

## Modesta N. Abugu

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### SKILLS

Research | Basic programming | Communication | Interpersonal | Leadership

### EDUCATION

University of Florida | *Gainesville, FL*

*Jan 2019-Present*

- Master of Science in Horticultural Science

*Research summary:* My research focuses on restoring lost flavor in modern commercial tomato cultivars. At the Klee's lab, some genes and alleles responsible for tomato flavor were found to be missing in modern commercial tomato varieties. My study seeks to re-introduce these flavor alleles in modern tomatoes using molecular markers. I'm applying R (ggplot2 and dplyr package) and JMP SAS data analysis software in this research

University of Nigeria Nsukka | *Enugu, Nigeria*

*August 2012*

- Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry

*3.76/ 5 CGPA*

*Research Summary:* Water Leaf (*Talinum triangulare*) is a popular vegetable in Nigeria. I studied the antioxidant properties of water leaf by inducing albino rats with carbon tetrachloride, treating them with water leaf extract and analyzing changes in some liver function enzymes before and after treatment. I gained a basic research and data analysis (excel) skills during this study

### LEADERSHIP AND INVOLVEMENT

#### American Society of Plant Biologists (ASPB)

2020 Convivon Scholar | *Online fellowship*

*December 2019-Present*

- Developed resource materials for K-12 students on the science and benefits of genetically modified organisms (GMOs)
- Conducted outreach events with about 100 high school students on relevance of GMOs in Agriculture
- Interviewed Dr. Patricio Munoz, Assistant Professor at UF Blueberry Lab on his research in developing improved blueberry varieties: <https://buff.ly/2zB9EES>
- Produced a three minutes video report on my research and participated in various leadership and academic webinars

#### University of Florida Plant Science Council

Member and Volunteer | *Gainesville, FL*

*December 2019-Present*

- Participated in various programming workshops organized by the UF plant science council
- Managed and facilitated social media interaction during the plant science council symposium

#### Cornell Alliance for Science Leadership Program

Leadership Fellow | *Ithaca, NY, USA*

*August 2015 -November 2015*

- Developed and implemented a country context 3-year strategic plan connecting the grassroots to grass tops for increased access to agricultural biotechnology products in Nigeria
- Led a media team to design, test and adopt programs to increase public acceptance on genetically modified organisms in Nigeria
- Participated in data collection, survey and management on the global food insecurity crisis and their impacts
- Recruited and trained volunteers on grassroots engagement, science communication and storytelling

### VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

Women in Genomics | *California, LA*

- Developed and implemented a communication plan to promote the activities of women in genomics and plant science
- Facilitated relations, conducted interviews and managed the social media pages of women in genomics

Guest Host, Taking Biotech Podcast | *Gainesville, FL*

- Sourced for speakers and interviewed them on their area of research
- Covered various topics including insect resistant cowpea in Africa, women in genomics, cassava innovation in Africa, bt. brinjal in Bangladesh, opportunities with ASPB and stewardship of biotechnology products in Africa

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### Centre for African Studies, University of Florida

Graduate Research Assistant| *Gainesville, FL*

*January 2019-present*

- Serve as a book review editor for the African Studies Quarterly (ASQ)
- Collect materials for the Center's annual report
- Assist the Associate Director in data collection for grant reporting.

### Cornell University Alliance for Science Leadership Program

Training Facilitator| *Ithaca, NY, USA*

*August 2016-November 2018*

- Trained leadership fellows, farmers and journalists on developing a strategic framework for grassroots engagement and science communication
- Designed and implemented a coordinated outreach strategy for GMO communication using a modified food cart initiative.

### Open Forum on Agricultural Biotechnology (OFAB) in Africa

Programme Assistant| *Abuja, Nigeria*

*February 2014-December 2018*

- Supported the management of information dissemination and awareness creation project on GMOs
- Led the planning and implementation of sensitization programs; prepared written reports that reflect a clear understanding of assigned roles and events undertaken
- Co-designed communications strategy for effective stakeholder participation during events as well as issue management procedures

## PRESENTATIONS, POSTERS AND PANELS

- Etakah Edia, Sipasi Olalekan, and **Abugu Modesta** (2020). The Impact of COVID\_19 on food and healthcare. Webinar by the International Society of Media in Public Health (ISMPH). 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020. <https://youtu.be/v3-euK0nO-E>
- Sessen Daniel, **Abugu Modesta**, Godwin James and Aya Bridgeland (2020). The future of our food systems; insights into genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Webinar by the scientists in every Florida school program, 26<sup>th</sup> May 2020. <https://youtu.be/ORW02det8DQ>
- **Abugu Modesta**, Tieman Denise, Vallejos Eduardo and Klee Harry (2019). Breeding for tastier tomatoes: Marker assisted introgression of superior flavour alleles into Fl8059. Poster presentation at the Plant and Animal Genomics Conference, 13<sup>th</sup> -15<sup>th</sup> January 2020. San Diego, California.
- **Abugu Modesta**, Tieman Denise, Vallejos Eduardo, Resende Marcio, and Klee Harry (2019). Introducing superior flavour alleles in a modern commercial variety. Poster presentation at the UF Plant Science Council Symposium. 30<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020. Gainesville Florida.
- Ambassador Patricia Haslach, Hans Dreyer, Sylvester Oikeh and **Modesta Abugu** (2017). Role of Biotechnology in promoting Food Security in Africa. Panel presentation at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Washington DC, USA, April 2017
- Nassib Mugwanya, **Modesta Abugu**, Sol Guerrero Ortiz, Joseph Opoku and Yan Mi (2016). Global Agriculture in the face of Climate Change. Panel presentation at the Cornell Alliance for Science Global Executive Leadership Program, Ithaca -New York, USA, October 2016

## TRAVEL GRANTS AND MONETARY AWARDS (Total \$1,650)

### Plant Biology 2020

- ASPB Convivon Scholars Travel grants of \$500

*Washington DC*

*July 2020*

### University of Florida Plant Science Council

- Second Prize winner, Poster Presentation (\$150)

*Gainesville, Florida*

*January 2020*

### National Academies Colloquium

- Travel Awardee (\$1000)

*UC Irvine, California*

*April 2019*