Louis P. Martini Endowed Chair in Viticulture

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Professor
Viticulture and Enology

RESEARCH
The Louis P. Martini Endowed Chair funds have primarily been used to supplement research funding for my grape breeding program. They have enabled a large number of grape germplasm collection trips with graduate students, post-docs and visiting scholars and resulted in excellent one-on-one teaching experiences. These funds also helped purchase a new microscope with video imaging and recording capability, and were used to purchase the critical (but unbudgeted) five-year service contract for an ABI genetic analyzer.

TEACHING
I teach a two-quarter course in the Department of Viticulture and Enology entitled VEN 101A & 101B, Viticultural Practices. The Fall quarter of this course teaches the students to identify and learn the characteristics of 70 wine, table, raisin and rootstock cultivars. The Winter quarter focuses on pruning and propagation, as well as the importance of the clean stock program. These classes have a 1.5 hour lecture and a 3.5 hour lab. The lab portion allows hands-on instruction in the field and ample opportunity for individual and small group teaching.

From 2008 to 2012, I also coordinated the Spring quarter of the Horticulture and Agronomy Graduated Group core course – Horticulture and Agronomy Practices. My role in the course, in addition to coordinating instructors, is stimulating discussion in the course and coordinating and advising student-led presentations and writing projects.

STUDENT TRAINING
Over the past year, the endowment funds were used to support the following graduate students’ participation at the American Society of Enology and Viticulture Annual Meeting in Portland, OR:
- Claire Heinitz (studying the identity and salt tolerance of southwestern grape species using ecological genetic methods)
- Kevin Fort (the evaluation and genetics of resistance to salt in grape rootstocks)
- Karl Lund (studying the genetics of resistance to the grape root aphid – phylloxera)
- Cecilia Osorio (studying the anatomical basis of drought resistance)
- Diego Roig (inheritance of poor wine color and its dilution in a multigenerational backcross breeding program)

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES AND/OR DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES
I have been saving some of the endowment to help fund a post-doctoral scholar to assist in breeding rootstocks with tolerance to grapevine virus diseases. I am also excited to help with the hiring of two new positions in the Department this Fall and Winter – an Extension Specialist to fill Jim Wolpert’s retirement and a new Plant Physiologist.

ACTIVITIES DIRECTLY SUPPORTED BY THIS FUND
In the past year, the Martini funds have been used to fund:
1. The maintenance and warranty of our new ABI genetic analyzer; this cost was not budgeted in grant applications
2. A porometer to measure leaf photosynthesis and determine whether low and high vigor rootstocks impact leaf function during and after harvest
3. Three Vitis species collection trips across the southwestern United States: Texas—Oklahoma; Colorado—New Mexico; and Nevada—Utah

THANKS
Dear Elizabeth, Mike and Carolyn --
Thanks so much! My appointment as the Louis P. Martini Endowed Chair in Viticulture was recently renewed for a 5-year-term. These funds have been a great help to my breeding program and have supported students, collection trips, and equipment purchases that were not budgeted on my research grants. These funds have also greatly assisted with our PD resistant winegrape breeding program – allowing us to expand and maintain vineyard blocks and purchase the vine training labor needed to force seedling populations to bloom in their second year. We now have PD resistant winegrapes that are 97% vinifera and have very good wine quality as judged from small scale fermentations. Plantings of the best of these selections are being expanded so that we can produce half-ton lots and decide on our final releases. It would be great to set up a tasting of the wines we produced from the 2012 harvest with your associates and winery personnel to help us better gauge their potential. I’d be happy to present the history of the PD breeding program and how it got to this point.

Best wishes,
Andy