

Department of Horticulture

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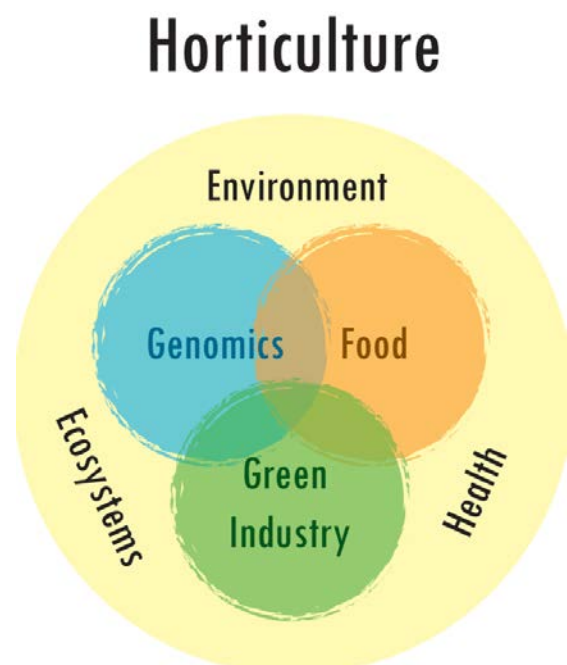


Roger Harris, Department Head

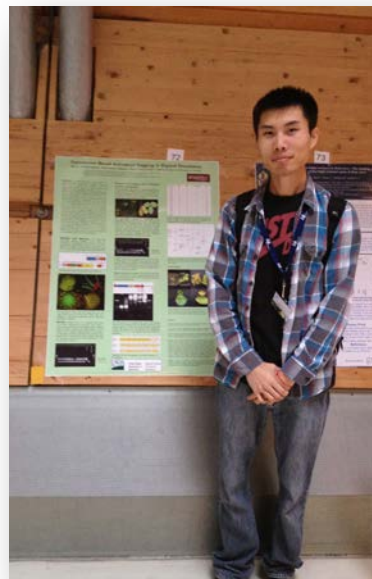
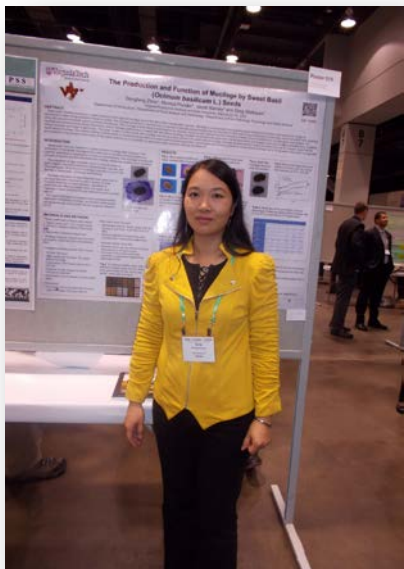
October 2012

Greetings everyone! I hope that fall has been as beautiful wherever you are as it has been around Blacksburg. The stunning fall colors all across campus and up in the surrounding mountains always remind me of how great it is to be a horticulturist! Virginia Tech recently revealed *A Plan for a New Horizon*, the strategic plan for 2013-2018 ([VT strategic plan](#)). This was followed by the unveiling of the college's strategic plan ([CALs strategic plan](#)). Both plans offer exciting vision and our department will be an essential catalyst for implementation of both. With both plans in mind, Horticulture faculty sequestered themselves up at the Hahn Pavilion this month for a strategic planning retreat. See the diagram below that came out of that retreat and summarizes our overall focus. We will be developing our strategic plan over the next few months and working on future directions. Stay tuned! This month, we continue to feature the essays from Susan Clark's Horticulture Seminar class (see end of newsletter). Alumni, please let us know what you are up to (rharris@vt.edu). Please visit the [Horticulture](#) Department web site often for special departmental features. If you have not seen our new movie, check it out. Enjoy! With kind regards, *Roger*

Our department has three core areas that encompass our teaching, research, and extension programs, *Genomics*, *Food*, and the *Green Industry*. The areas outside of the three focus areas, *Environment*, *Health*, and *Ecosystems* are integral to our overall focus and include the fundamental research of some faculty.



Holly Scoggins and **Joyce Latimer** participated in the Ohio Floriculture Association Perennial Production & Retail Conference in Grand Rapids, MI last month. Holly teamed up with perennial growers Allen Pyle of Rakers Acres (Litchfield, MI) and Paul Westervelt (HORT BS 2001, MS 2003) of Saunders Brothers Nursery (Piney River, VA) to help new growers decide which perennial crops to grow and how to schedule them. Joyce presented information on the use of plant growth regulators for height control and branching.



Horticulture graduate students on the road! **Emily Zhou** (left) presents two posters from her MS research at the annual Crop Science Society of America conference in Cincinnati. **Nan Lu** (right) presents research from his PhD studies at the Sixth Rosaceous Genomics Conference in San Michele all'Adige in Trento, Italy.

Emily Zhou received a scholarship for her attendance at the Mid Atlantic Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture in Cumberland, MD last month.

New publication:

Kim Seonhwa, **Lowman Scott**, Hou Guichuan, **Nowak Jerzy**, **Flinn Barry**, **Mei Chuansheng**. Biotechnology for Biofuels. 2012. Growth promotion and colonization of switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*) cv. Alamo by bacterial endophyte *Burkholderia phytofirmans* strain PsJN.

<http://www.biotechnologyforbiofuels.com/content/5/1/37>

Brittaney Nelson, rising senior in HORT, is a recipient of the prestigious Vic & Margaret Ball Intern Scholarship, administered by the American Floral Endowment. Students selected for the program are placed in paid internships at a commercial production greenhouse or nursery. Upon completing the internship, participants receive scholarship funds, in addition to their salary.

Hahn Horticulture Garden Happenings

Art in the Garden

A new program featuring the work of local artists - on display inside the Peggy Lee Hahn Garden Pavilion. Currently displaying *Moonscapes in Rust* - works by Diane Relf (retired Horticulture professor) through December 20. Also - Stained Glass by Nancy Norton.

Fall and Winter Gardening Workshops and Seminars

Take advantage of our low admission prices and prepare to be informed, entertained, and inspired! Call Stephanie at 540-231-5970 to register by phone or email vtgarden@vt.edu.

The History of Landscape Design with Robert McDuffie. Thursday, November 15, 2012 - 6:00 p.m. -7:30 p.m. \$15 general public/\$10 Friends of the Garden members.

Holiday Wreath Workshop with Richmond Floral Designer, David Pippin. Saturday December 1, 2012 10:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m. The workshop is limited to 25 participants, pre-payment is required. \$50 general public/\$40.

Sex in the Garden: Hidden Secrets!! with Dr. Brian Jackson, NC State University. Thursday December 6, 2012 6:00-7:30 p.m. \$15 Friends of the Garden/\$19 General Public.



From the archives: Aerial view of the Test Gardens on Washington Street, current site of the Hahn Horticulture Garden - mid 1960's



Horticulture Seminar (Hort 4004)

Passion to Make a Difference

By Charles William Knight, III



During my time studying Horticulture at Virginia Tech there has been many lessons both inside and outside the classroom that will always have lasting impact on me. It is difficult to pinpoint a single moment or person, but all these experiences have one thing in common, passion. The passion exhibited by the faculty and my fellow students has been an inspiration to me, the university, and the community. This characteristic has

been a vital key to unlocking my love and understanding of Horticulture. With this same passion now ingrained in my heart I know there is nothing that is out of the realm of possibility.

Upon graduating this spring I plan on obtaining my master's degree in Agriculture Education and Extension. With the knowledge acquired here at Virginia Tech I will be pursuing a career as a high school Horticulture teacher. Along with being part of the classroom environment this path will enable me to continue to be high school cheerleading coach and an official for the Virginia High School League. As an educator I can instill passion, love, and appreciation for Horticulture in my students. As a coach I can demonstrate to my athletes the importance of dedication, selflessness, and hard work. By combining all areas of my career I will be able to reach my ultimate goal of making a positive difference in the education and development of future generations.

