

GRADUATED FROM BLACK RIVER IN 2005

Published: Sept. 4, 2018

MICHAELA TERAVEST WINS PRESTIGIOUS BECKMAN YOUNG INVESTIGATOR AWARD

Contact(s): Val Osowski

Michaela TerAvest, Michigan State University assistant professor of biochemistry, was recently awarded the Beckman Young Investigator Award by the Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation.

The award program provides research support to the most promising young faculty members in the early stages of their academic careers in the chemical and life sciences, particularly to foster the invention of methods, instruments and materials that will open up new avenues of research in science.

TerAvest joined the MSU Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology in 2015 after completing a position as research associate at the University of California, Berkeley. She received both her master's and doctorate degrees in biological and environmental engineering at Cornell University.

"For the TerAvest Lab, this award represents a special opportunity to pursue a high-risk, high-reward project," TerAvest said. "With this funding, my lab will develop microbial electrosynthesis technology to simultaneously capture carbon dioxide, store renewable energy and produce valuable chemicals."

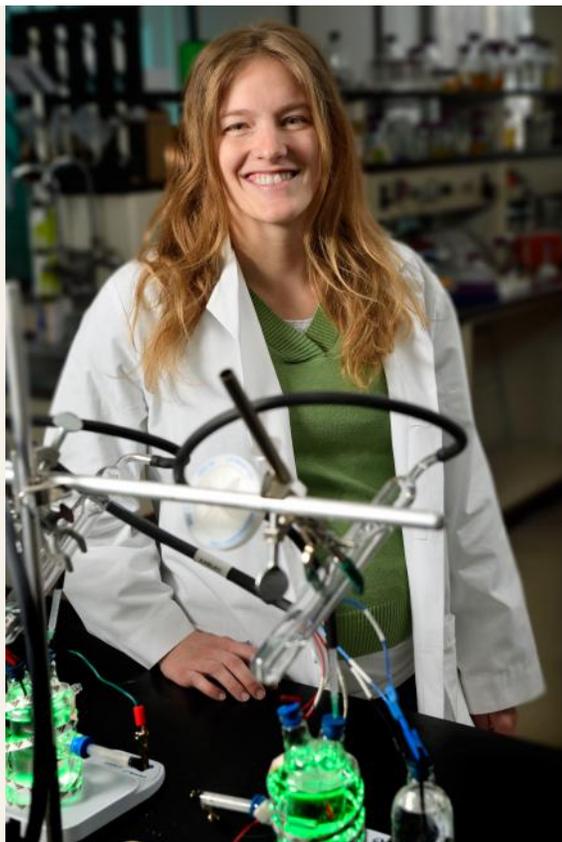
TerAvest's research involves better understanding bacterial respiratory processes and their impact on engineered metabolic pathways for sustainable biotechnology. Her BYI project will tackle the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and excess electricity storage by engineering a bacterium to use electricity as an energy source to produce biofuels.

"I believe this technology has the potential to reduce global climate change, which is my highest professional goal," TerAvest said. "I am deeply grateful to the Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation for helping me work toward that goal. Personally, I am inspired by Dr. Beckman and Mabel's philanthropy and honored to receive an award from their foundation. I hope to follow in their footsteps and use the products of my scientific work to give back to my community."

"Michaela TerAvest is to be congratulated for being a recipient of this very prestigious award, which recognizes the innovative and high caliber research conducted in her laboratory," said Erich Grotewold, BMB chair. "Her project is ambitious and has the potential to be a game-changer for how excess electricity is stored and utilized."

For more information, and to read about all 10 BYI award recipients for 2018, visit <http://www.beckman-foundation.org/programs/beckman-young-investigators-award-recipients>.

Since 1990, the Beckman Young Investigator program has given 360 awards totaling more than \$98 million.



Michaela TerAvest, assistant professor of biochemistry, was one of 10 early career faculty members from across the country to be awarded the Beckman Young Investigator Award by the Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation. Photo by Harley Seeley.