



## **Issue 18 - October 2019**

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### ***Straight From an ECP: Transitioning to a Primarily Undergraduate Institution***

I went to graduate school and got my PhD because my goal was (and still is) to become a tenured professor and teach undergraduate students. My current job at Farmingdale State College (SUNY), a primarily undergraduate institution (PUI), places the greatest weight of tenure decisions on teaching, and I teach four classes a semester. I'm also expected to serve on committees, mentor undergraduate researchers, and I need to have two peer-reviewed publications by the time I apply for tenure. If you are in graduate school and my job sounds like your dream job, I have some advice to offer about transitioning from your R1 grad program to a PUI. Granted, this advice is from an ECP two years into their tenure-track gig, but consider it a start:

1. Find multiple people in your field who are at PUIs and follow them on social media, read their blogs, and reach out to them. You want to talk to someone who has successfully gone through the application process and has sat on recent search committees. Ask them about their teaching load, research expectations, and work/life balance.
2. Start learning about learning! Read academic journals on education in your field (like the *Journal of Biological Education*) and follow the discussion on new practices in teaching. Growing this body of knowledge will be absolutely fundamental when writing your teaching philosophy, interviewing, and (see below) actually teaching your first class.
3. Try to become the instructor of record for a course, after you have experience as a TA. TAs are useful, and they help you get your feet wet when it comes to teaching, but they often do not count for much when applying for assistant professorships at PUIs. How do you do this? If

you have the time (hah!) in graduate school, apply for open adjunct positions. Alternatively, while the rest of your cohort is applying for post-docs, search for 'Visiting Assistant Professorship' or 'Teaching Fellowship' positions. I would highly recommend two year positions, as I found that applying for jobs while I only had four weeks as the instructor of record resulted in no phone interviews, while applying a year later resulted in several.

Again, this advice is limited to my experience. Start with item 1 and talk to folks that have this job. If you want more details from me, feel free to [get in touch](#) and if you're coming to Entsoc 2019, join ECP for a Lunch and Learn "So, You're on the Academic Job Market: Drafting Memorable Statements, Secrets from the Search Committee, and Advice from Recent Hires" on Tuesday, Nov 19th from 12:15 - 1:15PM.

### First Annual ECP Mixer in St. Louis

Calling all ESA Early Career Professional members! If you will be attending the [Annual Meeting](#) in St. Louis this November, then mark your calendars for Tuesday, November 19, 2019 from 8:00 - 09:30 pm, because you will be at the Shark Bar!

This year, the ESA Early Career Professionals (ECP) Committee is hosting the first-ever mixer specifically for early career/student transition members of ESA at the national meeting. Join us for an opportunity to meet, network with, and possibly vent about life to your peers and fellow ECPs in a relaxed setting with good drinks and tasty food. It will be held on Tuesday night at the same time as the traditional student mixer and will actually be located just around the corner, as both events will be taking place at Ballpark Village.

Once more, for those of you in the back of the room, this event is open to all early career and student transition members of ESA. Better yet, it is free! Come join us to make new friends, establish some new connections, commiserate with others about the challenges we face as ECPs, and celebrate our successes. We hope to see you there!

### First ECP Calendar for Events

Every year for the ESA annual meeting, the ECP Committee has a series of activities lined up for our members, and this year won't be the exception for the 2019 ESA Meeting in St. Louis.

It can be difficult to make it to everything you want to see at the meeting which is why **we have conveniently added all of the ECP events to a [Google calendar](#) that can be added to your personal calendar!** If you have questions or comments, please [email us](#) for more information.

Don't miss the following events:

1. *Selling yourself and building your brand as an Early Career Professional:* Sunday, November 17<sup>th</sup>, 12:15 PM - 1:15 PM

After constantly talking about your research as a graduate student, you forget how to talk about YOURSELF! It feels selfish to ramble about personal accomplishments in an interview. However, landing a job requires personal advocacy, so visit our lunch and learn to finally get comfortable building and selling your brand!

2. *Advocating diversity among entomologists: If insects are diverse, we should be, too!:* Sunday November 17<sup>th</sup>, 1:30-5:30pm

This symposium will address ways to recruit and support a diversity of entomologists at all career stages. By focusing on practical methods of inclusion, we will engage with the audience to address their concerns and capture their ideas. We will utilize mobile device-enabled anonymous surveys (e.g., Mentimeter) during each talk with results displayed in real-time. There will also be a large part (broken into two increments) of the symposium for public discussion with the speakers.

3. *Work on your social life: Starting social science collaborations*: Monday November 18<sup>th</sup>, 8:00-11:00am

Want to learn how to design a survey without leading questions and get valuable feedback from stakeholders? Or how to incorporate human history into a class on insect-vector-borne disease? In this workshop you will learn tools and methods to integrate biological with social science to develop interdisciplinary projects and collaborations.

4. *So, you're on the academic job market: Drafting memorable statements, secrets from the search committee, and advice from recent hires*: Tuesday November 19<sup>th</sup>, 12:15-1:15pm

Applying for academic jobs? Seeking guidance from entomologists who have gone through the process recently? Then join us as we cover preparing your application materials (curriculum vitae, plus teaching, research, and diversity statements), the phone interview, the on-campus interview, and insider information on how search committees review applicants.

5. *What's your story? Tips and tricks for telling compelling entomology*: Wednesday November 20<sup>th</sup>, 12:15-1:15pm

Peer review invitations are a fact of life for scientists. Our panel of experienced reviewers and editors will provide advice on speeding up the process of writing a review, focusing on the most important aspects of a paper, and writing reviews that result in higher quality papers.

6. *Next-gen scientists: Mentorship and teaching strategies to advocate for undergraduate entomology education*: Wednesday November 20<sup>th</sup>, 1:30-5:30pm

How do we keep the Entomology Pipeline going? Advocate undergraduate involvement, of course! Come listen and share mentorship and teaching strategies with a range of members working primarily as educators. Take home new ideas, opportunities, and strategies to help advocate!

These sessions are usually interactive topics that can go from critical current issues to introduction of any organizational initiatives. The value of having these sessions is to enhance teamwork communication and skills that can result in an increase of motivation among members needed to support our society and workplaces. These activities will involve discussions from managing the early years of your next career step to becoming effective leaders in your workplace.

### **Professional Development Webinars**

Last month, Dr. Karen Kelsky of "[The Professor in In](#)" gave two webinars for those on the job market. You can find *Hacking the Academic Job Market* and *Preparing for the Non-Academic*

Career archived on ESA's [website](#). Many thanks to ESA and all the sections, P-IE, MUVE, SysEB, and PBT, for sponsoring these helpful webinars.

### *Hacking the Academic Job Market*

This webinar, targeted for those looking for tenure track (TT) academic positions, began with some bleak statistics. The market is currently flooded with PhD-level academics and not enough faculty positions to accommodate them all. This makes for stressed out, overworked search committees that want to reject you, says Dr. Kelsky. Therefore, you must use your application to grab the committee's attention right away with facts and accomplishments, not emotions. Successful candidates possess a productivity that is forward-looking, telling the committee that you have 'tenurability.' Other important qualities include professionalism, self-respect, and effective self-promotion.

As you prepare your job application, keep in mind that you cannot flatter yourself into a TT position. Academics are skeptical by nature and respond to reliable evidence. Focus exclusively on what you have accomplished and describe it with confidence. If you secure an interview, be concise, well-organized and well-rehearsed. Common pitfalls include rambling, speaking in an insecure tone, or not targeting the specific requirements of the job.

### *Preparing for the Non-Academic Career*

The transition to searching for non-academic jobs can be brutally hard, Dr. Kelsky explained in her second webinar. But this doesn't mean it is bad idea! Only a fraction of PhDs are getting tenure track jobs so we must prepare for the non-academic job search. Strategies would be finding mentors, securing internships or volunteer positions, or seeking additional training. There are many non-academic positions out there, including but not limited to, higher education administration, consulting, non-profit work, financial services, academic publishing, secondary school teaching, federal government, professional research, or entrepreneurship.

As graduate students, we have many skills that are often overlooked. Don't underestimate yourself! We have project and communication skills, entrepreneurship, and knowledge and information skills. Use this to your advantage as you are on the non-academic job search. Finally, don't forget about the importance of networking as the majority of non-academic jobs are not advertised. Look to the digital space (e.g. Twitter, LinkedIn) and your personal network to find positions that may be of interest.

One crucial thing not to forget while you are on the job market is *self-care*. The emotional cost of searching for jobs as early career professionals is real and we have to remember to take care of ourselves. Reach out for help if you need it and take time for yourself throughout this process.

### ***American Entomologist Debuts New ECP-Coordinated Column***

The Fall 2019 *American Entomologist* debuts a new look for the magazine, based on feedback from a 2018 readership survey. The magazine is debuting new content as well, including the "[Zyzyva](#)" column, which focuses on the intersection of entomology and society and which is curated by the Early Career Professionals Committee, and "[Signals](#)," a column for science communicators and educators edited by ECP Lauren Diepenbrock. [Read more about the new AE design.](#)

## ***Entomology Today* Blog**

The ECP Committee has enjoyed working with ESA's *Entomology Today* blog to highlight the work of several early career professionals since January 2018 in our *Entomology Today* ECP Standout Series.

Looking for a way to stay current with the blog? [Sign up to get a real-time alert](#) whenever a new *Entomology Today* post is published.

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### **Want to Get Involved?**

If you have any thoughts, suggestions, or questions for the ECP Committee, please contact us by emailing [esa.step.committee@gmail.com](mailto:esa.step.committee@gmail.com).

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## **Meet the 2019 ECP Committee**



**Ms. Lina Bernaola** is a PhD student at the Louisiana State University studying the mechanistic basis of plant resistance against above-ground and below-ground organisms in rice. Primarily, she studies the effects of mycorrhizal fungi, a symbiotic soil borne organism, on rice resistance to insect herbivores. Lina has been actively involved with ESA since 2013. She has presented her research at several national and Southeastern Branch meetings. Through ESA, Lina has gained opportunities to learn and practice leadership skills and to network with fellow entomologists. Previously, Lina served as student representative of the P-IE Governing Council and Student Affairs Committee of the SEB-ESA. Currently, she is the Student Representative to the ESA Governing Board and a member of the SAC.



**Dr. Katelyn Kesheimer** is an Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist in the Entomology and Plant Pathology Department at Auburn University. She currently works in grain crops, forages, stored grain, and commercial turf and helps to provide Alabama growers with up-to-date research-based information. Her research broadly focuses on combining field and laboratory-based techniques to implement integrated pest management strategies that are both environmentally and economically sustainable. An ESA member since 2009, Katelyn received her MS in Biology from Eastern Illinois University and her PhD in Entomology from the University of Kentucky. Katelyn is excited to chair the ECP Committee and enjoys being part of such a beneficial society. As part of the ECP committee, she hopes to advocate for all professionals of any career, and provide support for those in this unique phase.





**Dr. Nicholas Larson** is a visiting scientist at the USDA Invasive Insect Biocontrol & Behavior Lab in Beltsville, MD. His current work involves toxicological analysis of naturally occurring compounds on agricultural and human pests. He received his Ph.D. in Entomology from Virginia Tech in 2017 where his work focused on the manipulation of honey bee foraging behavior through utilization of repellent chemistries. Nicholas received his B.S. in biology from the University of Central Florida and his M.S. in entomology from the University of Florida. He joined ESA in 2016, and has been an active member at both the national and Eastern branch meetings. He served in several

leadership roles while attending school and he looks forward to continuing his volunteer work by serving as the P-IE representative on the Early Career Professionals Committee.



**Dr. Ryan Leonard** is currently a post-doc at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. His research explores the ecology of ground nesting bees, and how pesticides including neonicotinoids influence the behaviour of these important, and typically undervalued pollinators. Prior to starting this position, Ryan completed a PhD at the University of Sydney, Australia. His thesis - 'Exhausting all avenues - the ecological effects of roads and air pollution on biota' used the European honeybee, *Apis mellifera* as a model organism to explore how pollutants from road and vehicle use affect bee cognition. Ryan is passionate

about pollinator health, science engagement and has been a member of ESA for 3 years. He looks forward to representing the growing international community of early career professionals at ESA in his role as the international branch ECP representative.



**Dr. Erika Machtinger** holds a B.S. from the University of Delaware in Wildlife Conservation and Ecology, and a M.S. and PhD in Entomology from the University of Florida. Currently, she is an Assistant Professor at Pennsylvania State University. As the principal investigator for the Veterinary Entomology Laboratory, her research focuses on arthropod pests of veterinary concern. The mission of the Veterinary Entomology Laboratory is to reduce the health risks to wild and domesticated animals associated with arthropod vectors and parasites. Current projects include understanding the ecology of mange

infection in American black bears, spatial ecology of white-tailed deer and white-footed mouse as it relates to tick abundance, evaluating the chemical ecology of blacklegged ticks, developing better fly control products for poultry facilities, and assessing the role of landscape in mosquito presence in ruffed grouse habitat.



**Dr. Tracey Payton Miller** is currently an Assistant Professor of Horticulture and Plant and Soil Sciences Program Leader at Langston University in Oklahoma. Tracey became interested in plant-related research early in her college career while working at the Oklahoma State University (OSU) Cimarron Valley Research station. After a semester in Greece studying cucumber genetics, she earned her B.S. in Horticulture, minor Entomology, from OSU. While employed at a wholesale greenhouse in Nebraska, she developed a keen interest in the insects feeding on the plants. Shortly

afterward she returned to Oklahoma to work as a Biological Science Technician at the USDA-ARS in

Stillwater. While there, she received her M.S. in Entomology from OSU. After graduation, she joined the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service in Norman for 10 years. During this time, Tracey earned her Ph.D. in Entomology working on the *Aphidius colemani*-*Rhopalosiphum padi* banker plant system for aphid control in greenhouses. Tracey continues investigating effective banker plant species and their incorporation into existing growing environments.



**Dr. Scott O'Neal** is currently a Postdoctoral Research Associate at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Scott grew up on a farm in rural southern Indiana and first developed an interest in entomology through his participation in 4-H. He earned his B.S. in Genetics and Microbiology from Purdue University and then his M.S. in Forensic Science from Virginia Commonwealth University. After working for several years as a researcher in the field of mammalian behavioral pharmacology, Scott returned to graduate school to earn his Ph.D. in Entomology from Virginia Tech, during which time he was awarded a USDA NIFA Predoctoral Fellowship to study ion channel regulation of honey bee cardiac function and antiviral immunity. Scott continues to investigate questions related to insect physiology with an overall interest in examining interactions between viruses and the immune response of the insect host.



**Dr. Hannah Penn** is a Postdoctoral Researcher at Louisiana State University; her primary research focus is on incorporating IPM practices with food web and landscape ecology. Hannah's interest in entomology stemmed from meeting entomologists at Florida's sterile Mediterranean fruit fly facility, prompting her to obtain a B.S. in entomology from the University of Florida. She has since gone on to earn a Ph.D. in entomology from the University of Kentucky with NSF GRFP funding looking at how land use influences biological control in soybeans. She is currently working on questions of disease and mite resistance and how they impact foraging decisions across honey bee stocks. Additionally, she is working on extension projects in collaboration with environmental economists to survey hobbyist beekeeper and farmer management decisions, how best to disseminate IPM methods, and delineating public perceptions of pollinators.



**Ms. Monique Rivera** is currently an Assistant Specialist in Cooperative Extension at the University of California, Riverside. Monique has been an ESA member since 2010, presenting at national and branch meetings, volunteering and serving as the student representative on ESA's membership committee. Monique joined the ECP Committee in 2018 and hopes to contribute to the guidance and advancing of fellow ECPs.



**Dr. Carly Tribull** is currently an Assistant Professor in the Biology department at Farmingdale State College (SUNY). She began her studies in entomology as an undergraduate at the University of California, Berkeley, and continued studying parasitoid Hymenoptera systematics at the Richard Gilder Graduate School at the American Museum of Natural History. As a professor at a primarily teaching-focused institution, she focuses on providing meaningful undergraduate research experiences and mentorship in field entomology and molecular systematics. Her other great passion is comics, specifically the incorporation of science communication and education comics into the college classroom - her work on a free, online textbook for non-major biology students

can be found at [www.biologycomics.com](http://www.biologycomics.com).



**Dr. James Wilson** joined the Virginia Tech faculty in January 2017 as the new Extension Apiculturist. His duties include Extension efforts throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia and teaching the Bees and Beekeeping class and Insects in Human Society class on campus in Blacksburg, Virginia. James grew up in Southport North Carolina and earned his BS in Fisheries and Wildlife Science from NC State in 2008. During his studies at NC State he became engrossed in the smaller wildlife of the region, especially insects. James went on to earn his MS in Entomology with Dr. Rick Fell at Virginia Tech, researching forensic entomology in wildlife poaching, while trying to learn as much about bees as he could on the side. After his Master's, James

worked with Dr. Tom Kuhar, Vegetable Entomologist at Virginia Tech, on the Integrated Pest Management of Cucurbit Production in Virginia. His dissertation research focused on pest and beneficial insect interactions as well as the qualification of pesticide exposure risk to honey bees. James maintains Virginia Tech's research and teaching apiaries and is looking forward to expanding the impact of Apiculture Extension throughout Virginia and surrounding states. For more information on Apiculture Extension in Virginia please visit [blogs.ext.vt.edu/bees](http://blogs.ext.vt.edu/bees).