

7 July 2023

TO; Heather Cacanindin, BSA Executive Director

FROM: Ann K. Sakai, BSA Distinguished Fellow and Emerging Leader Awards Committee, Chair

RE: Report of the BSA Distinguished Fellow and Emerging Leader Awards Committee 2023

CC: Jim Leebens-Mack, Stacey Smith, Vivian Negrón-Ortiz (President, ex officio), Brenda Molano-Flores (President elect)

The 2023 Distinguished Fellow and Emerging Leader Awards Committee (Chair Ann Sakai (2023), Jim Leebens-Mack (2025), Stacey Smith (2025)) and Vivian Negrón-Ortiz (2023) President, ex officio; without David Lee (deceased)) met to consider applications for the Distinguished Fellow (DF) and Emerging Leader (EL) Awards. Of the two applicants for the EL award, one was not within the 10 year limit from the Ph.D. and thus was not considered further. The committee recommended Dr. Joyce Onyenedum (formerly Chery; Ph.D. 2019, Asst. Prof. at Cornell beginning 2021) for the Emerging Leader award, based on her demonstrated promise for future accomplishments in basic research and service to the professional botanical community.

Three applications were received for the Distinguished Fellow award. One was not considered further for this award because the application was incomplete and the applicant was judged to have not yet reached the level of Distinguished Fellow. The committee recommended Professor Steven R. Manchester (Curator of Paleobotany, Florida Museum of Natural History and Adjunct Professor, Department of Biology, University of Florida) based on his contributions through his paleobotanical expertise and academic achievements, educational contributions, and significant service to the botanical community. For the third applicant, because half of the original committee had conflicts of interest (COI), an additional committee member (Dr. Brenda Molano-Flores) was added to the committee for consideration of the application of Dr. Thomas Givnish (Professor of Botany, University of Wisconsin-Madison). One additional potential committee member was unable to attend any meetings. This committee recommended Dr. Givnish for a Distinguished Fellow award based on his significant contributions to botanical research.

The committee also discussed the need for a larger committee, how to attract both more applicants as well as more diverse applicants (by institution type, discipline, country, etc.) for each award, and whether the DF award criteria needed to be changed and/or clarified to reflect more than just one of the qualifying criteria listed.