



Olufunmilayo AJAYI

Home Country
Nigeria

Degree
Post-Doctorate
in Pest Management

Expertise
Biology

Research Focus
Management of Agricultural Pests

Host University
Auburn University, United States

Fellowship Awarded
2012

Olufunmilayo Ajayi was born in Ekiti State in southwest Nigeria. Her parents were peasant farmers with four children. Until completing her second degree she helped support herself financially with jobs such as a house maid, selling plantains, hair dressing, and farming.

Olufunmilayo attended the Federal University of Technology, Akure, Ondo State, southwest Nigeria, where she gained a B. Tech. and M. Tech. in Food Storage Technology, followed in 2010 by a PhD in Stored Products Entomology. She then became a faculty member lecturing in the University's Department of Biology.

The research focus is on annexing the knowledge of semiochemicals involved in interactions between the major insect pest of cowpea, *Callosobruchus maculatus* (F.) and its leguminous host-plants to develop semiochemical based management tactics for *C. maculatus*. Semiochemicals are volatile biochemical compounds that produce intra and interspecific signals which elicit behavioral responses among living organisms. Olufunmilayo's goals are to know the methods of collection of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) from organisms, evaluate semiochemical-mediated host attraction of *C. maculatus* to VOCs of some legumes, and identify the VOCs that attract *C. maculatus* to seed and plant legumes; towards producing lure.

On completion of her post-doctoral studies, Olufunmilayo plans to return to teaching in Akure. She expects the knowledge gained to help solve problems related to agricultural pests in Nigerian fields and food stores through direct teaching of students in the Federal University of Technology, seminar presentations, and workshops.