

Dear Dr. Jeremie Fant

As a Seeds of Success collector I've become, familiar with, and interested in your research on maintaining the genetic diversity of wild-harvested seed populations grow-outs.

I plan to attend graduate school for my Master's in Fall of 20XX, and would love to combine my Undergraduate Botany education from SCHOOL, where I was mentored by PERSON, and Field Experience with the Chicago Botanic Garden, to further develop research-driven guidelines for farmers. I am wondering whether you expect to have any graduate openings in your lab at that time? If so I would be interested in utilizing greenhouse studies, genetics, and observational field studies, to compare how pollinators affect the yield, fitness, and diversity of seeds in wild and commercial settings. My career goals are to work for a farm which grows-out and sells native seeds to the various agencies carrying out restoration such as governments and non-profits.

I have attached a copy of my CV for your consideration, and would be very interested in discussing possibilities with your lab.

Sincerely,  
Reed

Dear Dr. Person

I hope you are well, I look back fondly on the undergraduate research work I did in your lab you so much so that I have decided to apply for graduate school.

I was wondering whether you would write me a strong letter of recommendation, to be due by 2 MONTHS FROM NOW. I am applying to Northwestern Universities Program in Plant Biology and Conservation as a Master's student, where I have been in touch with, and encouraged, to apply by Dr. Jeremie Fant. We are interested in better understanding the phylogenetic history of *Sphaeralcea*, a genus commonly used in restorations, but for which our understandings of species boundaries and the possibilities of decreased hybrid fitness could have deleterious effects on restoration success. We hope to utilize greenhouse, field, and next-generation sequencing approaches.

It seems it's been a while since we've talked, so I have attached my draft CV, and my Statement of Purpose - which I plan on doing a lot more work on, but I hope is helpful to see where I am headed.

Sincerely,  
Me

Asa Funk  
AFunkyHomosapien@gmail

Bachelor's of Science, University of Place 2024  
Major Adviser: Carol Linne

## **Professional Experience**

*Lead Botanist, The Chicago Botanic Garden, April-October 2024.*

- Made 33 operational seed collections (80k+), while managing a crew of two technicians on four day camping 'hitches' across a 1.2mi acre Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Field Office, for agricultural seed amplification for large scale restoration projects.
- Sampled leaf tissue, and seeds, from 13 populations of various *Astragalus* species, requiring the use of herbarium vouchers, microscopy, and dichotomous keys to make positive identifications, in order to identify non-toxic species eligible for germplasm development.

*Natural Resource Specialist, The Chicago Botanic Garden, April-October 2023.*

- Worked with my Senior botanist to make 27 operational seed collections, by helping to navigate to remote areas, performing vehicle checks, and packing gear and food for 5-day 4-night camping hitches across a 3.4mi acre BLM field office.
- Collected nearly 100 herbarium vouchers in triplicate, and handled most herbarium data entry and QC using *BarnebyLives!* in order to document the plant populations we scouted and collected seed from.

## **Research Experience**

*Some Professors Name Lab, 2-5 hours a week, Fall-Spring 2023-2024*

I extracted, purified, and amplified DNA from ca. 500 *Arabidopsis thaliana* seedlings for genomic assays seeking to identify genes related to heat tolerance survival. I also attended lab meetings and helped proof-read grad students manuscripts.

## **Volunteer Experience**

*Old Persons Name (OPN) Herbarium, 3-7 hours a week, Fall-Spring 2022-2024*

I helped accession ca. 3000 collections from several multi-day herbaria forays, which I often attended, by transcribing field notes to databases, making labels, and mounting specimens.

## **Scientific Conferences & Proceedings**

My States Native Plant Society Regional Meeting, April 4<sup>th</sup> 2022. Poster Session. "*Modeling the historic spread of a noxious weed using GIS – which did it come by first the boat of the wagon?*"

## **Awards**

*My States Native Plant Society Regional Meeting Travel Award. \$50*

## **Relevant Coursework**

Plant Diversity & Evolution  
Statistics for the Natural Sciences  
Geographic Information Systems (GIS) 1 & 2  
Phylogenetics  
Genomics  
Restoration Ecology

