

Invitations Posted for the University Club Fall 2020 Zoom Talks

Dr. John Sedbrook Friday October 9, 2020

Dr. John Sedbrook, Professor of Genetics, School of Biological Sciences will give a Zoom presentation entitled, "Pennycress – Biofuel for a Greener Future" at 3 p.m. Friday October 9, 2020. The link for the Zoom talk will be sent to you Thursday October 8 or earlier.

He will discuss his ongoing research on the biofuel crop plant, pennycress, that has received national attention. "Though farmers consider pennycress (*Thlaspi arvense*) nothing more than a weed, Illinois State Professor of Genetics Dr. John Sedbrook is working to change their perspective—and the plant itself. Sedbrook and his student researchers in the School of Biological Sciences are genetically modifying pennycress as part of a multistate, multi-institutional effort funded by a five-year, \$10 million USDA grant and a \$13 million Department of Energy grant. The harvested plant can be processed into biofuel, jet fuel, animal feed, and other products." (Excerpts from ISU News Oct 1, 2020).

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Allison Fundis Friday November 13, 2020

Allison Fundis, Chief Operating Officer, Ocean Exploration Trust, will give a YouTube presentation via Zoom entitled, "Ocean Exploration and the Search for Amelia Earhart" at 3 p.m. Friday November 13, 2020. The link for the Zoom talk will be sent to you Thursday November 12 or earlier.

Robert Preston will introduce the talk (to be shown from YouTube) by Allison, COO, Ocean Exploration Trust, at 3 p.m. November 13 via Zoom. Her original Zoom presentation was recorded August 5, 2020 by the Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory (MDIBL). Allison is an alumna (2002) from the MDIBL student summer research program and was part of my research group there (but mentored by Christopher Petersen, Faculty, College of the Atlantic). She received an NSF Undergraduate Research Fellowship from a grant on which I was the lead Principal Investigator with Co-Principal Investigators George Kidder (MDIBL) and Christopher Petersen (COA).

She was a Co-Leader of a search for Amelia Earhart with Dr. Robert Ballard (the discoverer of the wreck of the Titanic in 1985). She is working on a very large world-wide ocean survey project in addition to the "Ballard project". Below is an overview of the presentation excerpted from the MDIBL website:

"Allison Fundis has forged her own path in deep sea exploration and has taken part in more than 50 expeditions on the nonprofit Ocean Exploration Trust's exploration vessel Nautilus. Last

summer Fundis spearheaded the search for traces of another groundbreaking woman: Amelia Earhart. More than eight decades after pioneering aviator's 1937 disappearance, no trace has been found of her Lockheed Electra, making it one of the most enduring mysteries of the 20th century. Fundis and her team used remotely operated underwater vehicles (ROVs) and other state-of-the-art technology to comb the ocean around Nikumaroro island in the western Pacific. While they made no definitive discoveries, Fundis can claim that she and her team have made the most comprehensive search for Earhart to date.

Fundis is passionate about sharing her enthusiasm for deep sea exploration. The Trust offers fellowships and internships aboard the E/V Nautilus and as COO, Fundis strives to create authentic, real-world opportunities to introduce youth, especially young women, to the fascinating world of research science.”

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Dr. Shirley Buzzard
Friday December 11, 2020

Our last University Club Zoom meeting for this semester will be held Friday December 11 at 3 p.m. We are fortunate to have a superb speaker, Dr. Shirley Buzzard, who will give a Zoom talk entitled, “Community Relocation: What Can You Do when the Sea Takes Your City?”. It is estimated that there are already 14 million climate refugees in the world, people who have moved to new cities or countries as individuals or families because of job loss, famine, and other climate extremes. The link for the Zoom talk will be sent to you Thursday December 10 or earlier

Over the past three years, Shirley Buzzard has been developing a non-profit organization (www.braceinstitute.org/ FB Brace Institute) that would assist Native Americans/Alaskans who live in coastal areas and need to relocate whole communities. There have been some start-up problems, not to mention Covid-19, but Shirley would like your comments and ideas on how to move forward with a broader (more fundable) perspective.

Dr. Buzzard is a medical anthropologist (Ph.D. American University) living in Washington, D.C. She has worked in international health and women's programs for over 25 years and has worked in over 70 countries worldwide. She did dissertation research among the Luo in Kenya on fertility and polygyny. She has taught at the U. of MD European Division, GWU, Georgetown, and other universities. She is president of Heartlands International, Ltd. a native American woman-owned small business. (www.heartlands.us)

From the late 1980s and over the next twenty years, Shirley gave several seminars and classroom presentations at ISU on the central themes of comparative rural and community development. For a period of about a decade she was an Adjunct Professor of Political Science, appointed by our friend and University Club founder Hib Roberts. She and Bob Hunt have worked on consulting projects associated with micro lending and small enterprise development. A consulting project with the Peace Corps they undertook began a process that led to the development of the Stevenson Center on Community and Economic Development at ISU.