

## Regents' Professor Appointment

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Dear Colleagues,

Please join me in congratulating **Judith K. Brown, Ph.D.**, professor of plant sciences, for her designation as a University of Arizona Regents' Professor.

A Regents' Professorship is awarded only to a very few select faculty who have achieved national and international distinction and exemplify the University of Arizona's objectives and standards for scholarship, research or creative activities, teaching, and service. Not only is it an exceptionally high bar for a nominee, but it requires an excellent nomination packet from faculty peers, and I would like to thank those faculty nominators who did the hard work required.

This morning, the Arizona Board of Regents unanimously confirmed Judy's appointment as a Regents' Professor. Professor Brown will be inducted at a dedicated ceremony sometime in the next academic year. She joins four other distinguished UA colleagues also becoming Regents' Professors: Peter Chesson, Ph.D. (Ecology and Evolutionary Biology), Jeff Greenberg, Ph.D. (Psychology), Connie Woodhouse, Ph.D. (Geography and Development), and Roberta Díaz Brinton, Ph.D. (Pharmacology). She will become the fourth Regents' Professor currently serving on our CALS faculty along with David Breshears (School of Natural Resources and the Environment), Bruce Tabashnik (Department of Entomology) and Rod Wing (School of Plant Sciences) – and only the seventh in total in CALS history.

Judy has been part of our faculty for 30 years and so is extremely well known to many of you. For those who are not aware of Judy's accomplishments, I'd like to share below the statement reviewed by the Regents as they considered her nomination. These are, of course, only a few of the highlights.

*Judith K Brown works in the complex framework at the intersection of biology and society. When plant health is impaired by diseases, this affects communities, particularly in developing economies, that rely on these plants for their livelihood. Most insidious among these diseases are those caused by viruses transmitted by insects, which are difficult to detect and counteract. Dr. Brown focuses on viruses and bacteria transmitted by insect vectors to agriculturally important plants--especially the geminiviruses and the whiteflies that transmit them. She was the first to use a "gene gun" to inoculate genomes of these viruses, the first to estimate the size of the whitefly genome, and among the first to sequence the genome of the sweet potato whitefly.*

*She was also the first to study whitefly-transmitted plant diseases in Arizona and has become the 'go-to' world expert on emerging plant viruses that infect cotton, recently discovering in the southeastern US cotton-growing region two viruses that are endemic to Africa and Asia. As a response, she is currently using gene silencing to develop cotton plants endowed with geminivirus/whitefly resistance. Every year, the Plant Virus Diagnostic Laboratory she established in 1990 receives and identifies about 10,000*

*samples of pathogens from all over the world. The Arizona and California Departments of Agriculture rely on her group to support quarantine efforts to limit the spread of diseases. As Coordinator for the National Plant Diagnostic Network, she works with state and national agencies to protect the agriculture sector.*

*Dr. Brown's stellar scientific trajectory has been recognized by numerous international and national awards, such as Fellow in the American Phytopathological Society, Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Fulbright Specialist, and the prestigious Wellman Award for Professional Achievement and Leadership from the American Phytopathological Society--Caribbean Division.*

I am so pleased that Dr. Brown's exceptional impact and achievements have been recognized by the Regents and look forward to seeing her continued success and leadership for us all. Please join me in congratulating her on this signal honor.

Regards,  
Shane

### **Shane C. Burgess**

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The University of Arizona is located statewide on the ancestral homelands of indigenous peoples.