

Danielle's Discourse

Happy New Year! Thanks to all of you for welcoming me to Project Apis m! I am excited to start 2016 in my new position as PAm Director of Operations, and what a great way to start, attending the ABF meetings in Florida. I am always reminded of what a unique community we belong to, full of good people. The meeting was well attended and there was so much excellent work being shared, with nearly half the talks I saw acknowledging support from PAm! This organization is well established throughout our industry, connected with the frontlines and poised to achieve increasingly greater things! ABF highlights included an inspiring talk about forage and habitat from our own Zac Browning and Pete Berthelsen of Pheasants Forever, with some startling facts about land conversion and the take home message that what benefits honey bees is also in the interest of many other species; when bees win, we all win. Their [Honey Bee and Monarch Partnership](#), expanding from the Dakotas, is a project surely to create synergy and momentum to draw more stakeholders and benefit so many of our bees foraging in that area. It was also great to see the PAm-Costco scholar, Laura Brutscher, win the ABRC student competition presenting her research on RNAi use for honey bee pathogen research, what a great investment!

She had stiff competition from other student work, also supported by PAm, including Sam Ramsey's project showing that Varroa mites are not just feeding on 'bee blood' like we assumed, but are actually depleting the fat bodies of developing bees. Kaira Wagoner also presented her exciting new discovery of P32, a cuticular chemical that is linked to bees' hygienic behavior. Kaira and I shared some very stimulating 'hallway talk' about the next steps with Dr. Bob Danka, who is continuing to select and refine VSH stocks from USDA Baton Rouge Bee Lab. All of these projects help to fill in the facts that help us do business and make progress, with the goal to make beekeeping and pollination systems more sustainable. I was proud to see PAm's investments in the industry, and reminded of this wisdom: What you water will grow! As you consider what makes your business grow in 2016, know that PAm is also working on your behalf, and grateful for all of your hard work and support.



Billy Synk at the PAm booth discussing the importance of Pollinator Habitat Programs.



Zac Browning and Pete Berthelsen present the Honey Bee and Monarch Partnership.



Congratulations PAm- Costco Scholar Laura Brutsher, whose presentation won the ABRC Student Competition!



Kaira Wagoner, Bob Danko and Danielle Downey discussing Wagoner's exciting discovery of P32, a signal involved in bees' hygienic response to Varroa.



Peter S. Berthelsen, Director of Habitat Partnerships Pheasants Forever, Inc. and Quail Forever, presenting a workshop on pollinator habitat.



Samuel Ramsey's presentation at ABRC, acknowledging support from PAm.



Apiary Inspectors of America hosted a field day for Pesticide Inspectors and Bee Inspectors to harmonize their important work!



Florida Dept of Ag and Consumer Services Bee Inspectors worked with Apiary Inspectors of America to host a field day for Bee Inspectors and Pesticide Inspectors to harmonize their important work!