their CVs on the designated board in the Ballroom (Pre-Function). Please bring enough copies of your documents for distribution (no photocopy service will be provided).

Recording, Photography, & Social Media Policy

PBESA requests that attendees do not take videos during sessions as they are disruptive to the presenters. If the presenter has granted permission by adding the "Photograph OK" logo, you are welcome to take photos, otherwise, please refrain from taking photos during talks. If you wish to take photographs of a poster, please check the "Photograph OK" logo on the poster or contact the poster presenter for permission. If the presenter has granted permission to share information about their presentation/poster on social media by adding the "Social Media OK" logo, you are welcome to share the allowed content on social media.

Photography OK	NO Photography
	
Social Media OK	NO Social Media
	

PBESA reserves the right to use photographs and videos taken during the meeting for informational and promotional purposes. Thank you for your cooperation.

Lost & Found

Lost and found items may be turned in and retrieved at the ESA Registration Desk.

Presenter & Moderator Instructions

Guidelines for Speakers & Moderators

Speakers and moderators will follow standard procedures and practices for ESA meetings. Moderators are responsible for maintaining the schedule, by not starting any presentation prior to its scheduled time, and by not allowing a speaker to exceed the allotted time. If a presentation is canceled, the moderator must wait to begin the next presentation until its scheduled time. If there are problems with the computer/projector, or other equipment, please report to the ESA Registration Desk.

Poster Presentations

Poster Size: Posters must be contained within the 48 x 48-inch space provided. The poster must NOT exceed the size limit. Posters should be hung in their assigned space according to the poster number assigned. Bring your own Velcro strips or tacks to secure your display to the poster boards. All posters will be displayed in the Ballroom (Pre-Function) at the assigned days and times.

Setup and Removal:

Student Posters

Setup: Monday, 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM
Removal: Monday, 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM
Author Presence: All student competition presenters should be present at their posters between the following times: 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM (odd numbers) and 3:00 PM - 3:30 PM (even numbers).

General Posters

Setup: Tuesday, 7:00 AM – 8:00 AM
Removal: Tuesday, 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM
Author Presence: Contributed poster presenters should be present at their posters between the following times: 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM (odd numbers) and 3:00 PM - 3:30 PM (even numbers).

PowerPoint Presentations

Speakers who present submitted papers (Student Competition or General Session) must bring their PowerPoint files on a USB drive to the Operations Desk located next to the ESA Registration Desk preferably the day before their scheduled session. Student Competition and General TMP speakers must have their talks uploaded by 8:00 AM on the day of their talk. Mac users, please make sure your presentation file will be compatible with PC computers. Student volunteers will upload the file, and you will have a chance to look over the presentation to ensure that it has been transferred correctly.

Speakers who are presenting in symposium sessions should provide their presentations directly to their symposium organizer in advance of the session.

Questions about audiovisual needs can be directed to Andrea Joyce (ajoyce2@ucmerced.edu) or Luis Espino (laespino@ucanr.edu) prior to the conference, or by visiting the operations desk during the conference. Speakers with presentations that link to audio or video files are requested to provide advance notice to the session organizers/moderators.

Session Moderators & Student Competition Judges

Symposia session organizers, volunteer moderators, and judges for the student poster and paper competitions should review moderator guidelines and judging instructions. All judges should submit their rankings online by 6:00 PM on Monday April 13 to finalize the student competition evaluations. Contact Brook Swanson at swansonb@gonzaga.edu with any questions.

Special Meetings & Events

Welcome & Plenary Session
The combination welcome session/plenary will be held from 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM on Sunday, April 12 in the Skyline A (12th Floor).

We are pleased to present a Plenary Session by Dr. Douglas J. Emlen

PBESA Executive Committee Meeting
The Executive Committee will meet
Sunday, April 12, 4:00 PM – 5:00 PM in the Pavilion meeting room (2nd floor).

Fly Tying Workshop
Sunday, April 12, 2026: 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM, Skyline A.

Entomology Games

Monday April 13, 8:00 PM –10:00 PM in Riverfront Ballroom D (2nd floor).

Meet the Poster Presenters
Connect with poster presenters during our Poster Networking—a dedicated time to ask questions, exchange ideas, and dive deeper into groundbreaking research!

Monday – Student Posters (April 13) 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM (odd numbers) and 3:00 PM - 3:30 PM (even numbers).

Tuesday (April 14) 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM (odd numbers) and 3:00 PM - 3:30 PM (even numbers). Posters will be displayed in the Ballroom (Pre-Function).

Spelling Bee
Tuesday, April 14, 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM in Pavilion (2nd Floor).

Entomolympics
Tuesday, April 14, 3:30 PM – 5:30 PM in Pavilion (2nd Floor).

Resume/CV Workshop
Tuesday, April 14, 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM, Pavilion (2nd Floor).

Photo Salon
Be sure to stop by and check out the insect photo salon! Images will be on display on Monday and Tuesday in the Grand Ballroom Foyer. Thanks to Josh Milnes and Lisa Brain for organizing this year's photo salon and congratulations to all the winners.

PBESA Mixer
PBESA President Laura Lavine will host a reception for all registered PBESA 2026 attendees on Monday, April 13 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM in the Riverfront Ballroom A/B/C (2nd Floor).

Awards Luncheon
The PBESA 2026 Awards Luncheon will be held on Tuesday, April 14 at 12:15 PM – 1:45 PM in Riverfront Ballroom A/B/C (2nd Floor). Your full conference registration includes admission to the luncheon.

Continuing Education Credits
Continuing Education Credits (CEC) have been applied for in CA and WA.

Stop by the registration desk for updates of which sections will count towards continuing education credits or contact Allison Walston for more information (Allison.Walston@valent.com).

Entomology Spelling Bee

Tuesday, April 14, 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM in Pavilion (2nd floor). You've mastered morphological keys and can distinguish Hymenoptera from Hemiptera at a glance — but can you spell them under pressure?

The Entomology Spelling Bee is designed to test your technical vocabulary. From anatomical structures and developmental stages to taxa names and species, this competition tests your entomology knowledge.

The competition will be broken up into three rounds starting with general scientific terms and ending with taxonomic names.

Challenge yourself alongside fellow entomology students in a fast-paced, academically spirited event that highlights both scientific literacy and professional precision.

Please contact Michelle Au with questions (aumi@hawaii.edu)

Entomolympics

Tuesday, April 14, 3:30 PM – 5:30 PM in Pavilion (2nd floor). Don't miss out on the 5th annual Entomolympics! Test your entomological skills against other teams (teams of four) for a chance to win some awesome prizes! Games include fan favorites like the six-legged race and a new activity inspired by the kid's game *Elefun*. We are bringing back our Build-a-Bug activity, where teams create and share their imaginative new insect species. We encourage everyone to participate in the audience and vote for their favorite team in the People's Choice Category.

Please contact Michelle Au for questions (aumi@hawaii.edu)

Resume/CV Workshop

Tuesday, April 14 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM in Pavilion (2nd Floor). Calling all students and ECPs - come meet experts from industry, government, and academia. Learn how to tailor your resume/CV for your dream graduate program or job and get some tips and tricks to help you stand out from the crowd. Bring a copy of your resume or CV and benefit from expert feedback from our professionals.

Please contact Michelle Au for questions (aumi@hawaii.edu)

Special thanks to...

Collins Agricultural Consultants Inc. and Syngenta for sponsoring the PB-ESA Student Activities!

Hotel and Local Information

Refreshments

Coffee and tea will be available during the breaks Monday through Wednesday. Light snacks will be offered at the PBESA Mixer. The Awards Luncheon on Tuesday is included with registration for all participants.

Hotel Amenities

Lobby Espresso Bar
Daily 6am – 11am

The Centennial Restaurant & Bar
Breakfast
Monday-Saturday 6am – 11am
Sunday 6am – 12pm

Lunch
Monday-Saturday 11am – 4pm
Sunday 12pm – 4pm

Dinner
Sunday-Thursday 4pm – 11pm
Friday-Saturday 4pm – 12am

Internet

WiFi access has been set up exclusively for the PBESA meeting area. Please be courteous when using the internet during your stay. Refrain from streaming large files, such as video, so that everyone will have access to the internet.
Network: "Guest Access"
Password: n/a

Parking

A discounted rate of $10 will apply per night for overnight self-parking.

Local Area

Spokane Falls - Spokane's pride and joy, the Spokane Falls roar right through downtown and cascade over a series of waterfalls. That makes it a top choice if you're looking for a picturesque walk, unique photo, or a sensory afternoon of classic northwest scenery.

Riverfront Park - The centerpiece of downtown Spokane, Riverfront Park is a 64-acre urban park featuring scenic walking paths, public art, and stunning river views.

Centennial Trail - The Centennial Trail runs right through downtown and along the river, offering miles of paved walking and biking paths with scenic views.

Kendall Yards - Just across the river from downtown, Kendall Yards is a popular area with, local restaurants and wine bars, boutique shopping, and great sunset views overlooking the Spokane River

2026 PBESA Meeting Organizers

Laura Lavine
President

Armando Falcon-Brindis & Tiziana Oppedisano
Program Co-Chairs

Marc Fisher
Secretary/Treasurer

Luis A Espino & Andrea Joyce
Operations

Gary Chang & Jenifer Walke
Local arrangements

Cindy Myers
ESA Staff
Associate Director, Partnerships,
Programs & Events

Becky Anthony
ESA Staff
Associate Director of
Programs & Meetings

PBESA Leadership and Committee Information

Executive Committee Members

President: Laura Lavine

President Elect: Angelita Acebes-Doria

Past President: Silvia Rondon

Secretary/Treasurer: Marc Fisher

Members At Large:

2023-2026: Luis Espino, Dong-Hwan Choe

2024-2027: Dowen Jocson, Adrian T. Marshall

2026-2029: Dalila Rendon, Andrew Rodstrom

PBESA Representatives

Governing Board: David Crowder

ECP: Kelsey Tobin

Awards & Honors: Gina Marie Angelella

Science Policy: Emily Rampone

Education & Outreach: Dowen Jocson

Entomology Games: Genevieve Tauxe

Student Affairs:
Samikshya Pandey

Planning Committees

Program Chairs:
Armando Falcon-Brindis, Tiziana Oppedisano

Operations:
Luis A Espino, Andrea Joyce

Local Arrangements:
Gary Chang, Jenifer Walke

Site Selection:
Silvia Rondon, Laura Lavine, Marc Fisher

Nominations and Awards Canvassing:
Karol Krey

Awards Selection: Jhalendra Rijal

Continuing Education Credits:
Allison Walston

Entomology Games Chair: Dowen Jocson

Entomology Games Master: Robert Orpet

Photo Salon: Josh Milnes

Student-Organized Activities: Michelle Au

Student Paper Competition: Brook Swanson

Student Travel Awards: Karol Krey

Resume/CV Workshop: Michelle Au

Pacific Branch Recognition Awards in Entomology

The Pacific Branch of the Entomological Society of America is pleased to announce the winners of its 2026 awards! Winners were selected by a diverse group of anonymous judges from the Branch. The awards will be presented at the Awards Luncheon.

Student Awards

Award	*Winner*	*Institution*
Pacific Branch John Henry Comstock Award	Daniel Marshall	Washington State University
Pacific Branch Student Leadership Award	Michelle Au	University of Hawaii
Pacific Branch Dr. Stephen Garczynski Undergraduate Research Scholarship	Raquel Amrhein-Cervantes	University of Nevada Reno; transfer student to UC Riverside
Student Travel Awards	Ava Bartlett-Miller	University of Arizona
	Melissa Thayer	University of California, Riverside
	Alejandra Rocha	University of California, Riverside

Professional Awards

Award	*Winner*	*Institution*
Pacific Branch Distinguished Achievement in Teaching Award	Geoffrey Attardo	University of California, Davis
Pacific Branch Award for Excellence in Integrated Pest Management	Dong-Hwan Choe	University of California, Riverside
Pacific Branch Distinction in Student Mentoring Award	Amy Murillo	University of California, Riverside
Pacific Branch Distinguished Achievement in Teaching Award	Andony Melathopoulos	Oregon State University
Pacific Branch Plant-Insect Ecosystems Award	Rachel Vannette	University of California, Davis
Pacific Branch Physiology, Biochemistry, and Toxicology Award	William Walker	USDA-ARS, Temperate Tree Fruit and Vegetable Research: Wapato, WA
Pacific Branch Excellence in Early Career Award	Adrian Marshall	USDA-ARS, Temperate Tree Fruit and Vegetable Research: Wapato, WA
Pacific Branch Systematics, Evolution, and Biodiversity Award	Scott Geib	USDA-ARS U.S. Pacific Basin Agricultural Research Center, Hawaii
Pacific Branch Systematics, Evolution, and Biodiversity Award	Scott Geib	USDA-ARS U.S. Pacific Basin Agricultural Research Center, Hawaii
Entomology Teamwork Award	Frank Zalom Team	University of California, Davis

2026 Pacific Branch Awards

Pacific Branch C. W. Woodworth Award

Jeff Fabrick
USDA-ARS

Dr. Jeff Fabrick is a Research Entomologist for the USDA Agriculture Research Service. He is stationed in the Pest Management and Biocontrol Research Unit at the U.S. Arid Land Agricultural Research Center in Maricopa, Arizona. He received a B.S. (1995) and Ph.D. (2003) in Biochemistry from Kansas State University in Manhattan, Kansas, and was a postdoctoral research associate at the University of Arizona (2003-2005). In 2005, Dr. Fabrick was recruited by the USDA-ARS to conduct research on key cotton insect pests, including pink bollworm, corn earworm, lygus bugs, whitefly, and others. Dr. Fabrick's research has been especially focused on resistance to Bt crops, with emphasis on determining the molecular and biochemical basis of Bt resistance. Dr. Fabrick developed and implemented molecular resistance monitoring techniques, including those that contributed to the Binational Pink Bollworm Eradication Program, which enabled the stunning elimination of this pest from the cotton-growing areas of the continental United States, saving U.S. growers $192 million from 2014 to 2019. Dr. Fabrick's current research projects focus on the use of gene editing and functional genomics to assign protein function in several economically important insect pests.

Dr. Fabrick has been a proud and active member of ESA since 2005. In addition to serving as a peer reviewer for many of the society's journals, he has attended number national and branch conference, acting as a presenter, moderator, student competition judge, and session organizer. He has authored or coauthored 87 research publications (80 refereed journal articles, 4 refereed book chapters, 2 technical bulletins, and one patent). He has collaborated on 25 funded grants and cooperative research agreements totaling nearly $3 million. Dr. Fabrick has been recognized with multiple regional and national awards, including the 2010 USDA-ARS Pacific West Area Early Career Research Scientist Award, the 2018 Physiology, Biochemistry & Toxicology Award for the Pacific Branch of ESA, and as co-recipient of the ESA Plant-Insect Ecosystems Section, Corteva Agriscience IPM Team Award in 2021. Dr. Fabrick has served in various advisory capacities, including USDA NIFA and BRAG panels, and a U.S. EPA Scientific Advisory Panel on Bt resistance.

John Henry Comstock Graduate Student Award

Daniel “Danny” Marshall
Washington State University

Daniel “Danny” Marshall, Ph.D., is adjunct faculty in the Department of Entomology at Washington State University (WSU) and operates a scientific consulting business. He earned his B.S. degree in physics from Cameron University after which he spent years working as an engineer in industry and government. Danny went on to earn his M.S. degree in biology from the University of Central Oklahoma after becoming interested in medical entomology by the 2015-2016 Zika virus outbreak. In 2025, Danny completed his Ph.D. in entomology at WSU under the supervision of Dr. Jeb Owen. His dissertation explored the interaction of behavior, ecology, and physiology of the lone star tick, *Amblyomma americanum.* While at WSU, Danny enjoyed teaching courses in the Department of Entomology and in the School of Biological Sciences and was a frequent guest speaker in classrooms and clubs across campus. He also developed a highly successful outreach program educating children in rural Oklahoma on tick safety. For his work at WSU, Danny received numerous scholarships and awards including the USDA NIFA Predoctoral Fellowship and a four-year doctoral grant from his tribe, The Muscogee Nation.

Danny’s current consulting work bridges the gap between academic, industry, and government partners where he assists clients develop novel technologies for the assessment and control of arthropods that threaten the health of humans and other animals. In his spare time Danny identifies ticks on iNaturalist where he is one of the top global contributors, maintains an insect collection focused largely on brachyceran flies, and competes as an amateur athlete in the sport of strongman where he has twice qualified for the United States national competition.

Student Leadership Award
Michelle Au
University of Hawaii

Michelle Au is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa in the IPM & Insect Ecology lab under the advisment of Dr. Mark Wright. Born and raised on O‘ahu, Michelle is passionate about Hawai‘i’s agriculture. Her dissertation work tackles the challenges surrounding the successful establishment of classical biological control agents for weed and insect species. Her research focuses on two model systems: biocontrol agents introduced to manage Brazilian peppertree (*Schinus terebinthifolia*) and resident natural enemies of a new insect pest of native nettles. The goal of her work is to better understand the complexities surrounding biological control and help Hawai‘i manage its growing pest pressures.
Michelle has been active in various clubs and organizations at UH Mānoa including her college’s Student Ambassador Program and the Ka Mea Kolo Entomology Club. She has served as a student representative on various College- and University-level committees, including those focused on leadership and strategic planning, administrative hires, and student advisement to the Vice Provost’s Office. Outside of the university, she organizes education and outreach events to connect with the community. Michelle is also very involved with the

Entomological Society of America at both the branch and central levels. She served as the Pacific Branch Representative of the Student Affairs Committee where she held leadership positions as the vice-chair and then chair of the committee. She has also been a part of UH Mānoa's Entomology Games team representing the Pacific Branch at the finals on four occassions. Currently, she leads the Pacific Branch Student Activities Committee. Michelle is passionate about helping students and providing them with opportunities to get involved and make a difference in their communities. She is honored to receive the Pacific Branch Student Leadership Award and hopes to continue being involved with the ESA.

Dr. Stephen Garczynski Undergraduate Research Scholarship

Raquel Amrhein-Cervantes

University of Nevada Reno
Transfer student to UC Riverside

Raquel Amrhein-Cervantes is an upcoming transfer student to the University of California, Riverside (UCR), whose passion for natural science began during childhood hikes in the high desert with her grandmother. Learning about rocks, minerals, plants, and insects during these early experiences sparked a deep curiosity about the natural world that has guided her academic path. She gravitated toward STEM from an early age, first exploring math and science and later focusing on biochemistry. A defining moment in her academic journey came when she joined a summer research program at her community college. Through this program, she joined the Subtropical Fruit IPM Lab at UCR under the supervision of Dr. Bodil N. Cass, where she was introduced to applied entomological research. Her project focused on documenting a newly emerging avocado pest, the avocado cone-roller moth, allowing her to participate in both field and laboratory research. Her work included sampling across multiple commercial avocado orchards in Southern California, processing samples in the laboratory, engaging with growers, and presenting her research to diverse audiences. This experience ignited her passion for agricultural entomology, insect ecology, and the role of research in supporting sustainable crop production. Raquel credits Dr. Cass for welcoming her into the lab and acknowledges the impactful mentorship of PhD student Alejandra Rocha, whose guidance encouraged her to pursue entomology as a long-term career. After completing the summer program, Raquel joined the lab as a research assistant, where she continues to strengthen her skills and deepen her experience. She will be transferring to UCR this Fall. As she advances in her academic career, Raquel aims to grow as a researcher and contribute meaningfully to the field of entomology. She is equally committed to uplifting others by sharing her journey and encouraging students to remain open to new opportunities, even when their path feels uncertain.

Excellence in Early Career Award

Adrian Marshall

USDA-ARS,
Temperate Tree Fruit and Vegetable Research: Wapato, WA

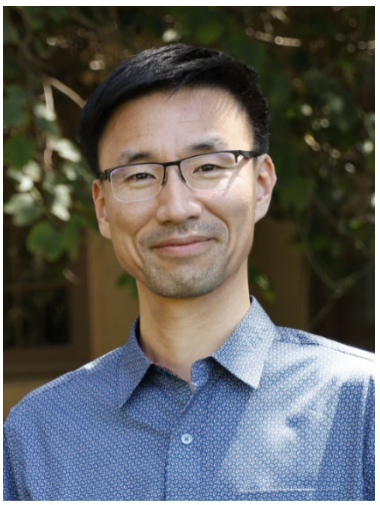
Adrian Marshall is a Research Entomologist with the USDA-ARS Temperate Tree Fruit and Vegetable Research Unit in Wapato, Washington. His career in entomology began as a high school assistant at Washington State University's Tree Fruit Research and Extension Center, and continued through a B.S. in entomology (University of Idaho) and a Ph.D. in entomology (WSU). Throughout his early career, he has focused on improving integrated pest management programs for key insect pests of tree fruits, including codling moth, brown marmorated stink bug, and leafhopper vectors of Little Cherry Disease (X-disease). As a graduate student, Dr. Marshall demonstrated that affordable orchard exclusion netting can eliminate codling moth damage without insecticides—an innovation now widely adopted by organic apple growers facing insecticide resistance. His postdoctoral and USDA-ARS research has transformed regional management of X-disease by identifying effective strategies to reduce leafhopper vectors and prevent pathogen transmission. His current work explores whether exclusion netting can block leafhopper-borne pathogens and quarantine-significant fruit flies, reducing pesticide use and production costs. He is deeply committed to outreach, organizing stakeholder meetings, contributing to extension programs, and mentoring students.

An active member of the Entomological Society of America since 2015, Dr. Marshall has organized national and branch symposia, judged student competitions, and currently serves as Member-at-Large for the Pacific Branch. He is also Vice Director of the Little Cherry Disease Taskforce and Chair of the Orchard Pest and Disease Management Conference, connecting university, government, and industry stakeholders to address critical challenges in tree fruit production.

Excellence in Integrated Pest Management Award

Dong-Hwan Choe

Department of Entomology
University of California, Riverside, CA, USA



Bio: Professor Choe is a Cooperative Extension Specialist / Professor in the Department of Entomology at University of California, Riverside. He got his Bachelor's degree in Agriculture from Korea University, and got his MS and PhD in Entomology from University of California, Riverside. His research program focuses on three major areas: urban entomology, insect behavior, and chemical ecology. In particular, his research has focused on exploring innate and learned behaviors of economically or environmentally important insect species to develop more effective integrated pest management (IPM) programs while reducing impact on human health and environment.

Professor Choe organizes educational conferences and workshops for urban pest management professional throughout the states, notably annual UCR Urban Pest Management Conference and UCR Fumigation School.

Distinction in Student Mentoring Award

Amy Murillo
UC Riverside

Dr. Amy Murillo is an Assistant Professor of veterinary entomology at the University of California Riverside. She earned entomology degrees from Purdue University (BS), North Carolina State University (MS), and UC Riverside (PhD). Dr. Murillo's work focuses on understanding the biology and ecology of mites, lice, and flies that impact animal health, welfare, and behavior. Through her studies, she has advanced knowledge in managing ectoparasites in cage-free and organic poultry systems, benefiting both animal well-being and agricultural productivity.

Distinguished Achievement in Teaching Award

Geoffrey Attardo
UC Davis

I am an Associate Professor of Medical Entomology in the Department of Entomology & Nematology at the University of California, Davis. My work focuses on the intersection of basic vector biology and applied public health. I study the physiology, molecular biology, genetics, and ecology of arthropod disease vectors, with a focus on *Aedes aegypti* and tsetse flies (*Glossina* spp.). My lab uses a mix of metabolomics, genomics, and advanced imaging approaches to understand how vector traits, especially those tied to reproduction, metabolism, and responses to environmental conditions, shape their biology and influence control outcomes. A major theme of my research is developing a mechanistic understanding to inform practical tools and decision-making, including work on insecticide resistance and other determinants of vector competence and population dynamics.

In addition to lab-based research, I collaborate on wetland restoration and monitoring projects that track biodiversity and water quality over time. I'm especially interested in ecological/one health-based approaches to vector management that can function as a net positive for environmental health and water conservation, focusing on partnerships that integrate traditional ecological knowledge with contemporary scientific methods.

I teach medical entomology, basic insect biology, and ethics-centered courses focused on examination of existing societal systems and consideration of how these systems can be improved to emphasize equity and inclusivity. I feel strongly that accessible and engaging science communication and outreach are essential for an informed and healthy society.

Distinguished Achievement in Extension Award

Andony Melathopoulos
Oregon State University

Andony Melathopoulos is an Associate Professor of Pollinator Health Extension at Oregon State University's Department of Horticulture. With over 20 years of experience, he works at the intersection of commercial beekeeping and land management to develop practical, science-based solutions for bee health.

He developed and leads the Master Melittologist program—the first of its kind in the nation—which trains volunteers to support Bee Atlas initiatives in British Columbia, Washington, Idaho, Oregon and New Mexico. This initiative has generated a massive combined dataset of 317,579 records, establishing it as the largest contemporary bee-occurrence record set in the world.

Andony's impact extends deep into Oregon's communities through Explore Oregon Bees, a partnership-driven agricultural and nutritional education program delivered to 115 school districts across 141 cities. Furthermore, his pesticide education program has trained over 15,000 licensed professionals since 2016. A key outcome of this work is a pesticide label comprehension infographic, which has been adopted for trainings nationally across the U.S. and Canada and translated into both Spanish and French.

In addition to his field work, Andony hosts the popular pollinator health podcast, *PolliNation*, and oversees the Bee Steward program, continuing his mission to bridge the gap between complex pollinator science and public action.

Plant-Insect Ecosystems Award

Rachel Vannette
Professor and Vice-Chair
Entomology and Nematology

Rachel Vannette is an ecologist at the University of California Davis, joining the faculty in 2015. She is interested in how microbial communities mediate interactions between insects and plants. Her group has focused on 1) understanding the basic biology and chemistry of microbial effects of pollination and plant-herbivore systems and 2) informing more sustainable pest (herbivore and pathogen) management strategies in orchard and row crop systems including almond, pear and tomatoes. Her group has focused on the function of flower microbiomes, pollinator microbiome composition and function, and soil microbial effects on plant health and pest suppression. More recently, research in her group has uncovered how symbiotic fungi and bacteria are involved in solitary bee development and defense against pathogens.

Pacific Branch Physiology, Biochemistry, and Toxicology Award

William Walker

USDA-ARS,
Temperate Tree Fruit and Vegetable Research: Wapato, WA

Dr. William Walker is a Research Geneticist with the United States Department of Agriculture – Agricultural Research Service at the Temperate Tree Fruit and Vegetable Research Unit in Wapato, Washington. Dr. Walker completed his B.S. in Zoology at Michigan State University in 2002 and Ph.D. in Neuroscience at Vanderbilt University in 2008. It was at Vanderbilt where he first experienced entomological research in a laboratory that was focused on olfaction in mosquitoes. In his present position, where he has resided since 2020, Dr. Walker leads research on the genetics, genomics and molecular biology of insect pests of tree fruit, including apple, pear and cherry, with a primary focus on the proverbial worm in the apple, the codling moth, as well as the leafhopper species that transmit phytoplasma bacteria that cause X-disease in cherry and other stone fruit. The ultimate aim of his research is to contribute to novel solutions in insect pest and plant disease management for agricultural producers.

Prior to joining the USDA in Wapato, Dr. Walker was employed as a postdoctoral researcher and eventually associate professor at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, in Alnarp, Sweden, across a span of ten years, from 2010 to 2019. It was here that Dr. Walker began his research investigations on the codling moth in 2015. During this time, he also was selected to give a presentation at the 2017 TEDx-Folketspark meeting on the topic of the importance of basic scientific research for technological advances in society.

Across his career, Dr. Walker has published 49 peer-reviewed publications and has been awarded more than $1.3 million in extramural funding. He has served ESA through active participation in PBT business meetings at the annual conference, and through the organization of no less than seven symposia across the ESA and PB-ESA annual meetings. Dr. Walker also serves local communities through hosting as a mentor at the USDA-ARS for undergraduate research projects for summer interns from nearby universities and colleges.

Systematics, Evolution, and Biodiversity Award

Scott Geib

USDA-ARS
U.S. Pacific Basin Agricultural Research Center, Hawaii

Dr. Scott Geib is the Research Leader of the Tropical Pest Genetics and Molecular Biology Research Unit at the USDA Agricultural Research Service Daniel K. Inouye U.S. Pacific Basin Agricultural Research Center in Hilo, Hawaii. Dr. Geib obtained his B.S. from Michigan State University Lyman Brigg College in Zoology in 2003, followed by a Ph.D. from The Pennsylvania State University in Entomology in 2008 where he was awarded the ESA John Henry Comstock Award for the Eastern Branch. After his Ph.D., Scott was a USDA Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at The Pennsylvania State University before becoming a Research Entomologist at the USDA-ARS in Hilo in 2010 in the Tropical Crop and Commodity Protection Research Unit. In 2022 he obtained the research leader position that he currently holds today. His research focuses on the evolutionary relationships, species boundaries, and genomic diversity of insects of regulatory and ecological importance, with an emphasis on pest fruit flies, pollinators, and invasive species across the Pacific region, including addressing longstanding species-complex challenges within *Bactrocera*, *Anastrepha*, and other high-impact fruit fly groups. By applying emerging genomic techniques and developing novel approaches in phylogenomics, the focus is towards development of biosecurity tools for use by regulatory agencies, including USDA-APHIS, to improve surveillance, exclusion, and response programs. In addition to applied systematics, Dr. Geib is active in consortium sequencing projects such as the Ag100Pest and Beenome100 initiatives, with focus on developing foundational genomic resources for important pest and pollinator species, which are a component of larger initiatives such as the Earth Biogenome Project. In addition to developing novel methods and approaches in arthropod genomics, Scott's lab deploys cutting-edge methodologies on state-of-the-art sequencing instrumentation to support these projects. Dr. Geib has published over 150 peer-reviewed manuscripts and secured over $5.5 million dollars in competitive funding. He has supervised 10 postdoctoral scholars and supervised or advised many graduate and undergraduate students. Within ESA, Scott is a past member of the Science Policy Committee as well as a Subject Editor for *Economic Entomology*.

Pacific Branch Entomology Team Work Award

Spotted-Wing Drosophila Resistance Team (UC Davis, Frank Zalom-lead)

The Spotted-Wing Drosophila Resistance Team represents a highly collaborative partnership that exemplifies how academia and the agricultural industry can successfully target, tackle and mitigate a major pest problem through world-class research and an extensive outreach program. The team closely collaborates with growers, various organizations and businesses affiliated with the berry industries, and researchers throughout the country.

The six-member team is led by IPM specialist Frank Zalom, UC Davis distinguished professor emeritus (on recall) and molecular geneticist-physiologist Joanna Chiu, professor and chair of the UC Davis Department of Entomology and Nematology. Team members include Christine Tubuloc, postdoctoral researcher in the Chiu lab; Mark Bolda, UC Cooperative Extension berry crops farm advisor for Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Benito counties - “the strawberry capital of the world”; Hillary Thomas-Sanchez, research and technical director for Naturipe Berry Growers; and Andrew Molinar, California Strawberry Commission production research manager.

Pacific Branch Student Travel Awards

Alejandra Rocha
University of California, Riverside

Alejandra Rocha is a second-year Ph.D. student in the Cass Lab at the University of California, Riverside. She earned her combined B.S.+M.S. in Entomology from UC Riverside, where her master's research focused on the systematics of paleotropical ant parasitoids in the family Eucharitidae using both morphological and molecular approaches. Her doctoral research focuses on developing integrated pest management strategies for an emerging lepidopteran pest of avocado in California. Through this work, she aims to generate the foundational knowledge needed to support sustainable, long-term pest management for the state's avocado industry.

In addition to her research, Alejandra is committed to mentoring students, particularly first-generation college students, and helping them recognize that the University of California is a place where they belong. She is passionate about science communication and regularly engages diverse audiences through extension articles and trainings, podcasts, and K–12 classroom presentations. Outside of research, Alejandra enjoys spending time with family, cooking, traveling, exploring the outdoors, and photographing insects, fungi, and slime molds.

Melissa Thayer
University of California, Riverside

Melissa 'Mel' Thayer is a second year PhD student in the Wilson Lab at the University of California, Riverside. Prior to graduate school, she earned her B.S. in Environmental Science and Management with a minor in Political Science at the University of California, Davis. During her undergraduate degree, her passion for ecology and how humans can leverage biological knowledge to create sustainable systems began. Her research is currently centered around the black fig fly, *Silba adipata*, and developing knowledge that will inform sustainable and effective management practices for the fly on both large and small scales.

Aside from research, Melissa's passion lies in extension and outreach. In the 2024-2025 academic year, she dedicated over 40 hours of outreach service through UCR's Department of Entomology, engaging with children and adults about insects, their importance, and the practical role entomologists play in our lives. Additionally, Mel presented multiple talks to growers and home gardeners about her research and potential management strategies for the black fig fly.

Melissa's main goal in graduate school is to hone the skills that will help guide her path into agricultural extension. One day she hopes to serve her community as an extension agent connecting research with the people that need it.

Ava Bartlett-Miller
University of Arizona

I was born and raised in Albuquerque, New Mexico and have received a Bachelor of Science in Biology with a secondary major in Theology/Ethics from Baylor University. While at Baylor, I was also a member of the track and cross country teams. Although I am innately curious and have always desired a career in the scientific realm, entomology was not on my radar until I joined an arthropod sensory lab and began studying the medically relevant mosquito species *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus*. This research experience provided me immense motivation to continue mosquito research and led me to the University of Arizona's Department of Entomology. As a PhD student in the lab of Dr. Michael Riehle, my research is focused on the manipulation of CoA biosynthesis in transgenic *Anopheles stephensi*. In particular, we hope to upregulate the vital enzyme pantothenate kinase (PanK) in order to deplete pantothenate levels in the mosquito, and eliminate this vital resource from Plasmodium species. The opportunity to participate in this research is an ongoing challenge and honor, and I am excited to be able to present at the 2026 Entomological Society of America Pacific Branch Meeting.

Bios

President, Dr. Laura Lavine (2025-2026)

Dr. Laura Lavine is Professor and Chair of the Washington State University Department of Entomology. Dr. Lavine received her Ph.D. in Entomology at the University of Kentucky and was a USDA NIFA Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Dr. Lavine has held many leadership roles while at WSU. Dr. Lavine's research program on the evolution of adaptation understanding the mechanisms underlying an organism's ability to rapidly adjust to its environment. Her research has been funded by the NSF and the USDA as well as commodity commissions and she has published her work in diverse journals such as *Nature*, *Science*, and the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science.*

President-Elect, Dr. Angelita Acebes-Doria (2026-2027)

Dr. Acebes-Doria is a research entomologist at the USDA-ARS PBARC in Hilo, Hawaii. Her research is on insect ecology and integrated pest management (IPM) of pests in tropical tree nut and fruit (e.g., macadamia and avocado). She established the Hawaii MyIPM App providing a resource for growers and stakeholders in Hawaii. Prior to working with USDA, she was a University of Georgia assistant professor focused on IPM strategies for pecan pests. She was also involved in several IPM-centered projects involving the invasive brown marmorated stink bug in the eastern U.S. and ambrosia beetles in the southeastern U.S. She completed her B.S. at the University of the Philippines with a major in entomology and earned an M.S. from the University of Hawaii and Ph.D. from Virginia Tech. She served in the U.S. Army Reserve from 2015 to 2021.

Plenary Speaker – Douglas J. Emlen

"The evolution of extreme weapons (lessons from a rhinoceros beetle)"

Douglas J. Emlen is an American evolutionary biologist and Regents Professor of Biology at the University of Montana, specializing in the development and evolution of exaggerated traits such as male weaponry in insects and other animals. His research integrates behavioral ecology, genetics, phylogenetics, and developmental biology to investigate how sexual selection drives the evolution of extreme structures, particularly horns and other appendages in scarab beetles, and how nutritional and genetic factors influence their size and shape. Emlen's work has demonstrated key mechanisms, such as the role of appendage patterning genes in horn morphology and the insulin receptor pathway in modulating weapon size based on larval nutrition. His contributions have significantly advanced understanding in evolutionary biology, animal behavior, and genetics.

Emlen has received numerous accolades for his scientific and educational impact, including election to the National Academy of Sciences in 2023, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2016, the U.S. Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers in 2002, and the E. O. Wilson Naturalist Award from the American Society of Naturalists in 2013.He is also recognized for his teaching, earning the Carnegie/CASE Montana Professor of the Year Award in 2015 and the University of Montana Distinguished Teaching Award in 2014. Beyond academia, Emlen communicates evolutionary concepts to broader audiences through popular media, including appearances on NPR's *Science Friday* and *Fresh Air*, BBC's *Nature's Wildest Weapons*, and PBS's *NOVA* episode *Extreme Animal Weapons*.

A prolific author, Emlen co-authored the widely adopted textbook *Evolution: Making Sense of Life* (fourth edition, 2025, with Carl Zimmer), used by over 250 universities, and wrote *Animal Weapons: The Evolution of Battle* (2014), which won the 2015 Phi Beta Kappa Science Book of the Year Award. He also published *Beetle Battles: One Scientist's Journey of Adventure and Discovery* (2019), a narrative nonfiction book for young adults highlighting his field research.

What limits the size of nature's most extreme structures? For weapons like tusks, antlers, or beetle horns, one possibility is a tradeoff associated with mechanical levers: as the output arm of the lever system gets longer—the antler or the beetle horn—it also gets weaker. Longer weapons should be weaker weapons, and this could offset the reproductive advantages of additional increases in weapon size. This is not what researchers have found, however. In crabs, frog-legged beetles, stag beetles, and leaf-footed bugs, males with the longest/largest weapons are also the strongest, presumably because selection has led to the evolution of compensatory changes to these lever systems that ameliorate the force reductions of increased weapon size. Given the confounding effects of compensatory evolution, Emlen suggests that the only way to fully test for the existence (and importance) of these biomechanical limits to extreme weapon size is to reconstruct the stages of weapon evolution – to explore whether *initial* increases in weapon length first led to reductions in weapon strength that were then ameliorated through later evolution of mechanisms of mechanical compensation. The answer lies in the *sequence of stages* of weapon evolution, which requires an examination of multiple populations of a heavily-weaponed species and a phylogenetic reconstruction of the historical relationships among these populations.

Emlen and his colleagues provide such a test for the giant Asian rhinoceros beetle *Trypoxylus dichotomus*, a species where males wield a “pitchfork” shaped head horn that can comprise up to 30% of the weight of the male. They show that horns increased in length independently in the Northern and Southern lineages of beetles, and each of these increases in horn length was associated with a dramatic reduction to horn lifting strength – compelling evidence for a biomechanical limit to extreme weapon size. They also show that these initial reductions to horn lifting strength were later ameliorated in some populations through reductions to horn length, evolution of larger thorax muscles, or through increases in head height (the input arm for the horn lever system). Reconstructing the sequence of evolution of this weapon provides a rare glimpse of an ephemeral and elusive cost to extreme structures.

Emlen also discusses results from field studies of multiple natural populations of beetles exploring how changes to the mating system contribute to population-differences in the intensity of sexual selection and the length of male horns. The talk ends with a surprise: even after battling to hold a territory, male beetles must perform stridulatory “songs” and trembling “dances” on the backs of the females! Experiments underway are exploring the functional significance of these putative courtship signals, revealing just how much we *don’t* understand about this amazing animal system.

This talk is aimed at academic audiences (biology departments) but is written in a “stand-alone” fashion that works fine with broader audiences. It is a fun story of the detective process so fundamental to basic scientific research, and a healthy reminder of how often our initial ideas turn out to be wrong!
Midway in the early 1880s, while his wife Jill is a Utah native, and descendent of early pioneers that walked 1,300 miles with handcarts to enter the Salt Lake Valley in the early 1850s.

Schedule By Day

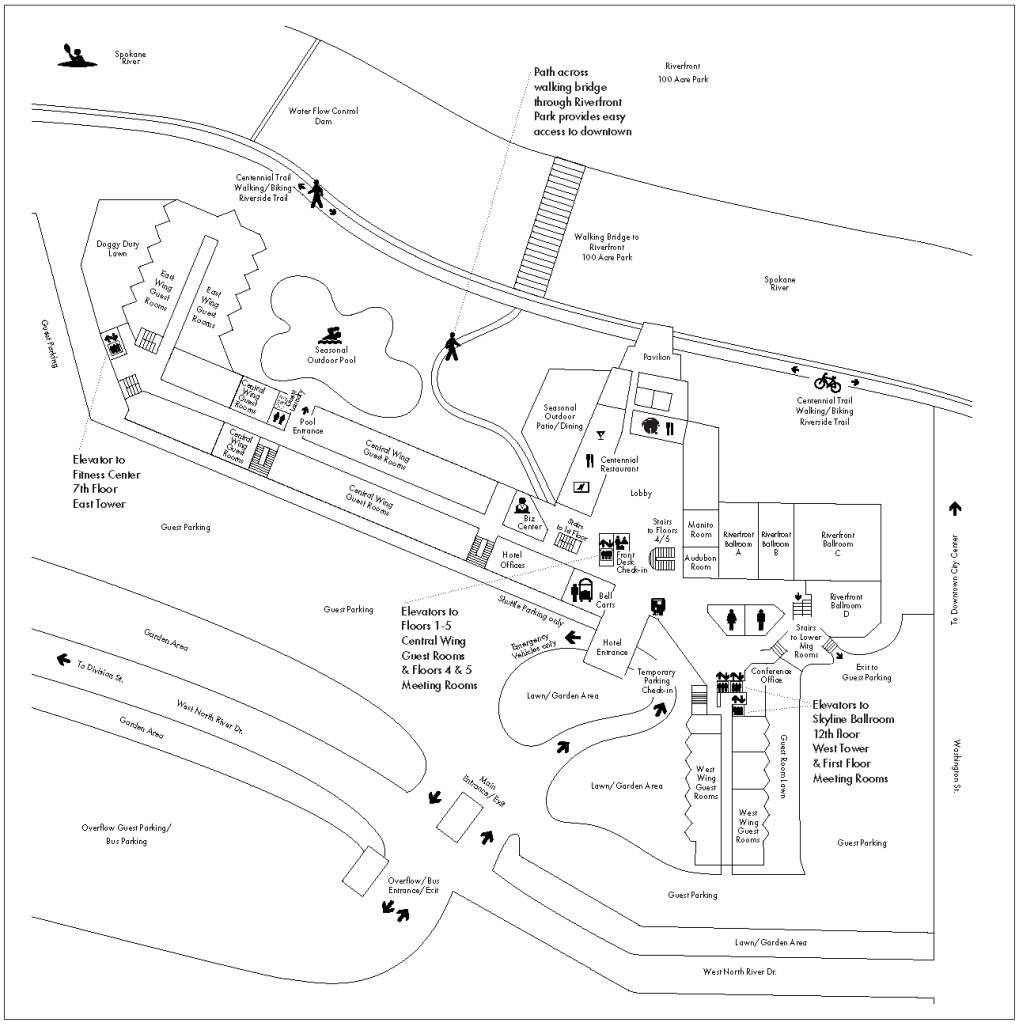
SUNDAY, APRIL 12		
Time	**Session/Function**	**Location**
1:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Fly Tying Workshop	Skyline A, The Centennial Hotel
2:00 PM - 6:00 PM	Registration and Presentation Uploads	Ballroom Pre-Function, The Centennial Hotel
4:00 PM - 5:00 PM	Executive Committee Meeting	Pavilion, The Centennial Hotel
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM	Opening Plenary	Skyline A, The Centennial Hotel
MONDAY, APRIL 13		
Time	**Session/Function**	**Location**
8:00 AM - 9:00 AM	Student Poster Display Setup	Ballroom Pre-Function, The Centennial Hotel
8:00 AM - 10:00 AM	Opening Session & Business Meeting	Skyline A, The Centennial Hotel
9:00 AM - 6:00 PM	Masters Poster Display Competition	Ballroom Pre-Function, The Centennial Hotel
9:00 AM - 6:00 PM	PhD Poster Display Competition	Ballroom Pre-Function, The Centennial Hotel
9:00 AM - 6:00 PM	Undergraduate Poster Display Competition	Ballroom Pre-Function, The Centennial Hotel
10:00 AM - 10:30 AM	Break	Ballroom Pre-Function, The Centennial Hotel
10:00 AM - 10:30 AM	Q&A with Student Poster Display Presenters (odd numbers)	Ballroom Pre-Function, The Centennial Hotel
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM	Masters 10-Minute Presentation Competition	Grant Room, The Centennial Hotel
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM	PhD 10-Minute Presentation Competition 1	Skyline A, The Centennial Hotel
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM	Undergraduate 10-Minute Presentation Competition	Finch, The Centennial Hotel
1:00 PM - 3:30 PM	PhD 10-Minute Presentation Competition 2	Skyline B, The Centennial Hotel
3:00 PM - 3:30 PM	Q&A with Student Poster Display Presenters (even numbers)	Centennial, Ballroom Pre-Function
5:00 PM - 6:00 PM	What's New in Industry	Corbin, The Centennial Hotel
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM	Student Poster Removal	Ballroom Pre-Function, The Centennial Hotel
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM	PBESA Mixer	Riverfront Ballroom A/B/C, The Centennial Hotel
8:00 PM - 10:00 PM	Entomology Games	Skyline A, The Centennial Hotel

TUESDAY, APRIL 14		
Time	**Session/Function**	**Location**
7:00 AM - 8:00 AM	Contributed Poster Display Setup	Ballroom Pre-Function, The Centennial Hotel
8:00 AM - 10:00 AM	10-Minute Presentation 1	Finch, The Centennial Hotel
8:00 AM - 10:00 AM	10-Minute Presentation 2	Corbin, The Centennial Hotel
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Biology, Ecology, and Management of Insect Pests in Western U.S.	Grant Room, The Centennial Hotel
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM	From Classrooms to Communities: How to FIT In Good Pedagogy	Riverfront Ballroom D, The Centennial Hotel
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM	The Sterile Insect Technique: Innovations, Challenges, and Future Directions	Skyline A, The Centennial Hotel
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM	W5185 Multi-State Research Project: Biological Control of Invasive Arthropods and Noxious Weeds in the Western U.S.	Skyline B, The Centennial Hotel
8:00 AM - 6:00 PM	Contributed Poster Displays	Ballroom Pre-Function, The Centennial Hotel
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Lepidopteran Pests of Tree Crops	Audubon/Manito, The Centennial Hotel
10:00 AM - 10:30 AM	Q&A with Contributed Poster Display Presenters (odd numbers)	Ballroom Pre-Function, The Centennial Hotel
12:15 PM - 1:45 PM	Awards Luncheon	Riverfront Ballroom A/B/C, The Centennial Hotel
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM	Spelling Bee	Pavilion, The Centennial Hotel
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM	10-Minute Presentation 3	Finch, The Centennial Hotel
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM	10-Minute Presentation 4	Corbin, The Centennial Hotel
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Grape Entomology	Grant Room, The Centennial Hotel
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Stress Biology in Insects: Molecular, Evolutionary, and Ecological Scales of Stress	Riverfront Ballroom D, The Centennial Hotel
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM	W5185 Business Meeting	Skyline B, The Centennial Hotel
2:00 PM - 5:00 PM	Emerging and Invasive Pests: Research Advances and Management Strategies	Skyline A, The Centennial Hotel
2:00 PM - 5:00 PM	Patterns and Puzzles: Understanding Insect Outbreaks across Ecosystems	Audubon/Manito, The Centennial Hotel
3:00 PM - 3:30 PM	Contributed Poster Display Presenters (even numbers)	Centennial, Ballroom Pre-Function
3:30 PM - 5:30 PM	Entomolympics	Pavilion, The Centennial Hotel
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM	Contributed Poster Display Removal	Ballroom Pre-Function, The Centennial Hotel
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM	Resume/CV Workshop	Pavilion, The Centennial Hotel

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15		
Time	**Session/Function**	**Location**
8:00 AM - 10:00 AM	10-Minute Presentation 5	Grant Room, The Centennial Hotel
8:00 AM - 10:00 AM	Leveraging Your Expertise: Sharing Science to Build Better Policy	Skyline A, The Centennial Hotel
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Leveraging Modern Technologies and Models to Reimagine Pest Management Decision-Making	Audubon/Manito, The Centennial Hotel
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Breaking Barriers: Women Leading the Way in Pest Management	Skyline B, The Centennial Hotel
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Impact across Scales of Inquiry: Current Advances In Medical-Veterinary Entomology	Riverfront Ballroom D, The Centennial Hotel

This year, anyone who attends the last session (or any concurrent last session) on the last day of any ESA meeting will receive an ULTIMATE INSTAR award sticker (Dishwasher safe! Perfect for a water bottle or travel mug!) to proudly display.

Hotel Map



DINING

- Centennial Restaurant 6 am - Midnight
- Outdoor Patio 11 am -10 pm
  (Seasonal, weather permitting)
- Espresso Stand 5 am - 5 pm
- Room Service 6 am -10 pm
- Poolside Service 10 am -10 pm

AMENITIES

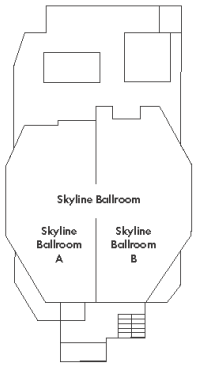
- Outdoor Pool 9 am - Dusk
  (Seasonal, weather permitting, guest keycard entry access)
- Fitness Center 6 am - 10 pm (Guest keycard entry access)
- Business Center 24 hour (Guest keycard entry access)
- Wifi "Guest Access" (No password required)
- Bike Rentals 8 am - Dusk (2-hour limit)
- Overnight Parking $12 per night

- **Check in** 4 pm
- **Check out** Noon
- **Phone** 509.326.8000
- **Fax** 509.325.7329

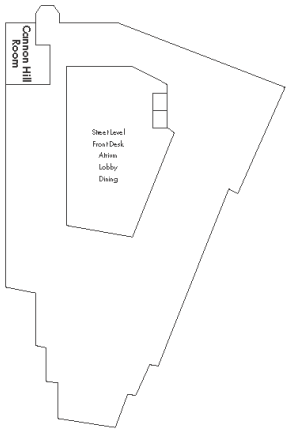
The Centennial Hotel by Davenport Hotels
303 West North River Drive
Spokane, WA 99201
centennialhotelspokane.com

Meeting Space

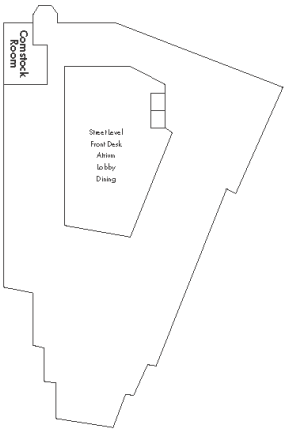
Floor 12 West Tower



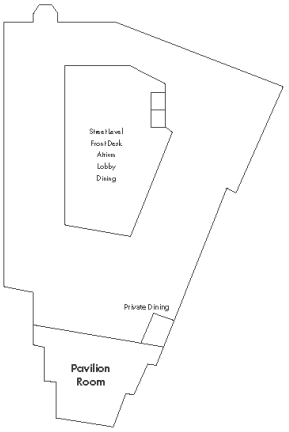
Floor 5 Atrium



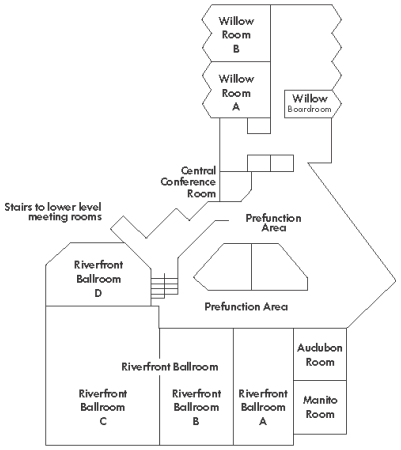
Floor 4 Atrium



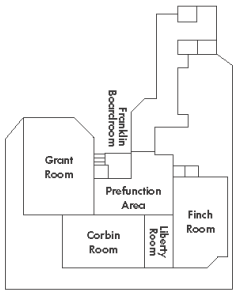
Lobby Level Floor 2 Atrium South



Lobby Level Floor 2 Atrium



Lower Level Floor 1



13