2014 has been an eventful year for student members of the Botanical Society of America. This year, we welcome Angela McDonnell as the incoming Student Representative to the Board.

The student representatives have spearheaded a few new activities this year and continue to support several ongoing events. First is the development of the Student Involvement Committee. The goal of this committee is to provide an easy, friendly way for students to communicate directly with us and each other. This helps us mold, shape, or create events based on the students’ ideas and comments and also allows the student representatives to expand the audience. Most notably, the format in which the student luncheon will be carried out this year was due to feedback by the committee. We currently have 25 members, 12 of which follow and keep up with us on Facebook. We continue to look for new members.

In April 2014, Morgan Gostel met with the second annual awardees of the BSA Public Policy Award in Washington, D.C. to help facilitate our ongoing participation with the AIBS and BESC Congressional Visits Day event. You can read a summary of our experiences with members of Congress in the Summer 2014 edition of the Plant Science Bulletin.

In May 2014, Morgan Gostel met with members of the Publications committee as part of a series of Skype calls to reenvision the next one hundred years of the American Journal of Botany. The results of these discussions have been shared in the report from the director-at-large for Publications, Sean Graham.

At this year’s meetings the student representatives are organizing three events. Two are longstanding – the student involvement in botany luncheon and the annual student social and networking event. The third event is new this year and gives students an opportunity to develop communication skills by crafting an elevator speech and sharing it with participants.

Looking toward the future, student representatives, Morgan Gostel, Angela McDonnell, and Jon Giddens plan to join the strategic planning session discussions to explore the role of our student membership in this process. Our current student membership will, as we can expect, transition into the future of this society and we therefore expect to continue to develop means to remain meaningful and relevant to these members at early stages of their career as well as support and encourage their continued growth. Cultivating this relationship with student members is going to be an important part of attaining our strategic planning goals. Focal areas will include cooperation with other parts of membership and the board to involve students in the
development of information technology, outreach, and awards. This will help students identify the BSA as a community that offers opportunities to enrich their work at an early time in their career as well as one that will continue to support their future plans.

Thanks,

Morgan Gostel
Jon Giddens
Angela McDonnell