As fall approaches the winter months, I am reminded that another semester is rapidly coming to a close. Faculty, staff and students are busy harvesting crops, conducting research, and are focused on classroom success.

In the newsletter you will find a series of student, faculty, staff and alumni updates that Purdue Agronomy is proud to share. Their work is what keeps us at the forefront of science and education.

Through the generosity of alumni, faculty, and friends we were able to award over $32,000 in travel scholarships to 21 graduate students and $11,500 for undergraduate students to attend scientific meetings and ASA collegiate soil judging contests. Many of them used their scholarship to fund their trip to the annual ASA meetings, held in November. The Soils Team had yet another successful event where they placed first overall and third in group judging. The Agronomy Club was also in the news as they won the first annual Farmer Olympics at the Purdue Ag Council Hog Roast. Congratulations to all of our students!

The last few months our faculty have excelled in many facets. You will be able to read about many of their accomplishments. Linda Lee received over a million dollars to further her research on chemical contaminants. Tony Vyn and Torbert Rocheford both were part of group research efforts. Vyn's study was on boosting corn yields by focusing on the effects of nutrient balance. Rocheford worked with groups from Cornell and Michigan State Universities to find a gene that naturally produces provitamin A in corn. Phillip Owens developed soil mapping technology to better understand soil functionality and Dev Niyogi was highlighted for his efforts to study weather patterns within the boundaries of cities and beyond. Janxin Ma is an associate editor of The Genetics Society of America. These are just a few of the examples of excellence in the department.

Our alumni are also being recognized as leaders. It is with pleasure that we highlight Chris Boomsma, Ph.D. 2009, who was named the Future Giant of the Seed Industry by Seed World. Boomsma is the perfect example of our students making a difference to provide food for a growing population.

I look forward to keeping you updated with Purdue Agronomy’s success.

Boiler Up!

Joe
The Purdue Soils Team placed first at the Region 3 Collegiate Soils Contest in Geneseo, Ill. The team placed third in group judging. Individual placings include Maggie Shoue, first; Betta McGaughy, second; Shelbi Louck, eighth; Katie Fagan, 10th and Arthur Franke, 11th. Other team participants include Tiffani Goodman, Ariel Kucera, Sarah Letsinger, Brid McClearn, Alexis Pearson, Nicole Shebesh, Shelby Sigmam, Maddie Smith and Yoong Sin Tong. The team is coached by Gary Steinhardt and Cathy Egler.

Agronomy Club wins Farmer Olympics

Congratulations goes out to the Purdue Agronomy club for winning the first annual Farmer Olympics at the Purdue Ag Council Hog Roast. Their victory was recognized with a shovel.

Travel Scholarships Awarded

2014 George D. Scarseth Scholarship (actual travel expenses to a maximum of $1500)
- Sara Alford
- Sarah Brooks
- Isis Chagas
- Keru Chen
- Minerva Dorantes
- Trevor Frank
- Monique Long
- Shams Rahmani
- Amanda Silva
- Kelsey Smith
- Edwin Suarez
- Martha Kille
- Min Xu

George W. Bailey Graduate Scholarship (actual travel expenses to a maximum of $1500)
- Joseph Martin – ASA/CSSA/SSSA meeting in Long Beach, CA
- Jenny Zenobio – SETAC (Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry) Annual Meeting in Vancouver, Canada

Loyal F. “Pete” Bauman Memorial Fund (actual travel expenses to a maximum of $1500)
- Anne Brown
- Ben Hall
- Alencar Xavier

Bauman-Doolittle Endowment Fund (actual travel expenses to a maximum of $1500)
- Jieqing Ping – International Plant & Animal Genome XXIII Conference, Jan. 10-14, 2015, San Diego, CA
Next-generation cities

When Dev Niyogi swapped a career in civil engineering for climatology, he had little idea that his new field would take him straight back to the cityscape. Nor could he have foreseen that his research would make him an expert on the complex relationship between urban development and regional climate. Now the Indiana state climatologist, Purdue's Niyogi is deciphering the myriad ways that a city directs weather patterns within its boundaries and beyond. To read more visit: www.extension.purdue.edu/pages/article.aspx?intItemID=6482#.VFkOUh3F-9M

Jianxin Ma announced as associate editor for The Genetics Society of America

The Genetics Society of America announced new additions to the editorial board of its peer-reviewed, peer-edited journal G3: Genes|Genomes|Genetics. Since the journal's launch in June 2011, its editorial board of academic experts has been instrumental in shaping G3 into an important forum for the publication of useful genetics findings and resources. Read more here: www.genetics-gsa.org/media/releases/GSA_PR_20140918_G3_editors.html

Purdue mapping technology could help farmers better understand soil functionality

Phillip Owens has developed soil-mapping technology that provides visual information about soil functionality and productivity, which could increase profitability for farmers and growers as they cultivate their crops. Read more here: www.purdue.edu/newsroom/releases/2014/Q3/purdue-mapping-technology-could-help-farmers-better-understand-their-soils-functionality.html

Boosting global corn yields depends on improving nutrient balance

Ensuring that corn absorbs the right balance of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium is crucial to increasing global yields, a Purdue and Kansas State University study finds. A review of data from more than 150 studies from the U.S. and other regions showed that high yields were linked to production systems in which corn plants took up key nutrients at specific ratios - nitrogen and phosphorus at a ratio of 5-to-1 and nitrogen and potassium at a ratio of 1-to-1. These nutrient uptake ratios were associated with high yields regardless of the region where the corn was grown. Read the full story here: www.ag.purdue.edu/aganswers/Pages/archive.aspx?story=765#.VFkQwh3F-9O
Agronomy team finds genes that naturally produce corn rich in provitamin A

Purdue researchers have identified a set of genes that can be used to naturally boost the provitamin A content of corn kernels, a finding that could help combat vitamin A deficiency in developing countries and macular degeneration in the elderly. Professor of agronomy Torbert Rocheford and collaborators at Cornell University and Michigan State University found gene variations that can be selected to change nutritionally poor white corn into biofortified orange corn with high levels of provitamin A carotenoids – substances that the human body can convert into vitamin A. Vitamin A plays key roles in eye health and the immune system, as well as in the synthesis of certain hormones. Read the rest of the story here: www.purdue.edu/newsroom/releases/2014/Q4/natural-gene-selection-can-produce-orange-corn-rich-in-provitamin-a-for-africa,-u.s..html

Linda Lee receives research grant

Dr. Linda Lee received $1,002,048 from DuPont in state of the art analytical chemistry equipment to support her research on chemical contaminants in the soil environment.

Welcome to Purdue Agronomy

The business office welcomes two new staff members. Amy Tarvin is an account clerk V and assumes the responsibility of graduate student and part of the faculty accounts. Anna Holmes is an account clerk IV and is involved with purchasing for both the Departments of Agronomy and Botany and Plant Pathology. Please stop by Lilly 2-448 and welcome them to Agronomy.

Welcome to the Agronomy family

Congratulations to Xiangye Xiao and Yupeng Li on welcoming their daughter, Harper Li, into the world on October 10. Harper weighed 7 pounds, 10 ounces and was 21.3 inches long.

Congratulations to Terry and Diana West for welcoming their granddaughter, Molly Anne West on September 2. Molly weighed 8 pounds, 4 ounces and was 21.75 inches long.
Alumni Pancake Breakfast

On September 27 the College of Agriculture hosted an alumni pancake breakfast before the Purdue Homecoming game. Although the Boilermakers were not able to overcome the Hawkeye’s, Purdue Agronomy was able to name several of their alumni winners. All alumni in attendance were able to take home a gift from the department and participate in the Dig into Agronomy game. From left, Linda Eastman won the women’s basketball tickets, Gunther Kreps received a clock and Tom Bradford won the men’s basketball tickets.

Purdue Agronomy alumni named Future Giant of the Seed Industry

Seed World sits down with the 2014 Future Giant of the Seed Industry award winner and explores what keeps Chris Boomsma motivated. Far from his urban roots, on the south side of Chicago, Chris Boomsma is making a name for himself within the seed industry. On any given day, he can be found in meetings, doing field work, interacting with universities and other companies, talking to classrooms, phenotyping corn plants or exploring the latest in precision ag technology. Read the complete story here: www.seedworld.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=793%3Aits-a-learning-obsession-seed-world-september-2014&catid=144&Itemid=120