

**PLANT SOIL
& MICROBIAL
SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT****Welcome to PSM!**

Emily Williams will be joining PSM as fiscal officer on March 4, 2021. Emily joins us from Biosystems Agriculture Engineering and brings with her a fantastic knowledge of MSU financial policy and procedures. She is an MSU alum and enjoys spending time outside with her kids and watching Spartan athletics. Emily will be cross training with Debbie to ensure a smooth transition.

**Seminars / Webinars**

February 15, 2021 at 1:00 PM

Plant Resilience Institute Brown Bag Seminar will feature two speakers from the Shade lab.

Marco Mechan: "Investigating the interplay between the phyllosphere microbiome, epicuticular wax and root mucilage on sorghum resilience to water and nitrogen limitation"

Sreejata Bandopadhyay: "Growth, resuscitation and recruitment of the rhizosphere microbiome in response to plant stress"

<https://msu.zoom.us/j/91388528921?pwd=RS9Wd1ZvQyt5U0JBdmxJNkpmeGNkdz09>

Meeting ID: 913 8852 8921

Passcode: Resilience

Contact Robin Buell (buell@msu.edu) with any questions

February 17, 2021

WACSS Anti-Racism Insight Series

Michael Lachney, Ph.D.

Anti-Racism in STEM Education

Registration: <https://wacss.msu.edu/events/index.html>

Hosted by:

MSU Women's Advisory Committee for Support Staff (WACSS)

Co-Sponsors:

MSU College of Agriculture & Natural Resources

MSU Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives

Seminars/Webinars

February 18, 2021 at 9:30 AM

MSU Employee Town Hall on COVID-19 Vaccines & Vaccine Prioritization Info

President Samuel L. Stanley Jr., M.D., will be joined by College of Human Medicine Associate Dean for Public Health Integration **Debra Furr-Holden** and MSU Emergency Management Coordinator Lt. **David Oslund** for a town hall meeting at 9:30 AM on February 18th to answer employee questions about the COVID-19 vaccines.

Information about vaccine prioritization and resources are available at the link below.

<https://msu.edu/together-we-will/covid19-vaccine/>

February 18, 2021 at 4:00 PM

HORT/PSM Spring Seminar

Dr. Chris Currey, Iowa State University

Title: Not yet announced

Horticulture Organization of Graduate Student Invited Speaker

Zoom: <https://msu.zoom.us/j/94865185229>

Passcode: 149149

February 25, 2021 at 4:00 PM

HORT/PSM Spring Seminar

Dr. Sandra Branham, Clemson University

Title: Genomics - assisted breeding of vegetable crops

Zoom: <https://msu.zoom.us/j/94865185229>

Passcode: 149149

Announcements

Hot Water Shutdown

Where: Center for Integrated Plant Systems (C.I.P.S.)

When: From 6:00 AM to 12:00 PM on Tuesday, February 16th

What is being done: Temporary shutdown of domestic hot water to the entire building.

Why this is being done: To install a new valve.

How this will impact building occupants: During this shutdown there will be no domestic hot water service to sinks, lavs, showers.

Who to contact for more information: **Greg Pierce**, planner/inspector/analyst, at 517-899-1904 or pierceg3@msu.edu, or IPF at 517-353-1760.

Medical Certification Needed to Drive Some University Vehicles

You may need to have a medical certification to drive some University Vehicles. If your vehicle has a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) or if your vehicle & trailer combination have a GVWR greater than 10,001 pounds; you need to have a medical certification. The GVWR is what your vehicle is rated to carry; not how much you are carrying. You can find more information from the [Occupational Health](#) page. Exposure to Health Risks Physical Demands Form attached.

Conversations with Morgan Halane

IS-MPMI has been hosting some events scattered throughout the year, and it continues with one on February 24th titled "Conversations with **Morgan Halane**" who founded #BlackBotanistWeek. <https://www.ismpmicconnect.com/>

Announcements

USDA 2021 Agricultural Outlook Forum Invitation

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has asked me to share with you the following invitation to the USDA 2021 Agricultural Outlook Forum and encourage you to share it with your faculty and students.

The 97th annual Agricultural Outlook Forum (AOF), the largest annual meeting and premiere event of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), will take place on February 18-19, 2021. Due to COVID-19 and current restrictions on large gatherings in the Washington, D.C. area, USDA will hold the 2021 Forum virtually for the first time and [registration](#) is free but required to access the Forum sessions.

The 2021 Forum, themed *Building on Innovation: A Pathway to Resilience*, builds on USDA's [Agriculture Innovation Agenda](#), launched in 2020 to align USDA's resources, programs, and research toward the goal of increasing U.S. agricultural production by 40 percent while cutting the environmental footprint of U.S. agriculture in half by 2050. The Forum will feature a panel of distinguished guest speakers and 30 breakout sessions developed by agencies across USDA. Topics covered include the food price outlook, innovations in agriculture, U.S. and global agricultural trade developments, and frontiers in sustainability and conservation. In addition, the USDA Chief Economist will unveil the Department's latest outlook for U.S. commodity markets and trade and discuss the U.S. farm income situation.

See the 2021 Forum's [Program at a Glance](#) and [Session Details](#).

About USDA's Outlook Forum

USDA's Agricultural Outlook Forum began in 1923 to distribute and interpret national forecasts to farmers in the field. The goal was to provide the information developed through economic forecasting to farmers so they had the tools to read market signals and avoid producing beyond demand. Since then, the event has developed into a unique platform where key stakeholders from the agricultural sector in the United States and around the world come together every year to discuss current and emerging topics and trends in the sector. More than 1,800 people attended the 2020 Forum.

The Agricultural Outlook Forum, which is organized by USDA's Office of the Chief Economist together with other USDA agencies, is independent of commercial interests and aims to facilitate information sharing among stakeholders and generate the transparency that supports well-functioning open markets.

For questions or additional information, please contact **Lisa Purnell**, USDA Liaison, Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement. Ms. Purnell can be reached via email at lisa.purnell@usda.gov.

Women in Research Month at MSU Kicks Off on February 11th

Special Viewing of "Picture a Scientist"

Join your MSU colleagues and students as we acknowledge and celebrate women in research during a special, month-long event, focused around the independent film documentary, "Picture a Scientist".

The event will kick off on February 11 for International Day of Women and Girls in Science, and conclude on March 8, International Women's Day, with a second opportunity to view the documentary. For additional information, please click on this link <https://vp.research.msu.edu/women-in-research-month>.

Announcements

Virtual Spartan Arbor Day 5k

MSU Infrastructure Planning and Facilities will host a virtual fun run this spring focused on raising funds for the growth and maintenance of campus trees. Funds raised by the event will be used to support continued efforts to ensure campus is green and sustainable for future Spartans.

Additional information: <https://ipf.msu.edu/about/news/virtual-5k>

Amazon available in Spartan Marketplace using Pcard

University Services Purchasing is pleased to announce that they have launched the Amazon catalog in Spartan Marketplace. By policy, purchases from the MSU Amazon Business account can only be made by individuals using a Pcard to obtain goods on behalf of the university and must be used for business purposes. Please see information attached to this newsletter.

C.S. Mott Fellows Nomination Invitation Letter

Attached to this newsletter you will find a letter from **Dr. Michael Hamm**, C.S. Mott Chair of Sustainable Agriculture, regarding the nomination of potential recipients of the Mott Fellowship for the 2021-2022 academic year. Feel free to contact **Emma McNabb** should you have any further questions regarding the contents of the letter. Emma can be reached at either ulrichem@msu.edu or 517-432-1612.

Building Access

If building access is needed, please remember to have your PI email **AnnMarie Guldner** (guldner1@msu.edu) directly with this request. Requests cannot be accepted from anyone other than your PI.

PSM Office Coverage

We will be staffing the PSM office on Wednesdays for essential needs only (Ex: keys). An appointment needs to be made prior by contacting **AnnMarie Guldner** at either guldner1@msu.edu or 517-353-0120. No drop ins will be allowed.

Spring Drop-In Advising

Career Services Network will be hosting several virtual Drop-in Advising events to help with resume reviews for career fairs and the job search, as well as overall preparation for our upcoming job fairs! If you know of any students who are looking for career fair prep and/or a fast resume review, we have advisors ready to help them for virtual drop-ins on these dates:

Thursday, February 18th from 5-7 PM (EDT)

Tuesday, April 6th from 5-7 PM (EDT)

All of these events are listed on Handshake (msu.joinhandshake.com) under "CSN Drop-in Advising", as well as on our website under "Learn About Drop-in Services". Promotional flyer will be attached to this newsletter for reference and promotions. Additional Questions: Contact **Lauren Hinkel**, Career Advisor, Exploratory and All-Majors-Career Services Network at 517-884-1353 or hinkell2@msu.edu

Upcoming MSU Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives Events

NSF Celebrates African American History Month with Princeton's First Black Valedictorian

Join EHR, MPS, and ODI in hosting Princeton's first Black Valedictorian, **Nicholas Johnson**, as he shares the lessons he's learned, the role of mentoring in his achievements, and how he thinks NSF can help broaden participation in STEM.

Starts: **February 11, 2021 1:00-2:00 PM**

Location: Zoom

Description: NSF Celebrates African American History Month with Princeton's First Black Valedictorian (Please use the following link to register:

<https://nsf.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJIsf--przwoHtCvVLLiYLLutp4XiVqfsH54>

Trapped Trauma: The Art of Protest. MSU Libraries Encompass Series 2021: Celebrating Black History Month

Tuesday, February 16, 2021 7:00-8:00 PM

Artist: **Lillian Young**, MSU MFA Candidate

More information and [Register for this event.](#)

DEI: Building Strong at the Speed of Change

Wednesday, February 17, 2021 from 6:00-7:00 PM

Professional Woman Builders Presents: DEI Building Strong At The Speed Of Change.

[Zoom Registration link](#)

More information [here.](#)

Mr. SOUL! MSU Libraries Encompass Series 2021: Celebrating Black History Month

Thursday, February 18, 2021 from 7:00-8:00 PM

Come together for a special WKAR online screening of Mr. SOUL! Presented by WKAR Public Media and MSU Libraries.

More information and [register here.](#)

APIDA/A Virtual Listening Space

Wednesday, February 24, 2021 from 1:00-2:00 PM

A Virtual Listening Space facilitated by CAPS Staff

Register [here.](#)

Have questions? Email BaoCun at hindbaoc@msu.edu.

Songs for My Right Side. MSU Libraries Encompass Series 2021: Celebrating Black History Month

Wednesday, February 24, 2021 from 7:00-8:00 PM

Director/Writer: **Jeffrey C. Way**, Professor in Film Studies Program, Department of English

More information and [register here.](#)

Dr. William G. Anderson Lecture Series, Slavery to Freedom: An American Odyssey

Thursday, February 25, 2021 from 5:00-6:30 PM

Presenter: **Dr. Cornel West**. Please register in advance for this webinar.

Please register in advance [here.](#)

[Slavery to Freedom flyer.](#)

Job Opportunities

United States Department of Agriculture - Agricultural Research Service Supervisory Research Plant Pathologist / Research Geneticist / Research Chemist Position

(GS-14/15, salary range \$108,885 to \$166,502): The USDA-ARS Cereal Crops Research Unit located at the Edward T. Schafer Agricultural Research Center in Fargo, ND is seeking a full-time, permanent Supervisory Research Plant Pathologist, Research Geneticist, or Research Chemist to serve in a leadership role as a Research Leader for the Unit, responsible for all fiscal, personnel, facilities, and programmatic aspects of the Unit. The primary mission of the Unit is to improve quality and disease resistance of small grains (barley, spring wheat, durum wheat, and oats) through research on genetics, genomics, pathology, and end-use quality. The incumbent would establish a personal research program on pathogens, germplasm development, or grain quality of barley, wheat, and/or oats. Specific lines of research may include: characterize variability, genetics, biology and other properties of pathogens to facilitate the development of new management or breeding strategies; genetically improve germplasm for disease resistance or grain quality through the application of molecular genetics and genomics; or contribute to an understanding of factors that influence end-use quality and functionality in barley, spring wheat, durum wheat, or oats. The Unit has excellent research facilities on the North Dakota State University (NDSU) campus and is comprised of about fifty personnel (including twelve scientists). Opportunity exists to mentor graduate students through an affiliate appointment with NDSU. U.S. Citizenship is required for this position. **The announcement will be open from January 29 - March 2, 2021.**

To view additional details about this position and complete application instructions, go to the USA Jobs website: <https://www.usajobs.gov/> and refer to announcement number ARS-D21Y-11012990-CMH. For specific questions regarding this vacancy, contact **Michael A. Grusak**, Director, Edward T. Schafer Agricultural Research Center at 701-239-1371 or mike.grusak@usda.gov. USDA is an equal opportunity employer.

Paid Lab Research Positions Available

*With potential opportunity for summer field work

Are you an MSU student interested in gaining research experience? Come join our team of researchers with the Great Lakes Bioenergy Research Center as we look to uncover the roles that soil invertebrates play in bioenergy cropping systems. The mission of our current project is to explore interactions between soil fauna and microbes! We are seeking applicants for multiple part-time research assistant positions to join us as soon as possible. The work is based in-person on the MSU campus within **Dr. Landis'** Entomology lab and folks will be expected to adhere to current COVID guidelines.

Main Job tasks include: Counting and identifying soil arthropods under a microscope, maintaining greenhouse pots (weed removal, monitoring plant survival, etc.), taking soil measurements such as respiration and microbial biomass, and doing DNA extraction.

Other tasks may include: Taking detailed notes, transcribing data into excel, and miscellaneous experiment maintenance tasks.

Due to restrictions, you should expect to work independently and communicate often with your team-mates and supervisor via e-mail and/or telephone.

No previous experience is necessary, and we encourage all those with an interest in science and research to apply!

Wages are based on experience but start at \$11/hr.

*Many of our students stay for full-time summer field research. It's not required but encouraged. Driver's license required.

TO APPLY: Please email resume and 2 references to dauriael@msu.edu. Reviewed as they come in <https://www.canr.msu.edu/landislab>.

COVID-19 Updates (1-8-2021)

Returning to work

- MSU continues to encourage everyone that can work remotely to do so. Supervisors should continue to ask employees who can work remotely to do so. Do not come to campus unless it is absolutely necessary.
- If you are on campus, [face coverings must be worn](#) (including all faculty, staff, students, vendors and visitors) indoors and outdoors while you are on property owned or governed by MSU and while participating in MSU-related or MSU-sponsored activities. If you have a medical condition that may prevent you from safely wearing a face covering, or you would like a clear face covering, you should contact MSU's Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities to begin the accommodation process.
- As required by the governor, all employees must fill out a health screening form each day they come to campus to work. MSU IT and the University Physician's office have created an online [campuswide health-screening form](#) that units can use.
- Human Resources keeps [an updated FAQ website](#) for employees, and information on resources for faculty, staff and researchers operating in a virtual setting can be found at [remote.msu.edu](#).
- For those administrative and academic functions that are deemed necessary to return to campus, [a template has been created](#) to help guide them through that process, along with a [decision making guide](#). Those units must review and respond to the Return-to-Work Procedures and Protocols framework, which guides what steps need to be taken before bringing employees back to campus. A [document](#) that complements this guide is intended to be used as a guide for unit leadership to ensure a fair and equitable process in making staffing decisions.

Food and Drink Policy

Food and Drink Policy - Addendum to the PSSB Reopening Plan 7/23/2020

Based on the changing Executive Orders and needs of the MSU community, food consumption Will be allowed in PSSB in posted designated areas. Please keep in mind that this change in policy may pose an increased risk of exposure and it is important to observe physical distancing, follow disinfecting protocols and spend minimal time in the room.

To meet these goals and maximize safety, the PSSB building SOP plan has been modified to:

- Note that it is always preferable to eat outside of the building when possible
- Conference and break rooms on the second floor will be open for food consumption. Please limit your time to 30-min to accommodate colleagues/other building occupants.
 - A279 - Horticulture conference room - maximum occupancy is 5
 - A271 - PSM conference room - maximum occupancy is 6
 - A246 - Break room - maximum occupancy is 5
- Maximum occupancy signs will be posted on each door. If the room is fully occupied, please check another designated space. If all conference and break rooms are fully occupied, check back later.
- Masks must be worn in each room unless actually consuming food.
- Kitchenettes will continue to be closed. There is no microwave or refrigerator usage allowed.
- Everyone should bring and remove all personal supplies for eating.
- The user is required to disinfect the space before and after each use following EPA approved guidelines (70% alcohol for 5-min; Sani-wipes for 3-min). Disinfectants will be present in the room.
- Snacks and community food to share should not be brought to work.

COVID-19 Vaccine Information For Faculty and Staff (1-8-2021)

Is MSU administering the vaccine?

Not at this time. The state and county health departments have indicated the COVID-19 vaccine only will be available from hospitals and local health departments. While MSU maintains clinical practices, the university does not have a health system and is not receiving doses from the state to administer.

What is happening at the MSU Agricultural and Livestock Pavilion?

MSU is providing the Ingham County Health Department space to use as a vaccine distribution center. Only those in the [appropriate phases](#), as outlined by the state of Michigan, and who live or work in Ingham County are eligible to receive it. This distribution site is not open to the public; an [appointment](#) is required.

Why am I hearing about vaccines being administered by the University of Michigan?

The state and county health departments have indicated the COVID-19 vaccine only will be available from hospitals and local health departments. Michigan Medicine, run by the University of Michigan, is a health system and received vaccine doses from the state of Michigan to administer.

How do I sign up to receive the vaccine?

First, you need to be sure that you fall within the priority group currently recommended to receive the vaccine. You can determine what priority group you are in and if you are eligible to receive the vaccine at this time by reviewing the [MDHHS priority guidance](#). When your time comes to make an appointment to receive your vaccine, visit [Michigan.gov/COVIDvaccine](#).

Will the university require vaccines for faculty, staff and students?

The university is not mandating a vaccine for spring semester 2021. However, MSU leadership strongly urges members of the community to receive the vaccine when it is available to them. Not only will receiving the vaccine protect you from the virus, it also protects your friends and loved ones.

Do I need to keep wearing a mask after I receive the vaccine?

Yes. It is vital that you keep wearing a face covering and practice all [COVID-19 related safety measures](#), as it will take many months before everyone is protected.

Who do I contact for more information about COVID-19 vaccines?

Local health departments are the best resource for information about vaccines. It is recommended you visit your local health department website as several have frequently asked questions posted online.

The state of Michigan also has a some [frequently asked questions](#) on its website.

Will MSU be administering the COVID vaccine?

- The state of Michigan is leading initial distribution plans for a COVID-19 vaccine. At this time, the university is not directly administering the vaccine. As we learn more about state distribution plans and its availability to our students, faculty and staff, we will keep you informed.

Face Coverings Updated 01/04/2021

Face coverings should:

1. be non-medical grade to maintain supplies for health care use,
2. fit snugly against the side of your face,
3. cover your nose and mouth,
4. be secured with ties or ear loops **and**
5. allow for breathing without restriction.

Cloth face coverings should only be worn for one day at a time, and they must be properly hand washed or laundered with soap/detergent before subsequent use. Face coverings may vary (for example, disposable non-medical masks or neck gaiters are acceptable).

In addition to wearing face coverings, whether you are on- or off-campus, you also must adhere to the guidelines and recommendations from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) as well as federal and [state government](#) authorities, in order to protect your own health and the health of the entire MSU community.

Protocol - MSU COVID 19 Testing and Reporting

Please see this [link https://msu.edu/together-we-will/students-parents/](https://msu.edu/together-we-will/students-parents/) and <https://msu.edu/together-we-will/faculty-staff/> for current COVID-19 testing and reporting protocol.

Vehicle Use Policy

Please see the attached COVID-19 Vehicle Occupancy Guidance. (September 2020)

Travel

Assistance Resources

Travel policy and travel program support: travel@ctrl.msu.edu or 517-355-5000

Concur: concurhelp@msu.edu

Inbound travel

- Travelers coming to any of MSU's campuses are asked to follow the applicable protocol outlined on our Office of International Health and Safety's website: <https://oihs.isp.msu.edu/travel-during-covid-19-pandemic/health-protocol-inbound-travel>.
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University-sponsored travel

- For employees and students engaged in university-sponsored projects, **all non-essential outgoing domestic and international travel is suspended indefinitely**. If you feel you have essential travel needs, you can submit a waiver for review at least 3 weeks prior to departure. Prior to submitting the waiver, you will be required to obtain documentation from your unit administrator and, for students, from the cognizant advisor, college administrator or program director, affirming that the travel is essential in the context of both programmatic priorities and financial considerations. Note: The health and safety context for travel is currently very fluid, rapidly evolving by location and significantly impacted by frequent issuances of local, national, and international policies.
- Links to appropriate waivers can be found here: <https://oihs.isp.msu.edu/travel-during-covid-19-pandemic>

MSU Academic Calendar

Spring 2021

March 2-3	Break Days
March 10	Middle of Semester
April 21	Classes End
April 22-23	Study Days
April 26-30	Final Exams
May 1-8	Commencements

Spring 2021 Commencement Dates

Due to COVID-19, ceremony specific information is not available at this time. For additional information go to <https://commencement.msu.edu/>

CITY OF EAST LANSING REMINDERS FOR LOCAL INCOME TAX PAYERS

As noted in [East Lansing's press release](#), the following forms will be required for non-residents requesting a refund in their 2020 tax filing:

- Form CF-COV or EL-COV to determine the allocation of time spent outside of the city. The form may be found in most tax software or at [City of East Lansing Allocation Form](#)
- A letter from your employer verifying the information on your return. Please see the 'Manager's City Tax Certification' form and instructions on the Controller's website at [Controller's Website City Tax Certification](#).
- If you would prefer to report the total number of work days spent working outside of the city, please see the instructions for Calculating City Work days [Calculating City Work Days](#).

Please note that HR and Payroll cannot assist you with completing any of these forms. If you have any questions please contact the East Lansing City Tax office at [City of East Lansing Income Tax](#)

2021 PSM Payroll Schedule

Attached to this newsletter is the PSM 2021 Payroll Schedule

PSM Payroll Time Reporting

Due Date Reminders for **biweekly payroll** (includes labor and student)

Reminder: If your employee's time is not submitted, they will not be paid.

- For the February 26th pay date (for time worked from January 31-February 13) your time is due by 5 PM on Tuesday, February 16th.
- For the March 12th pay date (for time worked from February 14-27) your time is due by 5 PM on Tuesday, March 2nd.
- For the March 26th pay date (for time worked from February 28-March 13) your time is due by 5 PM on Tuesday, March 16th.
- For the April 9th pay date (for time worked from March 14-27) your time is due by 5 PM on Tuesday, March 31st.

PSM Office Contact Information / Hours

Effective March 24, 2020 the PSM Administration Offices are closed. During this time of uncertainty, please be patient with any request that you may have placed with a PSM support staff member. Know that PSM support staff will get to your request as quickly as possible.

AnnMarie Guldner	guldner1@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	7 AM-3 PM
Ashley Lathrop	danas@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	8 AM-12 PM & 1-5 PM
Brian Horgan	horganb@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	8 AM-12 PM & 1-5 PM
Christiina Donley	tymoszew@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	8 AM-12 PM & 1-5 PM
Debbie Williams	williade@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	7 AM-3 PM
Dominic Colosimo	colosi14@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	8 AM-12 PM & 1-5 PM
Gina Centeno	centeno@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	8:15 AM-2:45 PM
Hannah O'Mara	omarahan@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	8 AM-12 PM & 1-5 PM
Lee Duynslager	duynslag@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	8 AM-12:30 PM & 1-4:30 PM
Lisa Bowen	bowenli1@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	8 AM-4 PM
Mackenzie Graham	graham2@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	8 AM-12 PM & 12:30-4:30 PM
Rachel Jorgensen	eschrach@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	6:30 AM-3:00 PM

Newsletter Submissions

Send newsletter submissions to AnnMarie Guldner at guldner1@msu.edu

Deadline: Thursdays by 10:00 AM