

FABI STUDENTS RETURN FROM PENN STATE EXCHANGE VISIT

Two PhD candidates, Benedicta Swalarsk-Parry and Jane Ramaswe returned from a three-month exchange visit to Pennsylvania State University in October. The visit was part of a strategic partnership between the Department of Plant Pathology and Environmental Microbiology in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences and the Forestry and Agricultural Biotechnology Institute (FABI) at the University of Pretoria.

The partnership is designed to increase research, teaching and extension impact and growth opportunities for both organisations and thereby increase food security and environmental stewardship; to develop a mentorship network that explores and defines best practices in mentorship to educate future generations of researchers and educators at both institutions and their partners and to increase multicultural fluency.



While at Penn State, Jane and Benedicta were advised by Prof. David Geiser, Director of the Fusarium Research Center and Professor of mycology. Both students participated in Plant Disease Diagnosis (PPATH 502), an annual diagnostic course taught by Gary Moorman, Professor Emeritus of plant pathology. In August, both attended "Crucial Conversations," a communication workshop led by Prof. Carolee Bull, Head of the Department of Plant Pathology and Environmental Microbiology.

But it was not all work while in the USA. They also had an opportunity to travel to New York City, the Pennsylvania Capitol in Harrisburg and a mushroom collection field trip to the Alan Seeger Natural Area in Huntingdon County.