



Director's Update September 2012

Reaching out through internships

REACCH is distinctive because of its integration across disciplines institutions and missions (research, education, and extension). An outstanding example of this integration is our exciting annual summer internship for undergraduates, which hosted its first cohort this summer from early June until Aug. 9. Our national search attracted students of uniformly high academic achievement and motivation. Interns were placed within REACCH programs at OSU, WSU, ARS and UI and were mentored by our PIs, graduate students and other personnel. Each had a specific research project and the group was exposed to the breadth of REACCH through weekly presentations and workshops from project PIs. Interns also participated in the summer field tour where they met producers and heard extension presentations on various topics being examined within the project.

Student projects included: the effects of climate and weather on cereal aphid flight patterns and communities, earthworm responses to within-farm variation in slope and soil moisture, effects of conservation tillage on soil carbon, greenhouse gas monitoring from agricultural fields using eddy covariance towers, within-field variability in soil moisture measured using electromagnetic induction, assessing soil texture at Pendleton and Moro research stations, exploring methods for soliciting producer attitudes towards agroclimatic change, modeling effects of climate change on agricultural yield, and PNW climate trends.

Students were enthusiastic about the quality of their experiences and by what they learned while immersed in REACCH for nine weeks. A two samples of student appreciation:

*"I learned a new set of skills that opened my eyes to the scientific process...
in a forgiving and welcoming environment."*

and

"I learned so much and had access to so many resources."

The internships culminated in a morning-long symposium on the UI campus of high quality, professionally prepared research presentations by the students, full of new information and good science about PNW agriculture and climate. The presentations are posted on our website, www.reacchpna.org.

Special thanks for the success of the internships are due to all of the REACCH PIs and others who mentored these students, and to Jodi Johnson-Maynard, who directed the effort. Marijka Haverhals did a stellar job coordinating all the arrangements, from student travel, scheduling of events, housing, compensation and keeping everyone connected through a Facebook site.

We are excited by the success of the internship and looking forward to making this a part of REACCH for the remaining years of the project.

Please join me in congratulating everyone on a job well done!

Sanford Eigenbrode, REACCH Project Director