

Josef F. Schuler Graduate Fellowship in Agronomy (Schuler Fellowship) (Fellowship for Graduate Students)

The Josef F. Schuler Graduate Fellowship in Agronomy (Schuler Fellowship) is a fellowship set up by the daughters of Josef F. Schuler. The fellowship shall be open to all students in the Dept. of Agronomy who are pursuing an MS or PhD with an emphasis in crop breeding; preference will be given to those students who are graduates of an Iowa high school or undergraduate institution; and preference will be given to those students who demonstrate financial need.

Josef F. Schuler was from Austria and currently lives in Reid Austria. When the war was over, both Russia and the United States were trying to endear Austrian youth to Russia or to the west. Josef was chosen to go to the United States on an agricultural internship, and ended up in Southwest Iowa. He finally ended with Stuart N. Smith (Smith Park on Elwood Drive). It was Dr. Smith who saw potential in and convinced him to go to Dr. Smith (PhD. 1936 Genetics). I am sure that with Dr. Smith, Schuler would not have reached his potential. Josef was a very good student and one of his fellow students was Owen Newlin (of the Regents).

He studied under Dr. George Sprague receiving a M.S. (1952) and Ph.D. (1954) degrees from Iowa State University. Both degrees were in corn breeding. After graduate study, he went to South America (primarily Peru) for a couple of years before returning to Europe. Before starting with his Basel work, he decided to stop working and to get married and begin a family (think 3 daughters). He worked with CIBA-Geigy and became very successful. I am not sure of exact title but I think eventually advanced to Vice President (or one of the vice presidents) of Seed Research for CIB-Geigy, Basal, Switzerland. Joe was the one who enticed Steve Eberhart to leave Ames and become director of corn research for Funks G-Hybrids. He was the one that convinced the leadership at CIBA-GEIGY to enter into the corn breeding enterprise. That enterprise is now NOVARTIS and one of their recent highlights was a subsidiary firm that sequenced the rice genome.

Joe Schuler was well-traveled and became well known throughout the world. When Gordon Eaton was President of Iowa State University, Joe Schuler was on Eaton's advisory panel (or council) on science. Joe stopped to visit annually while active in CIBA-Geigy and advising Gordon Eaton. Joe retired about 10 years ago, returned to Austria, and he indicated he was going to take it easy up in the mountains. But I believe he was operating a ski resort inherited from his father. He also occasionally stopped to visit after visiting his farm(s) located near Madrid, IA. I think because of laws that the land is in the name of his daughter.

Joe Schuler is a very interesting fellow who has been successful, who is quite wealthy, moves easily about the world (hunting in Zimbabwe, fishing Caribbean, etc.), a very friendly person, and one who never forgot his days as a graduate student at Iowa State. When he visited, he almost always discussed his days at Ames, graduate studies, fieldwork with Sprague, etc. I always got the impression that the time he spent at Ames formed the base for his future success. I have met several people from Europe over the years, but I believe Joe Schuler also was in the Germany Army and survived Stalingrad. One would have to be tough, and lucky, to survive that fight.

Dr. Schuler resides at 651 Ried, Tyrol, Austria. His email address is Josef.schuler@tirol.com