Meet the Nominees

ROBERT M. TOBIAS CERTIFICATE

★★★★★ *of* ★★★★★

ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Scott Adkins

Laboratory Director
Horticultural Research Laboratory
U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
Key Cohort REE SES 12

A native Marylander, Scott Adkins earned his B.S. and M.S. degrees at Ohio State, and Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He joined USDA-ARS at the U.S. Horticultural Research Laboratory (USHRL) in Fort Pierce, Florida in 1999 as a Research Plant Pathologist and built an outstanding emerging vegetable and ornamental virus research program. Adkins distinguished himself by assembling and leading teams to describe the novel cause of viral watermelon vine decline and the first interspecies tospovirus reassortant, and by addressing regular requests to unravel diseases of uncertain etiology. His scientific enthusiasm has attracted numerous aspiring scientists to his laboratory including many undergraduate students. Simultaneously, Adkins served in major American Phytopathological Society (APS) leadership roles, most notably chairing scientific program committees for the 2018 International Congress of Plant Pathology and the APS annual meeting for six years. Throughout his career, Adkins has made fundamental advances in tospovirus gene function and viral RNA synthesis, while developing and extending real-world applications to growers, regulatory agencies and other stakeholders.

Adkins was appointed Acting Research Leader of the Subtropical Plant Pathology Research Unit at USHRL in April 2020. He served in that position until being selected as Research Leader and Supervisory Plant Pathologist in February 2022 for this same unit. From September-December 2022 and again April-June 2023 Adkins served as Acting Laboratory Director for USHRL until being selected as Laboratory Director in September 2023. In this role, he continues to expand the horticultural research mission of USHRL and implement addition of a warm water marine aquaculture research unit.