

Public Policy Committee

Kal Tuominen (Chair)

Krissa Skogen (Chair)

Andre Naranjo (Secretary)

Benjamin Blackman (Honorary)

Steven Callen (2018)

Meagan Philpott (2018)

Charlotte Germain-Aubrey (2018)

Ingrid Jordon-Thaden (2018)

Muriel Poston (2019)

Larry Huford (2019)

Sandra Knapp (2020)

Amy Litt (2020)

Andrew Pais *Student Representative* (2018)

Timothy Batz (2021)

Tanisha Williams (2021)

Report Topics for 2017-2018

- *Plant Science Bulletin* Public Policy Quarterly
- Botany 2018 Committee Meeting
- Skype Meeting Lists and Topics 2018-2019
- Letters that were signed
- Awards: Congressional Visits Day and Botany Advocacy Leadership Grant
- Committee Development and Planning

***Plant Science Bulletin* Public Policy Quarterly**

The Public Policy Committee has contributed pieces to the *Plant Science Bulletin* on the activities of the PPC, with the goals of increasing visibility of the Committee's activities and engaging the BSA membership policy items that are relevant to them.

- PSB 64 (3) 2018.
 - The 2018 BAL Grant recipient published the benefit he received from the award in the Fall 2018 issue of the *Plant Science Bulletin*. In the article, Dr. Roland Eberwein from the Carinthian Botanic Center explains how funding was used to update his microscopy camera technology in order to improve how he communicated information to public audiences attending a lecture-series—ensuring the continued operation of a historically important botanical garden in Austria.
 - Public Policy News article highlighting science and civic participation and how to effectively engage policy makers.
- PSB 65 (1) 2019. Public Policy News – Featured legislation, the Botany Bill, H.R. 1572.
- PSB 65 (2) 2019. BSA Public Policy Award recipients (Adam Schneider and Audrey Haynes) wrote testimonials for the *Plant Science Bulletin*.

Botany 2018 EPPC-ASPT/PPC-BSA Joint Committee Meeting

- Discussion to develop “Terms of reference” by joint secretary to help govern how BSA and American Society of Plant Taxonomists (ASPT) Public Policy committee/section interact and coordinate as a joint committee.
- In resuming talks of 5-year plan, a call was made to develop a survey to poll committee members on what they think their committees are and should be doing. The survey that has been developed and will be revisited at the next annual meeting.

15 July 2019

- There was discussion on how to improve the messaging of award call for the Botanical Advocacy Leadership Grant to promote proposals that directly impacted a public policy issue as opposed to promoting science policy indirectly through broader education projects.
- Botany Policy Network development discussion included the following themes:
 - Co-opt apps or collaborative platforms such as ScratchPads or iNaturalist
 - Organize a hierarchy of regional coordinators to connect committee and membership
 - Poll interested members on what information they'd like to receive out of this network
 - At this time, a paid intern to facilitate this network is not feasible, as it would require additional funds from both ASPT and BSA.
- Updates were given on an initial draft document related to the National Plant Sciences Initiative (NPSI), and initial discussion was made on who from joint-committee should be nominated to attend the upcoming NPSI meeting.

Joint EPPC/PPC Skype Meeting Lists and Topics 2018-2019

- November 19, 2018 meeting to: revisit progress on the 2019 policy awards cycle; draft roles and responsibilities document intended to provide some framework for long-term sustainability of the committee; draft committee statement on positions like evolution, climate change, and biodiversity for PSRN; and continue long-term planning of the Botany Policy Network.
- January – April 2019: email coordination of proposal review and decisions for the BSA Public Policy Award and Botany Advocacy Leadership Grant.

Signed Letters / Endorsements

- Following suit with the Society for the Study of Evolution, PPC leadership drafted letter in response to Department of Health and Human Services regarding their discriminatory definition of sex and gender
- BSA endorsement of reintroduced Botany Bill (H.R.1572)

Awards

- The joint EPPC committee received double the number of applicants compared to 2018 for BSA Public Policy Award/ASPT Congressional Visits Day Travel Grant thanks to improving the content and dissemination of the award call.
- An evaluation form for review of incoming proposals was developed and shared among reviewers to make sure the ranking criteria of for the BSA Public Policy Award was transparent and congruent with the original award call. This form optimized discussions and shortened the review process, and the template for the evaluation has been emulated for review of Botany Advocacy Leadership (BAL) grant proposals and future award cycles.
- 2019 BSA Public Policy Awards went to Adam Schneider and Audrey Haynes for traveling to D.C. in March. for AIBS Congressional Visits Day; covered all expenses.
- 2019 Botany Advocacy Leadership grant: \$1000 went to Else Demeulenaere in order to assist her in promoting Guam's biocultural diversity at the Guam Legislature. The committee will continue to work with Else to communicate the impacts of awarded grant, and we will continue to revisit how to make the award call clear while expediting advertisement and review processes.

Committee Development & Planning:

- Conversations among co-chairs this year highlighted a need to further clarify the long-term mission and structure of the joint committee and to establish a better internal “institutional memory”
 - Key challenge at this time is a combination of scope creep (e.g., Botany Policy Network) and limited volunteer capacity
- Mission & Vision, Roles & Responsibilities, and Five-Year Plan documents have been drafted for committee review/approval at Botany 2019 with this goal in mind