



# BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA

*Mission: To inspire and promote an inclusive global community committed to advancing fundamental knowledge and innovation in the botanical sciences for the benefit of people and the environment.*

## I. 2022-2023 BSA Business Report – Introduction

The following report provides an overview of the activities of the Botanical Society of America's business office over the past twelve months. Despite a less lucrative publishing agreement for 2023-2027, the Society continues to thrive and meaningfully drive several initiatives in the second year of our new strategic plan. We are finding efficiencies in collaboration, our bank accounts are in good shape, and conference attendance for Boise is strong. I would like to thank the Board, section leadership, and committee chairs for their support, understanding and direction during this past year. On behalf of the Board and Society, I also would like to thank our nine staff members. They work hard to deliver on the Society's mission and are very invested in our strategic plan and mission in order to serve our members.

## II. Financial Update

BSA finances remain strong. We ended FY2022 with a net operating gain of \$244,727, however we took a significant loss in our investment account of \$1.7 million due to a tough year for the markets. We also realize that due to the trends in the publishing industry and our new publishing agreement, publishing revenues will be much less than previous years. We will need to draw on the BSA investment portfolio to help support operations for the foreseeable future. The Board, Council, Investment and Finances committees are all in agreement that a 4% draw on the unallocated portion of the investment portfolio is appropriate.

FY2023 income is on track and a good portion of our expenses are happening this month with award checks and meeting expenditures. (Please see FY2023 Budget to Actual report).

### Key things to note about our FY2023 fiscal year performance:

- 1) Our overall income from membership dues is up 4% from last year for the same period
- 2) Publication income is on target, and will be significantly less than previous years due to our new contract with Wiley
- 3) Our salaries and benefits are now returning to pre-pandemic levels and also reflect merit increases for staff
- 4) BSA took a loss on the 2022 conference so that loss of \$3K is reflected in the FY2023 finances
- 5) Grant income and expenses are greater than last year. Activity and spending for our F2 Education/PlantingScience grant has picked up and we are in the heart of the time of the main expenditures for all Society grants
- 6) We are holding staff and Board travel to a minimum as much as possible

### As of June 30, 2023:

BSA Conference Account:	\$335,409
BSA Checking Account:	\$258,530
BSA Money Market Account:	\$408,977

\* The conference account is yet to pay out most of the expenses for Botany 2023. We have also been spending down a cash buffer that BSA built up over the last few years. This buffer allowed us to refrain for as long as possible from drawing on the investment account.

**BSA Investment Portfolio**

We extend a special thank you to the members who donated to our endowment, the Past Presidents’ Fund, the Grad Student Research Awards and to the various BSA section and award funds. Total giving so far this year includes 493 donations totaling \$73,203 in all categories. This is almost the same number of donors as last year (493 vs 494) while the total amount is \$23K more than this same period last year. Total BSA endowment giving so far is \$15,455, which came from 61 donors (an increase of \$800 over the same period last year).

Some welcome news.....as of June 30, 2023, our BSA investment portfolio (BIP) stood at **\$7,627,561** which is a significant (10%) increase from last year.

**Society and Sectional Funds as part of the Total BIP  
Actuals as of September 30, 2022 (end of FY2022)**

<b>MS Investment Portfolio:</b>	<b>\$6,496,241</b>
Designated Funds (BSA/Sections)	\$1,941,919
Undesignated Funds	\$4,554,322
<b>BSA Funds</b>	<b>\$1,502,331</b>
BSA Designated Funds	\$139,332
BSA Awards	\$1,420
BSA Endowment	\$513,714
BSA Restricted Funds	\$139,332
<b>Sectional Funds</b>	<b>\$439,588</b>
Sectional Accounts	\$118,216
Sectional Awards	\$163,042
Sectional Endowments/Restricted	\$158,331

*\*these figures will be updated again at the end of the fiscal year on September 30, 2023*

**III. Governance**

This year has been another productive time for our organization. As stressed in our strategic plan, we have worked on several collaborative efforts (those related to grants and those with other scientific societies like AIBS, ASPB, BLM, etc) to increase efficiencies and impact. Also, much time has been spent in the past year on some necessary administrative matters, such as the NSF desk review, adjusting BSA policies and procedures, and restructuring the Botany and Beyond: PLANTS III grant administration.

One of my goals was to secure a favorable new publishing agreement for BSA peer-reviewed publications that incorporates a move toward open access. It’s been a long slog of negotiations and financial analysis but after over a year of working with Clarke & Esposito, our lawyer, and

our Publications team, we finally were able to come to agreement and sign a new publishing contract with Wiley at the end of December. These next five years will prove very interesting for scholarly society publishing! The publishing agreement is less lucrative than the previous one, (especially the first few years) but is in line with what other societies are experiencing and where the industry is headed. I will be keeping a close eye on how SSE fares with their recent move from Wiley to Oxford University Press as their publishing partner for *Evolution* and *Evolution Letters*.

A significant portion of my time this winter has been spent on the restructuring of the Botany & Beyond grant and program. We were disappointed to lose Sarah Sims as our DEI Programs Coordinator. She has moved on to a position at Washington University. I worked with Catrina to support Sarah's offboarding in December and she left us with many pre-prepared documents and folders for continued grant and DEI work, doing her best to set us up for success. With the restructure of the grant, and the plan to shuttle off the bulk of the funds and programming through a subaward, we will not be replacing the coordinator position on staff. We put in the paperwork to change Co-PIs on the grant so that Catrina Adams steps off and I have assumed that role of working with Anna Monfils and Muriel Poston on Botany & Beyond. We signed an agreement with a facilitator to help us through the process of restructuring the budget and moving to a subaward situation with either CMU or Pitzer. NSF is in favor of this process of facilitated restructuring. In order to continue the work of the grant while restructuring is taking place, Anna continues to work on the Science Identity Workshops which took place in April at the Smithsonian and BSA contracted with Molly Phillips who is assisting as a coordinator working directly with Anna on that piece of the grant. BSA is handling the PLANTS III program for this summer and after receiving applications and conducting interviews, we contracted with Maria Morrow, a PLANTS alum from 2012, to assist me with the coordination of PLANTS. Maria is working directly with me, with input from Ann Sakai.

Another goal in our strategic plan was to bring financially accessible professional development events to our community. We have done this through the launch of Botany360, a series of online webinars and discussion sessions that connect our community during the 360 days when we are not together for BOTANY conference. After 18 months of programs, the Early Career Professional Development Committee was approved as a permanent BSA committee, and they are highly involved in planning many of these events. Amelia Neely oversees the entire effort so you can learn more about Botany360 in her Membership Report. I am very excited about upcoming events in the works, including a Career Panels and another Applying to Graduate School online workshop as well as some ideas regarding scientific communication and the possibility of a half-day virtual symposium.

Planning for the Botany 2023 conference in Boise, ID took extra time and effort as we knew we wanted to make improvements to the virtual components of the meeting so that a better hybrid experience would be made available. We also contracted with a new company, X-CD, and implemented a new platform for abstract submission, registration, the virtual platform and app. Many thanks to Melanie Link-Perez, Johanne Stogran, Steve Bornhoeft, and Amelia Neely for their review of all the options, and to the entire Program Planning Committee for being so responsive to BSA members' safety. I also worked with our Conference Manager to negotiate and review contracts and lay out the initial plans for Botany 2024 in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

More recently, Tricia, Catrina and I have been working through responses to an NSF Desk Review that was performed last winter. A desk review is meant to help organizations strengthen their overall policies and procedures as it pertains to grant management and we have been in the midst

of making adjustments these last several months. All revisions to policies and procedures will be reviewed and approved by the BSA Board.

Finally, in what I saw as an exciting development, we were able to hold our first Advisory Council meeting outside of the Botany conference! The meeting included seeking review and feedback on a BSA membership survey, a proposed climate change initiative and the new professional disclosure document for nominated awards, which is in line with our BSA ethical guidelines. I look forward to continuing this online mid-year meeting practice so that committee and sectional leaders can share information and bring forward their own agenda items to the group.

Other items I have been working on are this year:

- Overseeing the work of our F2 (\$3.8 million) five-year grant that supports PlantingScience, our educational outreach program
- Assisting the set-up and the committee for the new Graduate Student Research Award in Phylogenetic Comparative Plant Biology which attracted 20 applicants this first year
- Drafting a new membership survey which was deployed in late spring
- Working with the President-Elect and Committee on Committees to assist with committee appointments
- Completing the performance review process for all staff members
- Participating in the Root & Shoot LEAPS grant through their diversity training sessions
- Working with the AISES staff and other partners (ESA, Ent Society) on the Indigenous Voices LEAPS grant, survey, indigenous scholars gathering and travel award applications to Botany 2023
- Conference planning and oversight for Botany 2023
- Assisting in the onboarding of new Ombuds/mediators for Botany 2023 and adjustments to the conference Code of Conduct
- Supporting the BSA nominations and election process
- Working with sectional and committee leadership to set up all the BSA and sectional awards for 2023
- Planning and work with SEB leadership for their June 2023 conference in Atlanta
- Preparation for and attendance at two SSE Council meetings

#### **IV. Membership**

We had three consecutive years of membership growth through 2021 and in 2022 we took a small dip. 2023 mid-year membership totals are strong and similar to last year, with a slight overall decrease of 0.9%. Much of this decrease continues to be in the professional membership categories, which has had a slow decent since 2020. Student numbers have hit a slight plateau since 2021 when comparing mid-year reports but continue to inch up. It is worth noting that student membership has grown 31.6% since 2019, and professional memberships have decreased by 3.5% since their peak in 2020. Please see the Membership and Communications Report for more information.

##### **Membership Recommendations:**

1. A Membership Ad-Hoc Committee to be formed to help strategize and implement efforts to increase membership numbers, focusing on year-end 2023, early 2024.
2. Increase in student membership fees from \$20 to \$25 (1-year membership) and \$50 to \$60

(3-year membership).

3. Increase Affiliate Memberships from \$50 to \$55.

4. Increase in student and developing nations' gift membership price from \$10 to \$20 (1-year membership) and \$30 to \$55 (3-year membership).

5. Printing and shipping the *Plant Science Bulletin* costs the Society between \$9,000 to \$10,000 annually. We recommend that print copies become a paid membership benefit with a cost of \$10/year to purchase print copies starting October 1, 2023.

<b>Membership Overview as of July 1 each year</b>										
	as of 7/1/23		as of 7/1/22		as of 7/1/21		as of 7/1/2020		as of 7/1/2019	
	<b>2023</b>	% of Total	<b>2022</b>	% of Total	<b>2021</b>	% of Total	<b>2020</b>	% of Total	<b>2019</b>	% of Total
Corresponding	72	2.6%	73	2.6%	69	2.4%	69	2.4%	65	2.4%
Life	118	4.2%	107	3.8%	96	3.3%	91	3.2%	82	3.1%
Emeritus	340	12.1%	311	11.0%	301	10.3%	282	10.0%	278	10.3%
E Family	46	1.6%	46	1.6%	43	1.5%	42	1.5%	39	1.5%
Retired	71	2.5%	67	2.4%	65	2.2%	63	2.2%	53	2.0%
R Family	2	0.1%	4	0.1%	2	0.1%	4	0.1%	2	0.1%
3 Yr Professional	223	7.9%	252	8.9%	287	9.9%	275	9.7%	287	10.7%
3 Yr Prof Family	19	0.7%	18	0.6%	20	0.7%	21	0.7%	18	0.7%
Professional	640	22.8%	705	24.9%	747	25.7%	814	28.8%	813	30.2%
P Family	81	2.9%	90	3.2%	102	3.5%	101	3.6%	108	4.0%
CC Professional	26	0.9%	35	1.2%	32	1.1%	41	1.4%	32	1.2%
CC Family	4	0.1%	2	0.1%	2	0.1%	3	0.1%	2	0.1%
3 Yr Postdoc*	73	2.6%	46	1.6%	27	0.9%				
PostDoc	84	3.0%	103	3.6%	124	4.3%	147	5.2%	145	5.4%
PD Family	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	0.1%	3	0.1%
3 Yr Student	270	9.6%	281	9.9%	173	5.9%	128	4.5%	0	0.0%
Student	528	18.8%	536	18.9%	648	22.3%	571	20.2%	618	23.0%
S Family	2	0.1%	4	0.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
S Chapter	42	1.5%	17	0.6%	14	0.5%	20	0.7%	22	0.8%
K-12 Teachers	5	0.2%	6	0.2%	7	0.2%	11	0.4%	9	0.3%
Affiliate	21	0.7%	17	0.6%	18	0.6%	25	0.9%	18	0.7%
Associate	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.0%
Amateur	38	1.4%	32	1.1%	47	1.6%	51	1.8%	42	1.6%
3 Tr Dev. Nat	39	1.4%	19	0.7%						
Developing Nations	62	2.2%	60	2.1%	85	2.9%	68	2.4%	51	1.9%
	<b>2806</b>		<b>2831</b>		<b>2909</b>		<b>2830</b>		<b>2688</b>	

## V. IT Support

Our IT Manager spreads his time throughout the year on providing updates to the CiviCRM membership database, which is used for by BSA, ASPT, SEB and SSE for member data. He also assists with questions and revisions to our awards management system, which is now used by BSA, SSE, SSB, and ASPT. Very recently, he has been working on transitioning the IAPT membership data to CiviCRM, and BSA will be paid for his time to assist IAPT with that work.

Rob assists with Botany Conference needs where we spent a great deal of time this past year in evaluating potential systems for abstract submission and virtual conference platforms. He also works with me to manage our outsourced IT contract with Gadellnet to support our staff computers, troubleshoots and answers assists with set up of our awards management system for various awards and committee applications, and spends a good deal of time responding to threats/needed changes and ongoing server updates to our IT systems. See the IT Report for more details.

## **VI. BSA Management Support Services**

Working with their officer teams, four BSA staff members provide a range of support services to SEB and SSE. We write and deploy communications and membership campaigns and manage their membership databases, assist with their IT needs, and I attend their Board meetings and provide governance and management advice. These two societies will bring in \$76,500 to BSA during this calendar year. The last five months, Amelia, Rob, Johanne and I have assisted SEB leadership and their meeting organizers with their conference in Atlanta, Georgia. (May 29 – June 2) including abstract submission, meeting registration, and web site deployment. Amelia and I provided on-site registration and attendee support from June 3-7.

This past year, we have assisted SSE leadership with an evaluation of banking options and transitioned their bank accounts from Commerce to US Bank. After 7 years of service, the Society has a new Executive Vice President, and we have been involved in bringing him up-to-speed in several areas including membership, finances and banking details. At least one BSA staffer attends the two main SSE Council meetings during the year (January and June).

Individual reports for Publications, Membership, IT, Conference, and Education have been submitted as well.

Respectfully submitted,  
Heather Cacanindin  
Executive Director  
7/17/23