



**STEP Newsletter
Issue 5
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Greetings,

Welcome to the fifth edition of the STEP newsletter, created by ESA's STEP Committee to keep early professional members and those just transitioning into their careers informed about important discussions, deadlines and information that's particularly pertinent to this growing membership group. The newsletter is now being sent to ESA leaders as well to keep them informed of STEP activities.

ICE 2016

After four years of preparation, ESA is excited to host **ICE 2016: Entomology without Borders, the XXV International Congress of Entomology**, in Orlando, Florida this September.

Did you know the last time the ICE Congress was held in the USA was 1976? You have the opportunity to be a part of history. The Congress is expected to bring together the largest delegation of researchers and experts from across the globe in hopes of building global networks, showcasing research, and highlighting the most recent advances in a wide diversity of entomological disciplines. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to enhance your professional development and advance your career — and meet the scientists who wrote the books you've been referencing for years!

1. Discounted Registration Deadline Fast Approaching

Discounted, early-bird registration ends on **March 25**, however, ESA members can access these lower rates until May 31. Find more information regarding registration, housing, and the overall event on the Congress website. www.ice2016orlando.org

2. Secure Your Housing Early

The Congress offers many different accommodation options for every need and budget. Book your hotel room early for the best selection - <http://ice2016orlando.org/host-travel-hotel/accomodations/>

3. \$27,000 in Travel Awards Available

The STEP travel awards contest is open! \$27,000 will be awarded to as many as 25 student transition and early professional members residing in the continental U.S., Alaska, and Hawaii, to support their travel to ICE 2016.

Don't miss the submission deadline of **April 11**; find details [here](#).

Award criteria includes:

- The scope and importance of the applicant's research to be presented at the Congress
- How the applicant's attendance and participation at the Congress will benefit his or her professional development and the science of entomology
- How the applicant's attendance will contribute to the diversity of attendees at ICE 2016 (Branch, Section, gender, ethnicity, etc.).

4. STEP-Sponsored Symposium: *Global Entomological Collaborations*

Many entomological positions require frequent collaborations, especially on large grants as mandated by funding agencies. Put those skills to the test and learn how to improve them at the STEP-sponsored symposium, "Global Entomological Collaborations", on Monday morning, September 26. Learn how to build networks, jump start collaborations, maintain relationships in the long term, and use them to benefit your career and progress the science of entomology.

Following the presentations, ESA STEP ICE Travel Award winners will be honored during a reception, where you will have the opportunity to put your networking skills to the test. Mingle with the speakers while enjoying a light lunch. The schedule for all ICE symposia is published [here](#).

5. Call for Moderators and Judges - What's the Value to STEPs in Doing This?

Enhance your professional service record and update yourself on new research in a broad variety of topics by judging or moderating the student competition at ICE 2016. Plus, it is an excellent way to give back to the Society, especially if you are a former competition participant...[Sign up today!](#)

6. 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 in your future.

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 will 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. Watch the [ICE schedule](#) for more details.

7. Information Coming in June on STEP Volunteer Opportunities

ESA will be announcing volunteer positions for student, student transition, and early professional members who have registered for ICE 2016 in June. Watch your inbox!

Additional STEP Updates

1. Nominations for ESA's Four New STEP Professional Awards Due May 1

Nominate yourself or a deserving STEP individual for one of our four new awards honoring individuals who have greatly contributed to the science of entomology:

- The [STEP Outreach and Public Engagement Award](#) will honor a student transition or early professional member working within the field of entomology that has demonstrated excellence, leadership, and creativity in outreach and public engagement.
- The [STEP Research Award](#) will recognize a STEP member who has made outstanding research contributions to the field of entomology.
- The [STEP Teaching Award](#) will recognize a STEP member who excels in entomological education.
- The [STEP Extension Award](#) will be given to a student transition or early professional member who excels in entomological extension.

Nominations for these and all other ESA and Entomological Foundation awards are due no later than **Sunday, May 1st**.

2. ESA's International Branch Early Career Award Nominations Open

ESA's International Branch has just launched their 2016 awards which include a new \$2,000 award for Early Career Researchers. The nominee must be a current member in good standing of the International Branch of the Entomological Society of America, and within five years of earning their last postgraduate degree or qualification (BCE, MSc, or PhD). The deadline for applications is **May 1, 2016**. For questions please contact the Chair of the Awards Committee, Robin Gunning (esaibawards@gmail.com). Information on the award can be [accessed online](#).

3. ESA's Code of Conduct

ESA has established a code of conduct to provide a safe, hospitable, and productive environment for everyone attending ESA events, regardless of ethnicity, religion, disability, physical appearance, gender, or sexual orientation. Details are provided [here](#).

ESA Webinar Wednesdays

ESA provides free, hour-long webinars for members to enhance their careers. **Watch your inbox for registration information for the events below:**

1. Considering Non-Traditional Careers in Entomology June 1, 2016 at 2 p.m. EDT

While industry related and tenure track academic jobs are often heralded as the traditional career path, many MS and PhDs are looking for employment in other fields. So what are these other alternative career

options and how do you find out about them? Explore the following three attractive options with Dr. David Serrano, Ester Serrano, and Alex Bryant:

- The 4-H Wilderness Experience with County Extension
- The World of Regulatory Agriculture with USDA-APHIS
- Faculty Positions at 100% Teaching, Non-Research Institutions

Plus, learn how to find information about alternative career options and what you can do to prepare for the job of your dreams.

2. Getting Your Foot in the Door - How to Write the Best Cover Letter

April 27, 2016 at 2 p.m. EDT

Do cover letters give you writer's block? You're not alone! Not only can job ads be overwhelming, but many can describe an "ideal candidate" making you discouraged and not wanting to apply. In this hour-long webinar, Dr. Robin Walker will provide step-by-step instructions for writing powerful cover letters. *Spoiler alert:* The cover letter is *not* about you, it's about *them*.

[View archives](#) of past ESA webinars (exclusive to ESA members)

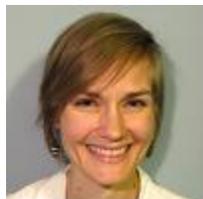
Meet the 2016 STEP Committee



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.

Want to get involved?

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