

## Mid-Columbia Agriculture Hall of Fame Intent to Nominate

Nominee's Name Sandya R. Kesoju

Mailing Address 2600 N 20<sup>th</sup> Ave, Pasco WA 99350

Nominee's Phone 509-546-4327 Fax \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail [skesoju@columbiabasin.edu](mailto:skesoju@columbiabasin.edu)

Date of Birth April 17 Birthplace Hyderabad, India

Date of Death (if deceased) \_\_\_\_\_

Nominator Name Anneke Rachinski

Phone 509-542-4436 Fax \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail : [arachinski@columbiabasin.edu](mailto:arachinski@columbiabasin.edu)

Family Contact Raja S. Ramoju

Phone 425-679-1121 Fax \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail [ramoju13@gmail.com](mailto:ramoju13@gmail.com)

# Nomination Package Requirements

## 1. Cover of Nomination packet (front page)

Name of Nominee – Sandya R. Kesoju

Hi Resolution Photo of Nominee - Attached

The Nominator and relation – Anneke Rachinski, Erin Fishburn, and Melanie Casciato

Date submitted – October 30, 2020

## 2. Years of Community and Agriculture Service

Please list no more than twenty (20) organizations and services the Nominee has participated in to enhance our agriculture community. (E.g. commissions, associations, community service, volunteer activities and events, etc.)

### ***Participation roles, involvement, and contributions to local community***

- Washington State Hay Growers Association
  - University/College Advisor
  - Scholarship reviewer
- Pacific Northwest Vegetable Association
  - University/College Advisor
  - Scholarship reviewer
- Ag Council Member – myTRI2030 (Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce)
- Member - Pasco Chamber of Commerce
- Committee member - Pasco Agriculture Advisory Committee
- Committee member - Richland Agriculture Advisory Committee
- Committee member - PNW Forage Regional Meeting
- Member - Women in Agriculture, Pasco Chapter
- Member – American Association of University Women, Tri-Cities
- Judge for Mid-Columbia Science and Engineering Fair – Columbia Center Mall, Tri-Cities, Washington (2015-present)
- Judge for Showcase for Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities (SURCA) – Washington State University, Pullman, Washington (2015)
- Judge for high school speaking contests - Prosser High School, Prosser, Washington (2015)

### ***Local conferences exhibits and presentations (2017-present)***

- Eastern WA Ag Expo
- Northwest Hay Expo
- PNW Vegetable conference
- Pacific Northwest AGIE
- Hermiston Farm Fair
- Local field days

### ***Regional and National Organization***

- Secretary/Treasurer for Western Society of Crop Science (June 2019- June 2021)

- Agreed to be an author for developing materials for an International Certified Crop Adviser Exam (ICCA) study guide
- Committee Member – Darrel S. Metcalfe Student Manuscript Contest Committee from January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2020
- Committee Member – Diversity in Agronomy, Crops, Soils, and Environmental Sciences Committee from January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2018
- Committee Member – Gerald O. Mott Scholarship Award Committee from January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2017
- Committee Member – Weed Science Society of America Graduate Student Award Subcommittee (2015 - 2018)
- Committee Member - Weed Science Society of America Website Committee (2015 – 2018)

#### **Judge on graduate student/oral presentation**

- Judge – 2020 NAAE Awards Judging Committee
  - Outstanding Middle/Secondary Ag Ed Program
  - Outstanding Early Career Teacher
- Reviewer - Washington State Hay Growers Association Scholarship 2020
- Reviewer – Pacific Northwest Vegetable Association Scholarship 2020
- Judge - Student oral presentation for Western Society of Crop Science, July 7-8, 2020.
- Judge - Showcase for undergraduate research and creative activities (SURCA) – Washington State University, Pullman, Washington (2015)
- Judge for high school speaking contests - Prosser High School, Prosser, Washington (2015)
- Judge for Mid-Columbia Science and Engineering Fair – Columbia Center Mall, Tri-Cities, Washington (2015-2016)

#### **Session Chair/Moderator**

- General Vegetable Session for Pacific Northwest Vegetable Association Annual Meeting, November 18-19, 2020
- Professional poster presentation session for Western Society of Crop Science, July 7-8, 2020
- Student oral presentation session for Western Society of Crop Science, June 25-26, 2019
- Organized Western Society of Crop Science Annual Meeting at CBC, June 25-26, 2019
- Organized Ag tour to Western Society of Crop Science, June 25, 2019

#### **Events**

##### **2020**

- Guest lecture for Master Gardner, Tri-Cities 2020

##### **2019**

- Presented about AAUW Grant activities at AAUW-Tri-Cities Board meeting on 21<sup>st</sup>, 2019 at Clover Island Inn, Kennewick, WA.
- Science Activity 8-9<sup>th</sup> grade Columbia Middle School on June 21, 2019 at CBC, Pasco.

- Take your Kids to work on Thursday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at CBC, Pasco
- Senior Night on February 5, 2019 at CBC, Pasco
- CBC booth setup at High School & Beyond Night Career and Educational Fair on 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2019 held at Tri-Tech Skills Center, Kennewick, WA.
- GPS, GIS and drone workshop

## 2018

- On-farm field day on September 25, 2018 at CBC Pasco
- Pesticide workshop on June 1 and 2, 2018 at CBC, Pasco
- Women in AG held at CBC, Pasco WA on October 27, 2018.
- PAS Competition held at Columbia Basin Community College, Pasco WA from January 26-27, 2018.
- Greenhouse Tour for Kennewick High School Students on 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2018 at CBC
- CBC booth setup at High School & Beyond Night Career and Educational Fair on 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2018 held at Tri-Tech Skills Center, Kennewick, WA.

## 2017

- **Speaker** – Women in AG held at CBC, Pasco WA on November 18, 2017.
- Club Rush – held at CBC Hub Center on Thursday October 12, 2017.
- PAS Competition held at Spokane Community College, Spokane, WA from January 26-27, 2017.

## Invited Talks and Extension Presentations

- Walker, C., and **Kesoju, S.** 2018. Agricultural careers and opportunities. On-farm field day held at Columbia Basin College, Pasco, WA on 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2018.
- Sheriff, O., Core, T., Walker, C., Carlson, D., Woodward, W., and **Kesoju, S.** 2018. Alfalfa breeding for verticillium wilt. On-farm field day held at Columbia Basin College, Pasco, WA on 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2018.
- **Kesoju, S.**, Woodward, W., Walker, C., Sheriff, O., and Core, T. 2018. Selecting chili peppers for sweetness and habaneros for easy picking and cleaning. On-farm field day held at Columbia Basin College, Pasco, WA on 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2018.
- Core, T., Sheriff, O., Walker, C., Woodward, W., and **Kesoju, S.** Effect of terminal bud clipping on growth and yield of soybean. On-farm field day held at Columbia Basin College, Pasco, WA on 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2018.
- **Kesoju, S. R.** 2018. The influence of the number of cuts on yield and quality of alfalfa. Mid-Columbia Basin Hay Growers Association/WSU Annual Hay Meeting held at Big Bend Community College, Moses Lake, Washington, February 15, 2018.
- **Kesoju, S. R.** 2017. Gene flow in genetically modified alfalfa. Idaho Hay and Forage Conference, Best Western Burley Inn and Convention Center, March 2-3.
- **Kesoju, S.** 2016. Update on RR gene flow research. Northwest Hay Expo, Washington State Hay Growers Association held at Three Rivers Convention Center, Kennewick WA Jan 20-21, 2016.
- **Kesoju, S. R.** 2015. Gene Flow in commercial alfalfa seed fields. Washington alfalfa seed field day at Touchet Lions Club, Touchet, Walla Walla, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

- **Kesoju, S.** 2015. Update on roundup ready gene flow GE fields to non-GE fields. Washington State Hay Growers Association held at Michael Jay's, Connell, WA May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015.
- **Kesoju, S.** 2015. Update on industry-driven field and landscape research on transgene dispersal in GE alfalfa. PNW Forage and Extension Specialist Meeting, Columbia Basin College, Pasco, WA March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015.
- **Kesoju, S.** 2015. Roundup ready gene flow in alfalfa. Northwest Hay Expo, Washington State Hay Growers Association held at Three Rivers Convention Center, Kennewick WA Jan 14 – 15, 2015.
- **Kesoju, S.** 2015. Industry-driven field and landscape research on transgene dispersal in genetically engineered alfalfa- an update. 2015 Idaho and Oregon Alfalfa and Clover Seed Growers Association Winter Meeting held at Hampton Inn, Nampa ID Jan 13<sup>th</sup> 2015.
- **Kesoju, S. R.** 2014. Review of project on round-up ready alfalfa gene flow. Crop and Soil Science and Horticulture 2014 Statewide graduate student tour at Toppenish, May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014.
- **Kesoju, S. R.,** and Boyle, N. 2014. Gene Flow. Washington alfalfa seed field day at Touchet Lions Club, Touchet, Walla Walla, June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

#### **Awards/ Recognitions**

- NAAE Outstanding Postsecondary Agriculture Program Award received on August 5, 2020 from NAAE.
- Received "Soar at CBC Award" with \$1,000 was awarded on September 11, 2019 from CBC.
- Received "**Emerging Scientist Award**" on June 26, 2019 from Western Society of Crop Science.
- Research photo was used as a cover photo for Crop Science Journal Volume 50, issue July- August 2019.
- \$300 for Maintaining genetic purity in alfalfa seed fields article from Hay & Forage Magazine 2019
- \$300 for Coexisting in a divergent alfalfa seed market article from Hay & Forage Magazine 2017
- Scholarship award for Tilth Producers Annual Conference awarded by Tilth Producers during November 2015
- Travel grant – International Weed Science Society awarded during 25<sup>th</sup> Asian-Pacific Weed Science Conference held at Hyderabad India in October 2015
- Easton, Dr. Gene and Marlene Scholarship (2012-2013) awarded by College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, University of Idaho
- Easton, Dr. Gene and Marlene Scholarship (2011-2012) awarded by College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, University of Idaho
- Toevs, John L. & Lois K. Scholarship (2011-2012) awarded by College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, University of Idaho

- Easton, Dr. Gene and Marlene Scholarship (2010-2011) awarded by College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, University of Idaho
- Outstanding Graduate Student Scholarship (2011) awarded by Western Society of Weed Science
- Gamma Sigma Delta Award (2010) by Chapter of Gamma Sigma Delta, University of Idaho
- Gold Medal (2007) awarded by Indian Society of Soil Science at College of Agricultural Sciences, GKVK, Bangalore, Karnataka, India for research work in M.Sc. at zonal level
- V. V. Kumara Sastry Memorial Gold Medal (2007) awarded by Acharya N. G. Ranga Agricultural University, Hyderabad, India for highest Overall Grade Point

### **3. Brief Bio of Nominee**

Dear Mid-Columbia Ag Hall of Fame Selection Committee:

It is my pleasure to nominate Dr. Sandya R Kesoju for Mid-Columbia Ag Hall of Fame for Advisor Award. Sandya was born in Hyderabad, India. Her grandparents are medium size farmers and grow crops like cotton, dried chili, rice, peanuts, and vegetables. They also grow tree crops such as mango, neem, and tamarind. Most of the crops are grown for their livelihood while cotton, red chili, mango, rice, and tamarind are sold in wholesale markets. She did her Bachelors in Agriculture from India and moved to US for higher education.

Sandya moved to US in January 2008 for her Master's in Agronomy at Northwest Missouri State University. She got her Doctorate in Plant Science from University of Idaho in December 2012 and moved to Prosser in January 2013 to work with USDA ARS at WSU's Irrigated Agriculture Research and Extension Center (IAREC) as research associate. During her research work with USDA, she worked with nearly 30 growers from Fresno County California, Canyon County, Idaho, and Walla Walla County WA. She worked with them closely and assisted them with alfalfa production issues. Sandya also not only educated growers but also trained interns, technicians, and Ph.D students.

In January 2017, Sandya moved to Columbia Basin College as Director for Agriculture Education, Research & Development. I have known her as a peer, colleague and friend for over 3 years. In a very short time, she has showed her extraordinary skills in educating students about agriculture and career opportunities available in the Basin not only to CBC students but also to high school students.

Sandya conducts research, educate students, outreach to agriculture industries, community, university and K-12 partners; and provide hands-on learning experience to students. She is a hard-working and self-motivated scientist with an unwavering ability to pursue research and education projects to completion. She is always willing to offer her assistance to colleagues and students and has displayed peoples' skills with students and growers. Sandya trained nearly 15 student interns who are graduated and currently working with the local companies or moved for higher education. She encourages students to present their research results at local and national conferences.

In 2018, Sandya received Mid-Columbia Ag Hall of Fame "Cultivating our Future" Grant to expose local youth to the real world of agriculture and provide them with the opportunity to learn about agriculture production, technology, research, and careers available in the Columbia Basin. She contacted community high schools to spread the word about the field day. During the event, she provided hands-on research demonstrations and discussed the science behind the agriculture. Students learned about breeding programs, why peppers are hot and how selecting disease resistant alfalfa varieties and clipping terminal buds produces more growth



and yield. Overall, the event was successful in broadening student knowledge of the agricultural industry, and CBC received positive feedback from both students and teachers.

In 2019, we received USDA NIFA HSI Educational Grant where Sandya is the Principal Investigator for the grant. Her main goal is educate high school students about agriculture and career opportunities available in the Basin and across the U.S; provide hands on training to undecided CBC students; summer internships for agriculture students; and professional development for STEM teachers and instructors.

Sandya provides tours to high school students, develops labs and teaches within the agriculture program. She put in countless hours helping to create our new Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree in Agriculture Production. The degree includes three certificates that students earn as they work towards the AAS. The certificates are in Crop and Soil, Precision Agriculture and Hydroponics/Greenhouse Management. Sandya has been actively serving in various committees and executive boards, which shows her commitment towards service activities for the greater good of the society. Within a short period at CBC, she has made substantial contributions to research and education activities and has built a noteworthy record of achievements towards improving societal challenges of the 21st Century.

Sandya Shout out - Here's a nice comment left on the KNDU Facebook page from community

The screenshot shows a Facebook post with the following elements:

- Engagement: "You and 59 others" (with Like and Love icons), "6 Comments", and "15 Shares".
- Actions: "Like" and "Comment" buttons.
- Sort: "Most Relevant" dropdown menu.
- Comment Input: A text box with the placeholder "Write a comment...".
- Comments:
  - Cynthia Muse**: "Dr. Sandya is running a top notch ag. program and her research abilities help any students wanting a logical, results based, hands on, and industry needs education. Women especially will find opportunity at every turn here, as Dr Sandya is a wonderful role model and is supportive of her students success." (2h)
  - Connie Tucker Smith**: "Awesomel" (13h)
- Footer: "Most Relevant is selected, so some comments may have been filtered out."

I believe that Sandya has tremendous potential to be a successful researcher in agriculture and a teacher and mentor to train a new generation of competent work force. In all aspects of her work, she is organized, efficient and a tireless worker. Sandya is a person of high integrity and works very well with her colleagues. I am consistently amazed at what she is able to

accomplish. Although we are a community college, the agriculture facilities of Columbia Basin College combined with Kesoju's expertise rivals most university programs.

<https://www.yaktrinews.com/cbc-agricultural-program-recognized-as-one-of-the-best-in-the-west/>

NEWS RELEASE



For Immediate Release

Contact: Jay Frank, CBC Spokesperson, 509-544-2038, [jfrank@columbiabasin.edu](mailto:jfrank@columbiabasin.edu)

#### **CBC's Agriculture Program Wins Top Award From the National Association of Agricultural Educators**

Pasco, Wash. – Columbia Basin College's Agricultural Program has been named the "Outstanding Post Secondary Agriculture Program" in the western United States for 2020. The National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE) will recognize CBC's program in a conference tentatively scheduled for this December. CBC took the top prize for a region comprised of 10 states in all.

"There are a lot of colleges that offer ag, but most don't offer the space and the experiences we do," says Sandya Kesoju, Director for Agriculture Education, Research & Development at CBC. Kesoju believes the NAAE evaluators recognized the program's degree options as well as the unique features of the program like eight-acre research farm and internship model, our partnership and service activities in the community. Outside of the classroom, students gain hands-on experience in the greenhouse and at the farm. Also, the new Career Launch Endorsement and Equipment grant which we received to expose students to latest equipment and technology used in agriculture also highlights the program.

CBC's Agricultural Program offers five degree options, including a Bachelor of Applied Science in Applied Management with a concentration in Agriculture. All ag students are eligible to apply for CBC Foundation scholarships. Many students choose to pursue a Direct Transfer Agreement, which allows them to complete two years of study and then transfer as juniors into the ag programs at Eastern Washington University or Washington State University.

Kesoju encourages more students to consider the benefits and career opportunities available with an agriculture degree. "The Mid-Columbia Basin is highly dominated by agriculture," she says. "Industry keeps calling me looking for student to hire. It's more than picking apples. There is STEM involved in ag. It's about using your knowledge to make local industry more productive."

Since Sandya began her service here at CBC, she has been instrumental in upholding her role as Director of Agriculture Education, Research, & Development by being awarded many grants, agriculture research projects, and gaining local community and industry respect desiring them to collaborate with CBC. Because of her extraordinary ability as not an only researcher but also educator and administrator, CBC has awarded her excellence award, CBC Soar Award, and nominated her for Tri2030. She deserves recognition via the Agriculture Advisor Award.

Thank you for your consideration of Dr. Sandya R. Kesoju for this prestigious award. Feel free to reach out to me directly should you have any questions or need more information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Anneke Rachinski". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Anneke Rachinski



October 13, 2020

Dear Selection Committee for Mid-Columbia Ag Hall of Fame,

I am writing to recommend Dr. Sandya Kesoju for consideration in the 2020 Ag Hall of Fame Advisor Award. I work closely with Sandya at Columbia Basin College and see the great work she is doing for agriculture education at CBC and in collaboration with other agencies. Sandya works to ensure that the college, greater community and especially our students learn about the study of agriculture.

Through my role at CBC I work with Sandya on outreach activities related to agriculture. Sandya has secured grants as part of her Ag research which have an emphasis on training students with the science behind agriculture. Sandya works to create meaningful activities that incorporate guest lectures, presentations and industry professionals to share their experience from a local perspective. She has partnered with WSU and the USDA to provide comprehensive information at these events which shows a great ability to collaborate.

In her role as Director of Agriculture Education, Research & Development at CBC, she has been instrumental in gaining local and community respect for the agriculture programs on campus. With an active farm on campus, she also oversees the planting, irrigation and harvesting of crops. Much of the crops are then donated to local organizations including Union Gospel Mission, 2<sup>nd</sup> Harvest and CBC's own Food Pantry. Recently, CBC was also able to donate pumpkins to many of the Boys & Girls club early learning centers to be used for fall activities. With such a bountiful research farm on campus, this allows CBC to be able to provide back to the community.

With her success at CBC, Sandya has been awarded her an excellence award, CBC Soar Award and nominated for Tri2030. I consider Sandya to be an excellent researcher, enthusiastic advocate for the study of agriculture, and dedicated to contributing to the next-generation of agriculturalists. I hope you will consider Sandya for this award.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Melanie Casciato'.

Melanie Casciato

Dear Mid-Columbia Ag Hall of Fame Selection Committee:

I am pleased to serve as a reference for Dr. Sandya R Kesoju for Mid-Columbia Ag Hall of Fame for Advisor Award. Sandya serves as the Director for Agriculture Education, Research and Development at Columbia Basin College. She has developed courses and curriculum for our Associate Degree in Agriculture Production and has been instrumental in obtaining funding for our Ag programs, including an impressive Career Launch Equipment Grant.

In 2019, we received AAUW community Action Grant where Sandya is the Principal Investigator. She is outreaching female students to introduce high school students and associate degree students (9 to 14) to the variety of resources and opportunities available in CBC's Agricultural Program and encourage them to pursue advanced agriculture degrees at CBC. The project consist of conducting training sessions for one week during summer for 2 years (2019 and 2020) at CBC's research farm and providing access to CBC's agricultural and greenhouse facilities. Sandya is working with local school districts to recruit approximately 20 students to participate in the sessions. She and her student workers will educate students with the research projects, as well as provide participants with hands-on training on field preparation, planting, transplanting, irrigating, fertilizer application, and agriculture technology. Information regarding the career opportunities available in our area, the college application process, and agricultural scholarships will also be provided.

Sandya mentors supervise and guide student interns. She assist students in getting an internship with agriculture industries in our community. Sandya also outreach to K-12 partners, Ag industries and developed strong relationship with the Ag industries and growers in our community.

I know Sandya as an enthusiastic educator who is always looking for ways to improve the education of agriculture students, develop opportunities for research, promote agriculture careers in our community, and expand student diversity in the agricultural sciences. Sandya has reached out to the basic science faculty at CBC to work collaboratively on promotion and development of STEM pathways and grants. I have observed Sandya's commitment to our students first hand. She is an exceptional role model for students of all disciplines and an advocate for science education and agricultural research at the undergraduate level and beyond.

Sincerely,



Erin Fishburn

Executive Director-Foundation

#### 4. Attachments (not to exceed ten (10) pages)

Please provide photos, newspaper, and/or magazine clips, individual letters of recognition and support, special awards, event photos etc.

### 2018 Mid-Columbia Ag Hall of Fame “Cultivating our Future” Grant

**New Horizons Students Attend Ag Field Day at CBC**

Eight students from New Horizons High School got a chance to learn about some of the career opportunities available in the agriculture industry during Columbia Basin College's first-ever Ag Field Day on Sept. 20. Funding for the event came from the Mid-Columbia Hall of Fame's *Building the Future* grant.

The event also included students from Kamiakin High School and Kiona-Benton City High School, along with the New Horizons students. The students spent the morning working through several breakout sessions where they learned about some of the careers and opportunities available in agriculture, and also got a chance to check out some of the field studies that current CBC students are undertaking.

“This event was great for our students because it made going to college feel like a reality for them,” says New Horizons Ag Science teacher Carol Travis. “It also broke down some of the stereotypes surrounding agriculture jobs. These kids learned that there are a wide variety of job opportunities available in the agriculture industry right here in our community.”



#### NEWS RELEASE

2600 N. 20th Ave., Pasco, WA 99301 509.543.1486 columbiabasin.edu

For Immediate Release: September 18, 2018

Contact: Anna Tensmeyer, 509.543.1486



#### Local High School Students to Attend Ag On-Farm Field Day at Columbia Basin College Thanks to Mid-Columbia Ag Hall of Fame Grant

Pasco, WA – Around 100 local high school students will attend Columbia Basin College (CBC)'s Agriculture On-Farm Field Day on Thursday, September 20 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., which will educate students on CBC's Agricultural Science opportunities. The event is funded by a \$1,000 Mid-Columbia Ag Hall of Fame “Cultivating our Future” grant. The event will be hosted by Dr. Sandhya R. Kesoju, CBC's Director for Agriculture Education, Research & Development.

One of the greatest concerns for the agricultural industry today is the lack of interest on behalf of high school students in pursuing an agricultural career. Students do not understand how broad the opportunities in the agricultural industry really are, and how many different work environments exist. This is particularly true for the large migrant population in our area, whose experience in the agricultural industry has often been limited to manual labor. These assumptions contribute to the misconception that agricultural careers provide low pay and no benefits. Consequently, students are selecting different career paths, and the number of workers available to replace an aging agricultural workforce is in decline.

During the free event, high school students will learn about modern agriculture as well as agriculture production, technology, research, and careers available in the Columbia Basin, while simultaneously learning about a variety of resources and opportunities available in CBC's Agriculture program.



Dr. Kesoju presenting to high school students at Ag Field Day 2018.

# AAUW Community Action Grant



## NEWSLETTER



### AAUW GRANT WINNER TO SPEAK AT September branch meeting

Dr. Sandya Kesoju will be the featured speaker at the September 21<sup>st</sup> branch meeting at the Clover Island Inn at 11:30 a.m. Dr. Kesoju recently received a \$9,940 grant from the AAUW Community Action Program for her project, "Agricultural Research Needs Young Brainpower: Educating, Encouraging, and Empowering Female Students in the Agricultural Sciences". This spring camp is designed to increase female interest in agricultural careers and improve gender equity in the industry. Dr. Kesoju will serve as the Project Director for the two year grant which begins this summer and will end in June of 2021 at Columbia Basin College in Pasco.

Our Tri Cities Branch is the proud sponsor of Dr. Kesoju's grant application and everyone is encouraged to attend the September branch meeting to support her and to learn more about her program for girls in our area.

### WSU-TC Welcomes Students



Tech Trek Girls

# SPRING BREAK CAMP Women in Agriculture



April 6 to 10 • 8 am to noon • CBC Pasco Campus



Interested in learning how the science of agriculture impacts all elements of life? The CBC Agriculture program is excited to offer a FREE camp for high school women during spring break. You are invited to attend the CBC Women in Agriculture camp funded by an American Association of University Women (AAUW) grant.

#### LEARN WITH US THROUGH:

- Hands-on activities in the greenhouse, ag research field and with hydroponics.
- Visits to local agriculture industry sites, including farms and equipment suppliers.
- Guest speeches from motivated women leaders.
- Activities with current CBC students in this program.
- Snacks provided daily!



Register now to take advantage of this opportunity.

EMAIL: [cbsw@cbc.columbia.edu](mailto:cbsw@cbc.columbia.edu)

PHONE: 509-543-1432

# USDA NIFA HSI Educational Grant

## Agriculture Campus Tour Day



### Attention Teachers!

Are your students interested in learning more about how the Agriculture industry touches so many aspects of our lives? Ag is so much more than working in a field!

The CBC Agriculture program invites you and your class to an Agriculture Campus Tour Day! Explore the CBC campus, including an in depth tour of the greenhouse and research space, provided by CBC professor, Dr. Sandya Kesoju. After lunch, participants will take a complimentary bus ride to the Irrigated Agriculture Research Extension (IAREC) WSU Center in Prosser for a detailed tour of the research projects happening there with WSU professor, Dr. Naida Dayapan.

**Who:** High School Students  
**What:** Tour the CBC and WSU Prosser research campus locations  
**When:** February 5, 2020  
**Where:** 8:30 am to 3 pm  
 Columbia Basin College & WSU Research Facility (Prosser)  
 Lunch will be provided.

Bus transportation to both the CBC campus will be provided to the IAREC WSU Prosser location.

Funding provided by USDA Grant #2019-38412-30212

Space is limited. RSVP by January 24, 2020.

EMAIL: [cbsw@cbc.columbia.edu](mailto:cbsw@cbc.columbia.edu) | PHONE: 509-543-1432 | ADDRESS: 1100 N. 9th Ave., Pasco, WA 99301 | WEBSITE: [www.cbc.edu](http://www.cbc.edu)



Dr. Kesoju hosting campus tour (CBC and WSU) to high school students



### USDA Grant Funds Agriculture Parent and Student Field Day

Dr. Sandya Kesoju, CBC's Director for Agriculture Education, Research & Development, was recently awarded a USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture Grant (Award number #2019-38422-30212), which provided funding to support outreach efforts for CBC's Agriculture program. She collaborated with CBC's Outreach Department to use the funds to host a Parent and Student Field Day, which took place on Saturday, December 7 on CBC's Pasco campus. During the event, CBC was able to highlight the Agriculture programs, discuss connections to employment in the community and share options on funding a student's education through work-based learning.

The group of about 10 attendees was able to get hands on experience potting and transplanting plants. Guest speakers also provided insight on the student experience at CBC both in the Agriculture program and campus experience at large. Students and their family members took a pre- and post-event survey to help demonstrate if the information helped them gain awareness of the agriculture industry. Based on the pre- and post-survey evaluation, 71% participants had no agriculture background. When asked if they were willing to pursue an agricultural career, nearly 57% responded they were willing. All of the participants felt agriculture is important to their community and feel it is important for youth to learn about agriculture.

For the first year of the grant, this event was successful in sharing information and spreading awareness for the program and industry. There are plans to host the same event in fall 2020 with plans to increase event awareness and attendance.

For more information, contact Sandya Kesoju at [skesoju@columbiabasin.edu](mailto:skesoju@columbiabasin.edu) or ext. 2367 or Melanie Casciato at [mcasciato@columbiabasin.edu](mailto:mcasciato@columbiabasin.edu) or ext. 2593.



Dr. Kesoju presenting to parents and students at Ag Parent-Student Day 2019.



## Conference



**CBC's Ag Program Hosts Crop Science Annual Meeting**  
The Western Society of Crop Science's (WSSCS) annual meeting took place on June 25 and 26 on CBC's campus, hosted by Dr. Sandhya Kesoju, Director for Agriculture Education, Research & Development.

This excellent opportunity gave colleagues and students from around the west a chance to network and exchange scientific information. Dr. Kesoju gave an Ag tour to the participants where she discussed details about alfalfa, peppers, switchgrass and soybeans breeding projects and CBC's collaboration with companies on sunflower, soybeans and pumpkin varieties. Dr. Kesoju has been instrumental in developing an outstanding agricultural program at CBC, which continues to ignite student interest in agriculture and crop science.

During the conference, Dr. Kesoju received the Emerging Scientist Award. This award, given yearly, recognizes an outstanding scientist who is seven years or less into their career, who is a member of WSSCS and who has made significant contributions to the scientific profession with notable impacts to agricultural industries. Sandhya Kesoju was unanimously selected as the prestigious award winner. She was also elected as Secretary Treasurer for the organization. Congratulations, Dr. Kesoju!

## Sandya and her student-exhibiting poster at Western Society of Crop Science, 2019. Magazines and Journals



### Coexisting in a divergent alfalfa seed market

By Sandhya Kesoju

THE interlocking markets of alfalfa seed production have grown from a complex network of producers and processors to a more complicated web of global trade in 2017. The first US alfalfa seed export to China was in 2011. The first US alfalfa seed export to the United Kingdom was in 2011. The first US alfalfa seed export to the United Kingdom was in 2011. The first US alfalfa seed export to the United Kingdom was in 2011.

NAFTA allowed seed to flow the other direction of US conventional and organic alfalfa seed to Mexico. The first US alfalfa seed export to Mexico was in 2011. The first US alfalfa seed export to Mexico was in 2011.

Based on a 3.2 percent response rate, the survey found that 57 percent of alfalfa seed producers in the United States are currently exporting alfalfa seed to other countries. This is up from 48 percent in 2014. The survey also found that 68 percent of alfalfa seed producers in the United States are currently importing alfalfa seed from other countries. This is up from 58 percent in 2014.

However, the volume of conventional alfalfa seed exports from the United States to Mexico has declined significantly since 2014. This is due to a combination of factors, including a decline in the number of conventional alfalfa seed producers in the United States and a decline in the number of conventional alfalfa seed processors in Mexico.

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### Research update: Alfalfa cutting management on yield, quality

Sandhya B. Kesoju for *Pragmatic Agronomy*

#### AT A GLANCE

A research update looks at the effect of cutting alfalfa at different heights on yield and quality.

Percent of the total hay grown in the United States is used for animal feed. The environment is uniquely qualified for producing high-quality hay and typically yields more than 10 tons per acre.

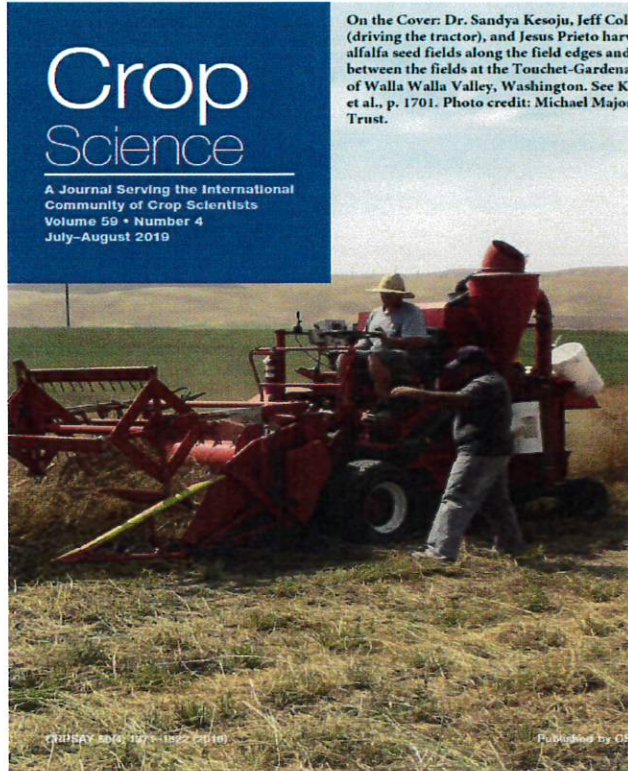
A potential future market for alfalfa that could develop is for alfalfa used as a forage. The alfalfa market is currently dominated by alfalfa used for dairy cows, beef cattle and sheep. Alfalfa is used by and marketed for dairy cows, beef cattle and sheep. Alfalfa is used by and marketed for dairy cows, beef cattle and sheep.

and development at Columbia Basin Community College. The alfalfa varieties were tested under four cutting management systems (two, three, four and five cuts per year).

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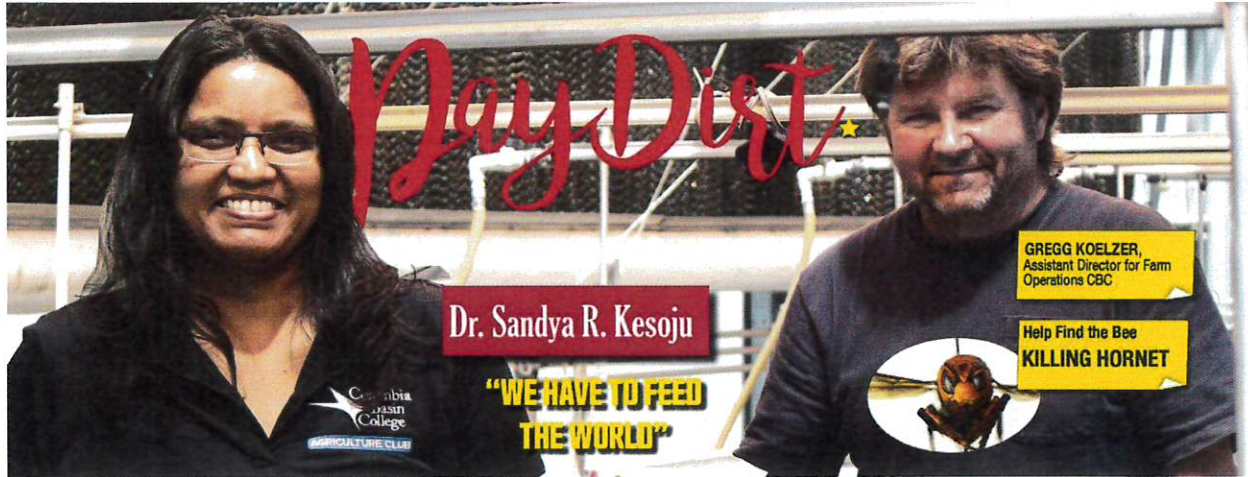
### CBC's Ag Program Featured on Cover of Pay Dirt Magazine

CBC's Ag program was recently featured in *Pay Dirt* magazine, a quarterly publication that is read by nearly 16,000 farmers in the irrigated Columbia Basin. The feature included a cover picture of Sandya Kesoju, CBC Director for Agriculture Education, Research & Development, and Gregg Koeltzer, CBC's Assistant Director for Farm Operations, as well as a four-page spread featuring CBC's Agriculture program.

We are proud to announce that the article is reaching many people as we are getting calls and messages from the community saying the article was awesome. We hope it will lead to growing enrollment in this important program. We are thankful to *Pay Dirt* for emphasizing our program.

For more information, contact Sandya Kesoju at [skesoju@columbiabasin.edu](mailto:skesoju@columbiabasin.edu).





## Awards and Honors



Dr. Sandya Kesoju, winner of the Emerging Scientist Award 2019 with Past President Mark Marsalis and President Olga Walsh.



