

# JOB SEARCH ADVICE

## from Plant Pathology alumni

### Audrey Kalil

- Received her Ph.D. in 2015
- Employed as a Plant Pathologist at North Dakota State University Williston Research Extension Center



- 1. Where did you look for jobs?** Indeed.com, APS job site, USAJOBS.gov, job pages of universities where I was interested in working. I found out about the job I am currently in when I called the research center itself to ask if they would have openings in the future. Don't be afraid to call people!
- 2. When did you start looking?** December, 2014.
- 3. What experiences did you have in graduate school that helped you succeed in getting a job and while on the job?** I gave a lot of presentations during graduate school and it was a skill I cultivated so at my interview I was very comfortable giving my talk and that helped a lot. They were interested in my molecular background because no one else at the research center had a strong background in that, so being a lab rat doesn't always hurt you. I thought that the fact that I mainly studied symbiotic organisms would be a problem for me getting a job as a plant pathologist, but the research center director was specifically looking for someone to study beneficial symbiotic organisms so it worked out! My lack of experience in field work was a weakness, but I worked as a crop scout the entire summer before I applied and that was strongly in my favor because then I had experience identifying the diseases of the crops in our region in the field. I was also able to establish contacts at NDSU that way too.
- 4. Why did you pick the sector you work in?** I'm in academia but I am an extension research scientist with a 100% research appointment. Of course giving talks at grower meetings is part of the job, but it isn't a formal percentage of my position so I don't have to report it. To me it's the best of both worlds because I have the freedom to choose what I research in academia, but I'm not in a tenure track position with the pressure to get a lot of grants and publish or perish.

## 5. What resources, if any, did you use on campus while you were looking and applying for jobs?

When I was interviewing I called up several extension professors at UW and some friends who were now graduated, and in similar positions to the one I was interviewing for, for advice and I am really glad I did. They were all more than willing to help and the advice I got was extremely valuable.

Good luck to all the graduating students!