



# BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA

*Mission: The Botanical Society of America exists to promote botany, the field of basic science dealing with the study and inquiry into the form, function, development, diversity, reproduction, evolution, and uses of plants and their interactions within the biosphere.*

## I. 2021-2022 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 the challenges the Covid-19 pandemic has presented, the Society continues to thrive and meaningfully drive several new initiatives in the first year of our new strategic plan. We have three new staff members on our team, our bank accounts are in great shape, and conference attendance stands at over 1200 and climbing. I would like to thank the Board, section leadership, and committee chairs for their support, understanding and direction during this very productive year of growth and change. On behalf of the Board, the Society and myself, I also would like to thank our staff, including our new hires this year – Jennifer Hartley, Tricia Jackson and Sarah Sims. Your staff continues to work hard to deliver on the Society's mission and is invested in our new strategic plan in order to serve our members.

## II. Financial Update

BSA finances are strong. We ended FY2021 with a net operating income of \$252,792, which was much higher than the budgeted surplus of \$17,848 due to our receipt of Employee Retention Credits, a decrease in travel/meeting expenses as well as very strong investment earnings during that fiscal year.

FY2022 income is on track and a good portion of our expenses are happening this month with award checks and meeting expenditures. (Please see FY2022 Budget to Actual report).

### Key things to note about our FY2022 fiscal year performance:

- 1) Our overall income from membership dues is down 3.7% from last year at the same time.
- 2) Publication income will end the year about 4-5% more than the previous year due to an increase in our royalty from Wiley (unexpected back sales of the *AJB* in China)
- 3) Our salaries and benefits are returning to pre-pandemic amounts. You will recall that in FY2020 we received a PPP loan through the Missouri Botanical Garden which covered 2 months of salary for our staff. In FY2021, we received Employee Retention Credits.
- 4) Meeting income from the 2021 conference was better than projected and is reflected in our FY2022 income. (\$15,853 was the BSA share of the profit)
- 5) Grant income and expenses are greater than last year. Activity and spending for our F2 Education/PlantingScience grant has picked up and we have begun to incur expense for our Botany and Beyond: PLANTS III grant.
- 6) Travel and meeting expenses have picked up, but most expense from travel and conferences are yet to be recorded in the last three months of this fiscal year.

**As of June 30, 2022:**

BSA Conference Account: \$412,546  
BSA Checking Account: \$525,802  
BSA Money Market Account: \$507,595

\*Cash in our accounts is higher than normal and has been growing over the last two years. The conference account is yet to pay out most of the expenses for Botany 2022. We have also been building a cash buffer to help BSA withstand the upcoming cut to publications revenue.

**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 494 donations totaling \$49,633 in all categories. Though our number of donations has decreased compared to the same dates last year (494 vs 519) the total amount is almost the same as last year. Total BSA endowment giving so far is \$14,655, which came from 77 donors (a decrease of \$2,000 vs. the same period last year).

As of June 30, 2022, our BSA investment portfolio (BIP) stood at **\$6,945,685** which is significant (13.5%) decrease from last year.

**Society and Sectional Funds as part of the Total BIP  
Actuals as of September 30, 2021 (end of FY2021)**

<b>TOTAL MS Investment Portfolio</b>	<b>\$7,912,191</b>
Designated Funds (BSA/Sections)	\$2,125,405
Undesignated Funds	\$5,786,786
BSA Designated Funds	\$174,845
BSA Awards	\$1,834
BSA Endowment	\$640,050
BSA Restricted Funds	\$757,245
SUBTOTAL BSA Funds	\$1,573,974
Sectional Accounts	\$144,705
Sectional Awards	\$206,500
Sectional Endowments/Restricted	\$200,226
SUBTOTAL Sectional Funds	\$551,431

*\*these figures will be updated again at the end of the fiscal year on September 30, 2022*

**III. Governance**

This has been an exciting and productive time for our organization. After the Council and members approved the new strategic plan in July 2021, the staff set about putting together an implementation plan for Year One, which required input from several parties. We embarked on those tasks for FY2022. I have been overseeing progress on the plan for the past year.

Since August, I have been working on the onboarding of several new staff members. Jennifer Hartley joined us in August in the role of Education Supervisor assisting Catrina Adams with the

F-2 / PlantingScience grant. She brings a wealth of knowledge from her time as a middle and high school teacher to the program. Tricia Jackson, CPA, replaced our long-time Accounting Manager Wanda Lovan and has quickly gotten up-to-speed with all of our accounting needs and made several recommendations for efficiencies and improvements. We have been able to use outside accountants less, due to the skills and expertise she brings to us. Finally, Catrina and I spearheaded the hiring process for the new DEI Outreach Programs Coordinator. This position is 80% grant-funded by the Botany and Beyond grant. We had over twenty candidates apply and the PIs on this grant were also involved in the interview process. Sarah Sims joined our staff in April and assists with the B&B grant as well as coordinates and carries out some of our new initiatives in DEI like facilitating affinity group meet-ups at BOTANY conference.

One of my goals was to secure a favorable new publishing agreement for our peer-reviewed publications. We understood that the new publishing agreement would not be as favorable as we would like; and handling the negotiations with Wiley for our publications contract has taken a significant amount of time. The offer from Wiley did significantly increase from May 2021 through our final acceptance in February 2022. It was a long slog of negotiations and financial analysis. The BSA Board was attentive and active throughout the process. We are now in the contract negotiation phase, working with our legal counsel and theirs to iron out all the details within the publishing contract. I am thankful to have Amy McPherson's keen eye and experience to lend to this task and Susan Carlson, our lawyer, who has previous experience with publication agreements with several commercial publishers.

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. We launched this effort last fall, and brought together an Ad Hoc Committee representing many different areas including Public Policy, Education, PUI, Teaching Section, DEI Committee, Early Career Professional Development Committee, student reps, etc. Our Membership Manager, Amelia Neely, has since taken over leading those meetings and ensuring that a continuous stream of worthwhile content is happening. Learn more about Botany360 in her Membership Report. I am very excited about upcoming events in the works, including a Careers Panel on Jobs at Botanical Gardens as well as an Applying To Graduate School online workshop.

I have also been participating in biweekly meetings with the Co-PIs of the Botany and Beyond: PLANTS III grant. The PIs are Anna Monfils, Muriel Poston and Catrina Adams. It has been a heavy lift to kick off this new \$1.2 million grant, plan for Botany 2022 grant-related events, workshops, revamp application forms, and hire and train a program coordinator to assist with the grant. A meeting was held in April with the Advisory Committee for this grant and we have brought 12 PLANTS Scholars and 7 community college educators. A new mentoring application was launched for the PLANTS program and this allowed us to improve the matching process of scholars and mentors. 24 mentors are part of the program this year and both scholars and mentors received training prior to the conference.

More recently, we have been able to resurrect the Financial Advisory Committee and its role in assisting the Treasurer and Board in reviewing the finances and budget of the organization. I provided background materials and held an orientation with the committee members early this spring and Lucinda and I were able to meet with the committee to review the FY2023 budget and answer their questions as well as hear their input. This is an important development for financial and strategic oversight for the organization.

Finally, in a very exciting development, I was able to work with an anonymous donor and our BSA officers to accept a large gift of stock, amounting to over \$300,000! BSA has such generous members who truly care about supporting the next generation and the Society for the future. This gift and the gift agreement prepared, sets up an endowed award that will provide at least one Graduate Student Dissertation Award in Comparative Plant Biology of \$10,000 annually. We are in the process of selecting an award committee, the award description has been finalized and the first recipient will be chosen in early spring of 2023. We look forward to announcing this at the Awards Ceremony at the conference.

Other items I have been working on are this year:

- Working with the President-Elect and Committee on Committees on the revamped committee application and appointment process
- Completing the performance review process for all staff members
- Working with the AISES staff as we began our collaboration on their LEAPS grant “Indigenous Voices”
- Conference planning and oversight for Botany 2022 and contractual revisions
- Supporting the BSA nominations and election process
- Assisted with the hiring and contracts for new editors for *APPS* and *AJB*
- Researching Directors & Officers insurance coverage and options for BSA which led to a recommendation to reduce our coverage from \$5 million to \$2 million and savings to the Society for insurance expenses
- Working with sectional and committee leadership to set up all the BSA and sectional awards for 2022
- Participating in the Root & Shoot LEAPS grant through their diversity training sessions
- Planning and work with SEB leadership for their June 2022 conference in Jamaica
- Preparation for and attendance at two SSE Council meetings

#### IV. Membership

We had three consecutive years of membership growth through 2021 and in 2022 it looks like we have plateaued. 2022 mid-year totals are almost exactly the same as 2020, and slightly down (by 78 members) from 2021. Looking at the membership totals at the end of the last 5 years you can see a slight upward trend with year-end totals at 3024, 3142 and 3214 members from the previous three years. The year-end gift membership push was quite a success, exceeding its goal. Please see the Membership and Communications Report for more information.

**Recommendation 1:** It is recommended that we again hold a “new” student membership drive, in which any of our members can provide a gift membership at the rate of \$10 per student.

**Recommendation 2:** Dues increase. It is with great thought that we put forth the recommendation to slightly increase the membership dues for certain membership levels for the 2023 renewal season starting on October 1, 2022. The BSA dues have not changed since 2014, and with decreasing publications revenue, along with increased inflation and rising costs for everything from software to travel, we believe that changing the following membership fees is necessary.

Professional One-Year Membership = **\$75** (was \$70)

Professional One-Year Membership with GSRA donation = **\$100** (was \$95)

Professional One-Year Family Membership = **\$100** (was \$85)

Professional One-Year Family Membership with GSRA donation = **\$125** (was \$110)

Professional Three-Year Membership = **\$205** (was \$195)

Professional Three-Year Membership with GSRA donation = **\$280** (was \$270)

Professional Three-Year Family Membership = **\$280** (was \$240)

Professional Three-Year Family Membership with GSRA donation = **\$355** (was \$315)

Retired Membership = **\$40** (was \$35)

Retired Family Membership = **\$55** (was \$50)

## Membership Overview as of July 1 each year

	as of 7/1/22		as of 7/1/21		7/1/20		7/1/19	
	<b>2022</b>	% of Total	<b>2021</b>	% of Total	<b>2020</b>	% of Total	<b>2019</b>	% of Total
Corresponding	73	2.6%	69	2.4%	69	2.4%	65	2.4%
Life	107	3.8%	96	3.3%	91	3.2%	82	3.1%
Emeritus	311	11.0%	301	10.3%	282	10.0%	278	10.3%
E Family	46	1.6%	43	1.5%	42	1.5%	39	1.5%
Retired	67	2.4%	65	2.2%	63	2.2%	53	2.0%
R Family	4	0.1%	2	0.1%	4	0.1%	2	0.1%
3 Yr Professional	252	8.9%	287	9.9%	275	9.7%	287	10.7%
3 Yr Prof Family	18	0.6%	20	0.7%	21	0.7%	18	0.7%
Professional	705	24.9%	747	25.7%	814	28.8%	813	30.2%
P Family	90	3.2%	102	3.5%	101	3.6%	108	4.0%
CC Professional	35	1.2%	32	1.1%	41	1.4%	32	1.2%
CC Family	2	0.1%	2	0.1%	3	0.1%	2	0.1%
3 Yr Postdoc*	46	1.6%	27	0.9%				
PostDoc	103	3.6%	124	4.3%	147	5.2%	145	5.4%
PD Family	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	0.1%	3	0.1%
3 Yr Student	281	9.9%	173	5.9%	128	4.5%	0	0.0%
Student	536	18.9%	648	22.3%	571	20.2%	618	23.0%
S Family	4	0.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
S Chapter	17	0.6%	14	0.5%	20	0.7%	22	0.8%
K-12 Teachers	6	0.2%	7	0.2%	11	0.4%	9	0.3%
Affiliate	17	0.6%	18	0.6%	25	0.9%	18	0.7%
Associate	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.0%
Amateur	32	1.1%	47	1.6%	51	1.8%	42	1.6%
3 Tr Dev. Nat	19	0.7%						
Developing Nations	60	2.1%	85	2.9%	68	2.4%	51	1.9%
	<b>2831</b>		<b>2909</b>		<b>2830</b>		<b>2688</b>	
Professional	1938	68.5%	2002	68.8%	2024	71.5%	1978	73.6%
Student	838	29.6%	835	28.7%	719	25.4%	640	23.8%
Other	55	1.9%	72	2.5%	87	3.1%	70	2.6%
<i>Growth/Decline</i>	<b>2831</b>		<b>2909</b>		<b>2830</b>		<b>2688</b>	
	as of 7/1/22		as of 7/1/21		as of 7/1/20		as of 7/1/20	

## V. IT Support

Our IT Manager spreads his time throughout the year on providing updates to the CiviCRM 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. He 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 worked with Amelia to create the user-friendly Botany 360 event calendar as

well as implementing a more secure election/ballot system for 2022 BSA Elections. It is important to note that Rob 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 few months, Amelia, Rob, Johanne and I have assisted SEB leadership and their meeting organizers with their conference in Mona, Jamaica (May 29 – June 2) including abstract submission, meeting registration, and web site deployment.

In addition, we were approached by SSE regarding managing the books for their Evolution conference. The Conference Manager they contract with can no longer manage the books for their meeting and Tricia and I agreed that their needs appear to be minimal. Their Conference Manager continues to handle invoicing and check writing and Tricia (our Accounting Manager) handles Quickbooks entries once each month and conducts an annual reconciliation. We are trying this out on a trial basis and have charged \$2500 to SSE for this service.

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

Respectfully submitted,  
Heather Cacanindin  
Executive Director  
7/18/22