

CWSS: Student Contest Winners!

(From the *UC Weed Science blog* posted [Feb. 3, 2020](#))

The California Weed Science Society (CWSS) met two weeks ago in Monterey, CA. As always, it was an excellent conference with numerous informative sessions across all aspects of weed management in the state.

The first session of the conference “the weed school” focused on hot topics such as drone based mapping, utilizing remote sensing and high-quality imagery to identify plants for robotic and precision-based weeding. It is amazing how advances in technologies are revolutionizing weed control in certain crops! The agenda also devoted time to five presentations focused specifically on glyphosate, which has been a hot topic as of late.

Speakers from the state, Cal Poly, UC Riverside, and Bayer presented information related to toxicity, cancer, statistics and risk assessment. Sitting in on these sessions was certainly informative. The CWSS always offers quality speakers talking about pertinent topics, which is exactly why many attendees come to the conference every year. (The 16 CE hours offered at this year's event didn't hurt either!!)

But I am getting distracted! I am writing this blog today to recognize the student participation we had at this year's conference. All students did an absolutely excellent job, and presented spectacular research updates on their programs. Their presentations and posters were well attended by conference participants. The CWSS is a very generous, supportive organization to students of California. Each year scholarships are given to support student work, travel stipends are available to support student's trips to the conference, and a student paper and poster competition are held with cash prizes! In my opinion, every single student deserved an award, as no one presented subpar research. However, my vote doesn't count. The judges reminded me that this was a competition, and those students whose work rose to the top deserve to be recognized!



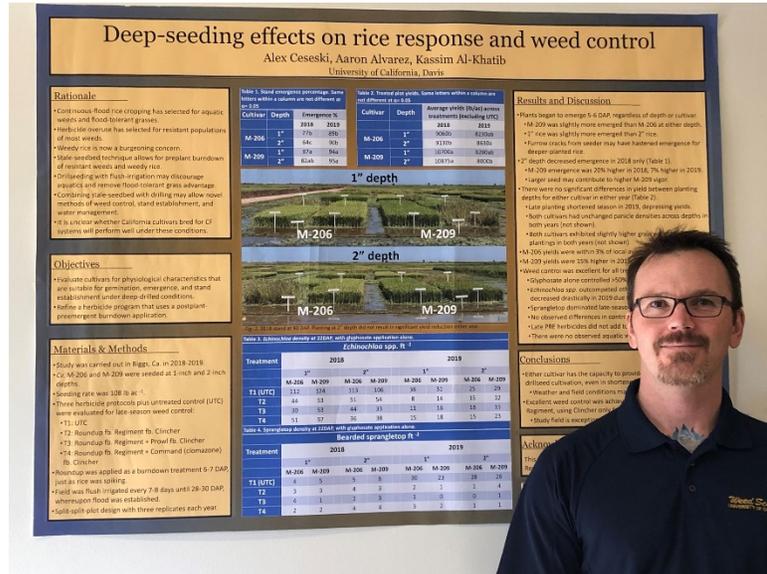
Student Contest Winners (left to right): Matthew Fatino, Guelta Laguerre, Drew Wolter, James Schaeffer (Alex Ceseski not present)

We had one undergraduate poster winner, Guelta Laguerre, who presented work she has been doing on “Understanding the Impact of Early Season Algae Infestation on Rice Seedling Emergence and Establishment” (Dr. Al-Khatib’s lab).

There were two graduate student poster winners, out of four contestants. While typically there is a first and second place prize, the judge’s scores came to a tie (down to a tenth of a point), so both students were given the award.

1st Place Poster (tie): Alex Ceseski – “Rice Seeding Depth Effects of Deep Seeding on Weed Management and Crop Response in California Rice Systems” (Dr. Al-Khatib’s lab).

1st Place Poster (tie): Matthew Fatino – “Evaluation of Growing Degree Day Based Chemigation Treatments for Management of Branched Broomrape in California Processing Tomato Systems” (Dr. Hanson’s lab).



1st Place Poster (tie) winner Alex Ceseski (UC Davis)

This year we only had graduate student contestants in the student oral competition. (However, undergraduates are encouraged to enter and compete next year!) All four contestants did an excellent job and I know the judges had a hard time deciding who to give the awards.

1st Place Presentation: Drew Wolter – “Can Trunk Paint Mitigate Herbicide Damage in Young Almond Trees?” (Dr. Hanson’s lab).

2nd Place Presentation: James Schaeffer – “Alkaliweed Invasions and Adaptations in Pistachio Orchards” (Dr. Shrestha and Kurt Hembree)

If you are a student who did not participate in the contest this year, I encourage you to do so next year. Please feel free to reach out to me for more details. Next year the CWSS Conference will be located in Santa Barbara, which is a great reason to visit southern California in January.

I hope to see you there!

Tom

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