

Meet a New ASP Member

by Dr. Diane S. Swaffar

ASP continues to welcome several new members to the Society during this new year. We are pleased to feature one of our newest members, Dr. Amani Awaad. She is a Professor of Pharmacognosy in the Faculty of Sciences, King Saud University (KSU) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. We are grateful to Dr. Awaad for giving us the opportunity to get more acquainted with her.

How did you hear about the ASP?

I first learned of the society when I was searching the internet looking for some researcher in pharmacognosy to share knowledge and information with. I actually found the ASP website when I Googled "pharmacognosy".

Why did you join ASP?

I would like to meet other pharmacognosists in the United States for joint collaboration work or to exchange knowledge and scientific information. I would also like to meet other people who are interested in natural products in my area of specialization.

Do you belong to any other scientific societies?

Yes, I am a member of the American Chemical, Royal Chemical, and Saudi Chemical Societies. As a licensed pharmacist, I also belong to the Saudi Pharmaceutical Society and the Egyptian Pharmaceutical Society.

What is your educational/scientific background?

I have a pharmacist license and obtained my B.S. and M.S. degrees in pharmaceutical sciences from the College of Pharmacy at KSU. I then obtained a Ph.D. in pharmacognosy from the College of Pharmacy at Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt. I did postdoctoral work in pharmacognosy at the School of Pharmacy and Biomedical Sciences, Portsmouth University, United Kingdom, and at the School of Life and Biological Sciences at Bradford University, United Kingdom. I have been employed as a researcher at the Aromatic and Medicinal Plants Department at the Desert Research Center in Cairo, Egypt, and was the Head of Natural Products Unit there prior to my current position at KSU. I have been Professor of Pharmacognosy at KSU since 2006. I am in the Chemistry Department, where I teach natural products and organic chemistry to undergraduate and graduate students.



Casimiroa edulis (Rutaceae), a plant Dr. Awaad works on.

What are your current research interests in pharmacognosy?

I am interested in all fields of applied pharmacognosy and in any natural products that have biological activities including pharmacological or antimicrobial activities. I am especially interested in the isolation, identification, and determination of the biological activity of naturally occurring compounds from plants and fungi.

What do you like doing in your spare time?

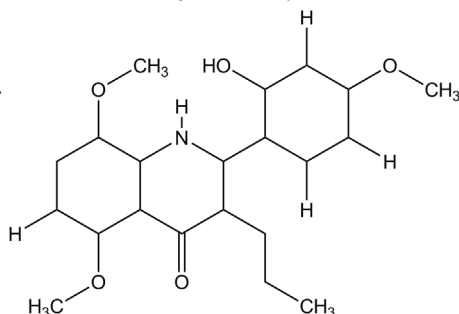
In my spare time I like to read old books and I like to do community service in teaching people about the advantages and disadvantages of natural products, especially those people who are using folk medicine. I do this through giving public lectures and writing articles in newspapers.

What are you currently reading?

I am currently reading old books like "Metamorphosis" by Franz Kafka and "The Aeneid" by Virgil.

What is your favorite movie?

I like any science fiction movies.



Dr. Awaad works with 2-(2'-hydroxy-4'-methoxyphenyl)-5,8-dimethoxy-3-propyl-1H-quinoline-4-one.