

# GEMS NUGGETS

WEEKLY SCOOP

NOV 2023

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## NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Hello, GEMS! To fill in the gaps between our comprehensive end-of-semester summaries, and to honor all the progress which happens day-to-day, I will be sending out occasional shorter updates. If you (yes, you!) are reading this and thinking, *wow Sierra, I wish my (insert recent cool item here) was featured*, you're in luck! You too can submit news at the link on the last page. Thanks to all who have submitted so far to allow us to create this new issue!

In this update, we have some details on spring semester courses, a new paper to add to your lit list, and a lot of exciting outreach and presentations to highlight. Read on! And as always, happy November, and happy researching!



## CURRENT EVENTS

**WEEKLY THURS**  
**2PM**

Writing Group  
IGB 3000  
UIUC Campus

**BIWEEKLY MON**  
**1/2PM**

GEMinars  
Zoom

**WEEKLY FRI**  
**10/11AM**

MGEs Reading Group  
Zoom

**DEC 11**  
**1/2PM**

All-GEMS Meeting 2023  
Zoom

## READING LIST ADDITIONS



UIUC graduate trainee Laura Sutzenfield has recently uploaded a preprint to BioRxiv detailing her exciting work on the co-evolution of *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* lysogens and their resident bacteriophages. Give it a read!



The work of recent graduate Dr. Kevin Ricks was just featured on the NSF's website! According to the statistics put out by the journal, Kevin's paper has already been downloaded over 300 times, mentioned by ten news outlets, and been cited once! And it's only been out for four months! Great job, Kevin and team! Be sure to check out the NSF news article at the link left. And follow along with Kevin's current work at the University of Toronto!

# IN THE COMMUNITY



**Cena Y Ciencias**  
**SOLAR SPARKS:  
 EXPLORING SOLAR CELLS**

Monday, November 6th | 5-7 PM | Martens Center  
 1515 N. Market Street, Champaign, IL 61820

Register for this event!  
 Contact Ricardo Diaz  
 217-979-0255  
 xpenn.diaz@gmail.com

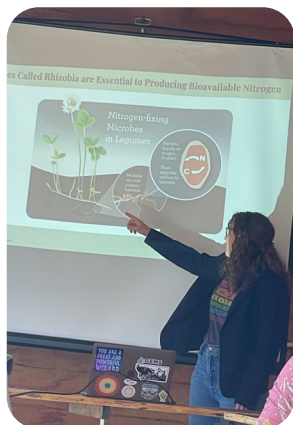
FREE dinner will be provided

## FULL STEAM AHEAD

Trainees Meghan Blaszyński (left) and Alex Murarus (right) put on a successful Full STEAM Ahead event in October! Here are some photos from their recent event. If you like working with children, the public, or want practice communicating science to a diverse audience, consider volunteering for the next event! They take place on the first Thursday of every month at the Martens Center in Champaign, from 4:30 - 5:30. Contact Barbara Hug for more information.

## CENA Y CIENCIAS

This month's CyC activity will take place on November 6th from 5-7pm at the Martens Center in Champaign, and focuses on solar cells! More info above.



## GENOME DAY

As part of the Institute for Genomic Biology's Genome Day events, graduate trainee David Vereau Gorbitz (left) ran an event to teach kids about evolutionary adaptation to different biomes! David says that it was both a big educational success and a great time.

## SCIENCE ON TAP

Trainee Sierra Bedwell (yours truly!) recently presented Science on Tap, a monthly seminar series co-hosted by Riggs Brewery and the UIUC Molecular and Cellular Biology Department Graduate Association. Over twenty people attended to hear about microbes in soil and agriculture.

## JUNIOR SCIENCE CAFE

Graduate trainee Ivan Sosa-Marquez recently gave a virtual lecture to students visiting the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry. The talk and activity, organized through the Museum's Junior Science Cafe, were delivered entirely in Spanish to around 40 children (all bilingual) to commemorate Hispanic Heritage Month. They discussed how mutations in DNA can give organisms different characteristics and how that relates to their position in the tree of life. He also talked about his journey in science and showed them around his lab! Ivan is excited to visit in-person in December to give another lecture.

## SPRING EDUCATION COURSE



Barbara Hug is gauging interest in teaching a graduate seminar course in the spring about K-12 education. If you are interested, please fill out the Google survey linked left or contact Barbara directly for more information.

## ON THE ROAD



It was a GEMS reunion at the 6th International Viromics Workshop in Ohio, with current postdocs John McMullen and Sierra Raglin meeting up with former undergraduate James Kosmopolous, who is currently pursuing his PhD at the University of Wisconsin. Sierra and John, if you have any wisdom to share with the younger crowd, we'd love to hear it!

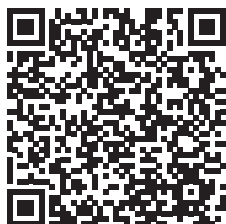
Additionally, trainee Ivan Sosa-Marquez recently traveled to Portland, OR for the annual SACNAS (Society for the Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science) National Diversity in STEM conference. We're excited to see how he will continue to advance outreach and equity in STEM!

## 2023 WRAP-UP

Save the date! The 2023 All-GEMS Meeting has been set for December 11, 2023, at the same time as the normal GEMinar (1CST/2EST). More information will follow soon from Susan (so check your emails!).

We're excited to see you soon and conclude another successful semester!

## NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS



Our submission box is always open! If you have updates you'd like to share with the GEMS community and the public, please fill out this form here or contact me directly at [sierrab4@illinois.edu](mailto:sierrab4@illinois.edu). Until next time! May all your PCRs amplify correctly.

-- SLB, Editor-in-Chief



# GEMS

## Communications