

Division News

Southern Division Gathers in Orlando for 87th Annual Meeting

The 87th meeting of the Southern Division of APS was held February 7–8, 2010, at the Wyndham Orlando Resort in Orlando, FL, in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists. President-Elect **Boyd Padgett** coordinated the local arrangements. President **Bob Kemerait** welcomed the group of 59 attendees (15 of whom were students) who contributed a total of 36 presentations to the program.

The meeting kicked-off on Super Bowl Sunday with a symposium entitled, “The enemy within: Current status and future outlook for diseases caused by fastidious vascular plant pathogens,” presided over by Padgett. Outstanding, timely presentations were made by the invited speakers, who included **Tim Gottwald**, USDA-ARS; **Charlie Rush**, Texas AgriLife Research; **Don Hopkins**, University of Florida; and **Phil Brannen**, University of Georgia.

The symposium was followed by a graduate student paper competition presided over by Past President **Kenny Seebold**, who was joined on the judging panel by **Tony Keinath**, **Tim Brenneman**, and **David Langston**. Twelve students took part in this year’s competition with participants representing Clemson University, North Carolina State University (NCSU), Southern University and A&M College, Texas A&M University, Texas Tech University, the University of Arkansas, and the University of Georgia. **Moytri Roy Chowdhury** (University of Arkansas; coadvisors, **Yulin Jia** and **Rick Cartwright**) won first place for her presentation, “Characterization of rice blast resistance gene *Pi-z(t)* in rice germplasm using DNA markers and pathogenicity assays.” **Terry Spurlock** (University of Arkansas; advisor, **Eugene Milus**) placed second for his presentation, “Etiology of zoysiagrass diseases in northwest Arkansas.” **Ashley Zearfoss** (NCSU;

coadvisors, **Christina Cowger** and **Peter Ojiambo**) came in third for her presentation, “Effect of temperature on latent period of *Stagonospora nodorum* blotch on winter wheat under field conditions.”

Barbara Christ, APS president, addressed the group during its annual business meeting, providing the annual report on the state and activities of APS. Secretary-Treasurer **Don Ferrin** gave the membership, financial, and necrology reports for the division. **Christopher Clark**, professor in the Department of Plant Pathology & Crop Physiology at Louisiana State University (LSU) and the LSU Agricultural Center, was presented with the Outstanding Plant Pathologist Award for 2010 by Vice



Bob Kemerait and Boyd Padgett.

President Langston in recognition of his nationally recognized research program on diseases of sweet potatoes. Langston also presented travel awards to **Julie Campbell** (Texas A&M University), **Bhabesh Dutta** (University of Georgia), and **Kirthi Kirin Yadagiri** (Clemson University).

Following the reading of this year’s resolutions by Seebold, the program came to a close with the passing of the gavel from outgoing President Kemerait to President-Elect Padgett, who adjourned the meeting until next year when we meet in Corpus Christi, TX.

This year’s festivities concluded with a dinner social followed by the Southern Division DeBary Bowl emceed by Chris “That’s Not What I Have Here” Clark. As in the Super Bowl the previous evening, the “Saints” came marching back in the second half to soundly defeat both the “Zebra Chumps” and the “PhytoWhizzes” to claim this year’s honor. We wish to thank the corporate sponsors for their support of this year’s meeting: Arysta LifeScience, Bayer CropScience, Cheminova, Dow AgroSciences, DuPont Crop Protection, Syngenta Crop Protection, and Valent U.S.A.

The officers for the Southern Division for 2010–2011 are Padgett, LSU AgCenter—president; Langston, University of Georgia—president-elect; **Ray Schneider**, LSU—vice president; Kemerait, University of Georgia—immediate past president; **John Rupe**, University of Arkansas—Southern Division councilor; and Ferrin, LSU AgCenter—secretary-treasurer.

To see the complete program, visit the APS Southern Division website (www.cals.ncsu.edu/plantpath/activities/societies/aps/SouthernAPS.html). ■



Southern Division Graduate Student Paper Competition Awardees: Moytri Roy Chowdhury and Kenny Seebold (top), Terry Spurlock and Seebold (middle), and Ashley Zearfoss and Seebold (bottom).



Chris Clark and David Langston.