

2024 Potomac Division 80th Annual Meeting

The American Phytopathological Society

March 27-29, 2024

Martinsburg, WV

MEETING MINUTES

The American Phytopathological Society Potomac Division's 80th Annual Meeting was held March 27-29, 2024.

Three symposia sessions featured 14 invited talks. The meeting started the afternoon of March 27th with a field trip to Sweet Run State Park, Virginia's newest state park, followed by the Industry/Extension session moderated by Jill Pollok, University of Delaware. This session included 2 talks from extension. The poster session was held after the Industry/Extension session and included 13 posters.

On March 28th, the day started with the Technician Breakfast and Networking Session. Rachel Melnick, the APS Potomac Division President, then opened the proceedings of the day moderating the first symposium session. This session focused on "Highlighting New Potomac Division Colleagues". Glen Groben, USDA ARS, talked about Amplification of COX1-2 operon for species level identification of oomycetes from environmental samples. Next, Rachel Koch-Bach NEA Foreign Disease Weed Science Research Unit, discussed a multi-omics approach to understanding the evolution and diversity of three foreign fungal plant pathogens. Kristen Wickert, US Forest Service discussed Forest Pathology from USFS Perspective. Lastly, Tammi Collum, USDA ARS, talked about the development of sustainable management strategies to reduce disease in temperate fruit tree production.

The theme of the second symposium was "History to the Future of Plant Pathology - A View of the Past along with the cutting edge research utilizing technology". Nina Shishkoff, USDA ARS NEA, gave a History of the Potomac Division and the group took a picture of the 80th Anniversary crowd in attendance. Karen Garrett, UFL, APS President, gave an update about APS Leadership's Update to Membership. Fereshteh Shahoveisi discussed her research using AI to identify nematodes.

During the lunch business meeting, Rachel Melnick provided the president's updates. Matt Kasson accepted to stay on as the divisional forum rep for another year. Rachel Melnick ran the 2023 Meeting Minutes approval. Jill Pollok gave the FY 2023 Financials update. As for new business, Gregory Rogers was nominated for the position of Secretary/Treasurer. The Solomons in Dowell, MD was chosen as the location for the new meeting. Karen Rane of the University of Maryland received the distinguished service award. The division agreed to contribute \$5000 to the Mannon Gallegly memorial student fund.

The graduate student paper presentation was after lunch. Seven students from APS Potomac division competed in the competition. They were Shiv Singla (UD), Danielle Mikolajewski (WVU), Matheus Borba (VT), Carlos Saint-Preux (VT), Inty Hernandez (WVU), and Lauren Irwin (UD). Bhavit Chhabra (UMD), Qi Li (VTech), Reza Mazloom (Vtech), Parul Sharma (Vtech), and Taylor Francis Schulden (UMD).

The banquet was held the evening of March 28. The invited speaker, Heather Zindash, The Soulful Gardener LLC, shared horticultural landscape pond inspiration with the group. The Graduate Student

Paper Competition were announced as: First Place: Inty Hernandz, Second place: Carlos Saint-Preux, and Travel Award winner: Shiv Singla. Maddie Henrickson was the winner of the t-shirt contest and their shirt was sold as a fundraiser.

Nina Shiskoff shared resolutions during the closing comments, yet again sharing her humor with the participants.

Friday March 29, the morning began with a Cover Letter 101 breakfast session run by Rachel Melnick. The contributed paper session started with John Bennett (USDA-ARS AFRS/Pennsylvania State University) speaking about Broad-Range Biocontrol Activity Against Fruit Rot Pathogens in Pome Fruits. Second, Nina Shishkoff (USDA ARS FDWSRU) shared a gallery of photographs of rose downy mildew. And lastly, Rachel Melnick (USDA NIFA) shared a USDA NIFA opportunity for climate extension.

In the closing session, President Rachel Melnick welcomed Nina Shichkoff (USDA ARS) as the new Secretary/Treasurer for the Potomac Division. The meeting concluded with final statements from President Rachel Melnick and a transfer of the Division's gavel to incoming President Nina Shishkoff.

































