

30 April 2004

Dear President Graham,

The Botanical Society of America Merit Award Committee recommends a BSA Merit Award to **Dr. Harry T. (Jack) Horner**, University Professor at Iowa State University and former BSA President and Treasurer and to **Dr. James L. Seago, Jr.**, Professor at the State University of New York at Oswego.

2004 BSA Merit Award recommendation of Dr. Harry T. (Jack) Horner

Dr. Horner's research has primarily focused on the cytology and development of anthers and pollen and on calcium oxalate crystal formation in plants. His research has been innovative, ground-breaking, and sustained. Over the past 43 years, he has published or has in press 110 papers in 43 high-quality refereed journals. His work is described by peers as "meticulous," "pioneering and outstanding," and "carefully documented." His work calls on multiple tools and approaches, is often collaborative and interdisciplinary, and has earned him an international reputation as one of the most eminent specialists worldwide on plant ultrastructure. An indication of his stature as a researcher is invitations to three Gordon Conferences on calcium oxalate, for one of which he was chair and another vice-chair.

His "heroic service" and numerous contributions to BSA over many years are greatly appreciated. Through his participation on committees, as Chair of the Financial Advisory Board, and in elected office (two terms as Treasurer and President), he has been an agent of many positive changes in our Society. He has also served his department and Iowa State University as Director of the Bessey Microscopy Facility for 34 years, in administrative positions, and on numerous committees. He served as President of the Iowa Academy of Science. He has reviewed manuscripts for about 30 journals.

Along with this impressive research productivity and service, Dr. Horner has been a dedicated and effective teacher. He has taught three different courses on microscopy each for over 20 years and up to the present, and his teaching of microscopy techniques is renowned. He has successfully advised 13 M.S. students and eight Ph.D. students. Many of his students have gone on to highly successful careers, indications of the solid training and mentoring he gave them. He has served on well over 100 graduate student advisory committees in 21 different programs at ISU or elsewhere.

It is not surprising that his numerous accomplishments have brought him many awards, including a Special Award for long-standing continuous service to the Botanical Society of America, a Centennial Citation and Distinguished Service Award from the Iowa Academy of Science, and the highest award at ISU, a University Professorship.

One of the best measures of one's reputation is recognition by peers. Hence from the supporters of Dr. Horner's nomination we hear that he maintains "the highest standards of performance imaginable," that he is a "model of clarity and rigorous scholarship," as well as "an exemplary scholar and citizen—and a good guy."

For his outstanding contributions to botanical science and to the Botanical Society of America, Jack Horner is unquestionably deserving of the Botanical Society of America's highest honor.

2004 BSA Merit Award recommendation of Dr. James L. Seago, Jr.

This award is in recognition of the tremendous contributions Dr. Seago has made in encouraging and supporting students to pursue careers in botany. Dr. Seago has spent the majority of his career at the State University of New York, Oswego, a primarily undergraduate institution where the faculty carry heavy teaching responsibilities. Despite this, he has maintained an active research program involving undergraduate students and has mentored many of them to continue to graduate school in botany. It is primarily for his mentoring of undergraduates that we recommend Dr. Seago for this award.

If students do not enter botany, the field will wither away. Attracting students into botany may not advance one's career as publications and grants do, but without a steady flow of new students, and especially students who are bright and interested, into botanical graduate programs, all botanists will have increasing difficulty publishing and obtaining funding. Dr. Seago has made remarkable and long-standing contributions to the flow of students into our discipline. He has the ability to spot interest and aptitude, to involve students in research, and thus to nurture their ability and interest. He has fostered student attendance at professional meetings and their presentation of papers at these meetings, and he has co-authored papers with students. In more than half of the past 30 years, Dr. Seago has coauthored a presentation or a paper with a student.

One colleague noted that "Jim obviously works closely with the students in planning the research and in helping prepare the talk, and the results are clear to all. Jim's students know their stuff and are well prepared to present their work in the most professional and effective manner." One colleague summarized Dr. Seago's mentoring of students as an "unrivaled, significant, and persistent commitment toward fostering undergraduate botanical research over the last 30 years."

Dr. Seago has encouraged many students to pursue careers in botany by actively promoting their applications to graduate schools. His matching of students with graduate programs that are right for them has not only benefitted the students but also the programs and ultimately plant sciences.

Dr. Seago has served his profession and his home institution in many important ways in addition to bringing students into botany. He was department chair for six years and has served on numerous committees at SUNY Oswego. He has served the Botanical Society

of America as Program Director of the Developmental and Structural Section (1994-1997) and has been a diligent and hard-working reviewer for the American Journal of Botany.

Dr. Seago's research deals with root developmental anatomy as well as the structure, development, and function of aquatic and wetlands plants. One colleague notes that "When one thinks of plants and roots, one must think of Jim Seago." He has published 14 papers in refereed journals (nine papers in the American Journal of Botany) and has one in press. His research program, while modest in terms of number of publications and grant support, is admired by colleagues who describe it as "solid and substantial," and "solid scholarly contributions."

For his outstanding contributions to botanical science, and especially for being, as a colleague observed, the "vibrant, enthusiastic teacher and researcher" that he is, Jim Seago is unquestionably deserving of the Botanical Society of America's highest honor.

Sincerely yours,

Christopher S. Campbell,
Chair, 2004 Merit Award Committee:

Lyn Bohs
Linda E. Graham
Edith L. Taylor