



Institute of Plant Breeding, Genetics and Genomics

College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

IPBGG EXTENDS A WARM WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW STUDENTS FOR FALL 2023:

Jessie Adams



Mr. Jessie Adams is an IPBGG student and Field Technician in Dr. Nino Brown's Peanut Breeding lab. His research focuses on developing high yielding cultivars with desired marketable traits through high-throughput phenotyping.

Jessie received a Bachelor's of Science in Business from Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College in 2019.

Jessie previously worked as a Field Technician for the Nematology lab in the Plant Pathology department at UGA Tifton. That position focused on field trials with cucurbits, fruiting vegetables, and winter cover crops. Prior to that Jessie was a student worker with the Turfgrass Breeding Program.

Please welcome Jessie to our Institute. His workspace is located in the Peanut Seed Lab on Rainwater Road and can be reached at jadams21@uga.edu

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Millicent Avosa



Millicent Avosa holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Horticulture from Maseno University, Kenya(2014), and a Master of Science degree specializing in Plant Breeding and Seed Systems from Makerere University, Uganda (2021).

Driven by her desire to empower farmers, particularly inspired by her mother's experiences, Millicent has dedicated her academic and professional pursuits to supporting sustainable agricultural practices. Her passion lies in helping farmers successfully produce and market their products. With her expertise in plant breeding and seed systems, Millicent has contributed significantly to the field during her time as a research assistant at the Genomics, Pre-breeding, and Bioinformatics unit at ICRISAT-Nairobi, where she has worked for the past four years. As she continues to make a positive

impact in the agricultural sector, Millicent is now joining the University of Georgia to pursue a Ph.D. in Plant Breeding Genetics and Genomics at the wild peanut lab.

Let's welcome Millicent to our Institute. Her workspace is located in Athens, CAGT Room 235 and her email address is millicent.avosa@uga.edu

Amelia Boettcher



Ms. Amelia Boettcher is a Research Assistant in the IPBGG Master's program for 2023. Working with Dr. Cecilia McGregor, her duties include working on breeding for gummy stem blight resistance in watermelon.

Amelia received her Bachelor of Science in Plant Science from the University of Florida (2022). Her previous employment experience includes a position as a seasonal watermelon variety trial assistant with Nunhems Vegetable Seeds (2023); an undergraduate lab and field technician at the University of Florida.

Please welcome Amelia to our Institute. Her workspace is located in Miller Plant Sciences, Room 1401, and her email is: alb68797@uga.edu.

Anne Marie Gahagan



Ms. Anne Marie Gahagan is a research assistant in the PBGG Master's program for 2023. She is working with Dr. Patrick Conner to analyze and map quantitative traits in pecan, specifically nut shape.

Anne Marie received her Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences along with a horticulture minor from Louisiana State University in May 2023. Ms. Gahagan previously studied aflatoxin resistance in maize as a laboratory assistant in LSU's plant pathology department (2019-2023). She also held an internship with Bayer Crop Science as part of their wheat breeding team in Idaho (2022). At LSU, she held leadership positions in her sorority, Pi Beta Phi.

Anne Marie spent the summer at Dr. Conner's lab in Tifton, but is excited to be joining students at the main campus for courses this fall. Let's welcome Anne Marie to our Institute! Her work space is in Athens, CAGT Rm 214 and her email is AnneMarie.Gahagan@uga.edu

Rachel Hill



Ms. Rachel Hill is a Research Assistant in the IPBGG Ph.D. program for 2023 working with Dr. Peng Chee. She is the recipient of UGA's Graduate School Doctoral Fellow Award. Her duties entail elucidating the genetic mechanism of traits conferring biotic and abiotic stresses in cotton.

Rachel received a Bachelor of Science in Agronomy and a Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry from Mississippi State University (2023). Ms. Hill's previous work experience includes a position as an undergraduate research assistant at Mississippi State University in the Department of Plant and Soil Sciences (2019-2023). She also completed an internship at the West TN AgResearch and Education Center with the Plant Pathology lab (2021).

Please welcome Rachel to our Institute. Her work space is located in NESPAL Rm. 306, Tifton Campus, and her email address is: Rachel.Hill1@uga.edu

Dallas Kreisa



Ms. Dallas Kreisa is a Graduate Research Assistant in the IPBGG Ph.D. program for 2023. She is working with Dr. Zenglu Li to perform high throughput genotyping in the lab and phenotyping in the field, and conduct molecular breeding to improve soybean yield and traits of importance using innovative genomic technologies.

Dallas received her Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from Marian University WI (2023). Her previous work experiences include an REEU position at South Dakota State University (2021) and an REU position at Utah State University (2022).

Please welcome Dallas to our Institute. Her workspace is located in Athens at CAGT Room 102 and her email address is: Dallas.Kreisa@uga.edu

Caitlin McCann



Ms. Caitlin McCann is a Research Assistant in the IPBGG Master's program for 2023. She is working with Dr. Dario Chavez and her duties include peach breeding and genetics data consolidation.

Caitlin received her Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from the University of Alabama, with a minor in Blount/Liberal Arts (2023). Her previous work experience includes undergraduate research at UA in the labs of Dr. Michael McKain and Dr. Jon Benstead, studying invasive Johnson grass and freshwater ecology, respectively. She has also undertaken two internships with Syngenta, one as the PPP North American Stewardship Intern (2022) and another as an Operations Intern (2023).

Let's welcome Caitlin to our Institute. She will be spending Fall 2023 in Athens and her permanent workspace is located in Griffin. Caitlin's email is Caitlin.McCann@uga.edu

Trenten McCracken



Mr. Trent McCracken is a Research Assistant in the IPBGG's Master's program for Fall 2023, working with Dr. Esther van der Knaap. His duties include field evaluations, DNA extractions, PCR, and mapping of volatile loci in tomatoes.

Trent received his Bachelor of Science in Plant Science, with an emphasis in Plant Genetics and Biotechnology, from The Pennsylvania State University, State College, PA (2023). He was employed in several labs as an Undergraduate Research Assistant at The Pennsylvania State University. In the Plant Pathology Disease Clinic, he identified crop diseases while assisting growers in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Working under Dr. Surinder Chopra, Trent cross-pollinated maize

and sorghum varieties with the objective of breeding insect-resistant corn and sorghum for the upregulation of anthocyanins. In Dr. Michael Wolfen's Entomology Laboratory, he aided in the extraction of 3-deoxyanthocyanidin from sorghum. This led to the development of a sorghum-based biopesticide which was shown to be an effective adulticide on two species of mushroom flies. This research won him first place in the Insects and Systems category of Penn State's Gamma Sigma Delta Agriculture Honor Society Expo. Most recently, Trent participated in several bacterial canker studies in Dr. Majid Foolad's Tomato Breeding and Molecular Genetics Laboratory, where he assisted in evaluations of wild tomato species' interaction with the causal pathogen, *Clavibacter michiganensis* subsp. *michiganensis*.

Please welcome Trent to our Institute! His workspace is located in Athens at CAGT Rm 124. and his email is Trenten.McCracken@uga.edu

Aasish Pokharel



My name is Aasish, which means blessing. I am from Kathmandu Nepal. I finished my undergraduate degree in agronomy from northwest Missouri state university and worked at Bayer Hazelwood seed center in St. Louis for 5 months afterwards.

I will be working with Dr Nino brown as a MS plant breeding student at UGA Tifton peanut breeding program. Other than plant breeding I am interested in yoga, meditation, eastern Vedic and yogic wisdom, international politics, business and so on. I play guitar and flute during my free time. I like making new friends, chatting and social media.

Let's welcome Aasish to our Institute! His workspace is located in Tifton at NESPAL and his email is aasishpokharel108@uga.edu

Emily Powell



Ms. Emily Powell is a Research Assistant in the IPBGG Ph.D. program for 2023, working with Dr. Zenglu Li. Her research consists of performing high throughput genotyping in the lab, phenotyping in the field, and conducting molecular breeding to improve soybean yield and traits.

Emily received her Bachelor of Science degree in Crop Biotechnology and Plant sciences from North Carolina State University (2023). Her previous employment experience includes a position as a lab assistant in for the USDA soybean breeding program and an undergraduate researcher in an evolutionary ecology lab.

Please welcome Emily to our Institute! Her workspace is located in Athens, CAGT Room 202, and her email is Emily.Powell1@uga.edu