



For Release to the News Media:

October 23, 2008

ASU - Jonesboro: Three faculty members to participate in biofuels and plant-produced products symposium

Three faculty members from Arkansas State University will participate in a symposium on biofuels and plant-produced products Monday, Oct. 27, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. (Eastern) at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester, Mass. The symposium is a collaborative effort between ASU's Arkansas Biosciences Institute and WPI's Bioengineering Institute and Department of Biology and Biotechnology.

Dr. Elizabeth Hood, distinguished professor of agriculture; Dr. Carole Cramer, director of the Arkansas Biosciences Institute (ABI), and Dr. Argelia Lorence, assistant professor of metabolic engineering, will team with WPI faculty members Dr. Eric W. Overstrom, biology and biotechnology department head; Dr. Reeta Prusty Rao, assistant professor in biology and biotechnology; Dr. Alex Dilorio, director of the bioprocess center; Dr. Pam Weathers, professor of biology and biotechnology; and Chris McPhee, bioprocess center lab manager, to speak on the collaborative research opportunities.

"The symposium at Worcester Polytechnic Institute was put together by Dr. Pam Weathers who was the Judd Hill Endowed Chair Professor at Arkansas State for the last two years," said Dr. Hood. "She has now returned to WPI, but to ensure that collaborations continue, she put together this symposium and invited three faculty members from ASU to come and meet and interact with faculty and present talks."

The symposium will showcase new opportunities which have been developed between ASU's research in agriculture and human health, and WPI, where engineering and biology relate to plant-produced products and biofuels. Topics include the latest research on cellulosic ethanol, therapeutics produced from tobacco root, and other plant-based research programs aimed at

improving human health and the environment.

The discussion topics include “The Arkansas Biosciences Institute: What it is and its research activities,” “Worcester Polytechnic Institute: Where science and engineering meet,” “Plant-produced production of small and large molecule therapeutics,” “The many reasons why plants also need their vitamin C,” “Cellulase enzymes from transgenic maize seed,” “The awesome power of yeast,” and “Biofuels: fuels controversy.”

A roundtable dialogue will follow the discussion agenda.

#

-- This and other releases are online at <http://ASUnews.astate.edu/newspage.htm>