

Summer 2024: Student Representatives Board Report

The Botanical Society of America

Officers

Outgoing: Eli Hartung (2022-2024)
Current: Joshua Felton (2023-2025)
Incoming: Benjamin Ajayi (2024-2026)

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Annual Botany Conference: Botany 2024

Student Registrations

- The number of students registered was 429 as of June 4th. This is a slight decrease compared to the 494 student registrations from last year. The registration numbers are similar to last year even with IBC occurring this summer. Students make up 52% of total attendees, greater than the student attendance percentages for 2019-2022 of about 43% and similar to last year (53%).

Student Events

1. Careers in Botany Luncheon (June 17th, 12:00pm - 1:30pm)

- We are following a world cafe format where students will be sitting at tables and the panelists will rotate between tables during the luncheon. At the end, we will come together and share insights learned with the larger group
- This year we have 12 professionals confirmed so far. The current panelists come from various careers and career stages. Our panelists are:
 - Jacob Landis, research associate
 - Hannah Marx, herbarium curator
 - Amanda Carmichael, Conservation Genetics Laboratory Manager
 - Judy Che-Castaldo, USFWS biologist
 - Susana Wadgymar, PUI professor
 - Robert Baker, NPS data scientist
 - Aaron David, Archbold biological station director
 - Seton Bachle, LICOR product manager
 - Ana Caicedo, Full professor

- 77 students were registered for this event as of June 4th.

2. Data Analysis and Visualization In R (June 16th, 8:00 am - 5:00 pm)

- This year, the student reps are hosting a Data analysis and visualization


workshop. We will be using the programming language R, a skill that most biology disciplines use in some form.

- Other than Eli and Josh, Gregory Pec, and Malu Ore-Rengifo will help run this workshop which will have four sections:
 - Part one #1: data cleaning
 - Part two #2: simple data analysis
 - Part three #3: ggplot2 and other main plotting techniques
 - Part four #4: hands-on group work with participants' own data or example datasets we will provide to practice building plots

3. Student Social (June 17th, 9pm - 11:59pm)

We will have a Wiley-sponsored student social at The B.O.B. (Big Old Building), 20 Monroe Ave NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503. 105 students have registered for the social as of June 4th.

5. Facilitated Networking

-  2024 - Virtual Networking Board
 - We have set up a virtual networking board for folks looking for positions and those with positions open!


Connecting with Student Members outside of Botany:

Botany360:

How to Be a Successful BSA Student Rep (January 26th, 2024)

- We gave a presentation outlining the BSA Student Rep position description, requirements, the election process, and examples of candidate bios submitted, and held a Q&A for interested students.
- This event was not recorded to make sure that students asked questions freely, but presentation slides from previous iterations are available on the Botany360 website

General Update

-  BSA Student Members Resources (updated January 2024)
- Plant Science Bulletin

Student rep BOTANY workshop funding request

- In light of the great response we have gotten in the past about the workshops we have organized for the conference, we are asking the board if we can set aside some funding for the workshops in the future so we can bring in and support workshop presenters.

Fall PSB Issue

- Botany Conference 2023 overview
- Advice from the Career in Botany Luncheon
- Heard at the Planting the Seeds of Science Communication Workshop
- Papers to Read for Future Leaders

Spring PSB Issue

- Highlight of our Botany360 event “How to be a Successful BSA Student Representative”
- BSA Spotlight series feature

Summer PSB Issue - tentative plan

- Details of all the student-centered events at Botany 2024.
- Getting to know your new student representative, Benjamin Ajayi.

Other activities:

- Served on the Botany 360 Ad Hoc Committee
- Served on the Early Career Professional Development Committee
- Inclusive Conference Working Group document review: Provided written comments and contributed in the discussion reviewing the document
- Participated virtually in the Botany 2024 Planning Meeting for Grand Rapids
- We have been active on X and bluesky, engaging with students and tweeting about student and BSA events

Future endeavors:

- Bring back the Student Conference Guide online event
 - With the conference being very early in the summer due to IBC, we omitted to host this event, in place of providing an online handout. In future years, we will bring back this event as a Botany 360 event as it has been received very receptively.
- Collaborating with committees
 - DEI committee

Event to think about what it means to write a DEI statement, and how to express your thoughts clearly on the matter

More belonging in botany-type roundtables - bringing this across different levels (not just higher ed but, a collab with PlantingScience/K-12)

- Development committee

Getting more pockets of funding for students - figuring out how best to start a fundraising campaign for these opportunities

- Education committee

Running either botany 360 events/handouts for students at various stages on how to succeed/things to be thinking about for what their career goals are