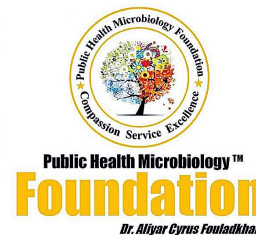




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7th Statewide Research Competition: Food Industry, Food Safety, and Public Health Microbiology in Changing Climate

Nashville, Tennessee, Lawson Hall 107B, Food Science Program, Tennessee State University

Date and Time

Thursday, October 16, 2025, from 4:30 to 7:00 pm (central time)

Tentative Agenda (central time):

3:00 to 4:00 pm: *High-pressure processing & Real-Time PCR facilities tour (Optional)*

4:00 to 4:30 pm: *Students arrival & presentations' set up*

4:30 to 5:00 pm: *Co-Keynote Speakers Presentations*

5:00 to 5:45 pm: *Oral Presentations by Finalists*

5:45 to 6:30 pm: *Poster Presentations by Finalists*

6:30 to 6:45 pm: *Judges Deliberations and Discussions*

6:45 to 7:00 pm: *Announcement of Awardees*

The meeting will take place in Nashville and all competitors are requested to be present in-person. Participants unable to attend in-person could attend the meeting via Zoom.

Zoom link (for participants only):

<https://tennessee.zoom.us/j/81604433925>

Passcode: PHMLab (Case sensitive passcode: first four letters are Uppercase)

Question:

Competition Organizer, Dr. Aliyar Cyrus Fouladkhah.

Phone: (970) 690-7392 Email: afouladk@tnstate.edu

Previous years' competitions:

<https://publichealthmicrobiology.education/annual-competitions>



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Submission Guideline:

You are cordially invited to submit an abstract for the 2025 graduate poster and oral competitions. Students who are planning to present/compete in IFT26 or closely allied organizations are especially encouraged to apply. Please submit the title of your research, 250-word abstract, and name of your advisor by **Friday, October 10, 2024, 11:59 pm** (central time). Please also let us know if you would like to be considered for competition in poster or oral division, or both. Please note that no late submission will be accepted, and only selected abstracts (finalists) will be scheduled for competition due to limitations in space and time for presentations. You can email the information to afouladk@tnstate.edu.

You will be notified of the status of your abstract on **Monday, October 13, 2025**. Up to 6 accepted abstracts in oral and poster divisions will be entered for the competition evaluated by the judges. The top three individuals* in each category will be awarded \$300, \$200, \$100**. All finalists will receive a certificate recognizing their achievement as a finalist.

Selected finalists are requested to dedicate 2 to 3 minutes of their poster and/or oral presentations to discuss the impact of their research on climate, after judges deliberate, one student will receive the **Climate Champion Award.**

The competition is free of cost for attendees. Applicants in any institution in Tennessee are cordially invited to apply. Please note that per the policy of the funding agency for this competition meals will not be provided, healthy snacks will be provided courtesy of the Public Health Microbiology Foundation. Recent graduates (those who graduated late in 2024 or early 2025) could also apply to compete as long as the abstract is from the work completed as a student.

**Awards will be mailed to the awardees approximately up to two months after the event, after completion of W-9 forms and other paperwork. There is a myriad of regulations for issuing the awards using extramural grants and appreciating in advance the awardee's patience. The awards are supported by Public Health Microbiology Foundation and Public Health*



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Microbiology Laboratory extramural grants (USDA NIFA projects 2023-70020-40768 and 2024-70020-42861).

***Awarded values will be divided if two competitors are tied.*

PAST AWARDEES

6th Annual State-Wide Competition for Food Safety Modernization Act, Food Safety, and Food Science Students 2024 Finalists in Oral Competitions for Students:

1st place (tied): Jiuyi Li, TSU
1st place (tied): Sandhya Thapa, TSU
2nd Place: Ranju Kafle, TSU
3rd Place: Not awarded this year

2024 Finalists in Poster Competitions for Students:

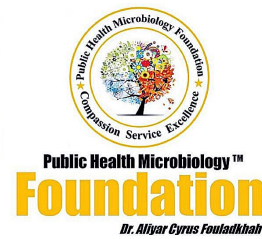
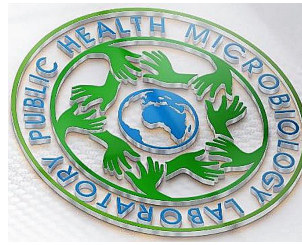
1st place (tied): Breanna Polen, UTK
1st place (tied): Junice Sibley, TSU
2nd Place: Niraj Ghimire, TSU
3rd Place: Rabin Raut, TSU

5th Annual State-Wide Competition for Food Safety Modernization Act, Food Safety, and Food Science Students 2021 Finalists in Food Policies Category:

First Place: Sadat Naraghi, VUMC
Second Place: Christian Landskroener, TSU
Third Place: Morgan Roberts, TSU



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2021 Finalists in Oral Competitions for Students:

First Place: Sabrina Wadood, TSU

Second Place: Ran Yang, UTK

Third Place: Sadiye Aras, TSU

2021 Finalists in Poster Competitions for Students:

First Place: Alexia Angelos, UTK

Second Place: Jyothi George, TSU

Third Place: Yun Tian, TSU

4th Annual State-Wide Competition for Food Safety Modernization Act, Food Safety, and Food Science Students

2020 Emerging Leaders Category:

1st Place (tied): Dr. M. Naraghi, VUMC

1st Place (tied): Dr. Tylor-Bowne, TSU

2nd Place: Dr. Md Niamul Kabir, TSU

2020 Oral Competitions for Students:

1st Place: Sabrina Wadood, TSU

2nd Place: Jyothi George, TSU

3rd Place: Sadiye Aras, TSU

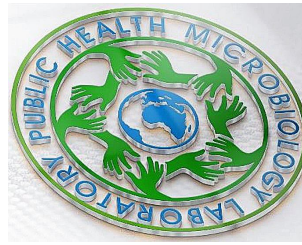
2020 Poster Competitions for Students:

1st Place: Andrea Nieto Veloza, UT

2nd Place: Anika Chowdhury, MTSU



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3rd Place (tied): Akiliyah Sumlin, TSU

3rd Place (tied): Shreya Hamal, TSU

**3rd Annual State-Wide Competition for Food Safety
Modernization Act, Food Safety, and Food Science Students
2019 Graduate Oral Competition Winners**

1st Place (tied): Monica Henry, TSU

1st Place (tied): Trent Kerley, UT

2nd Place: Abimbola Allison, TSU

3rd Place: Shan Hong, UT

2019 Graduate Oral Competition Winners

1st Place (tied): Jennifer Vuia-Riser, UT

1st Place (tied): Kaleh Karim, TSU

2nd Place (tied): Shreya Singh Hamal, TSU

2nd Place (tied): Purni Wickramasinghe, UT

3rd: Place Jayashan Adhikari, TSU

**2nd Annual State-Wide Competition for Food Safety
Modernization Act, Food Safety, and Food Science Students
2018 Graduate Competition Winners**

1st Place (tied) Monica Henry: Graduate Competition, TSU

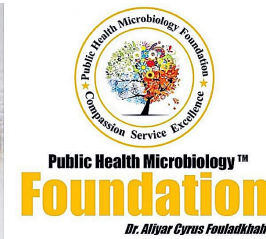
1st Place (tied) Grace Shupe: Graduate Competition, UT

2nd Place Devendra Bhandari: Graduate Competition, TSU

3rd Place Michelle Heatherly: Graduate Competition, UT



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2018 Undergraduate Competition Winners

1st Place Braxton Simpson: Undergraduate Competition, TSU

2nd Place Akiliyah Sumlin: Undergraduate Competition, TSU

3rd Place (tied) Kristin Day: Undergraduate Competition, TSU

3rd Place (tied) Kayla Sampson: Undergraduate Competition, TSU

1st Annual State-Wide Competition for Food Safety Modernization Act, Food Safety, and Food Science Students

2017 Competition Winners

1st place: Danielle Gunter-Ward, TSU

2nd place: Li Wang, TSU

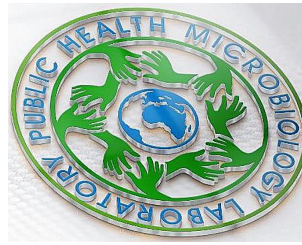
3rd place: Shreya Singh Hamal, TSU

2025 Competition Committee

Founder and Chair	Dr. Aliyar Cyrus Fouladkhah	Vol. section IFT Public Health Microbiology Foundation
Competition Co-chair	Dr. Minoo Bagheri	DBMI, VUMC
Competition Co-chair	Mr. Shahid Chowdhury	Public Health Microbiology Laboratory, TSU



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Dr. Aliyar Cyrus Fouladkhah

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

The content of the presentations does not necessarily reflect the views of the funding agencies.

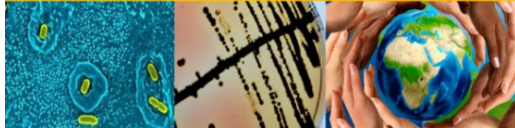


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United States Department of Agriculture
National Institute of Food and Agriculture

Public Health Microbiology Laboratory



PBI **Pressure**
BioSciences
Inc.

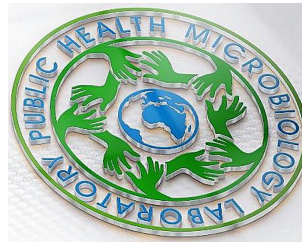


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**Direction to Public Health Microbiology Laboratory for Optional
High-Pressure Processing and Real-Time PCR Demonstration**



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