

PBGG Newsletter

Summer 2009

PBGG's First Graduates

The Institute had its first graduates this May. Ben Rambo-Martin graduated with his MS and is applying to PhD programs in human genetics. Muhammet Sakiroglu graduated with his PhD and has returned home to Turkey where he has a faculty position at Kafkas University in Kars. Becky Tashiro graduated with a MS and is moving to New Zealand to begin her PhD at the Lincoln University. She will be working with grapes. Douglas Heckart graduated with his MS and will continue his PhD here at UGA in Wayne Parrott's lab under the direction of Wayne Parrott and Paul Raymer. Xuehui Li has taken a postdoc position here at UGA.

This summer, Kathryn Harman Bost graduated with a MS. She is current interviewing for research positions.



Left to right: Benjamin Rambo-Martin (MS), Muhammet Sakiroglu (PhD), Rebecca Tashiro (MS), Charlie Brummer (Institute Director), Douglas Heckart (MS), Xuehui Li (PhD).



Kathryn Harman Bost (MS)

New Students for Fall

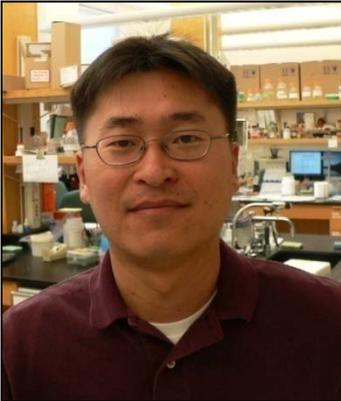
Rajiv Parvathaneni will begin his MS program this Fall with Katrien Devos. Rajiv has just completed a Masters program in Biotechnology at the University of Texas at San Antonio.

Thomas Jacobs will begin his MS program this Fall with Wayne Parrott. Thomas has just completed his Bachelor of Science degree in Horticulture at the University of Connecticut.

Douglas Eudy will begin his PhD program this Fall working with Katrien Devos. Douglas completed his Bachelor of Science degree in Biology in 2008 at Truman State University. Douglas received a Presidential Scholarship with UGA.

New Research Scientists in the Institute

The Institute of Plant Breeding, Genetics, and Genomics would like to welcome Dr. Bo-Keun Ha and Dr. John Bowers, who join the Institute as Research Scientists.



Bo-Keun Ha earned a Ph.D. degree in soybean molecular genetics and breeding at the University of Georgia in August 2006. His study topics were to find single nucleotide polymorphism (SNP) markers associated with southern root-knot nematode resistance in soybean and to map quantitative trait loci (QTL) conditioning resistance to reniform nematode with SSR markers. During a post-doctoral position and his current assistant research scientist position, Bo-Keun has been working on discovery and fine mapping of a QTL in soybean for traits of economic importance (Asian soybean rust, peanut root-knot nematode, frogeye leaf spot disease, and high oleic acid soybean oil) and development of new SNP assays to detect these QTL at the University of Georgia.



John received his PhD at the University of California Davis in 1998 developing a widely used SSR-based methodology to DNA fingerprint grapevine varieties. One outcome of the research was the discovery of the parentage of several important winegrape varieties, including Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon. He moved to Athens in 1999 working in the laboratory of Andrew Paterson from 1999-2008. His principal project centered on genetic and physical mapping of *Sorghum bicolor* finishing with the assembly of the complete genome in 2009. Other projects involved examination of ancient polyploidy events within plant genomes; he was among the first to report three rounds of polyploidy within *Arabidopsis* and to demonstrate a whole genome duplication within rice. Starting in 2009, he moved to the laboratories of Steve Knapp and Jim Leebens-Mack, where he is currently involved in work on sunflower, peanut, *Amborella*, and continuing work on polyploidy and synteny.

Contracts and Grants News

Charlie Brummer was recently awarded a grant from the USDA-DOE Joint Program for Biomass Feedstock Genomics. The project, which also includes Institute members Steve Knapp and Maria Monteros (Noble Foundation) as well as Greg May at the National Center for Genome Resources in New Mexico, will develop SNP markers for use in improving alfalfa as a biofuel feedstock.

Travel

Institute Director Brummer attended the 3rd National Plant Breeding Workshop in Madison, WI, and presented an invited talk on Forage Breeding in the Southeastern USA.

If you have any news, grants, publications, or travel to share please email the Institute at pbgg@uga.edu.