

**PLENARY SPEAKER**

**“Ethnobotany as a tool for targeted  
discovery of bioactive natural products”**

**Cassandra Quave, Ph.D.**

Emory University



Dr. Cassandra L. Quave is Curator of the Herbarium and Associate Professor of Dermatology and Human Health at Emory University. She was appointed as Thomas J. Lawley, MD Professor of Dermatology and Assistant Dean of Research Cores at Emory University School of Medicine in 2023. Dr. Quave earned degrees in biology and anthropology (B.S.) from Emory University in 2000 and a Ph.D. in biology in 2008 from Florida International University under the direction of Dr. Bradley Bennett. She completed postdoctoral fellowships in microbial pathogenesis at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences under the direction of Dr. Mark Smeltzer (2009-2011) and in human health at Emory University under the direction of Dr. Michelle Lampl (2011-2012). As a medical ethnobotanist, her work focuses on the documentation and pharmacological evaluation of plants used in traditional medicine. The National Institutes of Health, industry contracts, and philanthropy support Dr. Quave’s research. She is a Fellow of the Explorers Club, a past President of the Society for Economic Botany, a recipient of the Emory Williams Teaching Award, Charles Heiser, Jr. Mentor Award, American Botanical Council James. A. Duke Excellence in Botanical Literature Award, and American Herbal Products Association Herbal Insight Award. In 2022, she received The National Academies Eric and Wendy Schmidt Awards for Excellence in Science Communication. Dr. Quave serves on the Board of Directors for the Society for Investigative Dermatology and the editorial boards for *Natural Product Reports*, *Scientific Reports*, and *Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine* and is an associate editor for *Frontiers in Pharmacology*.

Beyond her academic research and teaching activities, Dr. Quave is the co-creator and host of [Foodie Pharmacology](#), a podcast dedicated to exploring the links between food and medicine, now in its fifth season. She is the creator and host of the [Teach Ethnobotany](#) channel on YouTube, through which she creates and shares educational videos about botanicals, pharmacology, and natural products. She writes a weekly newsletter, [Nature’s Pharmacy](#), to reveal the science behind natural remedies and address misinformation on herbs. Dr. Quave has authored more than 100 scientific publications, two edited books, twenty book chapters, and seven patents; her work has been cited in the scientific literature more than 6,600 times. Dr. Quave is co-founder and CSO of Verdant Scientific—a biotech company focused on developing new therapies for inflammatory skin disease. Her research has been featured in the *New York Times Magazine*, *BBC Science Focus*, *National Geographic Magazine*, NPR, PBS, and the National Geographic Channel. She has written opinion essays for *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Conversation*. Quave is the author of an award-winning science memoir *The Plant Hunter: A Scientist’s Quest for Nature’s Next Medicines*, acclaimed as one of the best books of 2021 by Kirkus Reviews. Learn more about her research by visiting her [website](#) or following her on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).