

## **2021-2022 BSA President's Report** (selected highlights, in no particular order, sorry)

We have continued our implementation of the BSA's Strategic Plan. Heather Cacanindin and her staff have developed a concrete implementation plan and timeline for accomplishing the very many goals we have set for ourselves.

We have launched Botany360, a community event calendar for online BSA activities throughout the year. This year we hosted workshops on careers in botany, submitting an abstract and talk title for a scientific conference, publication in BSA journals, etc. Many thanks to Amelia Neely for taking the lead on this project.

We are providing new support for our publications, including editorial stipends and support for author publication charges for financially strapped authors, especially those in the global south. We are very excited to have appointed a new Editor for APPS, Briana Gross. Many thanks to Emily Sessa and her committee for this accomplishment!

Our contract negotiations with Wiley have been ongoing throughout the year. This has been a complicated back-and-forth over the exact terms of the agreement, led superbly by Heather and Amy McPherson in consultation with our lawyer and an outside consulting group, Clark and Esposito. Journal publication is a complicated and rapidly-changing landscape, and we have done our best to secure the best possible deal with Wiley.

Our new Botany & Beyond NSF grant (\$1.2 million) has officially started and planning and activities are well underway. We are especially grateful to the PIs on the grant, Anna Monfils, Muriel Poston, and Catrina Adams.

We provided \$10,000 to the BSA sections to assist with travel awards and sectional programming.

We have had productive meetings this year with our Investment Committee (Toby Kellogg, Chair) and with our Finance Advisory Committee (Larry Hufford, Chair), and with the two together to help facilitate their coordination. Importantly, given budgetary challenges and our desire to expand efforts in relation to our strategic plan, these committees have evaluated and approved the idea of making regular annual draws on our investment account. We have approval to make a 2% draw in FY2022, but have not yet had the need to do so.

We have been actively involved in two NSF LEAPS (Leading Cultural Change through Scientific Societies) projects that have gotten off the ground this year: Root & Shoot and Indigenous Voices. Many thanks to Chelsea Specht, Anna Monfils and Catrina Adams for their efforts!

We have been in conversation with our Mexican colleagues about establishing various collaborations. In late September we hope to present a workshop on publication in BSA journals (led by Amy McPherson) at the Mexican Botanical Congress in Puebla, Mexico. We are also discussing a possible joint symposium for our 2023 meeting in Boise.

We successfully hired a DEI Outreach Programs Coordinator, Sarah Sims, who is spending much of her time assisting with the Botany and Beyond project.

We are thrilled to have received a major anonymous donation (~\$300,000) to set up an endowed research award for graduate students. This ~\$10,000 award will be given annually in the broad area of

comparative plant biology (using a phylogenetic approach at any level or organization). We are in the process of establishing the committee to evaluate applications. Many thanks to Jennifer Cruse-Sanders for her work in establishing this extraordinarily generous gift.

In September, 2021, we signed a letter in support of the establishment of visas for foreign-born STEM professionals, and in March, 2022, we crafted a well-received statement in support of Ukraine.

We helped to sponsor and participated in an AIBS workshop organized by Jyotsna Pandey and BSA member Rachel Meyer on the Nagoya Protocol and the international sharing of DNA sequence data.

With help from Cindi Jones and Vivian Negrón-Ortiz, I evaluated the performance of our Executive Director, Heather Cacanindin, and established her new salary with the Missouri Botanical Garden.

With Board approval we worked with the Missouri Botanical Garden to obtain special merit payments for our BSA staff members, in recognition of their special efforts during the Covid pandemic.

Under the leadership of Vivian Negrón-Ortiz, the Committee on Committees carried out its work and filled the various open slots. This was the second year in which we used a new committee application procedure, and again this worked well.

Several concerns were expressed this year about the suitability of individuals who were selected for particular BSA awards. We have taken these inputs very seriously and have been examining our policies and procedures for making these important choices. However, there is still much to be done to modify these procedures and to update our BSA Guidelines for Professional Ethics.

Chris Pires stepped down as BSA Secretary in June, 2022. With the approval of the BSA Board and Executive Committee, we approached Norm Wickett (who was on the ballot in the last election) about the possibility of stepping into this position. We are extremely grateful to Norm for accepting this responsibility starting in September. Per BSA Bylaws, he can fill out the remainder of Chris' term.

Planning for our first-ever hybrid conference in Anchorage took loads of extra time and effort. We are extremely grateful to Melanie Link-Perez and Johanne Strogan for their extraordinary efforts, and to the entire Program Planning Committee for being so responsive to concerns about safety and making key policy adjustments throughout the process.

In closing, it has been a great honor and learning experience to serve this year as President of BSA. It has also been a tremendous pleasure owing to the wonderful leadership and support of our Executive Director, Heather Cacanindin, and the entire BSA staff. And, it has been fun and enlightening to interact regularly with presidents Cindi Jones, Vivian Negrón-Ortiz, and Linda Watson. Our botanical community is extremely well served by this amazing team!

Respectfully submitted on July 20, 2022



Michael Donoghue  
President of the Botanical Society of America