

Bean Improvement Cooperative - Presidential Highlights

The Bean Improvement Cooperative (BIC) was officially created by the founding coordinator committee of L. L. Dean, W. D. Enzie, W. A. Frazier, John McCabe and W. J. Zaumeyer in 1957. Since its creation more than 50 years ago, the BIC has released annual publications of member reports and germplasm releases, convened national meetings 25 times in venues throughout the United States and Canada, promoted the lively exchange of scientific information and bean germplasm between public and private sectors, facilitated countless collaborations and friendships nationally and internationally, and provided a stimulating environment for its diverse membership which has grown from 63 in 1957 to nearly 300 in 2010. The proportion of international members has increased three-fold from 1957 (16%) to 2009 (53%).

The nurturing atmosphere of the BIC is exemplified by the ease and energy with which the beginning student or recently hired specialist can engage seasoned veterans to Professors Emeriti in spirited and constructive discussions at any place and at any time. Many students have been inspired by the intellectual, personal and emotional dedication of the BIC members to pursue productive and satisfying careers working with and improving *Phaseolus* species alongside their colleagues from other disciplines and all walks of life. We gratefully acknowledge the creation of the BIC by its founders in 1957, and the effort put into its organization and evolution by the hundreds of members who have contributed to this organization and its continued well-being.

The following individuals were fortunate to be selected by their bean colleagues to lead the BIC throughout its productive 50+ year tenure; and the BIC takes pride in sharing a few highlights from the service of each of these leaders to our organization and their career-long dedication to their respective disciplines, students and clientele.

1957 – 1967: BIC Founder & Coordinator

William A. 'Tex' Frazier, Horticulturist, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon.

His interests included teaching and advising students, and breeding of snap beans as well as other vegetables including carrots, tomato, watermelon and rhubarb. One of his major bean accomplishments was the dwarfing of the Pole Blue Lake bean to bush size so that it could be mechanically harvested; in addition he conducted research on the biochemical genetic bases of flavors in beans. He was responsible for the

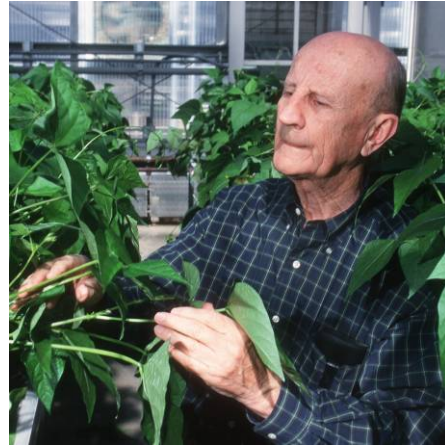


organization and development of the Bean Improvement Cooperative which has been recognized as a model of efficiency and effectiveness in achieving an exchange of scientific and technical information, as well as breeding material among all members of the scientific and commercial community associated with beans. His scientific accomplishments were also recognized when he was elected and served as President of the American Society for Horticultural Science. The BIC conferred the first Meritorious Service Award to Tex in appreciation for his vision and outstanding leadership of our organization.

1968 – 1976: BIC Coordinator

Dermot P. Coyne, Plant Breeder, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska.

His interests included teaching and advising more than 40 graduate students, and dry bean breeding with an emphasis upon multiple disease resistance. His distinguished career covered 40 years, and he contributed to more than 160 journal articles, 8 book chapters, 350 abstracts/research notes and 75 other publications. His varieties and breeding lines with common bacterial blight resistance have been a major contribution to breeding programs throughout Africa and the Americas. His commitment to multiple disease resistance using both classical and molecular methods combined with a team breeding approach has resulted in advanced bean breeding lines and varieties that have benefited bean production throughout the Americas. His scientific accomplishments were also recognized when he was elected and served as President and Editor of the American Society for Horticultural Science.



1976 – 1987: BIC Coordinator

Michael H. Dickson, Plant Breeder, New York State Agricultural Experiment Station, Cornell University, Geneva, New York.

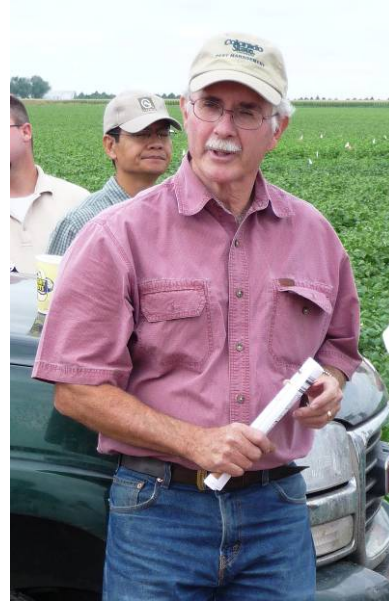
His interests included bean breeding and genetics, identification of useful germplasm, development of significant snap bean breeding lines and cultivars. He also conducted significant research on breeding carrots and lettuce, and taught at the University of Guelph, Canada before joining Cornell. He made significant contributions in identifying snap bean germplasm with resistance to various plant pathogens, including white mold. He also identified germplasm to alleviate seed quality problems such as seed coat rupture, hard seeds, transverse seed cracking, mechanical injury, and was successful in selection for higher cold tolerance both in germination and in later growth stages of beans. His scientific achievements were acknowledged when he received the prestigious Campbell Award from the American Society for Horticultural Science.



1988 – 1997: BIC President

Howard F. Schwartz, Plant Pathologist, Colorado State Univ., Fort Collins, Colorado.

His interests included international bean pathology and breeding with his early bean role as Plant Pathologist at the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), where he developed numerous screening protocols for the principal fungal and bacterial pathogens of beans throughout Latin America and eastern Africa. The remainder of his career was devoted to research and extension pest management needs of dry bean and onion clientele in Colorado and the surrounding High Plains region of the United States. His applied research and extension achievements were acknowledged when he received the prestigious Excellence in Extension Award from the American Phytopathological Society. He has served in various Editorial roles for professional journals, and contributed to more than 70 journal articles, 22 book chapters, 5 disease compendia, and 85 other publications; in addition to the on-line sharing of more than 6,000 of his international digital images of agricultural diseases, pests, crops and production practices.



1998 – 2009: BIC President

James D. Kelly, Plant Breeder, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan.

His interests included bean breeding, with his start as the Chief Bean Breeder for the Campbell Institute for Research, where he gained worldwide recognition for significant contributions to navy beans. Throughout his career, Jim has tackled a wide variety of difficult dry bean research problems which ranged from development of over 30 high yielding, architecturally superior, disease resistant varieties using traditional breeding strategies to adopting marker-assisted selected technologies. One of his major bean accomplishments was the release of ‘Sierra’ pinto bean which combined upright architecture with medium seed size; this was an outstanding plant breeding accomplishment and this represented a shift for bean improvement programs worldwide. Subsequently he has envisioned using newer molecular tools for integrating marker-assisted selection into a customer-based breeding program with the identification and application of selectable markers for disease resistance traits. He has been recognized internationally because of his intimate knowledge of *Phaseolus* and his creativity and success on several research fronts. He was elected Fellow by Crop Science Society of America and received the prestigious Distinguished Faculty Award from MSU. He, like most of the BIC community, has dedicated his entire professional career to improving a crop species that offers the best potential for alleviating world nutritional deprivation.



2010 - present: BIC President

Phillip N. Miklas, Research Geneticist, USDA-ARS, Prosser, Washington.

His interests included bean breeding, with his start as the Bean Geneticist with the USDA-ARS at Mayaguez, Puerto Rico prior to joining the program at Prosser, Washington. He has gained national and international prominence with his work on inheritance of disease resistance, comprehensive linkage maps for disease resistance traits, and generating resistance-linked markers. Along the way new marker systems and marker-assisted selection strategies were adopted for bean. Cumulatively, his efforts served to bridge the gap between traditional bean breeding and genomics. He was a proponent for integrating marker-assisted selection in germplasm and cultivar development, and was lead scientist or major collaborator to more than 100 improved bean germplasm lines and cultivars. He is an excellent universal collaborator with both private and public researchers nationally and internationally, as evidenced, in part, by the diverse group of authors he collaborated with on more than 100 research journal articles. He served on the editorial board for Crop Science for many years, and was elected Fellow to American Society of Agronomy and to Crop Science Society of America in recognition of his service and research contributions.

