

Spring 2025: Student Representatives Board Report
Botanical Society of America

Josh Felton (2023 - 2025)

Ben Ajayi (2024 - 2026)

| | |
|---|----------|
| STUDENT RESEARCH GRANTS | 1 |
| STUDENT MEMBERSHIP | 2 |
| BOTANY 2024 RECAP | 3 |
| Summary | 3 |
| Evaluating proposal to increase student participation in symposia and colloquia | 4 |
| Event Recap | 5 |
| LOOKING FORWARD - BOTANY 2025 | 6 |
| Conference events | 6 |
| Networking | 6 |
| OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS | 6 |
| Plant Science Bulletin | 6 |
| Committee applications | 7 |
| Connecting with Student Members | 7 |

STUDENT RESEARCH GRANTS

Total investment in student grants peaked in 2023, but BSA was still able to support 32 students' research. Especially in these uncertain times, with the attempts to dismantle higher education, BSA's commitment to our values, building community, and providing research for student grants are essential for students to be able to do their research. We recognize that the amount of money available to be allocated towards student research awards is reliant on fundraising efforts, and we hope BSA can sustain these high funding levels in the long term. Additionally, we encourage the development committee to explore new funding sources, such as sponsorships from companies like PacBio or Illumina, for example, a "PacBio Biodiversity Genomics Grant."

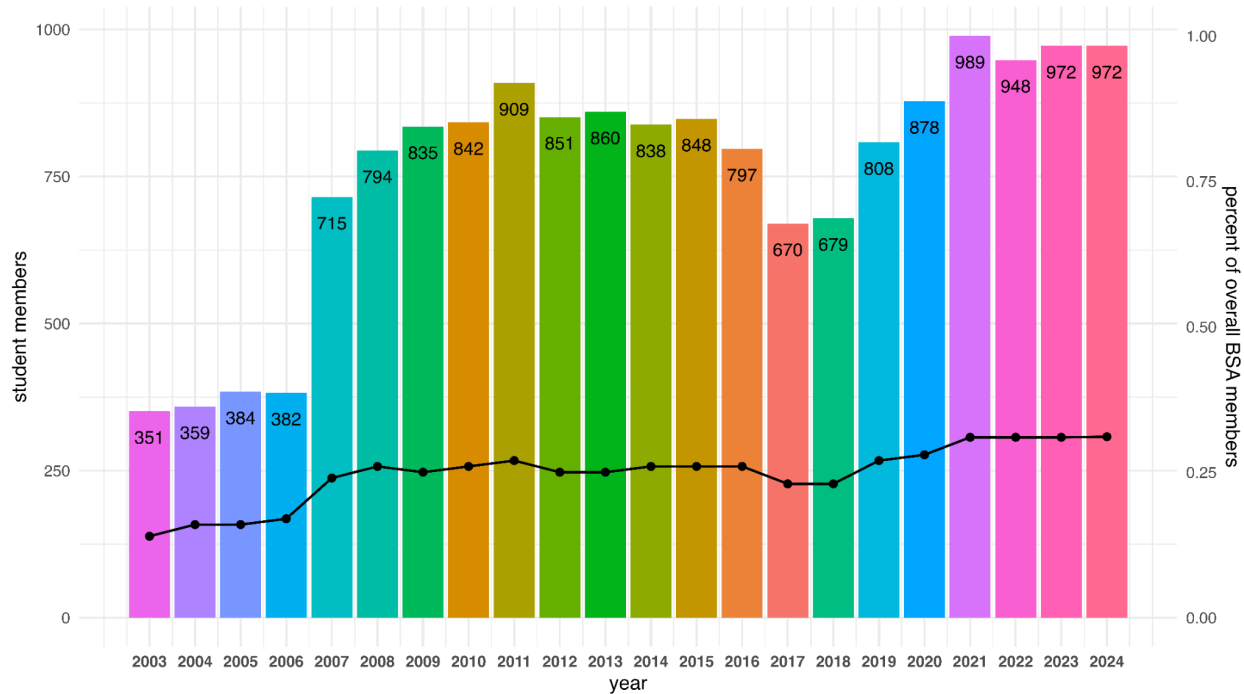
| Award | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <i>BSA Graduate Research</i> | \$500 | \$500 | \$1,500 | \$1,500 | \$1,500 | \$1,500 | \$1,500 | \$1,500 |
| <i>Count</i> | 20 | 20 | 20 | 27 | 40 | 32 | 32 | 25 |
| <i>BSA Undergrad Research</i> | \$200 | \$200 | \$200 | \$200 | \$200 | \$500 | \$500 | \$500 |
| <i>Count</i> | 4 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 12 | 6 | 6 | 4 |
| <i>Kaplan</i> | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$10,000 | \$10,000 | \$10,000 | \$10,000 |
| <i>AJ Harris</i> | | | | | | | | \$1,200 |
| <i>Phylogenetic Comp. Pl. Bio.</i> | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | \$10,000 | \$10,000 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Total | \$10,800 | \$10,000 | \$31,000 | \$51,500 | \$72,400 | \$61,000 | \$71,000 | \$60,700 |
|-------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|

This Fall/Winter, we collaborated with Amelia on the GSRA Fundraising campaign to share stories of how the award has helped past recipients complete their research. Moving forward, we hope to expand our collaboration to encourage more GSRA giving. One idea is to have award recipients do a takeover on Bluesky to showcase their research, along with short video clips sharing what the GSRA means to them.

STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

Similar to the previous years, student members continue to make up ~31% of total membership. In 2024, the distribution of student memberships has shifted: 38% now hold a 3-year membership (up from 33%), 56% have a one year membership (down from 64%), and 5% have a chapter membership (up from 3%).



These trends continue to reflect the high student engagement in the society and highlight the importance of the student population for the society, both for student membership and for conversions from student to other membership types.

In the last year, we have taken many steps to create opportunities for students to continue to engage them in the society and maintain membership:

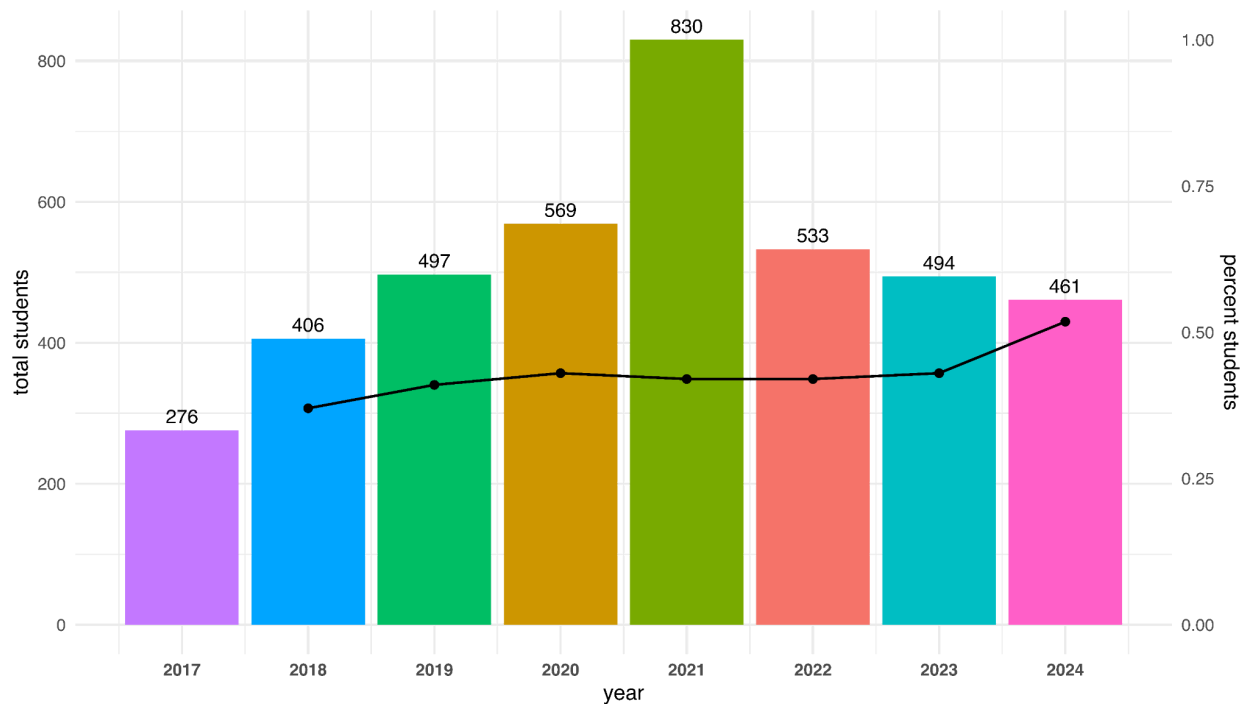
- We continued to compile student resources in a Google Doc and actively interacted with student members via Bluesky.
- The Early Career Professional Development Committee has been active and working on professional development events for our members.

- We held another successful GRFP workshop in Fall 2024
- Planning an upcoming industry career panel this May

BOTANY 2024 RECAP

Summary

The Botany 2024 conference student attendance was similar to pre pandemic numbers and Botany 2023, with 461 registered students. **Students made up 52% of the total conference attendees!** This increase was most likely due to IBC, but emphasizes the importance of the conference as a place of networking and career development for students.



General:

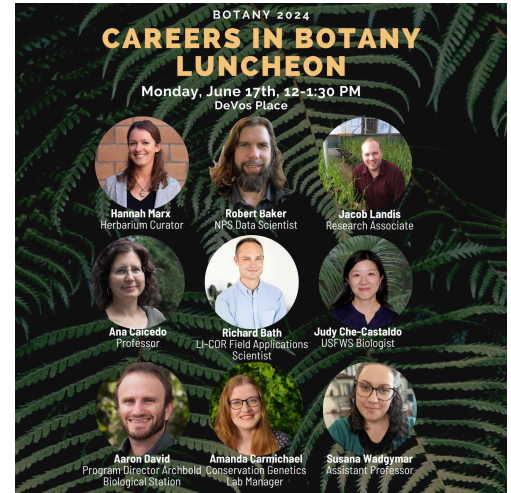
- 461 student attendees
- The percentage of graduate/undergraduate students attending the conference has grown and we hope to see that percentage get even larger!

Key takeaways:

- Students continue to make up a large percentage of conference attendees averaging at 42% of total attendees over the last five years. This means we must understand their conference needs to continue to serve this population and maintain their engagement in the conference.

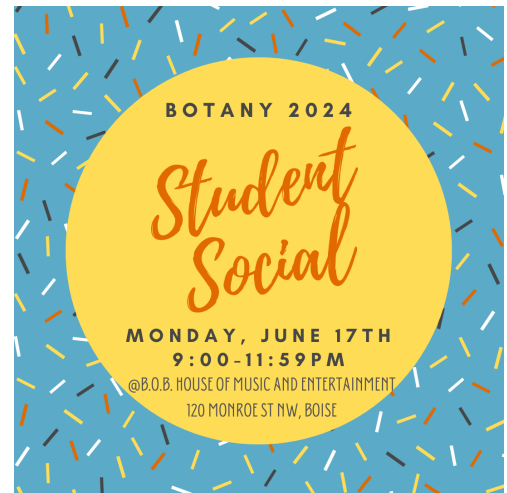
Event Recap

Career in Botany Luncheon: At the Careers in Botany Luncheon, we had 9 panelists with careers in academia, government, non-governmental organizations, herbaria, botanical gardens and industry. They represented the spectrum of career stages, and collectively, they work in 8 US states. A total of 82 students attended. [Profiles were added to Botany.org.](#)



Student Social and Networking Event:

We had 137 students who attended the social (similar attendance to 2023).



Botany 2024 Networking Board: For our conference's Networking Board, we only had two postings. This year we will make sure to advertise the virtual networking board on both Bluesky and at the student social and other events.



LOOKING FORWARD - BOTANY 2025

Conference events

- Workshop - Version control, the Git/GitHub workflow and creating a website with Github pages
- Careers in Botany Luncheon
- Student Social
- BSA Student Chapter Meet-up

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

Plant Science Bulletin

Summer 2024

Felton J. and Hartung E. 2024. Student Section. Plant Science Bulletin 70(1): 93 – 94.

- Advertised conference events for 2024

Fall 2024

Felton J and Benjamin A. 2024. Student Section. Plant Science Bulletin 70(3): 302 – 303.

- Recapped events from Botany 2024 and shared feedback

Spring 2025

Felton J. and Benjamin A. 2025. Student Section. Plant Science Bulletin 70(4):

- Emphasized BSA's commitment to community and our values
- Highlighted the grants/internships/workshops available to students in the "Roundup of Funding Opportunities"
- Botany 2025 reminder and mini guide to the conference
- Shared new articles in the Papers to Read for Future Leaders section

Committee applications

We had five open positions for student representatives (in addition to the board representative) on various BSA committees. These positions were advertised through the student newsletter and on Bluesky.

- **Committee for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**
- **Education Committee**
- **Investment Committee**
- **Public Policy Committee**
- **Publications committee**



Josh Felton

@botanyballer.bsky.social

Five @botsocamerica.bsky.social committees have student rep openings this year!

Plus, apps are open for the 2025–2027 Board Student Rep position as my term ends this summer!

Passionate about botany? Get involved! Reach out if you have any questions regarding the committees/application form!

Botany360

We are also planning another “Preparing for Botany” Botany 360 event to help students, especially those who have not yet attended a conference, plan for Botany 2025.

Tentative on event dates, but planning for mid to late June.

Connecting with Student Members

We continue to update the [BSA Student Resources Google Doc](#).