Botanical Society of America
Education Committee
Report to the Council
August 1, 1999

The committee continued work on several major projects:

**Improvement of Pre-College Science Education**

**GOAL:** To support the improvement of science education through participation at conventions of science teachers.

**STATUS:** Again this year, the Education Committee and the Teaching Section cooperated in representing the BSA at annual meetings of the National Association of Biology Teachers in Reno, NV (November 4-7, 1998) and the National Science Teachers Association in Boston (March 24-28, 1999). Rob Reinsvold has written a full report of these activities which are summarized here.

NABT: Rob Reinsvold and Ethel Stanley presented a workshop for secondary and community college teachers, “Leave It to the Plants.” The room had a capacity of 50 persons but an additional 30-40 teachers stood around the edges of the room. Teachers asked for more workshops of this type.

NSTA: Rob, Ethel, and J. Shipman staffed the BSA booth. This was strategically located adjacent to booths sponsored by ASPP, American Phytopathological Society, Wisconsin Fast Plants, and C-Fern. This area was dubbed “The Plant Place” by convention participants and was very popular. Conference attendance totaled 21,154 teachers (of all the sciences) and we had direct contact with approximately 1,500 of them. Visitors to our booth started their own pocket gardens which were attached to their name badges. Each “garden” had an onion set with a label containing the BSA logo and the URL of our web site. In the course of several days the onion sets produced roots and shoots and the teachers learned how they could be used to teach a variety of principles of plant biology. A survey of booth visitors indicated a need for more workshops and hands-on plant lessons. Rob’s excellent report contains more details.

This outreach was supported by a $5,000 appropriation to our committee by last year’s Council. The success of this outreach effort attests to the need for expansion of these efforts. Rob and Ethel have been accepted as workshop presenters at the 1999 meeting of NABT, October 27-30 in Fort Worth, TX. We will not have a booth at that meeting because we missed the reservation deadline. The appropriation requested below includes funds for a booth at the NABT meeting in 2000 (October 25-28, Orlando, FL) because we must reserve space and pay for it before next summer’s meeting of Council. If funds are appropriated (motion below), we will participate again at the NSTA meeting, April 6–9, 2000 in Orlando, FL. Again, we have asked to be located
adjacent to the other societies. If we can find BSA members who are willing to attend regional conferences of these organizations, we want to encourage that.

Motion: That the Council approves a sum, not to exceed $10,400 (for travel, lodging, registration fees, and booth rental) for selected BSA members to attend national, regional, or state meetings of organizations like the National Association of Biology Teachers and National Science Teachers Association for the purpose of presenting workshops on plant biology in the K-12 curriculum and distributing educational materials in support of expanding the quantity and quality of plant biology. The proposed budget is on the next page:
### 1999-2000 PROPOSED BUDGET

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<tr>
<td>NABT: Booth</td>
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<td>BSA Volunteers (3 X $1000)</td>
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<td>Handout Materials</td>
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<td><strong>Sub-Total</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>NSTA*: Booth</td>
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<td>BSA Volunteers (3 X $1000)</td>
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<td>Handout Materials</td>
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<td><strong>Sub-Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$5400</strong></td>
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**TOTAL** $10,400

*Expenses at NSTA are higher because it is a much larger conference (more attendees) and, therefore, tends to be in places that charge more for exhibit space.

If the Council approves the expenditure, the Education Committee will select members to represent BSA in these activities and will authorize payments upon proof that the workshops and other outreach activities were performed as proposed.

**Digitized Botanical Images**

**GOAL:** To digitize the BSA's collection of 35mm slides, then to make the images available through a web page or CD-ROM or both.

**STATUS:** Thomas W. Jurik (Dept. of Botany, Iowa State University) chaired a subcommittee in charge of this project. Tom and David T. Webb (Botany Dept., University of Hawaii) have finished digitizing the slides. Scott Russell is nearly finished putting them on the BSA website. Temporary access for beta testing is at [http://129.15.38.204/bsa/images.html](http://129.15.38.204/bsa/images.html). We have asked for a permanent address and expect to get approval for [http://images.botany.org/bsa/images.html](http://images.botany.org/bsa/images.html). This collection consists of **799 images in 14 categories**. Some work on the web site remains to be done, but the initial databases are finished and a search engine is built. Each of the images is available as a thumbnail, medium resolution (640 x 480 range, i.e., a screen-full) and high resolution (1600 x 1200 range, i.e., more than a screen-full!).

Many of the captions need to be expanded now that the slides are available to teachers and students who may not be as familiar with the subject matter. Scott is programming a limited-access editing function so we can expand and correct the captions. We are enlisting the help of several Education Committee members and volunteers in that phase.

The Education Committee (and all members of BSA) are indebted to Tom and David for digitizing the slides and to Scott Russell for designing and mounting the web site. We think all members will find the images useful in their teaching and will be proud of having made this collection available to teachers throughout the world.
The Education Committee wants to expand this collection of images and is working with Scott Russell to determine the best way of doing that in the coming year.

**Participation in Workshops of Project Kaleidoscope (PKAL)**

**GOAL:** The Botanical Society should cooperate with other professional societies in plant biology to improve undergraduate education in the life sciences.

**STATUS:** David Kramer and Gordon Uno and other members of BSA will be participating in two round table discussions sponsored here at IBC by Project Kaleidoscope. Organized by Susan Singer, these discussions are scheduled for **7 am to 8:45 am on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings in the East Room of the Holiday Inn Select.** The goals are “1) to identify critical issues in plant biology education for college and university faculty and 2) to create an agenda for a 3 day plant biology education workshop to be held in Keystone the week of July 16, 2000.”

**Additional Goals for 1999-2000:**

**GOAL:** To **publish hands-on, discovery-type plant biology exercises** for use in schools as well as at colleges and universities. These could be published on our website and/or in hard copy.

**GOAL:** To offer assistance to publishers who are seeking **professional review of manuscripts** for plant biology books. We want to make sure the plant biology content is correct **before** it is published.

**Final Comment**

In addition to its appointed members, the Education Committee has a number of volunteers who help with various projects. **Any member who wants to be actively involved with any of the committee projects should contact the chair.**

The chair thanks all members and volunteers of the committee for their support and especially thanks the officers of BSA for supporting the work of this committee and encouraging the BSA to be more active in educational outreach.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. David W. Kramer, Chair

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