



COUNCIL'S NEWSLETTER

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The High Council & Atlas Publishing, LLC Will Organize the “Fifth International American Moroccan Agricultural Sciences Conference—AMAS Conference V on June 15—17, 2020 in Tangier, Morocco

The High Council of Moroccan American Scholars and Academics (HC-MASA; www.hc-masa.org), Atlas Publishing, LLC (www.atlas-publishing.org), and tentatively the University of New England, Tangier Campus (Prof. Anouar Majid) are Co-Organizing the Fifth International American Moroccan Agricultural Sciences Conference (**AMAS Conference V**) on **June 15—17, 2020 at the University of New England, Tangier Campus, Tangier, Morocco**. This Co-Organization of AMAS V Conference is in Collaboration with INRA, and Institut Agronomique et Veterinaire (IAV) Hassan II, Rabat, Morocco.

The conference organizers Prof. Khalid Meksem, Southern Illinois University, USA (Council's President) and Prof. My Abdelmajid Kassem, Fayetteville State University, USA (Council's VP-USA) and the rest of the Organizing and Scientific Committees are calling all students, faculty, and scientists in Morocco and around the world to attend and present at this international event.

The conference welcomes abstracts from all fields of Agricultural and Plant Sciences from students, faculty, and scientists around the world. Prizes for the best student posters and oral presentations will be awarded.

It is noteworthy to mention that the conference gained international recognition and its attendance increased every year since its start in 2013. The first edition (AMAS Conference I) was organized on March 18—19, 2013 in Rabat, Morocco; AMAS Conference II was organized on October 18—20, 2014 in Marrakech, Morocco; AMAS Conference III was organized on December 13—16, 2016 in Ouarzazate, Morocco; and AMAS Conference IV was held on May 9—11, 2018 in Meknes, Morocco. During AMAS Conference V, 76 oral presentations and 176 posters have been presented by attendees from countries including Morocco, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Ghana, UAE, France, The Netherlands, Germany, and USA. These are published in:

Kassem MA, A Walters, K Midden, and K Meksem. Proceedings of the Fourth International American Moroccan Agricultural Sciences Conference - AMAS Conference IV, May 9-11, 2018, Meknes, Morocco. Atlas Journal of Biology 2018, pp. 422–545. <https://doi.org/10.5147/ajb.v0i0.175>.

The organizers expect that the fifth edition (AMAS Conference V) will be attended by over 400+ attendees from across the world.

Long Live AMAS Conference!

The High Council of Moroccan American Scholars and Academics—HC-MASA Will organize the Fifth International American Moroccan Agricultural Sciences Conference—AMAS Conference V on June 15—17, 2020 in Tangier, Morocco

In This Issue

- AMAS Conference V
- Articles Published By Council Members
- Moroccan-Americans at PAG Conference XXVII
- A French-Moroccan Contributed to the Wheat Reference Genome Sequence and Won a Prestigious Award
- New Members
- And much more!

Council's Members Published Articles (July 2018–Jan. 2019)



Abdessamad Ben Moumen , Gaetan Richard, Marie-Laure Fauconnier , Marianne Sindic, **Ahmed Elamrani** and Hana Serghini Caid (2018). Proximate composition, amino acid profile, carbohydrate and mineral content of seed meals from four safflower (*Carthamus tinctorius* L.) varieties grown Eastern Morocco, OCL 2018, 25(2), A202 OCL 2018, 25(2), A202 © F. Mansouri et al., Published by EDP Sciences, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1051/ocl/2018001>, Available online at: www.ocl-journal.org. <https://www.ocl-journal.org/articles/ocl/pdf/2018/02/ocl170054.pdf>.

Abuauf H, Haider I, Jia KP, Ablazov A, Mi J, **Blilou I**, Al-Babili S. The *Arabidopsis* DWARF27 gene encodes an all-trans- β -carotene isomerase and is induced by auxin, abscisic acid and phosphate deficiency. Plant Sci. 2018 Dec;277:33-42. doi: 10.1016/j.plantsci.2018.06.024.

Abulfaraj AA, Mariappan K, Bigeard J, Manickam P, **Blilou I**, Guo X, Al-Babili S, Pflieger D, Hirt H, Rayapuram N. The *Arabidopsis* homolog of human G3BP1 is a key regulator of stomatal and apoplastic immunity. Life Sci Alliance. 2018 May 31;1(2):e201800046. doi: 10.26508/lsa.201800046.

Akond M, J Yuan, S Liu, SK Kantartzi, **K Meksem**, N Bellaloui, DA Lightfoot, and **MA Kassem**. Detection of QTL Underlying Seed Quality Components in Soybean. Canadian J. of Plant Science 28 (4): 881–888, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1139/cjps-2017-0204>.

Aromolaran AS, Srivastava U, Alí A, Chahine M, Lazaro D, El-Sherif N, Capeccchi PL, Laghi-Pasini F, Lazzerini PE, **Boutjdir M**. Interleukin-6 inhibition of hERG underlies risk for acquired long QT in cardiac and systemic inflammation. PLoS One. 2018 Dec 6;13(12):e0208321. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0208321.

Azizi G, Layachi M, Akodad M, Yáñez-Ruiz DR, Martín-García AI, **Baghour M**, Mesfioui A, Skalli A, Moumen A. Seasonal variations of heavy metals content in mussels (*Mytilus galloprovincialis*) from Cala Iris offshore (Northern Morocco). Mar Pollut Bull. 2018 Dec;137:688-694. doi: 10.1016/j.marpolbul.2018.06.052.

Baghour M, Gálvez FJ, Sánchez ME, Aranda MN, Venema K, Rodríguez-Rosales MP. Overexpression of LeNHX2 and SISOS2 increases salt tolerance and fruit production in double transgenic tomato plants. Plant Physiol Biochem. 2018 Nov 24;135:77-86. doi: 10.1016/j.plaphy.2018.11.028.

Bendahmane A, Fatome J, Finot C, Millot G, Kibler B. Selective generation of Kerr combs induced by asymmetrically phase-detuned dual pumping of a fiber ring cavity. Opt Lett. 2018 Sep 15;43(18):4449-4452. doi: 10.1364/OL.43.004449.

Chakraborty B, **Blilou I**, Scheres B, Mulder BM. A computational framework for cortical microtubule dynamics in realistically shaped plant cells. PLoS Comput Biol. 2018 Feb 2;14(2):e1005959. doi: 10.1371/journal.pcbi.1005959.

Chang HX, Roth MG, Wang D, Ciano SR, **Lightfoot DA**, Hartman GL, Chilvers MI. Integration of sudden death syndrome resistance loci in the soybean genome. Theor Appl Genet. 2018 Apr;131(4):757-773. doi: 10.1007/s00122-018-3063-0.

Council's Members Published Articles (July 2018–Jan. 2019)

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- Fantini E, Sulli M, Zhang L, Aprea G, Jiménez-Gómez JM, **Bendahmane A**, Perrotta G, Giuliano G, Facella P. Pivotal roles of cryptochromes 1a and 2 in tomato development and physiology. *Plant Physiol*. 2018 Dec 12. pii: pp.00793.2018. doi: 10.1104/pp.18.00793.
- Farid Mansouri, Abdessamad Ben moumen, Kamal Belhaj, Gaëtan Richard, Marie-Laure Fauconnier, Marianne Sindic, Hana Serghini Caid1, **Ahmed Elamrani** (2018): Effect of crop season on the quality and composition of extra virgin olive oils from Greek and Spanish varieties grown in the Oriental region of Morocco, *Emirates Journal of Food and Agriculture*. 2018. 30(7): 549-562, doi: 10.9755/ejfa.2018.v30.i7.1738, *Emirates Journal of Food and Agriculture*. 2018. 30(7): 549-562 / DOI i: 10.9755/ejfa.2018.v30.i7.1738. <https://www.ejfa.me/index.php/journal/article/view/1738>
- François L, Verdenaud M, Fu X, Ruleman D, Dubois A, Vandenbussche M, **Bendahmane A**, Raymond O, Just J, Bendahmane M. A miR172 target-deficient AP2-like gene correlates with the double flower phenotype in roses. *Sci Rep*. 2018 Aug 27;8(1):12912. doi: 10.1038/s41598-018-30918-4.
- Habbadi K, Meyer T, Vial L, Gaillard V, Benkirane R, Benbouazza A, Kerzaon I, **Achbani EH**, Lavire C. Essential oils of *Origanum compactum* and *Thymus vulgaris* exert a protective effect against the phytopathogen *Allorhizobium vitis*. *Environ Sci Pollut Res Int*. 2018 Oct; 25 (30): 29943-29952. doi: 10.1007/s11356-017-1008-9.
- Kassem MA**, A Walters, K Midden, and **K Meksem**. Proceedings of the Fourth International American Moroccan Agricultural Sciences Conference - AMAS Conference IV, May 9-11, 2018, Meknes, Morocco. *Atlas Journal of Biology* 2018, pp. 422–545. <https://doi.org/10.5147/ajb.v0i0.175>.
- Kassem MA**, A Walters, K Midden, and **K Meksem**. Proceedings of the Third International American Moroccan Agricultural Sciences Conference – AMAS Conference III, December 13-16, 2016, Ouarzazate, Morocco. *Atlas Journal of Biology* 2017, pp. 313–354. doi: 10.5147/ajb.2017.0148.
- Kirienko AN, Porozov YB, Malkov NV, Akhtemova GA, Le Signor C, Thompson R, Saffray C, Dalmais M, **Bendahmane A**, Tikhonovich IA, Dolgikh EA. Role of a receptor-like kinase K1 in pea *Rhizobium* symbiosis development. *Planta*. 2018 Nov;248(5):1101-1120. doi: 10.1007/s00425-018-2944-4.
- Kong W, **Bendahmane M**, Fu X. Genome-Wide Identification and Characterization of Aquaporins and Their Role in the Flower Opening Processes in Carnation (*Dianthus caryophyllus*). *Molecules*. 2018 Jul 29;23(8). pii: E1895. doi: 10.3390/molecules23081895.



Council's Members Published Articles (July 2018–Jan. 2019)

International Wheat Genome Sequencing Consortium (IWGSC); IWGSC RefSeq principal investigators: Appels R, Eversole K, Feuillet C, Keller B, Rogers J, Stein N; IWGSC whole-genome assembly principal investigators: Pozniak CJ, Stein N, Choulet F, Distelfeld A, Eversole K, Poland J, Rogers J, Ronen G, Sharpe AG; Whole-genome sequencing and assembly: Pozniak C, Ronen G, Stein N, Barad O, Baruch K, Choulet F, Keeble-Gagnère G, Mascher M, Sharpe AG, Ben-Zvi G, Josselin AA; Hi-C data-based scaffolding: Stein N, Mascher M, Himmelbach A; Whole-genome assembly quality control and analyses: Choulet F, Keeble-Gagnère G, Mascher M, Rogers J, Balfourier F, Gutierrez-Gonzalez J, Hayden M, Josselin AA, Koh C, Muehlbauer G, Pasam RK, Paux E, Pozniak CJ, Rigault P, Sharpe AG, Tibbits J, Tiwari V; Pseudomolecule assembly: Choulet F, Keeble-Gagnère G, Mascher M, Josselin AA, Rogers J; RefSeq genome structure and gene analyses: Spannagl M, Choulet F, Lang D, Gundlach H, Haberer G, Keeble-Gagnère G, Mayer KFX, Ormanbekova D, Paux E, Prade V, Šimková H, Wicker T; Automated annotation: Choulet F, Spannagl M, Swarbreck D, Rimbart H, Felder M, Guilhot N, Gundlach H, Haberer G, Kaithakottil G, Keilwagen J, Lang D, Leroy P, Lux T, Mayer KFX, Twardzik S, Venturini L; Manual gene curation: Appels R, Rimbart H, Choulet F, Juhász A, Keeble-Gagnère G; Subgenome comparative analyses: Choulet F, Spannagl M, Lang D, Abrouk M, Haberer G, Keeble-Gagnère G, Mayer KFX, Wicker T; Transposable elements: Choulet F, Wicker T, Gundlach H, Lang D, Spannagl M; Phylogenomic analyses: Lang D, Spannagl M, Appels R, Fischer I; Transcriptome analyses and RNA-seq data: Uauy C, Borrill P, Ramirez-Gonzalez RH, Appels R, Arnaud D, Chalabi S, Chalhoub B, Choulet F, Cory A, Datla R, Davey MW, Hayden M, Jacobs J, Lang D, Robinson SJ, Spannagl M, Steuernagel B, Tibbits J, Tiwari V, van Ex F, Wulff BBH; Whole-genome methylome: Pozniak CJ, Robinson SJ, Sharpe AG, Cory A; Histone mark analyses: Benhamed M, Paux E, **Bendahmane A**, et al. (2018). Shifting the limits in wheat research and breeding using a fully annotated reference genome. *Science*. 2018 Aug 17;361(6403). pii: eaar7191. doi: 10.1126/science.aar7191.

Lakhssassi N, G Patil, S Piya, Z Zhou, A Baharlouei, **MA Kassem**, DA Lightfoot, T Hewezi, A Barakat, H Nguyen, and **K Meksem**. Genome reorganization of the GmSHMT gene family in soybean showed a lack of functional redundancy in resistance to soybean cyst nematode. *Scientific Reports*. Accepted 2019.

Lazzerini PE, Capecchi PL, El-Sherif N, Laghi-Pasini F, **Boutjdir M**. Emerging Arrhythmic Risk of Autoimmune and Inflammatory Cardiac Channelopathies. *J Am Heart Assoc*. 2018 20;7(22):e010595. doi: 10.1161/JAHA.118.010595.

Lazzerini PE, Laghi-Pasini F, **Boutjdir M**, Capecchi PL. Cardioimmunology of arrhythmias: the role of autoimmune and inflammatory cardiac channelopathies. *Nat Rev Immunol*. 2018 Dec 14. doi: 10.1038/s41577-018-0098-z.

Liu J, Williams PC, Geisler-Lee J, Goodson BM, Fakharifar M, Peiravi M, Chen D, **Lightfoot DA**, Gemeinhardt ME. Impact of wastewater



Council's Members Published Articles (July 2018–Jan. 2019)



- effluent containing aged nanoparticles and other components on biological activities of the soil microbiome, *Arabidopsis* plants, and earthworms. *Environ Res.* 2018 Jul;164:197-203. doi: 10.1016/j.envres.2018.02.006.
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- Moreno-Pachon NM, Mutimawurugo MC, Heynen E, Sergeeva L, Benders A, **Blilou I**, Hilhorst HWM, Immink RGH. Role of *Tulipa gesneriana* TEOSINTE BRANCHED1 (TgTB1) in the control of axillary bud outgrowth in bulbs. *Plant Reprod.* 2018 Jun;31(2):145-157. doi: 10.1007/s00497-017-0316-z.
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- Outchkourov NS, Karlova R, Hölscher M, Schrama X, **Blilou I**, Jongedijk E, Simon CD, van Dijk ADJ, Bosch D, Hall RD, Beekwilder J. Transcription Factor-Mediated Control of Anthocyanin Biosynthesis in Vegetative Tissues. *Plant Physiol.* 2018 Feb;176(2):1862-1878. doi: 10.1104/pp.17.01662.
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- Platon L, Zehraoui F, **Bendahmane A**, Tahi F. IRSOM, a reliable identifier of ncRNAs based on supervised self-organizing maps with rejection. *Bioinformatics.* 2018 Sep 1;34(17):i620-i628. doi: 10.1093/bioinformatics/bty572.
- Rai MI, Alam M, **Lightfoot DA**, Gurha P, Afzal AJ. Classification and experimental identification of plant long non-coding RNAs. *Genomics.* 2018 Apr 19. pii: S0888-7543(18)30245-3. doi: 10.1016/j.ygeno.2018.04.014.
- Ramírez-González RH, Borrill P, Lang D, Harrington SA, Brinton J, Venturini L, Davey M, Jacobs J, van Ex F, Pasha A, Khedikar Y, Robinson SJ, Cory AT, Florio T, Concia L, Juery C, Schoonbeek H, Steuernagel B, Xiang D, Ridout CJ, Chalhoub B, Mayer KFX, Benhamed M, Latrasse D, **Bendahmane A**; International Wheat Genome Sequencing Consortium, Wulff BBH, Appels R, Tiwari V, Datla R, Choulet F, Pozniak CJ, Provart NJ, Sharpe AG, Paux E, Spannagl M, Bräutigam A, Uauy C. The transcriptional landscape of polyploid wheat. *Science.* 2018 Aug 17;361(6403). pii: eaar6089. doi: 10.1126/science.aar6089.

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- Raymond O, Gouzy J, Just J, Badouin H, Verdenaud M, Lemainque A, Vergne P, Moja S, Choisine N, Pont C, Carrère S, Caissard JC, Couloux A, Cottret L, Aury JM, Szécsi J, Latrasse D, Madoui MA, François L, Fu X, Yang SH, Dubois A, Piola F, Larrieu A, Perez M, Labadie K, Perrier L, Govetto B, Labrousse Y, Villand P, Bardoux C, Boltz V, Lopez-Roques C, Heitzler P, Vernoux T, Vandebussche M, Quesneville H, **Boualem A**, **Bendahmane A**, Liu C, Le Bris M, Salse J, Baudino S, **Benhamed M**, Wincker P, Bendahmane M. The Rosa genome provides new insights into the domestication of modern roses. *Nat Genet.* 2018 Jun;50(6):772-777. doi: 10.1038/s41588-018-0110-3.
- Reda Melhaoui, Mohamed Addi, Nadia Houmy, Malika Abid, Atika Mihamou, Hana Serghini-Caid, Marianne Sindic and **Ahmed Elamrani** (2018): Pomological Characterization of Main Almond Cultivars from the North Eastern Morocco, *International Journal of Fruit Science*, DOI:10.1080/15538362.2018.1552232. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15538362.2018.1552232>
- Ruggieri V, Alexiou KG, Morata J, Argyris J, Pujol M, Yano R, Nonaka S, Ezura H, Latrasse D, **Boualem A**, **Benhamed M**, **Bendahmane A**, Cigliano RA, Sanseverino W, Puigdomènech P, Casacuberta JM, Garcia-Mas J. An improved assembly and annotation of the melon (Cucumis melo L.) reference genome. *Sci Rep.* 2018 May 24;8(1):8088. doi: 10.1038/s41598-018-26416-2.
- Shimotombo A, Heidstra R, **Blilou I**, Scheres B. Root stem cell niche organizer specification by molecular convergence of PLETHORA and SCARECROW transcription factor modules. *Genes Dev.* 2018 Aug 1;32(15-16):1085-1100. doi: 10.1101/gad.314096.118.
- Nabloussi A.**, L. Velasco et N. Assissel. 2018. First Report of Sunflower Broomrape, *Orobanche cumana* Wallr., in Morocco. *Plant Dis.* 102: 457.
- El Harfi M., M. Jbilou, H. Hanine, H. Rizki, M. Fechtali, **A. Nabloussi***. First assessment of genetic diversity in Moroccan sesame (*Sesamum indicum* L.) populations using agro-morphological traits. *J. Agric. Sci. Technol.* 2019. n press.
- Channaoui S., M. Labhilili, H. Mazouz, M. El Fechtali & A. Nabloussi*. Assessment of novel EMS-induced genetic variability in rapeseed (*Brassica napus* L.) and selection of a promising mutant. *Pak. J. Botany.* 2019. In press.



Congratulations to Our Members!
Keep Up The Good Work!

Humboldt Kolleg Beacons of Hope in the Quest For the Next Einstein in Africa/MENA Marrakech, Morocco, April 4-6, 2018—Posters presentations:

ADDI Mohamed, Bendella O, Serghini H, Elamrani A, Mihamou A, Abid M. In vitro callogenesis and organogenesis in some citrus species. Humboldt Kolleg Beacons of Hope in the Quest For the Next Einstein in Africa/MENA Marrakech, Morocco, April 4-6, 2018. PN9.

ADDI Mohamed, KODAD S, MELHAOUI R, SERGHINI H, ELAMRANI A, MIHAMOU A, ABID M: Almond in vitro tissue culture. Humboldt Kolleg Beacons of Hope in the Quest For the Next Einstein in Africa/MENA Marrakech, Morocco, April 4-6, 2018. PN24.

AMRAOUI Rajae; ADDI M.; SAHIB N.; ELAMRANI A.; SERGHINI CAID H., MIHAMOU A., ABID M. Morphological, molecular and physico-chemical characterization of traditional Moroccan tomato (*Solanum Lycopersicum L.*) genotypes. Humboldt Kolleg Beacons of Hope in the Quest For the Next Einstein in Africa/MENA Marrakech, Morocco, April 4-6, 2018. PN12.

BELHAJ Kamal, Farid MANSOURI, Aziz TIKENT, Atika MIHAMOU, HANA SERGHINI Caida, Mohamed BOUKHARTA and Ahmed ELAMRANI: Effects of age and live weight at slaughter on 'female lambs' carcass characteristics of Béni-Guil breed raised in highlands of eastern Morocco. Humboldt Kolleg Beacons of Hope in the Quest For the Next Einstein in Africa/MENA Marrakech, Morocco, April 4-6, 2018. PN14.

HOUMY Nadia, Melhaoui R, Sindic M, Fauconnier M-L, Serghini Caid-H, Elamrani A: Characterization of almond oils and cakes, obtained from broken almonds discarded by sorting during shells' cracking process for almond kernels separation. Humboldt Kolleg Beacons of Hope in the Quest For the Next Einstein in Africa/MENA Marrakech, Morocco, April 4-6, 2018. PN4.

MANSOURI Farid, Abdessamad BEN MOUMEN, Hana SERGHINI CAID and Ahmed ELAMRANI: Oxidative stability and shelf-life evaluation of monovarietal extra virgin olive oils Humboldt Kolleg Beacons of Hope in the Quest For the Next Einstein in Africa/MENA Marrakech, Morocco, April 4-6, 2018. PN2.

Melhaoui Reda, Houmy N, Abid M, Mihamou A., Serghini-Caid H, Fauconnier M-L, Sindic M; Elamrani: Morphological and chemical characterization of almond's fruits of Ferragnes and Ferraduel cultivars recently introduced in eastern Morocco. Humboldt Kolleg Beacons of Hope in the Quest For the Next Einstein in Africa/MENA Marrakech, Morocco, April 4-6, 2018. PN3.

NIA Sara, Belkoura Ilham, Abid Malika. Carob tree micropropagation essays (*Ceratonia siliqua L.*). Humboldt Kolleg Beacons of Hope in the Quest For the Next Einstein in Africa/MENA Marrakech, Morocco, April 4-6, 2018. PN10.

SAHIB Nargis: Changing hydrology controls the dynamic of plants in two Moroccan temporary ponds (Western Morocco). Humboldt Kolleg Beacons of Hope in the Quest For the Next Einstein in Africa/MENA Marrakech, Morocco, April 4-6, 2018. PN25.



**Professor
Elamrani's Research
Group Excelled at
the Humboldt Kolleg
Beacons of Hope in
the Quest For the
Next Einstein in Africa / MENA Marrakech!**

Council's Members Conference Presentations (July 2018–Jan. 2019)

Channaoui S., H. Mazouz, et A. Nabloussi. 2018. Reaction of some rapeseed (*Brassica napus* L.) genotypes to different drought stress levels during germination and seedling growth stages. 15th European Society for Agronomy Congress, ESA2018, Geneva, Switzerland, 27-31 August 2018.

Channaoui S., M. Labhilili, M. Mouhib, H. Mazouz, M. El Fechtali et A. Nabloussi. 2018. Induced Quantitative variability in Rapeseed (*Brassica napus* L.) by Physical (gamma rays), Chemical (EMS) and Combined Mutagen Treatments. 9th International Agriculture Symposium (Agrosym 2018). Jahorina mountain, Bosnia & Herzegovina, 4-7 October 2017.

Channaoui S., M. Labhilili, H. Mazouz, M. El Fechtali et A. Nabloussi. 2018. Evaluation of EMS induced genetic variability in Rapeseed (*Brassica napus* L.). 4th International American Moroccan Agricultural Sciences Conference (AMAS Conference IV), Agropolis, Meknès, Morocco, May 9-11, 2018.

Channaoui S., M. Labhilili, M. Mouhib, H. Mazouz, M. El Fechtali et A. Nabloussi. 2018. Evaluation of Five Mutants of Rapeseed (*Brassica napus* L.) for Earliness, Agronomic Traits and Response to Changing Environments in M2 Population. 4th International American Moroccan Agricultural Sciences Conference (AMAS Conference IV), Agropolis, Meknès, Morocco, May 9-11, 2018.

El harfi M., A. Nabloussi, M. Jbilou, H. Hanine, H. Rizki et J. Charafi. 2018. Agro-morphological analysis of Moroccan sesame (*Sesamum indicum* L.) populations. 4th International American Moroccan Agricultural Sciences Conference (AMAS Conference IV), Agropolis, Meknès, Morocco, May 9-11, 2018.

El Harfi M., A. Nabloussi, H. Hanine et J. Charafi. 2018. Genetic Diversity of Moroccan Sesame (*Sesamum indicum* L.) Populations Using ISSR Markers. 4th International American Moroccan Agricultural Sciences Conference (AMAS Conference IV), Agropolis, Meknès, Morocco, May 9-11, 2018.

Houmanat K., J. Charafi, H. Mazouz, M. El Fechtali et A. Nabloussi. 2018. Analysis of Genetic Diversity Among Safflower Accessions of Different Origins Using Agro-Morphological Traits and ISSR Markers. 4th International American Moroccan Agricultural Sciences Conference (AMAS Conference IV), Agropolis, Meknès, Morocco, May 9-11, 2018.

Kettani R., A. Nabloussi, L. Hssaini et C.D. Khalfi. 2018. Evaluation of some new introduced hybrids of sunflower (*Helianthus annuus* L.) under drought conditions in Morocco. 4th International American Moroccan Agricultural Sciences Conference (AMAS Conference IV), Agropolis, Meknès, Morocco, May 9-11, 2018.

Rizki H., H. Hanine et A. Nabloussi. 2018. Valorisation du sésame marocain et innovation de nouveaux produits pour l'agro-industrie. Premier Forum de l'innovation de l'agro-alimentaire. AGRINOVA, Qualipole-Meknès, 27 et 28 avril 2018.



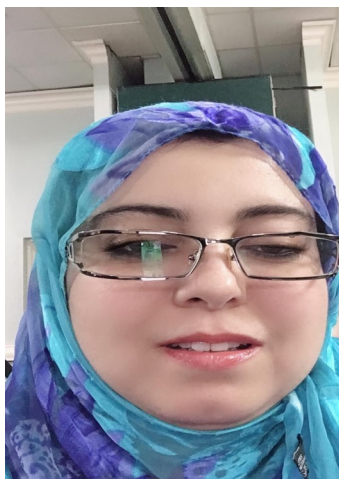
Dr. Nabloussi's 2018-2019 Achievements:

1. Four published articles
2. Nine conference Presentations
2. Release and registration of a new rapeseed variety in Morocco : Baraka (INRA-CZH3)
3. Member of International Sustainable Development Society (ISDS), Japon. (Since May 2018, ID: M007556).



Congratulations to Mrs. Sanaa Rajaallah Who Graduated With a BS in Business Administration on December 14, 2018!

Mrs. Sanaa Rajaallah, a new member of the High Council of Moroccan American Scholars and Academics (HC-MASA) graduated in on December 14, 2018 (Fall 2018) with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a concentration in Entrepreneurship from Fayetteville State University, Fayetteville, NC. She graduated with the Highest Honors! We congratulate Sanaa for her achievement and we wish her all the best in pursuing her graduate studies or a brilliant career in the US.



Congratulations Sanaa!
Keep Up The Good Work!

Fayetteville State University, Fayetteville, NC



American-Moroccan and Other Council Plant Scientists at the International Plant & Animal Genome Conference XXVII (January 12—16, 2019)



American-Moroccan and Other Council Plant Scientists Thrive at the International Plant & Animal Genome Conference XXVII in San Diego, CA

Every year since 2000, American-Moroccan and other Moroccan Plant Scientists were present at “The International Plant & Animal Genome Conference XXVII” that was held January 12–16, 2019 in San Diego, CA. These were:

- Dr. Khalid Meksem, Professor, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL, USA
- Dr. My Abdelmajid Kassem, Professor and Department Chair, Fayetteville State University, Fayetteville, NC, USA
- Dr. Mohammed Bendahmane, Ecole Normale Supérieure, Lyon, France
- Dr. Naoufal Lakhssassi, Postdoctoral Fellow, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL, USA

These scientists organized workshops and presented their research findings in oral and poster formats as follows:

I. WORKSHOPS:

a. Workshop: Teaching Genetics, Genomics, Biotechnology, and Bioinformatics

Organizer: Abdelmajid Kassem, Fayetteville State University, USA

Date: Saturday, January 12, 2019, Time: 4:00-6:10 PM

Room: Town and Country, Pacific Salon 1

- ◆ 04:00 PM W1071 Public Repositories using Cloud Computing in Bioinformatics Teaching. Pushpinder Singh Bawa and **Subha Srinivasan**, Institute of Bioinformatics and Applied Biotechnology, Bangalore 560100, India.
- ◆ 04:20 PM W1072 Research Assisted Teaching Biology at Fayetteville State University. **Jiazhng (John) Yuan**, Dept. of Biological Sciences, Fayetteville State University, Fayetteville, NC 28301, USA.
- ◆ 04:40 PM W1073 Discovering Bioinformatics Analytic Tools Leveraging the Bioscience Query Tool Discovery System (Bio-TDS). Etienne Gnim-



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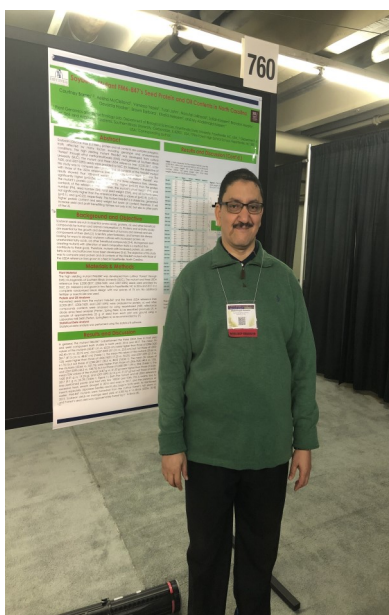
pieba and **Carol Lushbough**, University of South Dakota, SD, USA.

- ◆ 05:00 PM W1074 Undergraduates Contain Multitudes: Course-Based Metagenomics Analysis using the DNA Subway Purple Line. **Ray Inke**, James Maddison University, Harrisonburg, VA 22807, USA.
- ◆ 05:20 PM W1075 Strategies for Incorporation of Bioinformatics into Life Science Curricula. **Anne Rosenwald**, Georgetown University, Washington, DC 20057, USA.
- ◆ 05:40 PM W1076 Teaching Statistical Genomics to Biology Students. Zhenyu Jia, University of California, Riverside, CA 92521, USA.

Congratulations to Our Members!
Keep Up The Good Work!



Dr. Kassem's Workshop Speakers: Left to right: Subha Srinivasan, Ray Inke, John Yuan, Zhenyu Jia, Abdelmajid Kassem, and Anne Rosenwald.



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b. Workshop: Genomics of Plant Development

Organizer: Dr. Khalid Meksem, Southern Illinois University, USA
Date: Sunday, January 13, 2018 Time: 4:00-6:10 PM
Room: Pacific Salon 6-7 (2nd Floor)

- ◆ 04:00 PM W563 Regulation of Barley Leaf Patterning and Axillary Branching. Gary Muehlbauer, Department of Agronomy and Plant Genetics, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA.
- ◆ 04:25 PM W564 Tilling by Target Capture Sequencing as a Tool for Functional Gene Analyses in Soybean. Leandro Neves, RAPID Genomics, Gainesville, FL 32601, USA.
- ◆ 04:50 PM W565 Application of TILLING and BSA-Seq Approach to Map Prominent Main Stem and Leaf Spot Resistance in Groundnut. Gaura Agawal (University of Georgia), Annapurna Chitkineni (ICRISAT), Baozhu Guo (University of Georgia), Corley Holbrook (USDA-ARS), Aamir Khan (ICRISAT), Peggy Ozias-Akins (University of Georgia), Manish Pandey (ICRISAT), Rajeev Varshney (ICRISAT), and Hui Wang (University of Georgia).
- ◆ 05:00 PM W567 Going Beardless: Identification of the B1 Awn Inhibitor Gene from Durum and Bread Wheat Populations. Allan Feurtado, Daiqing Huang, Qian Zheng, Tancey Melchikart, Yasmina Bekkaoui, David J. F. Konkin, Venkatesh Bollina, Sateesh Kagale, Martial Martucci, Frank M. You, Curt McCartney, Martha Clarke, Nikolai M. Adamski, Catherine Chinoy, Paul Nicholson, Adrian J Cutler.

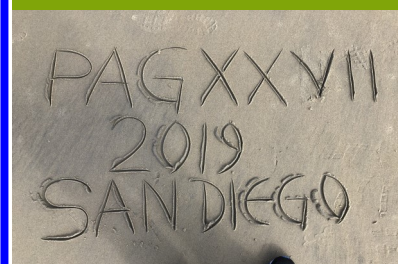
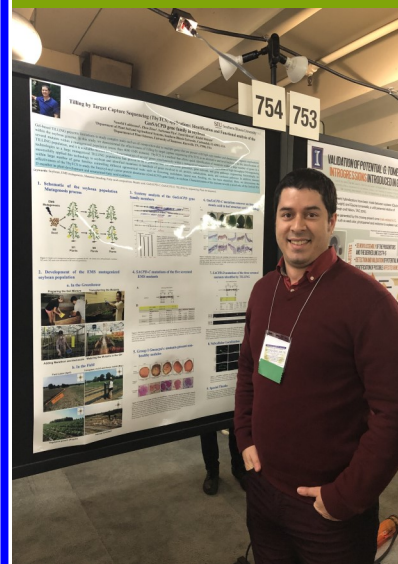


Dr. Meksem speaking at his workshop.



Dr. Lakhsassasi speaking.

The International Plant & Animal Genome Conference XXVII Photo Gallery



American-Moroccan and Other Council Plant Scientists at the International Plant & Animal Genome Conference XXVII (January 12—16, 2019)

c. Workshop: Functional Genomics

Organizer: David Lightfoot, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL, USA

Date: Sunday, January 13, 2018 Time: 1:30-3:40 PM

Room: Room: Esquire - Meeting House

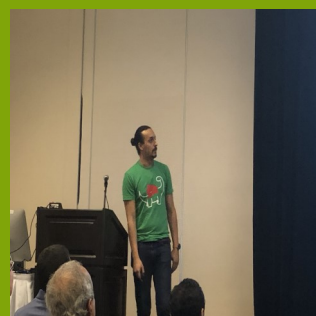
- ◆ 1:30 PM W456 Navigating NCBI Resources for Plant Genomics. Terence D. Murphy, National Center for Biotechnology Information, National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health, USA.
- ◆ 1:43 PM W457 Adaptation to Boron Toxicity in the Extremophyte *Schrenkiella Parvula*. Maheshi Dassanayake, Louisiana State University, USA.
- ◆ 1:56 PM W458 Transcriptome Analysis of Wheat Cultivar Molly Under Heat Stress and Hessian Fly Infestation. John Yuan, Fayetteville State University, USA
- ◆ 2:09 PM W459 Soybean Tilling by Target Capture Sequencing (TbyTCS) Applications: Identification and Functional Analysis of the GmSACPD Gene Family in Soybean. Naoufal Lakhssassi, Southern Illinois University, USA
- ◆ 2:22 PM W460 *Olea europea* Omics State of the Art. Oussama Badad, Southern Illinois University, USA
- ◆ 2:35 PM W463 Single-Molecule Sequencing Reveals Increased Complexity of the Transcriptome Landscape in Maize and Sorghum. Primo Baybayan, Pacific Biosciences, USA.
- ◆ 2:48 PM W464 Accurate Prediction of Regulatory Maps in Plant using DAP-Seq, ATAC-Seq and Single Cell Sequencing Data. Song Li, Virginia Tech, USA.
- ◆ 3:01 PM Digital Phenotyping for Understanding the Cold-Stress Tolerance Mechanisms in *Arabidopsis*. Madan K. Bhattacharyya, Iowa State University, USA.



Prof. David Lightfoot, Council Member and Functional Genomics Workshop Organizer at the PAG Conference Since 1992!



Prof. David Lightfoot



Mr. Oussama Badad speaking at Functional Genomics Workshop.

American-Moroccan and Other Council Plant Scientists at the International Plant & Animal Genome Conference XXVII (January 12—16, 2019)

d. Workshop: Ornamentals

Organizer: Mohamed Bendahmane, Ecole Normale Supérieure, France

Date: Sunday, January 13, 2018 Time: 1:30-3:40 PM

Room: Room: Esquire - Meeting House

- ◆ 01:30 PM W759 High-Quality Chromosome-Level Rose Genome Sequence provides insights on Domestication and Major Traits. Jeremy Just. Ecole Normale Supérieure de Lyon/CNRS, France.
- ◆ 01:50 PM W760 Comparative Genomics Identifies Patterns of Selection in Roses (*Rosaceae*). Jinyoung Hu, Kunming Institute of Botany, Chinese Academy of Sciences, China.
- ◆ 02:10 PM W761 Genetic Variation in Historic Populations of *Chrysanthemum Arcticum* Using GBS (DArTseqLD). Neil O Anderson, University of Minnesota, Department of Horticultural Science, USA.
- ◆ 02:30 PM W762 Linkage and QTL Mapping in Autohexaploid *Chrysanthemum*. Paul Arens, Peter M. Bourke, Aike Post, and Geert van Geest, Wageningen University & Research, Plant Breeding, Wageningen, The Netherlands.
- ◆ 02:50 PM W763 Transcriptome Analysis and Identification of Single Nucleotide Polymorphisms for Powdery Mildew Resistance in Gerbera Daisy. Krishna Bhattarai, and Zhanao Deng, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611, USA.
- ◆ 03:10 PM W764 Molecular Regulation of Petal Size and Nectar Production in Field Pennycress (*Thlaspi arvense*). Jason Thomas, University of Minnesota Twin Cities, USA.



Mohamed Bendahmane

II. ORAL PRESENTATIONS:

The following scientists presented their research findings orally:

- ◆ W459 Soybean Tilling by Target Capture Sequencing (TbyTCS) Applications: Identification and Functional Analysis of the GmSACPD Gene Family in Soybean. **Naoufal Lakhssassi** and **Khalid Meksem** @ Sunday, Jan 13 2:09 PM.
- ◆ W566 Whole Genome Re-Sequencing Reveals the Impact of Copy Number Variants of the Rhg4 Gene on Broad-Based Resistance to Soybean Cyst Nematode. Tarek Hewezi (University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN, USA), Mariola Klepadlo (University of Missouri), **Naoufal Lakhssassi** (Southern Illinois University Carbondale, IL, USA), **Khalid Meksem** (Southern Illinois University Carbondale, IL, USA), Henry T. Nguyen (University of Missouri), Gunvant Patil (University of Minnesota), Adrian O. Stec (Department of Agronomy and Plant Genetics, University of Minnesota), Robert M. Stupar (Department of Agronomy and Plant Genetics, University of Minnesota), Babu Valliyodan (University of Missouri), Tri D. Vuong (University of Missouri), Jinrong Wan (University



American-Moroccan Plant Scientists at the International Plant & Animal Genome Conference XXVII (January 12—16, 2019) - Continued

of Missouri & National Center for Soybean Biotechnology) @ Sunday, Jan 13 5:15 PM.

III. POSTER PRESENTATIONS:

Courtney Barnes, Aeisha McClelland, Yopez Vanessa, Jiazheng (John) Yuan, **Naoufal Lakhssassi**, **Safiah Kassem**, Brandon Murphy, Devonta Hooker, Barbara Brown, **Khalid Meksem**, and **My Abdelmajid Kassem**. PE0760 Soybean Mutant FM6-847's Seed Protein and Oil Contents in North Carolina.

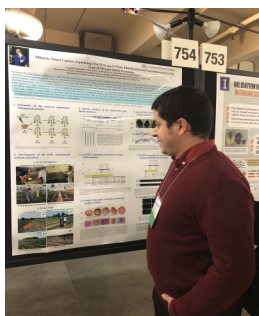
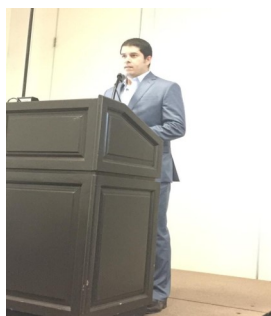
Jiazheng (John) Yuan, **My Abdelmajid Kassem**, Daniel Okunbor, Briana Davis, and Trinity Reid. PO0743 Strengthening Undergraduate Plant Science Teaching in HBCU Through Research Experience and Community Engagement.

Four Council Members to Publish An Article in *Scientific Report*, a Prominent International Journal of Nature Publishing Group

The article entitled "*Genome reorganization of the GmSHMT gene family in soybean showed a lack of functional redundancy in resistance to soybean cyst nematode*" is about the characterization of the Serine HydroxyMethylTransferase protein (e.g., GmSHMT) gene family.

Naoufal Lakhssassi, Gunvant Patil, Sarbottam Piya, Zhou Z hou, Azam Baharlouei, **Abdelmajid Kassem**, David Lightfoot, Tarek Hewezi, **Abdelali Barakat**, Henry Nguyen, and **Khalid Meksem**. Genome reorganization of the GmSHMT gene family in soybean showed a lack of functional redundancy in resistance to soybean cyst nematode. *Scientific Report*, 2019 – Accepted (In press).

Dr. Naoufal Lakhssassi





Ahmed Elamrani, Professor of Biochemistry and Plant Physiology, Faculty of Science, Department of Biology, Mohammed I University, Oujda, Morocco Contributed to a Book in Agricultural Sciences

Prof. Ahmed Elamrani, Coordinator of a book chapter for the Agricultural Science Team of the Tuning Africa Project (Phase II), On "Harmonisation of higher education in Africa as a multidimensional process that promotes the development of an integrated higher education space on the continent of Africa.

Chapter 2: Definition of Generic Competences, in "Design and Implementation of Degree Programmes in Agricultural Sciences", by: Yemi Akegbejo-Samsons¹, Olubunmi Abayomi Omotesho², Ahmed Elamrani³.

1: Federal University of Agriculture, Nigeria. 2: University of Ilorin, Nigeria. 3 : Université Mohammed Premier, Oujda, Morocco.

<http://tuningafrica.org/upload/evento/editor/doc/33/agricultural-sciencestuning-africa-2018.pdf>

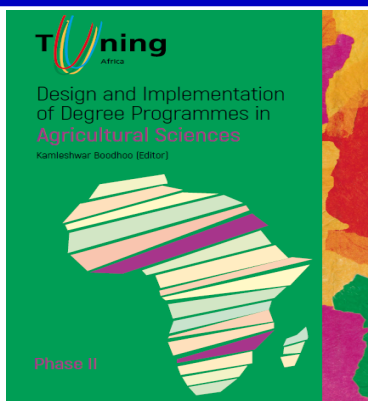
Book Title : Design and Implementation of Degree Programmes in Agricultural Sciences.

Kamleshwar Boodhoo (Editor). Authors: Kamleshwar Boodhoo, Yemi Akegbejo-Samsons, Olubunmi Abayomi Omotesho, Ahmed Elamrani,

Taky Hortense Atta Diallo, Mariama Sene, Christopher Mubeteneh Tankou, Rashid A.M. Hussein, Henri R. Mloza-Banda, Esther Sakyi-Dawson, Bonaventure Minani, Randriany Jean Baptiste Ramaroson. Publication of Tuning Africa Project phase II, Tuning Academy, Coordinator: Deusto University, Bilbao, Spain © Deusto University Press P.O. box 1 - 48080 Bilbao e-mail:

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about Tuning International Tuning Academy Universidad de Deusto Avda. de las Universidades, 24 (48007 Bilbao) Tel. +34 944 13 90 95 Spain, di-ta@deusto.es. <http://tuningafrica.org/upload/evento/editor/doc/33/agricultural-sciencestuning-africa-2018.pdf>.



**Congratulations Ahmed!
Keep Up The Good Work!**



A Prominent Moroccan-French Plant Scientist and Council Member Published an Article in the Prestigious International Journal Science

Shifting the limits in wheat research and breeding using a fully annotated reference genome. Science, 2018 361 (6403).

A prominent plant scientist and Council Member Abdelhafid Bendahmane contributed to the fully annotated wheat genome sequence published recently in the prestigious international scientific journal Science. The genome coverage was approximately 94% and contained about 108,000 genes.

The reference genome sequence is a valuable resource to the scientific community to better understand genes involved in different developmental stages, environmental adaptation, metabolic processes, and other important agronomic traits, etc.

Abdelhafid is also the Council's Vice—President for Europe.

**Congratulations Abdelhafid!
We Are Proud of You!**

Abdelhafid Bendahmane



Abdelhafid Bendahmane



Abdelhafid Bendahmane Won “*The Audace and Leadership*” Award at INRA, France!

Dr. Abdelhafid Bendahmane, a Research Director at INRA, France was among few French Laureates to receive awards in a ceremony held at Théâtre Édouard VII, Paris in presence of Didier Guillaume, Minister of Agriculture and Food and Frédérique Vidal, Minister of Higher Education, Research, and Innovation, and Philippe Mauguin INRA President/Director.

Abdelhafid received “The Audace and Leadership Award”. In a video featuring Abdelhafid and his team’s work: [http://jobs.inra.fr/A-la-une/Lauriers/Lauriers-2018/Reportage-Abdelhafid-Bendahmane/\(key\)/3](http://jobs.inra.fr/A-la-une/Lauriers/Lauriers-2018/Reportage-Abdelhafid-Bendahmane/(key)/3), Abdelhafid said: “Genomics is a strong tool to find genes controlling important agronomic traits”.

**Again, Congratulations Abdelhafid!
You Made Us Proud of You!**

Award Ceremony, Théâtre Édouard VII, Paris, France



Abdelhafid Bendahmane



Abdelhafid Bendahmane
“*Audace and Leadership Award*” Winner,
INRA, France, 2018.



The Council Is Growing! (Welcome to our New Members)

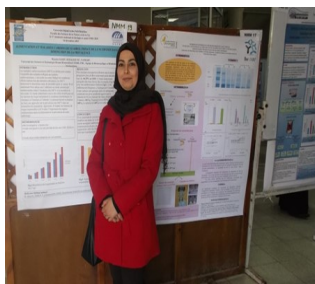
- Abdellatif Elhomani, PhD, University of Tennessee and Oak Ridge National Lab, Oak Ridge, TN, USA
- Halima Saiah, PhD, Hassiba Benbouali University, Chlef, Algeria

Abdellatif Elhomani, PhD

Dr. Elhomani earned a PhD in Mechanical Engineering; MS in Mathematics and MS in Industrial Engineering; BS in Biology, and BS in Engineering. He holds a dual-appointment of Associate Researcher at the University of Tennessee and Oak Ridge National Lab. Previously, he worked as an Advanced Development and Research Senior Engineer at Altec industries (2011—2016); Associate Researcher at Washington University School of Medicine (2010—2011); and Process Engineer at Lafarge North America (2009—2010). Currently, he is an active member of the Applied Mathematics Group at UMKC; a member the American Society of Mechanical Engineering and American Society of Quality. His research interests are centered around modeling of mechanical systems, biological systems and bio genetics, artificial intelligence and machine learning.

Halima Saiah, PhD

Dr. Halima Saiah earned a B.S. degree from Hassiba Benbouali University in 2005, a M.S. from the University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan, and a Ph.D. in Biochemistry from Oran 1 Ahmed Ben Bella University in 2017. Currently, she is lecturer at the Department of Biology at Hassiba Benbouali University (2009-Present) and serves as a Department Co-Chair (2018-Present). Her research interests span both the identification and evaluation of pharmacological activity of natural products. She is interested in understanding the phytochemical composition of pharmacologically active plant extracts and determining the mechanism of action of each individual active compound.



Dr. Abdellatif Elhomani



Dr. Halima Saiah

The Council Is Growing! (Welcome to our New Members)

- Sanaa Rajaallah, BS, Fayetteville State University, Fayetteville, NC, USA
- Mohamed Ismah, MS in History and Philosophy of Science, University Paris VII, Paris, France
- Abdennaceur Kassem, MS, Center of Inspectors of Elementary Education, Rabat, Morocco in 2018.

Sanaa Rajaallah, BS

Mrs. Sanaa Rajaallah earned her BS degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Entrepreneurship from Fayetteville State University in Fall 2018 and intends to pursue an MBA degree starting fall 2019. She is an active member of several organizations including Entrepreneurial Action for others creates a better world for US all (ENACTUS), Islamic Center of Fayetteville (ICF), and Arab Americans Society of North Carolina (AASNC) of which she serves as a Treasurer.

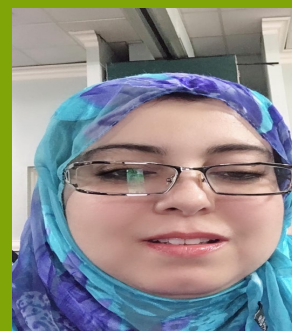
Mohamed Ismah, MS

Mr. Mohamed Ismah earned a BS degree from Morocco and a MS degree in History and Philosophy of Sciences from University Paris VII, Jussieu, Paris France. He is an active member in several Associations in Paris, France.

Abdennaceur Kassem, MS

Mr. Abdennaceur Kassem earned a degree in Elementary Education from the “Center of Elementary Education Teachers Education”, Ouarzazate, Morocco in 2005; a BS degree in Law and Documenting from University Al Qarawiyyine, Fez, Morocco in 2015; and an MS degree from the “Center of Inspectors of Elementary Education”, Rabat, Morocco in 2018. His BS thesis topic was: “Experience of Moroccan small enterprises in Microfinance”. His MS thesis topic was “Pedagogical coaching of pre-K Elementary female teachers: Reality and Horizons”. Currently, he is working as an “Inspector of Elementary Education” in the region of Essaouira in Morocco.

**Welcome and Thank You
For Joining Us!**



Mrs. Sanaa Rajaallah



Mohamed Ismah



Abdennaceur Kassem

The Council's Newsletter

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Current Board of Directors Was Elected for
Two-Year Term (2016-2018)

President: Khalid Meksem, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, USA

Vice-President-USA: Abdelmajid Kassem, Fayetteville State University, Fayetteville, NC, USA

Vice-President-Europe: Abdelhafid Bendahmane, INRA, France

Vice-President-MEA (Middle East & Africa): Abdelhamid El Mousadik, Ibn Zohr University, Morocco

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Member at Large: Abdeslem El Idrissi, CUNY, USA

Member at Large: Vacant, USA

Happy and Prosperous New Year 2019!

Volume 6, Issue 9, January 2019

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