

Graduate Student Professional Interest Group

Student Spotlight:

Samuel Kwakye
University of Florida



1. Tell us what you love about horticulture

While the ornamental plants make our landscape beautiful, I like the fact that the fruits and vegetables give us good sources of vitamins. Horticultural crops are part of our everyday life, and therefore having the privilege to share my research to solve pertinent issues about horticultural crop production feels rewarding.

2. Why and when did you get into horticulture?

Horticulture is a way of connecting with the society, and I'm always excited when my friends and family ask me something about horticulture and I can help them learn new things. I was a member of my high school's horticultural society, and I also learned more about horticulture at college and afterwards.

3. What inspired you to go into graduate school?

I have always wanted to be part of the problem solving and decision making team. Graduate school gives me the necessary training and tools that I might need to solve problems related to my field of study.

4. What is your goal after school?

To be part of an applied research team in an institution that diagnoses and finds solution to agricultural and environmental related problem.

5. What is your favorite plant?

Mango tree

6. What would you research if you had unlimited funds

With unlimited funds I may invest into finding ways to improve water uptake efficiency for various commercial growing horticultural crops. The reason behind this idea is that sources of water for agricultural use is becoming scarce worldwide, and we may definitely need to come up with a way to improve upon plant water use efficiency.

7. What has been the highlight of your graduate school experience so far? On the other hand, have you had any major research mishaps?

Meeting and sharing research ideas with my peers and professionals in my field. Especially, attending professional meetings and asking questions that might help me improve as a professional in my field of study. Another aspect that I have enjoyed most is sharing with kids about what a plant needs to grow and why we need plants and healthy soil.

8. Do you have any advice for incoming graduate students regarding their academic and/or personal life?

Once you are satisfied with your choice of program, try to be more curious by asking a lot of questions to people who have more experience in your field of study. Also, convince your advisor to assist you financially to attend professional meetings, where you may meet your peers and professionals who share similar interests with you.

