Botanical Society of America

Education Committee Annual Report

July 19, 2015

EDUCATION COMMITTEE (6 appointed members; 3 year terms)


The Education Committee focused its efforts on continuing development of the PlantED Digital Library Resource and discussions of an outreach activity being planned for Botany 2016 in Savannah, GA.

The PlantEd website is now fully functional. After identifying a number of small glitches in the system, we now have a smooth workflow system in place to monitor the progress of manuscripts from their submission through the final review process. There were several discussions among editors about ways to modify and speed the review process. While this may be necessary for some of the portals, there does not appear to be a need to change the review process for PlantED. We are in continuing discussion with other members of the Life Discovery Network for planning and participation in the Life Discovery Conference tentatively planned from mid-March in Baltimore, MD.

The Education Committee also had preliminary discussions about sponsoring a competition among student chapters to develop a botany outreach activity that can be used at the Botany 2016 meeting. Although planning is still in the preliminary stage, the basic idea is to have student chapters develop a “trunk” activity that would be appropriate for a science outreach event at museum or similar venue. Submissions will be presented at Botany 2016 and prizes awarded for the top three activities. Detailed planning and discussion of logistics, criteria, awards/prizes, and judging for this competition will begin at the Botany 2015 Education Committee meeting.

At the Annual Meeting in Boise, the Education Committee sponsored a symposium titled, “Vision & Change in Undergraduate Botany Education” on Tuesday afternoon. The five speakers presented how the AAAS Vision and Change Report has been used to drive changes in undergraduate botany education in their individual courses and research programs, as well as larger departmental curricula. The symposium was well attended and concluded with an engaging discussion among panelists and audience members.

There were no nominees for the Bessey Award this year.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Phil Gibson

Chair, BSA Education Committee