

Keeping **E**arly **C**areer **P**rofessionals **connected, informed, and prepared.**



Issue 6 - July 2016

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New Name for STEP Committee (ECP) and Other News

You may have noticed something different about this newsletter... it's our new name!

Here's the background... The annual ESA strategy meeting was held in Chicago last month and members of the STEP committee were invited to share their perspectives and speak on behalf of you and other ESA members who are in the early stages of their careers. During the ESA Governing Board meeting held alongside this event, the Committee was renewed for an additional three years—and it was renamed as the "Early Career Professionals" (ECP) Committee. We believe the new name better captures our mission to support our critical demographic of the Society; one that has specific interests and needs—the student transition and early professional members of ESA.

This year's committee report and discussions at the meeting highlighted the importance of science communication and diversity within our science and Society, and featured preparations for the upcoming ICE 2016 meeting in Orlando, now just two months away. The ECP committee shared its 2016 achievements, which include a series of important professional development webinars, and support for new awards focused on ECP members. Discussions included ways to have more ECP members involved in ESA Branches and Sections. ECP members play a critical role in the future of ESA, and both the ECP committee and the Society will work to promote the participation and success of early career entomologists.

A Call to Early Career Professionals to Get Involved

New Value to Your Membership



ECP Committee Members



Dr. Tamra
Reall Lincoln,
USDA-ARS in Missouri

Over the past year, ECP members have become an important focal point within the Society. Since the 2015 Summer Strategy meeting in Minneapolis, many exciting things have been adopted to add value to your student transition (ST) or early professional (EP) ESA membership. These include the addition of new awards at the Society and Branch levels, new workshops and programs to further your professional development, and the opportunity to be more involved through more volunteer opportunities at meetings.

Serving in the Society

With the encouragement of our Society leaders, the ECP Committee invites you to consider running for a Branch, Section, or Society-level position. Positions include roles with the ESA Governing Board, Branch or Section executive committees, and various society and Branch and Section committees. These opportunities allow you add your voice to everyday discussions and decisions, expand your networking base, and further your professional development. Some committee positions will open for 2016-2017 soon. Please reach out to your Branch and Section leaders to let them know of your interest – and be sure to update your member profile on [ESA's Volunteer Directory](#) so leaders can find you.

In addition, ESA leaders and the ECP Committee encourage you to participate in Branch and Section business meetings taking place during ICE 2016. These meetings are open to ESA membership and are a great place to learn about the current events of the Society and they offer opportunities to get involved with advancement of the Society.

Early Career Professional Awards

Nearly six months ago, a collaborative project between ESA's Governing Board and Early Career Professional (ECP) committee resulted in the addition of four new awards to honor individuals who have greatly contributed to the science of entomology. The **ECP Outreach and Public Engagement Award** honors a student transition or early professional working within the field of entomology that has demonstrated excellence, leadership, and creativity in outreach and public engagement. The **ECP Research Award** recognizes an ECP member who has made outstanding research contributions to the field of entomology. Additionally, the **ECP Teaching Award** recognizes an ECP member who excels in entomological education. And the **ECP Extension Award** is given to a student transition or early professional who has shown excellence in entomological extension.



Last month, ESA announced the first recipients of these awards - <http://www.entsoc.org/press-releases/esa-names-winners-2016-awards>.

- **Dr. Adrian Smith** has been recognized with the ECP Outreach and Public Engagement Award.
- **Dr. Lauren Diepenbrock** is the recipient of the 2016 ECP Extension Award.
- **Dr. Nicholas Teets** has been awarded the 2016 ECP Research Award.

ICE 2016



Dr. Erika Machtinger,
USDA-ARS in
Maryland



Dr. Amy Morey,
University of Minnesota



Dr. Rob Morrison,
USDA-ARS in
West Virginia



Dr. Travis Prochaska,
North Dakota State
University



Dr. Rebecca
Schmidt-Jeffris,
Cornell University

Childcare Program – Camp ICE

ESA will be providing [on-site childcare](#) during the Congress free of charge for registered ICE attendees. Camp ICE will be conveniently located at the Rosen Plaza Hotel, adjacent to the Orange County Convention Center. Register early; space is limited. Dates, times, and details may be [found here](#).



U.S.-based ECP Travel Awards; Reception Planned

The Student and Early Career Professionals Committee (STEP; recently renamed as the Early Career Professionals Committee) sponsored a travel grant competition for U.S.-based early career professionals earlier this year. A total of \$27,000 was awarded to 28 ECPs to cover travel costs to ICE 2016-<http://www.entsoc.org/press-releases/esa-ice-2016-travel-award-winners>. Last year, \$50,000 was awarded to 27 non-US based ESA undergraduates, graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, or other ECPs. All of these award winners are invited to a ceremony at the end of the ECP-sponsored, "Global Entomological Collaborations" symposium (see below).

Early Career Professionals Symposium: *Global Entomological Collaborations*

Plan to attend the Early Career Professionals Committee-sponsored symposium, "Global Entomological Collaborations", at ICE 2016! Beginning at 9:15 am on Monday, September 26, speakers will share their experiences and wisdom on the unique benefits and challenges of undertaking entomology in an international arena. Learn how to build global networks, jump-start and maintain collaborations, and use them to enhance your career and research.

Following the presentations, ESA-STEP ICE Travel Award winners will be honored during a reception at 11:15am (light refreshments included), and symposium attendees will have the opportunity to mingle with the symposium speakers and each other. The schedule for all ICE symposia is published [here](#).



Dr. Ashfaq Sial,
University of Georgia



Dr. Sheena Sidhu,
University of
California Riverside



Dr. Ana Maria Velez,
University of
Nebraska-Lincoln

For ECP Committee members' full bios, click [here](#).

Lunch & Learn: "Down with Publish or Perish! Non-Traditional Careers in Entomology"

Interested in a job that doesn't require constant publishing? Would you like a job where funding is available without chasing after it? Non-traditional career paths, such as regulatory entomology, may be your answer. The BYOB-style lunch and learn kicks off with a Q&A session featuring a panel of individuals representing diverse agencies and career paths. Then you'll have an opportunity to mingle with Society of Regulatory Entomology committee members in a relaxed setting and discuss job opportunities. Agencies represented may include USAID, CBP-DHS, USDA (including APHIS, CPHST, and ARS), other foreign government agencies, and state or local regulatory agencies.

ESA Webinar Wednesdays

ESA provides free, hour-long webinars to help ECPs gain new skills and enhance their careers. Register for the events below:

Stand Out from the Crowd: Promoting your Strengths and Meeting the Right People.

July 27, 2016 at 2 p.m. EDT

Did you know your next job interview begins before you even walk in the door or submit your CV for consideration? In part one of *Standing Out from the Crowd*, we will explore how to meet the right people, and get them to remember you; tips and tricks to leveraging your graduate program to build on your personal development; and the steps to take to become involved in outreach and community service programs.

Stand Out from the Crowd: Building Your CV and Resume

August 10, 2016 at 2 p.m. EDT

The ability to explain your research is a key component to your success. In part two of *Standing Out from the Crowd*, we will discuss not only how to give a presentation people will remember, but what other areas can make you an ideal candidate with a well-rounded CV. Learn how volunteering through ESA can help you gain new experience and perspective and the importance of getting involved in committees and journal review boards.

Know Before You Go: ICE 2016

September 7, 2016 at 2 p.m. EDT

You have made the commitment to go to ICE 2016, now ensure that you will have the best time possible. Tips on planning the best experience include: what not to miss; how to plan your schedule in advance; what to bring; what to wear; and how to take advantage of the networking opportunities available to meet the right people. This is a not-to-be-missed webinar event for ICE 2016 attendees!

ECP Member Spotlight

Beginning with this issue, we are excited to announce the addition of the "ECP Member Spotlight" to this newsletter, allowing you to learn what other ECP members are doing with their careers—spanning research, teaching, outreach and extension activities. Watch your inbox for emails regarding the submission process for future ECP Spotlights.



Name: **Dr. Rob Morrison**

Job Title: Post-doctoral Researcher

Employer: USDA-ARS Appalachian Fruit Research Station

ESA Branch: Eastern Branch; ESA Section: PI-E

How did you become interested in Entomology?

Since I was a young kid, I've been fascinated by the living, natural world. I knew I wanted to be some sort of biologist after taking biology in high school, because the course was so amazing. As an undergraduate at a liberal arts school, I performed research with the one faculty member dedicated to entomology. That opened the world of insects up to me, and I realized how fascinating and vitally important insects are.

What is your current research focus?

I am currently researching the integrated pest management of the brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB) in tree fruit systems at the USDA-ARS in Kearneysville, WV. One of my main projects includes assessing the use of an attract-and-kill tactic in apple to reduce insecticide input and restore sustainable management programs. Other projects include evaluating the native predator and parasitoid community of BMSB, understanding how host volatiles and host stimuli affect foraging by, and studying the movement ecology of BMSB. The overall goal of my research is to increase the sustainability of agriculture, while reducing inputs.

What are your career goals?

Ultimately, my goal is to be a faculty member at a large land grant university performing research that is of paramount importance to growers and other stakeholders, while increasing the sustainability of agriculture.

Describe how ESA has broadened your horizons.

ESA has been enormously beneficial to my career by providing venues to present my research, opportunities for networking and professional development, as well as help mentoring the next generation of entomologists. ESA's annual meeting, committee work, opportunities to provide younger students feedback on their work, and branch meetings have all been instrumental in helping me to get to where I am today.



Name: **Dr. Rebecca Schmidt-Jeffris**

Job title: Postdoctoral Research Associate

Employer: Cornell University

ESA Branch: Pacific Branch and Eastern Branch; ESA Section: Plant-Insect Ecosystems

How did you become interested in Entomology?

I have always been interested in animal ecology and ethology. In childhood, I went through phases of wanting to study whales, bats, hermit crabs, ants, and reptiles in turn. As an undergraduate at Washburn University, I had the opportunity to conduct my own research projects. My research advisor, Lee Boyd, encouraged me to work with insects to investigate my interest in prey preferences and kinship selection. My first study organism was the Chinese praying mantis – and I was permanently hooked!

What is your current research focus ?

I am interested in how landscape use and management practices affect arthropod communities in agroecosystems. I work with Brian Nault in the vegetable entomology lab at Cornell. I am currently investigating how temporal and spatial dominance of *Bt*-free corn affect European corn borer (ECB) and natural enemy populations. Additional work involves examining how soil management affects plant health and host plant preferences of ECB. We are also concluding research examining efficacy of newer, reduced-risk materials for ECB control in snap bean.

What are your career goals?

I am currently seeking a position as a professor or USDA-ARS scientist working on applied arthropod ecology research. Beyond being able to investigate my own research questions, I am excited about the opportunity that these positions bring to mentor new scientists.

Describe how ESA has broadened your horizons.

ESA has been an amazing means for meeting new people within the entomological community. I am especially grateful that I have gotten to know both established professionals in ESA leadership, as well as up and coming leaders during my time on the Student Affairs Committee and currently in the Early Career Professionals Committee. Interactions with these people have strengthened my confidence in my own abilities as a scientist and leader, and I am constantly impressed by how welcoming we are as a society. ESA meetings have allowed me to travel the country in addition to meeting people from all over the world.

Describe a favorite experience while attending an ESA meeting.

I really enjoyed the latest Pacific Branch meeting (April 2016). First, it was in Honolulu, so it was nice to take a break from the east coast winter, and to go swimming with sea turtles and spot whales. Additionally, I was able to present my research from my Ph.D. during the opening plenary, which was an honor and a great opportunity. I am looking forward to ICE, which is likely to be my favorite meeting yet.

Want to Get Involved?

If you have any thoughts, suggestions, or questions for the ECP Committee, please contact us by emailing esa.step.committee@gmail.com or by joining our [ESA network](#).



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Meet the 2016 STEP Committee



Dr. Tamra Reall Lincoln is a postdoctoral research associate with the USDA-ARS at the Biological Control of Insects Research Laboratory in Missouri. She is currently working in cell culture. Tamra has been involved in ESA in many ways, most recently as the Student Representative to the ESA Governing Board (GB) and as GB liaison to the SAC and STEP Committee. Serving on various committees has been an integral part of her career preparation. Involvement in ESA has not only given her a back-door view of how things work in the society, but also exposed her to many research ideas and concepts beyond her research. She enthusiastically encourages others to become involved in ESA.



Dr. Erika Machtinger is a Post Doctoral Scientist with the USDA, ARS in Beltsville, MD. She received her BS from the University of Delaware in Wildlife Conservation and her MS and PhD in entomology from the University of Florida. Erika was raised in the natural areas surrounding the coast of Maine, which fostered her love of the environment and wildlife. Erika has worked at the USDA-BIIRL Laboratory in Newark, DE and also as a wildlife biologist and Environmental Scientist. Because of her involvement with the equine industry, Erika focused her doctoral research on biological control of filth flies. In her current position, Erika is combining her wildlife background and investigating host targeting integrated control of ticks.



Dr. Amy Morey is a post-doctoral researcher with the Minnesota Invasive Terrestrial Plants and Pests Center and the University of Minnesota Department Of Entomology. Her research broadly centers on the intersection of insect cold tolerance, invasion biology, and risk assessment. The goal of her work is to improve invasive species management practices and methods currently used to forecast insect distributions. Amy has been active in ESA since 2008, presenting at yearly branch and national meetings, participating in the Linnaean Games, volunteering, and serving on the North Central Branch Student Affairs Committee. She is thrilled to continue being strongly connected with the ESA community and actively contributes to its function as a member of the STEP Committee.



Dr. Rob Morrison is a post-doctoral researcher with the USDA-ARS at the Appalachian Fruit Research Center in West Virginia. He is currently researching attract-and-kill technology to manage the brown marmorated stink bug in apples, and is also investigating its native predator community. Rob's long-term research interests include understanding how semiochemicals modify plant-insect interactions, and how we can exploit this knowledge to improve the sustainability of agriculture. Rob has been active in ESA, serving on committees in the North Central and Eastern Branches of ESA, as well as regularly judging student competitions. He is excited to be serving on the STEP Committee and to be the STEP liaison to the Education and Outreach Committee of ESA, because he believes it is important to increase science literacy among the public.



Dr. Travis (TJ) Prochaska has just accepted a position with North Dakota State University. He graduated in August with his PhD from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln under the supervision of Drs. Tiffany Heng-Moss and Gautam Sarath where he worked on the biochemical, physiological, and anatomical insights of insect-bioenergy grass interactions to help better understand the potential insect resistance mechanism among defined switchgrass populations. Previously serving as the Student Representative to the ESA Governing Board for two years, Travis has been able to learn about the topics of interest that STEP and other members find valuable to build webinars and ESA workshops to give back to the Society. This has allowed him to make new contacts that STEP can potentially utilize in future projects to add value to the STEP membership.



Dr. Rebecca Schmidt-Jeffris joined the ESA in 2010 as a graduate student at Washington State University. She is currently a postdoctoral research associate at Cornell University, where she is determining factors that increase risk of European corn borer infestation in vegetable crops. Her broad research interests include landscape ecology, biological control, and the development of innovative IPM practices. She has greatly benefited from her involvement in ESA; her leadership roles have included chairing the ESA and ICE 2016 Student Affairs Committees, organizing the Student Debates and symposia, and an extension careers Lunch and Learn. She is excited to use this leadership experience to advocate for postdocs and other early career professionals as a STEP committee member. Rebecca would like to help other members become engaged with ESA; contact her with any questions or suggestions regarding how ESA can better serve its members.



Dr. Ashfaq Sial is currently working as an Assistant Professor in the Entomology Department at the University of Georgia where he has a research and extension appointment. The goals of his research program are to investigate biology and ecology of insect pests of small fruits in both field and laboratory settings, and to develop sustainable management programs. The majority of his current projects focus on invasive pest, spotted wing drosophila. He works directly with growers to help them implement IPM programs in conventional and organic production systems. His laboratory is well funded through federal, stakeholder, and industry grants. He also serves as IPM Coordinator for the state of Georgia.



Dr. Sheena Sidhu is a postdoctoral researcher at University of California Riverside studying pollinator communities and pollination biology in both natural and agricultural systems of southern California. Sheena has valued the benefits of being an ESA member and particularly appreciated the focus on students at branch and annual meetings. She joined STEP to advocate for similar support for postdoc and in-transition members that are at the critical phase of early career development. Sheena is open to hearing concerns, questions, and suggestions from fellow ESA members in order to provide a voice for STEP members within ESA and to foster a community among peers.



Dr. Ana María Vélez is currently a research assistant professor in the Insect Toxicology Lab at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Her research interests include different aspects of the use of RNAi as a pest management tool and evolution of resistance to insecticides. For Ana, her ESA membership has been extremely valuable since it has provided her with an opportunity to share her research and to network with fellow entomologists. As a STEP Committee member Ana is eager to advocate for the needs of the STEP community, her main goal is to improve support and recognition of early career professionals. In addition, Ana is interested in promoting diversity and inclusion in the STEP community.