

## Graduate Student of the Month

Megan Leigh Schill, Ph.D. student, Texas A&M University

### What university do you attend and what is your research focus?

I am a PhD student at Texas A&M University, working under the advisement of Dr. Muthukumar Bagavathiannan. My dissertation research is dedicated to exploring the biological nitrification inhibition (BNI) potential in weedy sorghum species. Through this work, I aim to identify adaptive traits these weeds possess, with the broader goal of applying this knowledge to enhance sorghum cultivation and crop resilience.



### What drew you to weed science?

I was drawn to weed science by the remarkable resilience of weeds, their ability to thrive in challenging environments and adapt to constant change. These plants are true survival experts, equipped with unique strategies that enable them to flourish where many crops would struggle. As someone who is passionate about sustainable agriculture, I believe that by studying and learning from weeds, we can uncover valuable insights to advance more sustainable farming practices and cropping systems.

### What is your favorite thing about the WSSA or your regional society?

I thoroughly enjoy the WSSA annual meeting. Having attended in recent years, I've had the opportunity to meet remarkable scientists and expand my knowledge of weed management. I'm continually inspired by the researchers and students I connect with through WSSA. As a Texas-based student, I'm also an active member of SWSS, which offers a supportive environment and numerous opportunities for students to build valuable professional skills.

### What is your favorite weed and why?

My favorite weed has to be the common mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*). Growing up in the south, I often see it used in herbal remedies, and its multipurpose nature has fascinated me. This resilient plant has a rich history in folk medicine, however beyond its medicinal uses, the common mullein is a true survivor. With its soft, fuzzy leaves and tall flowering stalks it is known for thriving in poor soil and difficult conditions. Its adaptability and utility make it a captivating example of how weeds can be both resilient and remarkably beneficial.

### What is your long-term goal?

My long-term goal is to advance research in the development of bioherbicides, ideally within private industry or with the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS). I am passionate about exploring sustainable weed management solutions that leverage natural compounds and

### If you want to add Megan Leigh Schill to your network, connect with Megan on:

LinkedIn: Megan Leigh Schill; E-mail: [megan.schill@tamu.edu](mailto:megan.schill@tamu.edu); X: MeganLSchill

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## WSSA Alumni Spotlight

Katilyn Price, Technical Product Manager for Herbicides, Bayer Crop Science

### What Universities did you attend/ degrees did you earn?

B.A. in Environmental science and Anthropology University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
M.S. Natural Resource Sciences University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
Ph.D. in Crop, Soil, and Environmental Science at Auburn University

### What is your current job title and how long have you been with your current employer?

North America Technical Product Manager for Herbicides, Bayer Crop Science and I have been with the company 3.5 years.

### What is the favorite thing about your job so far?

I love the level of cross function collaboration in my role, I get to work with a ton of different groups to bring solutions to growers. I have gotten to meet and work with Bayer employees all over the world to collaborate, pass on learnings and brainstorm. I have had the opportunity to work with wonderful people from so many different backgrounds who will help if you need it (both professionally and personally). I couldn't have imagined the experiences I have had with Bayer when I first started with the company.

### What is something you wished you knew as a student that you know now?

Work life balance. Sometimes if you take even a few hours to eat a good meal, take a nap, go on a walk, read a book etc. You will be surprised how much more refreshed and productive you will be when you return to your research. Looking back, I wasted a lot of time trying to push through because I was almost burned rather than take a few moments for myself. I have learned a lot in recent year that my job will still be there tomorrow, the company will not fall, if I needed to take time for myself. I should have applied that to my life in graduate school.

### What is the biggest piece of advice you'd give students searching for a job?

You don't need to meet every qualification listed on a job application to apply. Often, managers prioritize finding someone who fits well within the team, possesses transferable skills, and is eager to learn. Don't hesitate to apply! Also network with people at WSSA, you never know when a job will open, and they will think of you.

### If you want to add Dr. Katilyn Price to your network, connect with Katilyn on:

LinkedIn: Katilyn Price; E-mail: [katilyn.price@bayer.com](mailto:katilyn.price@bayer.com)



### WSSA GSO Contact Info

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[isabels6@illinois.edu](mailto:isabels6@illinois.edu)

#### Navdeep Godara

Vice-President  
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#### Vipin Kumar

Secretary  
[vkumar4@huskers.unl.edu](mailto:vkumar4@huskers.unl.edu)

#### Ryan Hamberg

Social Media  
[ryan.hamberg@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:ryan.hamberg@ag.tamu.edu)

### Important Events & Dates

#### NCWSS Annual Meeting

December 9-12, 2024 - Kansas City, MO

#### NEWSS Annual Meeting

January 6-9, 2025 – Annapolis, MD

#### SWSS Annual Meeting

January 20-23, 2025 – Charleston, SC

#### WSSA & CWSS Joint Annual Meeting

February 24-27, 2025 – Vancouver, BC, Canada

#### WSWS Annual Meeting

March 10-13, 2025 – Seattle, WA

### Follow us on Social Media!



@WSSA\_GSO



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WSSA GSO

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## Graduate Student of the Month

Vikas C Tyagi, Ph.D. student, Texas A&M University

### What university do you attend and what is your research focus?

I am pursuing my Ph.D. in Plant Breeding with a specialization in crop-weed ecology under the guidance of Dr. Muthukumar Bagavathiannan. My research focuses on unraveling crop-weed interactions (sorghum-johnsongrass and rice-weedy rice) under climate change scenarios. I am also investigating the morphological and genetic diversity of johnsongrass populations collected from the southern United States, aiming to understand their adaptive traits and potential management strategies.



### What drew you to weed science?

My passion for weed science stems from the critical challenges weeds pose to agriculture worldwide. As a scientist at the ICAR-Directorate of Weed Research, Jabalpur (India), I conducted research on the biology and ecology of various weeds, gaining firsthand insights into their profound impact on crop yields and quality. This experience, coupled with my strong academic foundation in agriculture, economic botany, plant genetic resources, and genetics and plant breeding, solidified my commitment to advancing knowledge and developing innovative solutions in weed science. This motivation led me to pursue further studies in this vital field.

### What is your favorite thing about the WSSA or your regional society?

I greatly admire the WSSA for its dedication to bridging the gap between theoretical research and practical weed management applications. The society plays a key role in fostering collaboration among researchers, students, and practitioners by creating valuable platforms for knowledge exchange and networking with both academic and industry professionals. Similarly, I have positive experiences with the Southern Weed Science Society (SWSS), particularly through my participation in the weed contest. The contest really provides a great opportunity to explore and learn key areas of weed science and enhance future management strategies.

### What is your favorite weed and why?

Johnsongrass (*Sorghum halepense*) is my favorite weed because of its exceptional adaptability and resilience. It presents a significant challenge in sorghum production, particularly due to the absence of herbicides capable of selectively controlling it in sorghum fields and the bidirectional pollen-mediated gene flow between the two species. Its complex interactions with other major crops, such as cotton, corn, and soybean, along with its ability to thrive under diverse environmental conditions, make it a compelling subject for research.

### What is your long-term goal?

My long-term vision is to establish myself as a leading weed scientist, committed to developing innovative and sustainable solutions for weed management. I also aspire to take a leadership role in shaping national and international weed management policies and best practices, particularly in the context of climate change.

### If you want to add Vikas C Tyagi to your network, connect with Vikas on:

LinkedIn: Vikas C Tyagi; E-mail: vikas10324\_tyagi@tamu.edu

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## WSSA Alumni Spotlight

Eric Jones, Assistant Professor and Weed Management Extension Specialist, South Dakota State University

### What Universities did you attend/ degrees did you earn?

Iowa State University, BS  
Iowa State University, MS  
North Carolina State University, PhD

### What is your current job title and how long have you been with your current employer?

Assistant Professor and Weed Management Extension Specialist, South Dakota State University. Started in March 2023.

### What is the favorite thing about your job so far?

I get help people (extension) and conduct research. I enjoy research so continuing to study weed biology and ecology to help provide solutions for a farmer is a big benefit. Additionally, I have been playing with non-traditional weed management tactics; doing research outside of the nozzle is fun too. There is a lot of pasture and rangeland here in South Dakota, doing research in that setting rather than row crops has been interesting.

### What is something you wished you knew as a student that you know now?

Failure is a part of the experience. Experiments will not go as planned, you will see a P-value of 0.06, a manuscript may be rejected, or a plethora of other mishaps. Graduate school is a time to explore and learn. Do not be afraid to try new things and do something outside of your comfort zone. Very important to make time for friends and family.

### What is the biggest piece of advice you'd give students searching for a job?

Try not to limit yourself to one region if you can. I believe leaving your home region usually has positive impacts both professional and personally, even if a short time. Start talking to people currently in roles you would like to have after graduating. Talk with about the day-to-day activities, the ups, the downs and what it takes to be successful. Start your application "packages" now; regardless of wanting to pursue an academic or industry career. These application packages can be time consuming to prepare.

### If you want to add Dr. Eric Jones to your network, connect with Dr. Jones on:

LinkedIn: Eric Jones; E-mail: [eric.jones@sdstate.edu](mailto:eric.jones@sdstate.edu)



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January 6-9, 2025 – Annapolis, MD

#### SWSS Annual Meeting

January 20-23, 2025 – Charleston, SC

#### WSSA & CWSS Joint Annual Meeting

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## Graduate Student of the Month

Sai Suvidh Maddela, Ph.D. student, University of Nebraska - Lincoln

### What university do you attend and what is your research focus?

I am a PhD student at the University of Nebraska Lincoln under the guidance of Dr. Amit Jhala. My research focuses on evaluating the effects of overlapping residual herbicides applied pre and post-emergence on seed production of Palmer amaranth in sorghum during the summer, as well as determining the critical period for hairy vetch removal in sorghum during the fall. The main goal of these studies is to develop effective integrated weed management strategies to support Nebraska farmers in controlling Palmer amaranth in sorghum production



### What drew you to weed science?

My interest in weed science began during my bachelor studies at the University of Agricultural Sciences, Raichur. Weeds, much like pests and soil-borne diseases, significantly impact crop productivity, resulting in substantial economic losses for farmers. These pressing challenges motivated me towards the field of weed science. I began understanding the importance of sustainable practices such as crop rotation, cover cropping and intercropping. These strategies not only enhance weed suppression but also minimize the repetitive use of herbicides, which are a leading cause of herbicide resistance in weeds, while reducing environmental harm

### What is your favorite thing about the WSSA or your regional society?

My favorite aspect of the WSSA is the incredible support and encouragement it provides to students for their research in the field of weed science. Additionally, I greatly value the opportunity to gain valuable knowledge and suggestions from researchers, industry professionals and fellow colleagues. The society also plays a key role in organizing oral presentations, poster sessions and weed contests, which not only help students gain knowledge but also motivate them to become weed scientists and excel in their careers in the field of weed science

### What is your favorite weed and why?

The careless weed *Amaranthus palmeri* is my favorite. This summer annual has a remarkable adaptability to extreme summer conditions and resistance to numerous herbicides. I often compare it to an iceberg; people typically notice only the visible ice above the surface but overlook the vast and intricate ice beneath the surface. Similarly, research on Palmer amaranth often focuses on its above-ground shoot architecture control and eradication, while its below-ground fibrous root system is overlooked. This robust root system enables the palmer to thrive in extreme summer conditions, highlighting an important and compelling area for further research.

### What is your long-term goal?

My long-term aim is to become a weed scientist and advance innovative research in sustainable weed management practices. I aim to address challenges like herbicide resistance and crop productivity while promoting environmental sustainability. Ultimately, I hope to contribute to global agricultural systems

### If you want to add Sai Suvidh Maddela to your network, connect with Sai on:

LinkedIn: Sai Suvidh Maddela; E-mail: [smaddela2@huskers.unl.edu](mailto:smaddela2@huskers.unl.edu); X: SuvidhUNL

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## WSSA Alumni Spotlight

Jose Nunes, R&D Scientist, Crop Protection and Field Development, Syngenta

### What Universities did you attend/ degrees did you earn?

B.S. in Agronomy from the University of Cuiaba and M.S. in Crop Protection from the Goiano Federal Institute, both in Brazil. During my M.S., I worked with Dr. Paulo Cunha screening goosegrass (*Eleusine indica*) populations from the state of Mato Grosso for resistance to glyphosate, clethodim, and haloxyfop.

Ph.D. in Agronomy from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. During my Ph.D., I worked with Dr. Rodrigo Werle studying different aspects of the adoption of cereal rye cover crop for *Amaranthus* spp. suppression on soybeans.



### What is your current job title and how long have you been with your current employer?

I am an R&D field scientist with Syngenta since April of 2024. In my role, I am responsible for implementing the crop protection R&D field program in Wisconsin. That includes conducting in-house field trials and coordinating external trials with cooperators (university and research companies).

### What is the favorite thing about your job so far?

I love the diversity of crops and pests I can work with. I learned so much in just one growing season by being exposed to things outside my comfort zone. I also love the freedom to shape my research program around the diversity of challenges that Wisconsin farmers face and help develop new solutions to solve those challenges.

### What is something you wished you knew as a student that you know now?

I wish I had spent more time developing skills that are not so much related to science in general. What you learn in grad school about science will definitely help you in the real world, but there are many skills that you can only learn if you go the extra mile. I bet in your lab there is a field scientist who runs all the field activities for your advisor. Be as close as you can to that professional because they know a lot of skills that nobody else will teach you in grad school.

### What is the biggest piece of advice you'd give students searching for a job?

Be patient because it can take a couple of shots to land the perfect job, but when you do, you will never forget the feeling of your phone ringing and being offered that job.

### If you want to add Dr. Jose Nunes to your network, connect with Jose on:

LinkedIn: Jose Nunes; E-mail: [jose.nunes@syngenta.com](mailto:jose.nunes@syngenta.com)

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#### Ryan Hamberg

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### Important Events & Dates

**Nominations for the new WSSA GSO officers are open until January 31, 2025!**

#### Annual Meetings:

##### SWSS Annual Meeting

January 20-23, 2025 – Charleston, SC

##### WSSA & CWSS Joint Annual Meeting

February 24-27, 2025 – Vancouver, BC, Canada

##### WSWS Annual Meeting

March 10-13, 2025 – Seattle, WA

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## WSSA/CWSS Joint Annual Meeting | February 24-27, 2025

Dear WSSA Graduate Students,

We are pleased to invite you to a series of student events organized by the WSSA and CWSS Graduate Student Organizations during the WSSA/CWSS Joint Annual Meeting in Vancouver.

**Sunday, February 22** – Please join us for a fun **Student Bowling Night** and enjoy some snacks and drinks at **Splitsville**, from **7 PM to 9 PM**. Pre-registration is required to ensure we have enough lanes and space for everyone.

**Monday, February 23** – The **WSSA/CWSS Student Business Meeting and Luncheon** will take place from **12 PM to 1 PM**, followed by a panel discussion titled: **“Stand Out in the Crowd: Job Search and Interview Strategies.”** Our panelists, **Victor Ribeiro, Jacob Montgomery, Crystal Sparks, and Tasha Valente** will provide valuable insights and strategies to help you navigate the job market and excel in interviews.

**Tuesday, February 24** – We invite you to attend the workshop on **“Protein Modeling of Herbicide Resistance: From Mutation to Resistance”**, from **4:45 PM to 6:15 PM**. Led by **Jacob Montgomery and Crystal Sparks**, this session will explore genetic mutations and the application of bioinformatics tools in understanding their impact on herbicide interactions at the protein level.

We appreciate your support and participation in these events and look forward to seeing you in Vancouver!

Best regards,  
Isabel, Navdeep, Ryan, and Vipin  
*WSSA Graduate Student Organization*



**Presented by: Weed Science Society of America & Canadian Weed Science Society**

**Where: Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre, 1000 Burrard St, Vancouver, BC V6Z 2R9, Canada**

**Dates: Monday February 24, 2025 – Thursday, February 27, 2025**

## WSSA GSO Officer Highlight!

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President – Isabel Werle

### What University do you attend and what is your research focus?

I am currently pursuing my Ph.D. at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. My dissertation research focuses on using 'omics' approaches to investigate nontarget-site herbicide resistance mechanisms in weedy species, with a particular emphasis on waterhemp (*Amaranthus tuberculatus*).



Isabel – PhD Student  
University of Illinois

### How do you manage the time requested to serve the society? How many hours do you spend in a month?

On average, I spend at least 3 hours per week on GSO-related activities, but this can vary depending on the month. Some months require a lot more effort, and the hours can quickly pile up when we're organizing virtual workshops, and as we get closer to the WSSA Annual Meeting. One of the best things about being part of the WSSA GSO was the chance to work alongside a dedicated group of students who were always ready to help. There were plenty of times when I needed extra support, and the team was quick to step up. I typically held a couple of meetings to assign tasks and set deadlines to ensure everyone was on track. Having a collaborative group made things a lot easier and helped to stay organized throughout the more demanding months.

### Tell us about different events that your society utilizes to increase student involvement.

The WSSA Annual Meeting has many events just for students. This year, you can look forward to a bowling night, a student luncheon, a panel discussion, a workshop, and student contests. There are other events, like the Women in Weed Science Networking Event, that are typically centered around student engagement and participation. Plus, the WSSA GSO puts on virtual workshops throughout the year, which is great for anyone who can't make it to the annual meeting in person and wants to connect with other WSSA student members. Other great opportunities are the WSSA Travel Enrichment Experience Program and the Science Policy Fellowship; they accept nominations every year!

### What advice would you give to someone interested in getting more involved in your society?

One of the best ways to get involved in any regional or national society is by volunteering as a GSO officer or serving as a student rep on one of the many WSSA (or your Regional Society) committees. It's a fantastic opportunity to learn about how the Society operates, how annual meetings are organized, etc. Another excellent way to connect with members of your society is by attending the annual meetings. For example, I particularly enjoy the poster sessions. If you can find some time to visit the posters and engage with the presenters, it's a great way to expand your network and learn about the research topics being explored within your Society.

### Are there any socials or events at your upcoming annual meeting that students should join?

Yes, we're really excited about all the student events at the upcoming WSSA/CWSS Joint Annual Meeting. Here are some highlights:

- **Student Bowling Night** – February 23, 7-9 pm (pre-registration required)
- **WSSA/CWSS Student Luncheon and Business Meeting** – February 24, 12-1 pm
- **Stand Out in the Crowd: Job Search and Interview Strategies (Panel Discussion)** – February 24, 1-2 pm
- **Protein Modeling of Herbicide Resistance: From Mutation to Resistance (workshop)** – February 25, 4:45-6:15 pm sharing of experiences, and building of lasting connections within our society.

### Society social media (X, Facebook, Instagram)

X: @WSSA\_GSO; Facebook and Instagram: @WSSAGSO; LinkedIn: WSSA GSO



Vice President – Navdeep Godara

**What University do you attend and what is your research focus?**

I am a Ph.D. Candidate at Virginia Tech. My research focuses on understanding the factors associated with pollinator foraging and floral morphology of weeds in turfgrass systems.

**How do you manage the time requested to serve the society?  
How many hours do you spend in a month?**

I served as a Vice President for WSSA GSO, President for SWSS GSO, and Vice President for NEWSS GSO from 2024-25. I enjoy my engagement in GSO's as I get a chance to network and learn more about my peers and fellow representatives from national and regional GSOs. I typically spend 10 hours per month assisting the GSO team, revising newsletters for WSSA GSO, and leading/assisting the GSO team in organizing student events focused on professional development. GSO teams are wonderful and always support each other to accomplish team objectives. So, support from our team and networking opportunities serve as fuel to manage the service to the societies.



Navdeep - PhD Candidate  
Virginia Tech

**Tell us about different events that your society utilizes to increase student involvement.**

WSSA & SWSS provides travel enrichment scholarships for student members to support a week-long immersion with an academic, government, or industry host. WSSA also supports travel awards for students to attend annual meetings. During annual meetings, societies host student oral or poster contests with monetary rewards to encourage student participation. National and regional societies also host weed contests annually. WSSA GSO and SWSS GSO hosted several webinars on data analysis, scientific writing, and grant writing. I would say societies offer numerous opportunities for the personal and professional growth of students.

**What advice would you give to someone interested in getting more involved in your society?**

WSSA, SWSS, and NEWSS GSO have several leadership positions that students can serve on if elected. Getting involved is a great way to network with future employers, reviewers, and mentors and also to advocate for your peers. Don't be shy to nominate yourself or a deserving colleague during the business meeting or virtual nomination process.

**Are there any socials or events at your upcoming annual meeting that students should join?**

WSSA, SWSS, and NEWSS annual meetings have several events for students which include networking sessions and mentoring sessions. Please check the conference meeting brochures which contain more details about upcoming events.

**Society social media (X, Facebook, Instagram)**

X: @WSSA\_GSO & @SWSSGSO

Facebook: @WSSAGSO

Instagram: @WSSAGSO

LinkedIn: WSSA GSO and Southern Weed Science Society Graduate Student Organization

## WSSA GSO Officer Highlight!

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Secretary – Vipin Kumar

### What University do you attend and what is your research focus?

I am a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln. My research focuses on integrating cover crops and herbicide programs for weed management and soil health improvement in corn and soybean fields under planted green conditions.

### How do you manage the time requested to serve the society? How many hours do you spend in a month?

I serve as the secretary for the WSSA Graduate Student Organization (GSO), where my responsibilities include collecting nominations for the student, and alumni spotlight of the month and compiling the monthly GSO newsletter. This role requires approximately 4–5 hours per month, making it a manageable commitment while allowing me to contribute meaningfully to the organization.



Vipin - PhD Candidate  
University of Nebraska

### Tell us about different events that your society utilizes to increase student involvement.

The society organizes a variety of events to enhance student involvement and support their personal and professional development. Among these, my favorite is the Weed Olympics, where students from universities across the United States and Canada compete, testing their weed science knowledge and skills in a hands-on environment. During the annual meeting, the society hosts social events to encourage networking among students, providing opportunities to connect with peers, faculty, and industry professionals. Additionally, the society organizes webinars and workshops focused on various aspects of career development, research advancements, and technical skills, ensuring a well-rounded experience for students.

### What advice would you give to someone interested in getting more involved in your society?

To get more involved in the WSSA GSO, attend events like annual meetings, workshops, and weed contest to connect with peers and professionals. Nominate yourself or a colleague for a GSO officer position to enhance your involvement and make a meaningful impact within the society. Be engaged with the GSO newsletter and social media to stay informed about job opportunities, scholarships, and upcoming events.

### Are there any socials or events at your upcoming annual meeting that students should join?

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## WSSA GSO Officer Highlight!

Social Media Chair – Ryan Hamberg

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### What University do you attend and what is your research focus?

I am a PhD Candidate at Texas A&M University. The focus of my dissertation research is investigating non-chemical weed management in Texas cotton. The two technologies I am testing are thermal weed control tools involving mid-infrared radiation and electricity.

### How do you manage the time requested to serve the society? How many hours do you spend in a month?

I would say as the social media chair I spend roughly 1 to 2 hours per week developing fliers and social media posts across all the different platforms our graduate organization use. The time investment is very manageable and can vary month to month depending on the events occurring.



Ryan - PhD Candidate  
Texas A&M University

### Tell us about different events that your society utilizes to increase student involvement.

I feel like one of the best things we do as a graduate organization is highlighting our fellow students each month within the newsletter. We also plan a few webinars that students can participate in each year. This year we held an interactive workshop which taught students about data analysis in R. Lastly, at each annual meeting we hold our student mixer, student luncheon which includes a panel discussion for students.

### What advice would you give to someone interested in getting more involved in your society?

Do not be too afraid to nominate yourself to be part of one of the graduate organizations either within the WSSA or your own regional society! I would suggest reaching out to the current officer who holds a position you are interested in and ask them about the role! Also attend the workshops, webinars and social events that take place throughout the year and try and socialize with students from across the society.

### Are there any socials or events at your upcoming annual meeting that students should join?

Of course! We have our graduate student mixer which will be a bowling night which will be a lot of fun. We will also have our usual student luncheon and panel which will discuss job search and interview strategies. We will also be hosting a student workshop at the meeting titled "Protein Modeling of Herbicide Resistance: From Mutation to Resistance" which I think will be a great one that students won't want to miss!

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Instagram: @WSSAGSO

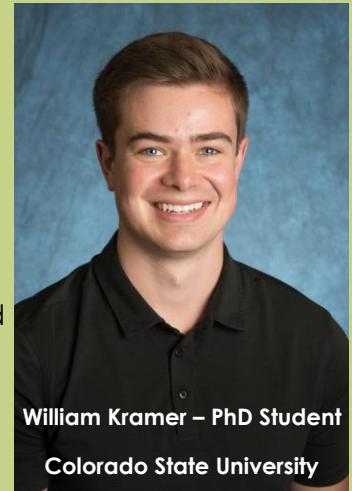
LinkedIn: WSSA GSO

## CWSS GSO Officer Highlight!

Graduate Student Representative – William Kramer

### What University do you attend and what is your research focus?

After completing my master's degree at the University of Guelph, Ontario, I chose to pursue a PhD at Colorado State University. My research focuses on understanding the role of GSTs in Group 1 quizalofop metabolism in wheat, contributing to a deeper understanding of herbicide resistance mechanisms using various molecular and biochemical techniques.



William Kramer – PhD Student  
Colorado State University

### How do you manage the time requested to serve society? How many hours you spend in a month?

Balancing my PhD research with my responsibilities at the Canadian Weed Science Society (CWSS) requires careful time management. As a board member, I attend regular meetings, help organize our annual meeting, and advocate for graduate students. On average, I dedicate 2-3 hours per month to these activities, with a greater time commitment leading up to the annual meeting.

### Tell us about different events that your society utilizes to increase student involvement.

CWSS offers numerous opportunities for student engagement. During my time on the board, I have helped organize workshops designed to support graduate students throughout their academic journey. Our annual meeting is an amazing event where students can present their research to the entire society, ensuring they receive meaningful feedback from experts in the field. We also encourage students to take part in networking events, career development workshops, and discussion panels to expand their professional connections.

### What advice would you give to someone interested in getting more involved in your society?

For students looking to become more involved, I highly recommend attending the CWSS annual meeting, presenting research, and engaging with board members. CWSS offers a lot of great scholarship opportunities that allow you to attend annual meetings or spend a week with a Weed Scientist in Canada, so I encourage students to take advantage of these opportunities. Additionally, volunteering at events, participating in discussions, and building relationships with professionals in the field are excellent ways to gain exposure and contribute to the society. Taking an active role in workshops or committee work can also help students gain leadership experience and expand their network.

### Are there any socials or events at your upcoming annual meeting that students should join?

This year, CWSS is collaborating with the Weed Science Society of America for the joint annual meeting, and we've planned several exciting events for students. Notable workshops include Protein Modeling of Herbicide Resistance: From Mutation to Resistance & Stand Out in the Crowd: Job Search and Interview Strategies. Additionally, we're hosting a graduate student mixer, which will be a fantastic opportunity for students to connect with peers, researchers, and industry professionals in a relaxed setting.

### Society social media (X, Facebook, Instagram)

Stay connected with the Canadian Weed Science Society on Facebook, Twitter (X), and LinkedIn for updates on upcoming events, research opportunities, and discussions in weed science. If you have any questions about the society or want to reach out directly, feel free to email me at [w.kramer@colostate.edu](mailto:w.kramer@colostate.edu).

## NEWSS Officer Highlight!

President – Eli Russell; Vice President – Navdeep Godara

### **What University do you attend and what is your research focus?**

I was a PhD Candidate at Virginia Tech during my time as the Graduate Student Representative for NEWSS. My research focused on using seed impact mills as a tool to implement harvest weed seed control (HWSC) in wheat and soybean.

### **How do you manage the time requested to serve the society? How many hours do you spend in a month?**

Managing the time required to serve the society can be tricky. What was nice about serving in the NEWSS GSO was that almost all of our time requirements were known about well in advance. This provided ample time to create a work schedule that balanced my responsibilities as a student and to NEWSS without being overwhelming. I would say that I devoted around 5 hr/month, with some months being more demanding.



Eli - PhD Candidate  
Virginia Tech

### **Tell us about different events that your society utilizes to increase student involvement.**

The NEWSS tries to increase student involvement in two ways, the annual meeting and the weed contest. At the annual meeting there are socials and workshops that give graduate students the opportunity to get involved with other students and with other members of the society. The weed contest offers students the chance to learn and bond with other students within the society. Personally, the weed contest is my favorite way of being involved within the society. It is a great opportunity to easily connect with the other students.

### **What advice would you give to someone interested in getting more involved in your society?**

Get to know people outside of your university! If you want to get involved in a society it is important to know its members. Additionally, getting to know members can result in friendships, future collaborations, or job opportunities. So, get out there and meet some new people!

### **Are there any socials or events at your upcoming annual meeting that students should join?**

Yes, the next event will be the student weed contest this summer! Make sure you keep an eye out for any email or website updates for it and other events!

### **Society social media (X, Facebook, Instagram)**

Sadly, the NEWSS GSO does not have a social media chair to manage a social media account. However, this is a potential need that the NEWSS GSO has discussed

Chair – Kaitlin Creager

**What University do you attend and what is your research focus?**

I am currently a PhD student working with Dr. Karla Gage at Southern Illinois University. My research focuses on identifying the critical weed free period (CWFP) for dual-purpose and fiber hemp varieties. Additionally, I am assessing the effectiveness of cultural and chemical weed management practices for hemp production.



Kaitlin– PhD Student  
Southern Illinois University

**How do you manage the time requested to serve society? How many hours you spend in a month?**

The time commitment fluctuates throughout the year, increasing in the months leading up to the meeting to prepare for workshops and symposia. Outside of the regular board meetings, I also helped organize a student workshop on CVs, résumés, and cover letters, which required approximately an hour per week of preparation before the meeting.

**Tell us about different events that your society utilizes to increase student involvement.**

At the NCWSS annual meeting, students can participate in the Grad Student Mixer, Grad Student Luncheon, and Women in Science Breakfast. Also, the NCWSS offers travel awards to the meetings for new members to help increase student involvement.

**What advice would you give to someone interested in getting more involved in your society?**

My advice for those who are interested in getting more involved in the NCWSS is to join the Graduate Student Organization (GSO), which allows students to learn, network, as well as advocate for their fellow peers. The simplest way of getting involved is by nominating yourself or a fellow student at the next meeting for the co-chair position-both self-nominations and peer nominations are highly encouraged!

**Are there any socials or events at your upcoming annual meeting that students should join?**

We already had our meeting this past December but be on the lookout for events on our X page or our NCWSS website!

**Society social media (X, Facebook, Instagram)**

X: @NCWeedScience

## NCWSS GSO Officer Highlight!

Vice Chair – Cristiana Rankrape

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### What University do you attend and what is your research focus?

I am a Ph.D. student at Southern Illinois University, and my research project focuses on characterizing novel resistances to soybean herbicides in waterhemp and giant ragweed populations from Southern Illinois.

### How do you manage the time requested to serve society? How many hours you spend in a month?

The time commitment varies depending on the time of year. Throughout the year, there are board meetings to attend, and in the fall, as the meeting date approaches, additional time is dedicated to preparation. I was involved in organizing a workshop for students, which required approximately one hour per week.



Cristiana – PhD Student  
Southern Illinois University

### Tell us about different events that your society utilizes to increase student involvement.

The NCWSS offers a variety of events for students to engage in. During the summer, there is the student contest, which provides an excellent learning experience and networking opportunity. At the annual meeting, students can participate in the student mixer, student luncheon, women in weed science breakfast, and society social—each offering valuable opportunities to connect with peers and professionals. The most recent meeting also featured a workshop on job applications, which included a panel where students could ask questions and gain insights on the topic.

### What advice would you give to someone interested in getting more involved in your society?

There are numerous opportunities to become more involved in the society. The Graduate Student Organization (GSO) is a great opportunity for learning and advocating for the students. The easiest way to join the GSO is by nominating yourself for an office position and you can also nominate others, both are highly encouraged. Additionally, serving on committees provides excellent opportunities to develop new skills and make connections that can contribute to career growth.

### Are there any socials or events at your upcoming annual meeting that students should join?

The NCWSS meeting took place in December, but there will be events throughout the year, so be sure to check your emails. The Women in Weed Science has already planned virtual meetings.

### Society social media (X, Facebook, Instagram)

X: @NCWeedScience

## SWSS GSO Officer Highlight!

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Vice President – Megan Mills-Singletary; President – Navdeep Godara

### What University do you attend and what is your research focus?

I am a PhD student under the advisement of Dr. Peter Dotray at Texas Tech University. My research evaluates the effectiveness of various integrated weed management tactics (cover crops, finger weeder cultivator, crop flamer, and cultivar characteristics) for organic cotton production in semi-arid environments.



Megan – PhD Student  
Texas Tech University

### How do you manage the time requested to serve society? How many hours you spend in a month?

Each person on the GSO board has a specific set of skills that allows them to effectively carry out their role and responsibilities. Utilizing everyone's skill set and assistance is the most effective way of managing the time requested to serve the SWSS. Depending on the time of the year, one can expect to spend 1-3 hours a week planning and executing workshops, email announcements, etc.

### Tell us about different events that your society utilizes to increase student involvement.

This past year our GSO team hosted two webinars: Scientific writing and formatting for journal publications, and USDA - NIFA Grant proposal writing. At our annual meeting this past January, the SWSS planned various activities for graduate students to network with fellow colleagues and with individuals from industry, academia, and government agencies. These events included the Top Golf Mixer, Student Luncheon Panel Discussion, Women's Networking Event, and the Graduate Student Quiz Bowl.

### What advice would you give to someone interested in getting more involved in your society?

First and foremost, the best way to become more involved with the SWSS is to interact with graduate students outside of your immediate lab/university. I cannot stress this enough!! Nominate yourself for the SWSS Graduate Student Organization (GSO). This is a great way to represent our graduate students and give back to the society. Not sure about the time commitment and responsibilities? Reach out to one of us and we will gladly share our experience on the GSO board! Apply for the SWSS Endowment Enrichment Scholarship. This is your opportunity to spend an entire week learning from weed scientists in research or extension, and with industry or academia.

### Are there any socials or events at your upcoming annual meeting that students should join?

We will be sending out a survey within the next month to all of our students regarding future graduate student mixer ideas and workshop topics of interest. Your feedback is important and helps us create future events for you. Also, keep an eye out for email announcements regarding the SWSS Endowment Enrichment Scholarship application and 2025 SWSS Contest signups.

### Society social media (X, Facebook, Instagram)

Make sure to follow us on...

X (formerly twitter): @SWSSGSO

LinkedIn: Southern Weed Science Society Graduate Student Organization



## WSWS GSO Officer Highlight!

Student Liaison Chair– McKenzie Barth

### What University do you attend and what is your research focus?

I am a Ph.D. student at the University of Wyoming evaluating herbicides for use in Kernza intermediate wheatgrass production.

### How do you manage the time requested to serve society? How many hours you spend in a month?

I prioritize my time to serve the society as the Student Liaison Chair, and spend about 5 hours a month working on WSWS business. I expect to spend more time serving WSWS graduate students when I become a full member of the WSWS Board of Directors at the annual meeting this spring.



McKenzie – PhD Student  
University of Wyoming

### Tell us about different events that your society utilizes to increase student involvement.

WSWS member universities send students to the WSSA Student Competition every year. WSWS also has a student night out during our annual meeting so that students can connect with academic and industry professionals.

### What advice would you give to someone interested in getting more involved in your society?

I'd advise anyone interested in getting involved with WSWS to run for Student Liaison Chair and to inquire about student positions open on WSWS committees - the Society loves having students represented and involved however we can. If students have new ideas about increasing student involvement, we'd love to hear it!

### Are there any socials or events at your upcoming annual meeting that students should join?

I hope to see all of our students at the Western Society of Weed Science Annual Meeting at our student night out, stay tuned for more details about that! It's a wonderful opportunity and I had a great time meeting faculty and industry professionals last year.

### Society social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram)

@WSWSstudents on X (formally Twitter)

Check out our website for resources and scholarship opportunities

<https://wsweedscience.org/student-resources/>

## WSWS GSO Officer Highlight!

Student Liaison Chair Elect – Wes Maughan

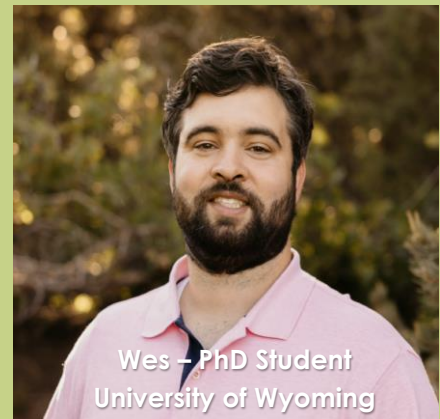
### What University do you attend and what is your research focus?

I am PhD student at Washington State University, where my research focuses on the trying to understand and model the effects of environmental factors on weed seedling emergence timings across eastern Washington.

### How do you manage the time requested to serve the society? How many hours do you spend a month?

Honestly, the time they request isn't all that much. Outside of the board meeting trips, I probably don't spend more than an hour or two a month on average handling email, organizing the silent auction, and preparing the students' night out.

Granted most of that time is spent in the month leading up to the conference.



Wes – PhD Student  
University of Wyoming

### Tell us about different events that your society utilizes to increase student involvement

The most important event we have is the students' night out. There, we get sponsors from industry and academia to take small groups of students (5-10) out to dinner away from some of the formality of the conference. It gives students an opportunity to develop their network in a much more personal way. There are also several ad-hoc committees that are always looking for help. Whether that is helping compile the society's historical records or updating the language of the bylaws, there is always some way to get more involved. Student liaison isn't the only position open to students.

### What advice would you give to someone interested in getting more involved in your society?

I'd say do it. Everyone knows you are a student. Most of them were students at one point or another and they know how much time you can reasonably commit to the society. They won't make you spend more time than you can afford.

### Are there any socials or events at your upcoming annual meeting that students should join?

The two big social events are the students' night out and the student luncheon. I would encourage every student to attend both of those events.

### Society social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram)

<https://www.facebook.com/WSWSStudentSection/>

<https://twitter.com/WSWeedSci>

#### WSSA GSO Contact Info

##### Isabel Werle

President – [isabels6@illinois.edu](mailto:isabels6@illinois.edu)

##### Navdeep Godara

Vice-president – [ngodara@vt.edu](mailto:ngodara@vt.edu)

##### Vipin Kumar

Secretary – [vkumar4@huskers.unl.edu](mailto:vkumar4@huskers.unl.edu)

##### Ryan Hamberg

Social media chair – [ryan.hamberg@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:ryan.hamberg@ag.tamu.edu)

#### Important Events & Dates

##### Feb 24-27, 2025

WSSA & CWSS – Vancouver, Canada

##### Mar 10-13, 2025

WSWS – Seattle, WA

##### Follow us on Social Media!



@WSSA\_GSO



@WSSAGSO