



Caryopsis

Cereals & Grains Student Association Newsletter

Greetings, Student Members of Cereals & Grains Association!



Hey team!

I'm thrilled to be part of this awesome crew! Over the past five years, I have been lucky enough to jump into different roles within the student association. This year, I am honored to step into the role of chair for the Cereals & Grains Student Association, working alongside a dedicated, talented, and ambitious group of student leaders.

During the Cereals & Grains 23 annual meeting, we successfully organized the Product Development Competition. It was truly gratifying to witness the hard work of the finalists and to sample their innovative products. Plus, we had a blast at the social event, making some killer connections. Now, looking forward to Cereals & Grains 24, we are excited to continue fostering connections and motivation among students through dynamic competitions and social gatherings.

Our big event this year is the Best Research Paper Competition, teams will compete for first, second, and third place. Keep an eye out for updates on deadlines, prize details, and announcements on our website and social media channels.

Beyond the events, I want to emphasize how crucial it is for all of us to be stewards of our organization. Let's come together to build a supportive community and make the experience amazing for everyone. We're also working hard to grow our Student Association, so don't hesitate to invite your colleagues and lab buddies to join in. Together, we can foster a culture of collaboration and innovation among cereal science students. Don't forget to follow us on LinkedIn, Facebook, and X (formerly Twitter) for all the latest updates and discussions on hot topics in the field.

I can't wait to see you all in October at Cereals & Grains 24 in Schaumburg, Illinois, U.S.A.

Cheers,
Edil Vidal Torres
Student Association Chair 2023–2024

Student Association Chair 2023–2024

Edil Vidal Torres

Edil is a food technologist-scientist at Northern Crops Institute (NCI) and a Ph.D. student in the Cereal Science Program at North Dakota State University mentored by Dr. Frank Manthey. Originally from the Dominican Republic, she completed her master's degree in food science and technology at the University of Puerto Rico Mayaguez Campus. Her research focuses on the characterization of two alternative crops, quinoa and amaranth. She gained valuable experience as an intern in Dr. Simsek's lab during the summer of 2018 and presented two posters at the Cereals & Grains 19 annual meeting in Denver, CO.

“Being part of the Cereals & Grains Student Association has provided me with opportunities to establish new professional connections, broaden my knowledge across diverse topics, and access invaluable resources and information. It's been an honor to collaborate with the association and work together toward our shared goals.”

continued



Immediate Past Chair **Cyprian Syeundac**

Cyprian, a research scientist in the Texas A&M University Department of Food Science and Technology, works with Dr. Joseph Awika in the Cereal Quality Lab. He is also a teaching assistant. Previously, he studied food science in Kenya for his bachelor's and master's degrees. Currently, his research focuses on understanding how cereal phenolic compounds impact the formation of Maillard reaction products, aiming to enhance the sensory attributes of whole grain-based products.



Committee Vice Chair **Ravinder Kumar**

Ravinder Kumar is a food science Ph.D. student at the University of Missouri at Columbia. He is from Haryana, India, where he completed his bachelor's degree in agricultural sciences in 2021. He came to the United States in 2021 and began a master's program in food science at the University of Missouri, graduating in 2023 under Dr. Pavel Somavat. He was a summer research and development intern at Bunge Milling in Chesterfield, MO. His research involves coproduct evaluation of colored corn varieties and valorization of purple corn pericarp for its anthocyanin content and functional properties.



Committee Vice Chair **Najmol Hoque**

Md Najmol Hoque is a cereal science Ph.D. student at North Dakota State University (NDSU) studying under the guidance of Dr. Shahidul Islam. Najmol's research focuses on the "Impact of Nitrogen Variation on the Biochemical Properties and Functionality of HRS Wheat." In 2023, he participated in his first Cereals & Grains meeting, presenting one poster at the meeting in Chicago, IL. He is honored and excited to be part of the Cereals & Grains Student Association as a vice chair for the 2023–2024 executive committee. Being part of the Cereals & Grains Student Association has given him the opportunity to make new professional connections, learn about diverse topics, and access documents and excellent information.



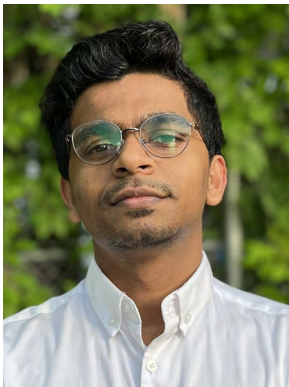
Secretary **Kashika Sethi**

Kashika Sethi is a Ph.D. student at the University of Saskatchewan, Canada, exploring the use of extrusion technology on pulse flours under the guidance of Dr. Yongfeng Ai. Originally from India, she earned her master's degree in food and nutrition in 2019. She is also a student representative in the Cereals & Grains Association Carbohydrate Division. She attended her first annual Cereals & Grains Annual Meeting in 2023, where she presented a poster and actively participated in division activities. Now, stepping into the role of secretary for the year 2024, Kashika is deeply enthusiastic about the opportunity to expand her knowledge and make meaningful contributions.



Engagement Chair – PDC Vimukthi Molligoda

Vimukthi Molligoda is the engagement chair and a Ph.D. student at North Dakota State University, Department of Plant Sciences, working under Dr. Frank Manthey. His current research project is on the characterization of starch in durum wheat grown in North Dakota. He obtained a B.S. degree in food science and nutrition from Wayamba University of Sri Lanka in 2017 and an M.S. degree in cereal science from North Dakota State University in 2023. He has been an active member of the Cereals & Grains Association since 2022. He acted as a co-chair in the Product Development Competition in 2023. He is excited to be part of the Cereals & Grains Student Association and the engagement chair for 2024.



Immediate Past Chair – PDC Anashwar Mullankuzhiyil Valsalan

Anashwar M. Valsalan is a food science master's degree student at the University of Manitoba studying under the guidance of Dr. Maneka Malalgoda. Anashwar's research focuses on underutilized wheat species, investigating their functional properties and developing nutrient-dense food applications. He participated in the 2022 Best Student Research Paper presentation and was awarded second place. He is honored and excited to be part of the Cereals & Grains Student Association and to mentor the Product Development Committee.



Engagement Vice Co-Chair – PDC Maria Robles

Maria Robles is a Ph.D. student in food science and technology at the University of Alberta Food Microbiology Lab advised by Dr. Michael Gaenzle. Her research interests include cereal fermentation, clean label and alternative flours for baked goods, and up-cycled ingredients. Her research project focuses on the use of *Bacillus* spp. ferments as a novel ingredient to improve bread quality. She participated in the Student Product Development Competition at Cereals & Grains 2023, and her team was awarded first place. She is excited to be part of the student association as a vice chair of the Product development Committee.



Engagement Vice Co-Chair – PDC Willow Liu

Sujun (Willow) Liu is a Ph.D. student in food science and technology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln under the supervision of Dr. Devin Rose. Her research primarily explores cereal fiber processing and its effects on human health, particularly gut health. Since 2020, Sujun has been an active member of the Cereals & Grains Association. She is enthusiastic about her role on the student association and looks forward to contributing to the 2024 research competition.

Questions? Contact us at:
cgastudents@scisoc.org



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