

Request for the return of interest on a donation

Summary: We are requesting that the interest earned on a donation made by one of our members be returned to the Physiological and Ecophysiological section. Our plan is to use this interest to fulfill the original goal of the donation to support awards for our membership.

Background: A member of the Physiological Section donated \$10,000 to provide an award for the “Best Physiological or Ecophysiological Paper in the American Journal of Botany”. The donation goal was to encourage the publication of increasingly excellent Physiological and Ecophysiological research in AJB. After the structure of the award and a judging panel was in place and voted on by the section, a disagreement arose with the BSA leadership on how the award would be managed and structured. Because the donor felt that the Physiological and Ecophysiological Section should manage the award, the original funds were returned to the donor in 2019. However, the money in question had accumulated interest of about \$5,900. At that time, the section planned to use the interest to achieve the goal of the original donation, but the money was removed from our account. The section tried to find where the funds had gone and learned that the money was absorbed into the general BSA funds. We are now submitting a formal request to have the money returned to our section.

Requested outcome: Our section feels that since this donation was originally earmarked for our section, the interest on the funds was ours to direct toward our sectional goals. We request the interest on the funds (~ \$5,900) be returned to our section. Our plan is to use the interest to support awards for our membership including ones that we give out at the annual meeting and/or to develop a new award for “Best Physiological or Ecophysiological Paper in the American Journal of Botany” as originally planned. We feel strongly that we are accountable to our donors and want to be able to honor their desires for their donations and accrued interest.

Motivation: Our section is strongly committed to supporting our members and rewarding excellent research in Physiology and Ecophysiology. We currently spend most of our funds on student awards. We are starting several new initiatives to increase our membership and hope that we can work collaboratively with the larger society in these efforts. We feel that access to the above-described interest would help us promote our section and thus strengthen the umbrella organization of BSA.

Jessica Savage, Chair
Christopher Krieg, Program Coordinator