

## AUTUMN GRADUATION HONOURS FOR FABI

FABI congratulates 25 FABIans who graduated at the University of Pretoria's Autumn Graduation ceremony on 2 May. FABI was especially proud to have seven of the nine PhD degrees conferred from this Institute. Two MSc students were capped along with 16 postgraduate students associated with FABI who were conferred their Honours degrees.

Listed below are the PhD graduates and the titles of their dissertations as well as the Honours students with projects in FABI over the past year. (\* degrees awarded with distinction).



### PhD's

#### **Dr Birhan Abate**

Molecular characterization and evaluation of entomopathogenic nematodes in South African forestry plantations.

Supervisor: Dr BP Hurley

Co-supervisors: Prof. B Slippers, Prof. MJ Wingfield

#### **Dr Mesfin Gossa**

Ecology and diversity of introduced *Pissodes* (Coleoptera: Curculionidae) in South Africa.

Supervisor: Dr BP Hurley

Co-supervisors: Dr JR Garnas, Prof. B Slippers

### **Dr Stanford Kwenda**

Transcriptome profiling of potato plant stems challenged with *Pectobacterium carotovorum* subsp. *brasiliense* and elucidation of the role of small RNAs in *Pectobacterium* survival mechanisms.

Supervisor: Prof. LN Moleleki

Co-supervisors: Prof. PRJ Birch,

### **Dr Jacqueline Meyer**

RNA sequencing of maize reveals metabolic processes, candidate defence genes and SNP markers associated with grey leaf spot disease resistance.

Supervisor: Prof. DK Berger

Co-supervisors: Dr SL Murray (University of Cape Town)

### **Dr Eston Mutitu**

Invasion history of *Thaumastocoris peregrinus* and development of a biological control agent.

Supervisor: Prof. B Slippers

Co-supervisors: Dr JR Garnas, Prof. MJ Wingfield, Dr BP Hurley

### **Dr Alex Osorio**

Diseases of mangrove trees in South Africa.

Supervisor: Prof. J Roux

Co-supervisors: Prof. MJ Wingfield, Prof. ZW de Beer

### **Dr Priyen Pillay**

Characterisation of VP1 protein sensitivity against proteases and identification of agroinfiltration-induced proteases in *Nicotiana benthamiana* leaves.

Supervisor: Prof. KJ Kunert

Co-supervisors: Dr BJ Vorster

### **MSc's**

Gustav Pretorius

Towards an understanding of quorum sensing in *Pectobacterium carotovorum* subsp. *brasiliense*.

Supervisor: Prof. LN Moleleki

Co-supervisors: Prof. J. Theron

Ncobile Kunene

Mating-type gene analysis of *Cercospora zeina* in commercial and small-holder maize farms in South Africa.

Supervisor: Prof. DK Berger

Co-supervisors: Dr SM Phillips

**BSc Honours students affiliated with FABI**



Nadine Botha

Claudio de Nuzzo

Herman Els

Shannon Flemington\*

Alessandro Gricia

Melissa Joubert\*

Dineo Mailula

Sophie Makua

Puseletso Manyaka

Nikki Miguel\*

Seamus Morgan

Debra Phaswana

Talia Pillay\*

Julanie Stapelberg

Salome van Hoepen

Bradley Vincent