

Membership and Communications Report

2022 November Board Meeting

Amelia Neely – Membership & Communications Manager

Membership Overview as of October 1 each year

	as of 10/1/22		as of 10/1/21		as of 10/1/2020		as of 10/15/2019	
	2022	% of Total	2021	% of Total	2020	% of Total	2019	% of Total
Corresponding	73	2.5%	69	2.2%	69	2.3%	70	2.5%
Life	107	3.6%	97	3.2%	93	3.1%	84	2.9%
Emeritus	320	10.8%	300	9.8%	283	9.5%	281	9.8%
E Family	46	1.6%	43	1.4%	42	1.4%	39	1.4%
Retired	69	2.3%	66	2.1%	65	2.2%	54	1.9%
R Family	4	0.1%	2	0.1%	3	0.1%	2	0.1%
3 Yr Professional	254	8.6%	289	9.4%	278	9.3%	296	10.4%
3 Yr Prof Family	18	0.6%	20	0.7%	21	0.7%	22	0.8%
Professional	726	24.6%	785	25.6%	842	28.3%	854	29.9%
P Family	94	3.2%	102	3.3%	102	3.4%	106	3.7%
CC Professional	37	1.3%	32	1.0%	43	1.4%	37	1.3%
CC Family	2	0.1%	2	0.1%	3	0.1%	3	0.1%
3 Yr Postdoc*	48	1.6%	30	1.0%				
PostDoc	109	3.7%	136	4.4%	160	5.4%	155	5.4%
PD Family	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	0.1%	3	0.1%
3 Yr Student	298	10.1%	182	5.9%	135	4.5%	35	1.2%
Student	578	19.6%	727	23.7%	639	21.5%	650	22.8%
S Family	3	0.1%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
S Chapter	19	0.6%	14	0.5%	21	0.7%	25	0.9%
K-12 Teachers	8	0.3%	7	0.2%	12	0.4%	11	0.4%
Affiliate	20	0.7%	20	0.7%	27	0.9%	20	0.7%
Associate	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.0%
Amateur	35	1.2%	53	1.7%	56	1.9%	46	1.6%
3 Tr Dev. Nat	20	0.7%						
Developing Nation:	67	2.3%	95	3.1%	78	2.6%	62	2.2%
	2955		3072		2975		2856	
Professional	1994	67.5%	2068	67.3%	2085	70.1%	2068	72.4%
Student	898	30.4%	924	30.1%	795	26.7%	710	24.9%
Other	63	2.1%	80	2.6%	95	3.2%	78	2.7%
<i>Growth/Decline</i>	2955		3072		2975		2856	
	as of 10/1/22		as of 10/1/21		as of 10/1/20		as of 10/15/20	

Membership has decreased 100 members compared to last year, but is only 20 behind 2020 and ahead of 2019 by about 100 members. This is not surprising as last year had the highest number of members since 2015, and I feel confident that the year will end strong.

The BSA Renewal season started on October 1st with email renewals being sent to those due to renew at the end of this year as well as lapsed members back to 2017. The renewal season will continue for the next few months and into the new year to encourage our members to renew, give gift memberships, update their information, and to make donations. Special year-end giving emails are also scheduled to be sent to any current BSA member who does not need to renew.

Membership Category Highlights compared to October 1, 2021:

- We saw an increase of 10 new **Life members** who took advantage of our one-time cost to stay members in perpetuity.
- **Student membership** numbers were slightly down compared to this time last year (-2.8%), but up almost 13% compared to 2020 and 26.5% compared to 2019.
 - 298 student members have taken advantage of the **3-Year student membership category**, up from 182 at the same time last year (a 63.7% increase!)
 - There have been 354 **New Student members** this year so far (down from 385 from 2021), which is 39.4% of our student member total, which is very close to last year's percentage of 41%. We expect that percent of total student membership to continue to decline as the 3-Year membership totals increase.
- The **Developing Nations'** category went down slightly year-to-year for the first time in several years. We are very excited the Developing Nations members can now take advantage of both 3-Year memberships and of being recipients of 3-Year Gift Memberships and we now have 20 3-Year members at this level.
- **Professional Members** (Professional, 3-Year Professional and Professional Family) decreased by 104 members compared to the same time last year (8.7% decrease). As seen in past years, this category renews at a high rate, but we do not have the new member numbers we need to keep this category growing or to replace those who move on to Retired or Emeritus. This has been an ongoing trend. To better understand the reason for this trend, we propose a survey be given to lapsed Professional members in both a general email and by board and staff making calls to see if we can assess why this decline is happening as the increase in Retired and Emeritus members was only 23 and does not explain the continued loss. We will give more details about the proposed calls at a future time and hope you will consider helping us contact our lapsed Professional members.

Professional members are asked each year to consider a membership fee increase of \$25 per year. This additional amount goes toward the Graduate Student Research Award fund. This fiscal year **\$16,400 was raised by Professional members opting-in to this membership fee increase**. A total of **470 1-Year** and **62 3-Year Professional members** opted-in to the increase. Of the 805 Professional members who renewed this fiscal year (some three-year members did not need to renew) only 273 (34 %) opted-out of the increase. Together, with GSRA donations (\$15,092), **\$31,492** has been raised for the GSRA.

- **Post Doc Members** are at almost exactly at the same point they were at this time last year, down just 9. The 3-Year Post Doc memberships are now up to 48, which is 30.6% higher than this time last year.



[Botany360](#) is a series of programming that connects our botanical community during the 360 days outside of Botany Conferences. The Botany360 event calendar is a tool to highlight those events. The goal of this program is to connect the plant science community throughout the year with professional development, discussion sessions, and networking and social opportunities.

So far this year there have been 9 events as well as 4 “Phytochem Talks,” held by the Phytochemistry Section, which met every-other week for four weeks.

- [Ace It! - Write a Better Title](#) (March 2, 2022)
- [Ace It! - Write a Better Abstract](#) (March 23, 2022)
- [Careers in Botany: Government Agencies](#) (April 6, 2022)
- [De-mystifying the MS submissions process: Before you submit \(Part 1\)](#) (May 11, 2022)
- [De-mystifying the MS submissions process: Before you submit \(Part 2\)](#) (May 18, 2022)
- [So you want to get involved with section leadership...](#) (June 5, 2022)
- [Nurturing Botanists - Developing a Self- and Community-Care Practice](#) (August 11, 2022)
- [Applying to Grad School - A Q&A Session](#) (September 20, 2022)
- [Utilizing Botany conference content in your teaching](#) (November 2, 2022)
- [Intro to Reviews and Meta-analysis](#) (November 7, 2022)

As the manager of Botany360, my goal is to organize the program so that event organizers can be as autonomous as possible to minimize BSA staff time needed for events while still providing them with the support and resources that they require for a successful event.

I accomplish this goal by giving each organizer a comprehensive “To Do” checklist that helps organizers think holistically about each event as well as what they need to contact me about in regards to planning. Most of the events so far have been fairly well self-managed, meaning they are using their own Zoom accounts and registration, creating their own graphics, and reaching out to registrants via email on their own if needed. On occasion I have had to step in and provide more support, using BSA’s Zoom account, downloading the registrants and sending them emails as directed by the organizer, and creating graphics for the event.

Other services I provide for all Botany360 events include: updating the Botany360 calendar, creating a landing page for the event ([example here](#)), creating stand-alone emails (usually 2) for the event that are sent to BSA membership, including the events in the BSA newsletter, preparing and posting about the event on all three BSA social media accounts, sending a link to the event survey to the organizer, sending survey results to the organizer, uploading any recordings to the BSA YouTube that are given to me of the event, and finally, updating the event recording webpage so people can access the recording, and providing Botany360 updates for the current *PSB*. As you can tell this program can be quite time consuming for short periods of time, but it has been well received and the comments on surveys are overwhelmingly positive and enthusiastic.

We are always looking for more Botany360 events. If you have an idea for a Botany360 event, or you want to organize a Botany360 event email me at aneely@botany.org!

It's Renewal Season!

October 1st was the beginning of the BSA renewal season. I am also in charge of the SSE and SEB renewal seasons, all of which start around the same time, but staggered. During this time period we ask current members to renew, lapsed members to rejoin, and we also approach new potential members to join as well. For the last quarter of the year, we will also reach out to BSA members for donations and ask them to participate in our gift membership drive.

This year, our IT Manager Rob Brandt, upgraded all three of the societies' membership databases to the latest version of CiviCRM right before the renewal season began. I have been working closely with him to test the databases and help solve issues in order to prepare for the start of the renewal season. Luckily, we did not have many other changes to the join/renew online forms for this year's renewal season. We do expect there to be potential changes in demographic questions in next year's BSA renew/join online form after the DEI Committee has made their recommendations.

The 2022 Gift Membership Drive

This year we have a goal of 175 gift memberships being purchased between October 1 and December 31, 2022. There are 1- and 3-year student and developing nations' gift memberships available (\$10 & \$30). Want to give a membership, but you cannot think of someone to give one to? You do NOT have to know to whom you are giving the gift membership. Simply put your own name and address in the gift membership fields and I will be sure to share those with students or developing nations' members who need financial support. As of October 26th, we have about 40 gift memberships purchased.

As board members, we ask that you continue to promote membership by renewing your membership, donating to the BSA endowment and award funds, purchasing gift memberships, and sharing our news and events by forwarding our emails and reposting our social media posts on your personal accounts.

Social Media Report

We are currently without a BSA Student Social Media Liaison as I and the Student Representatives work together to discuss the future of this position. I will be taking over most of the BSA social media content from October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2023 with the help of publications staff who continue to promote the BSA publications on social media. I am also managing the Spotlight Series and am working with the current Early Career Advisory Board group to highlight them in our monthly Spotlights. If you have an early-career BSA member that you would like to see highlighted you can fill out [this form](#).

Social Media Stats:

Instagram – 3,523 followers (862 more than the year before)
Twitter – 18,376 followers (3,938 more than the year before)
Facebook – 35,929 followers (2,043 more than the year before)
Total Followers on all three platforms: **57,828**

Other Projects

- I continue to manage all BSA and SEB email communications to members including eNewsletters, eTocs, and eBlasts about events, annual meetings, and awards.
- I continue to make all changes to the BSA and SEB websites as needed including updated committees, awards, and publication needs.
- I have taken on more graphic design projects this year including advertising projects for the publications staff and social media campaigns. I have also helped staff to utilize our organizational Canva program for their own needs.
- I am working with the Student Reps to overhaul the Student Chapters including new requirements that the chapters will need to finalize by December 31, 2022 to stay in the program.
- I finished a 9-hour DEI training on Human Subjects Research and received certification for the course.
- I am working with SEB on their 2023 annual meeting including managing their meeting webpages, social media, email communications, and being on their Publicity Subcommittee.
- I have been working with BSA sections who need to have leadership elections and helping them with the logistics of getting those done.
- I took part in an AIBS IDEA Conference Mini-Session on External Communications as well as a day-long Steering Committee meeting for AISES.
- Looking forward, I will be working with Heather to prepare the BSA website and the awards portal for the coming award season that will launch in early 2023.