



IUSSI - North American Section

The Jeffery P. La Fage Student Award for Applied Research on Social Insects recognizes a graduate student for distinguished research and scholarly activity on social insects, with an emphasis on applied projects. The award consists of a plaque and an honorarium. The North American Section of the International Union for the Study of Social Insects is proud to announce that **Elizabeth M. Walsh, of Texas A&M University**, is the recipient of the 2017 Jeffery P. La Fage Award.

Elizabeth's PhD dissertation research, under the direction of Juliana Rangel at Texas A&M University, addresses honeybee queen reproductive quality, the relationship between queen quality and colony condition, and how beekeepers can improve practices to improve queen and colony health. She is studying pesticides and other agro-chemicals as particularly important factors. The common use of miticides to fight infestations of *Varroa* mites has potential negative effects on the bees themselves, and these toxins are known to contaminate the majority of beeswax combs in the United States. Elizabeth has found that queens raised in miticide-laden wax attract smaller retinuees than control queens reared in miticide-free wax. She is pursuing the possibility that these effects stem from differences in queen mandibular glands, where queen pheromones are produced. In support of this, she has found evidence that the composition of gland contents is affected by queen rearing environment. Her work promises to shed light on the potential sublethal effects of miticides, so that beekeeping practice can be improved. Elizabeth's achievement of these goals is helped by the fact that she is an accomplished professional beekeeper in her own right, having worked as the local representative for Dadant and Sons Beekeeping Supply Company and run her own beekeeping business since she was a high school sophomore. The proceeds from this business helped pay her way through college. She is also highly active in outreach to the general public and to the Texas beekeeping community, frequently speaking and teaching at beekeeper gatherings. All of these accomplishments make Elizabeth Walsh a highly deserving winner of this year's Jeffery P. La Fage Student Award.

IUSSI-NAS Awards Committee

Terry McGlynn and Stephen Pratt (Co-Chairs)

Rebecca Clark, Hongmei Li-Byarlay, Juliana Rangel, and Chris Smith