

# The SS-ASPB

February 2018

Newsletter of the Southern Section of the American Society of Plant Biologists

TO ENCOURAGE AND PROMOTE THE GROWTH OF AND THE WELFARE AND GOOD FELLOWSHIPS OF PLANT BIOLOGISTS GENERALLY...

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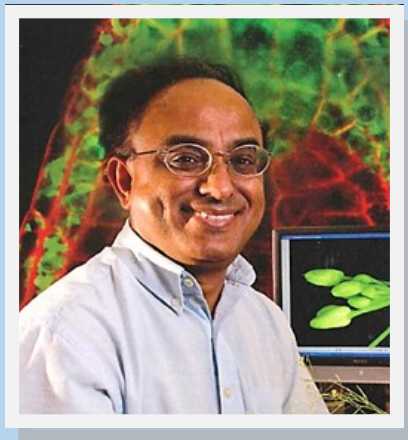
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*Greetings from  
Dr. Nihal Dharmasiri  
2017-2018 SS-ASPB Chair*

Greetings, Southern Section friends! It will be an exciting year for the Southern Section of ASPB as we prepare for our 2018 annual meeting that will be held in Le Pavillon Hotel in New Orleans, Louisiana, from March 24-26. SS-ASPB Secretary/Treasurer Dr. Aruna Kilaru, along with local organizer Dr. Jay Shockey, have been busy for the last few months putting together this meeting. This year's theme of the Kriton Hatzios symposium is "**Big data: Next Frontier in Plant Science**", which is organized by Dr. Shahid Muktar. Dr. Philip Benfey (*Duke University*), Dr. Bob Schmitz (*University of Georgia*), Dr. Libo Shan (*Texas A&M University*), and Dr. Jason Willams (*Cold Spring Harbor*) will address the symposium. The SS-ASPB meeting is a great forum for undergraduate and graduate students and postdocs to present their research in a friendly environment. Additionally, graduate students have the opportunity to compete in oral presentations, while undergraduate students will compete in poster presentations. In addition to listening to great talks, you will also have the opportunity to interact with other Southern Section friends and give your opinion on the future plans of SS-ASPB. We invite all of you to our 2018 annual meeting and look forward to seeing you all in New Orleans.



## SS-ASPB 2018

### New Orleans, LA

### March 24-26, 2018

Greetings fellow SS-ASPB members! Please plan to join us for the 2018 annual meeting of the Southern Section of the American Society of Plant Biologists, to be held in the **Le Pavillon Hotel in New Orleans, Louisiana, March 24-26, 2018**. The city is famous for its authentic cuisine, music (particularly jazz), and its annual celebrations and festivals, especially Mardi Gras, dating back to French colonial times. The historic 1880s Le Pavillon hotel is one of the grandest hotels in the Central Business District of New Orleans. Having survived the great depression, this historic building is often called “The Belle of New Orleans”. The hotel continues to practice old traditions in these modern days, while staying true to southern hospitality. The hotel is within walking distance to many attractions such as the famous French Quarter,—home to music, dining, shopping and the iconic Bourbon Street. A block of rooms has been reserved at a lower rate for SS-ASPB meeting attendees. If you need more information about the hotel or for reservations call 844-498-8577 or visit online: <http://www.lepavillon.com/>.



SS-ASPB meetings keep our tradition of promoting plant science and education, especially focusing on graduate and undergraduate students, and postdocs. If you need further information regarding the 2018 SS-ASPB meeting, please contact either Dr. Aruna Kilaru, (Secretary/Treasurer; [KILARU@etsu.edu](mailto:KILARU@etsu.edu)) or Dr. Jay Shockey (local organizer; [Jay.Shockey@ars.usda.gov](mailto:Jay.Shockey@ars.usda.gov)).



# SS-ASPB 2018

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## Tentative Schedule

Saturday, March 24th	Opening Night Mixer
Sunday, March 25th	Plenary Session Oral & Poster Presentations
Monday, March 26th	Kriton Hatzios Symposium SS-ASPB General Business Meeting

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## Registration Information

- ◆ Registration is now open and will continue through **March 1, 2018**.
- ◆ Online registration and abstract submission is available at [www.ss-aspb.org](http://www.ss-aspb.org).
- ◆ Registration fees are \$120 for students and \$180 for standard registration.
- ◆ Registration fees include Saturday night mixer, meeting break refreshments, Sunday night banquet and commemorative t-shirt.
- ◆ Payment can be made by check or online with PayPal.
- ◆ Participants receive a discounted rate at Le Pavillon hotel. The group rate is available until **February 22, 2018**.
- ◆ Meeting attendees also qualify for discounted airport-hotel shuttle rates.
- ◆ Competitions will be held for best undergraduate student poster presentation and best graduate student oral presentation.

## SS-ASPB 2018

### Kriton Hatzios Symposium

# Big Data: the Next Frontier in Plant Science

Dr. Shahid Mukhtar, Symposium Organizer

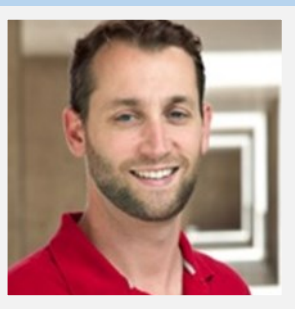
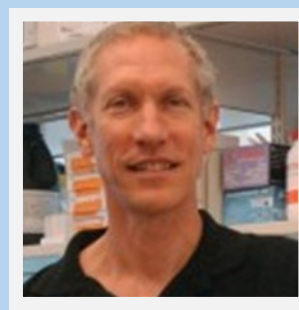
#### **“Underground signaling networks”**

**Dr. Philip Benfey**

Paul Kramer Professor and HHMI Investigator

Duke University and HHMI

<https://sites.duke.edu/benfey/>



#### **“Mapping and exploiting functional variation in crop genomes”**

**Dr. Bob Schmitz**

Associate Professor

University of Georgia at Athens

<http://schmitzlab.genetics.uga.edu/>

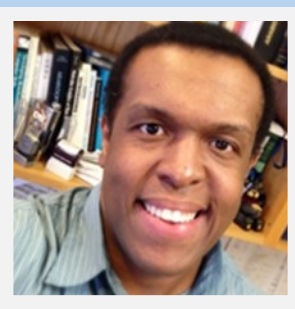
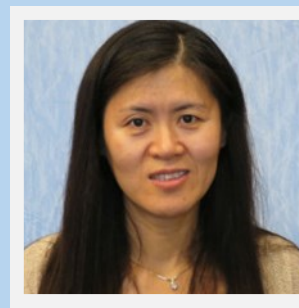
#### **“Microbial sensing and signaling from the plant cell membrane”**

**Dr. Libo Shan**

Associate Professor

Texas A&M University

<https://ipgb.tamu.edu/people/shan-libo/>



#### **“Data, Data Everywhere Nor Any a Drop to Drink”**

**Dr. Jason Williams**

Lead, CyVerse EOT

Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory

<https://www.dnalc.org/about/staff/williams.html>



## Plant Biology 2018 Montréal, Quebec, Canada July 14-18, 2018

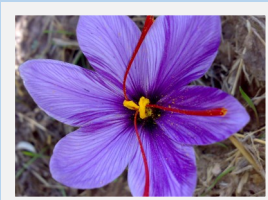
A joint meeting of the American Society of Plant Biologists, Canadian Society of Plant Biologists/Société Canadienne de Biologie Végétale, and the International Society of Photosynthesis Research.

Registration information, meeting schedule, and abstract submission information is available at  
<http://plantbiology.aspb.org/>.

### ASBP Membership Committee Report

by Dr. Ashlee McCaskill, SS-ASPB Representative

The ASPB membership committee recently voted to support the creation of a new official section within the ASPB organization that is focused on our members at Primarily Undergraduate Institutions (PUIs). The new section, which will initially be given probationary status, will be open to all ASPB members. Its goals will be to provide resources, information and networking opportunities for ASPB members interested in or located at PUIs. More information on the new section can be found at <https://aspb.org/aspb-sections/pui/>.



### Plant Biology Trivia

- The spice saffron is the dried stigmas from the flowers of *Crocus sativus*, the autumn blooming crocus.
- Saffron can cost as much as \$5000 per pound.
- It takes about 150,000 flowers to produce a kilogram of saffron.
- There are four main compounds that give saffron its taste, aroma and color—crocin, crocetin, picrocrocin, and safranal.

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We're on the web!  
<http://ss-aspb.org/>



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## 2017-2018 SS-ASPB Officers

### *Chair*

#### **Dr. Nihal Dharmasiri**

Associate Professor  
Department of Biology  
Texas State University  
San Marcos, TX 78666  
512-245-4911  
md34@txstate.edu

### *Vice-Chair*

#### **Dr. Shahid Mukhtar**

Assistant Professor  
Department of Biology  
University of Alabama Birmingham  
Birmingham, AL 35294  
(205) 934-8335  
smukhtar@uab.edu

### **Secretary/Treasurer**

#### **Dr. Aruna Kilaru**

Associate Professor, Biology  
East Tennessee State University  
Johnson City, TN 37614  
Office: 423-439-6931  
Fax: 423-439-5958  
<http://faculty.etsu.edu/kilaru/>  
kilaru@etsu.edu

### *Executive Committee Members*

#### **Dr. Ken Korth**

Professor of Plant Pathology  
University of Arkansas  
Fayetteville, AR 72701  
479-575-5191  
kkorth@uark.edu

#### **Dr. Rick Turley**

Research Plant Physiologist  
USDA-ARS, Jamie Whitten Delta States  
Research Center  
Stoneville, MS 38776  
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Rick.Turley@ars.usda.gov

#### **Dr. Ashlee McCaskill**

### **2017-2020 Southern Section Representative to ASPB Executive Committee**

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