

Dr. David Unander, Eastern University, PA

David Unander is a Professor of Biology at Eastern University in the Philadelphia area. He studied agriculture, biology and plant breeding at Southern Illinois University and Univ. of Minnesota. After finishing his doctoral research in 1983, on genetic variation for cold tolerance in soybean seedlings in Minnesota, he was hired by Univ. of Puerto Rico, where he learned Spanish and worked on disease resistance and other traits in several vegetables in Puerto Rico and other Caribbean countries. In 1987, he was hired as the resident botanist and plant breeder for a research team led by Nobel laureate Baruch Blumberg at Fox Chase Cancer Center in Philadelphia that was investigating tropical plants with antiviral effects. During this time, he joined the Board of ECHO (Educational Concerns for Hunger Organization) in Ft. Myers, FL, a Christian mission that provides training and extension services to missionaries and others globally, and has since served their board for 14 years (in non-consecutive terms).

Dave was hired full-time by Eastern University, primarily in the Dept. of Biology, with part-time involvement in courses related to International Development and to Science and Values. He helped develop the CCSP program in the mid-1990s and has taught in Belize four previous times. He developed and teaches the May term course, 'Tropical Agriculture and Missions', for the Au Sable Institute, has taught 14 Biology- or Development-related travel courses in various Latin American countries for Eastern, and served on numerous missions projects with university students and others. Besides ECHO, he has served on the boards of Plant with Purpose (formerly Floresta), a Christian mission with a reforestation focus, and Hope Seeds, a Christian mission that provides ecologically appropriate seeds for relief and development efforts of other missions. His primary professional focus at this time is university teaching and extension-type service. Recently, he has been learning Italian and helping develop new programs and courses in Italy for Eastern University. He has four grown children and two (God willing, soon three) grandchildren, and is actively involved at Providence Church in West Chester, PA.