

Spring 2020: Student Representatives Board Report
Botanical Society of America
 Shelly Gaynor (2019 - 2021)
 Imeña Valdes (2020 - 2022)

STUDENT GRANTS	1
Proposal #1	2
STUDENT MEMBERSHIP	2
BOTANY 2020 RECAP	3
Summary	3
Proposal #2	4
Event Recap	5
LOOKING FORWARD - BOTANY 2021	6
Networking	6
Conference events	7
OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS	7
GRFP-BSA Working Group	7
Plant Science Bulletin	7
Committee applications	8
ASPB/BSA/ESA Collaboration	8
Connecting with Student Members	8

STUDENT GRANTS

We love seeing graduate students grant increase over the last couple years:

2018	20 awards, \$500 each
2019	20 awards, \$1500 each
2020	26 awards, \$1500 each + 1 Kaplan award for \$10,000
2021	40 awards, \$1500 each + 1 Kaplan award for \$10,000

Though we have increased the graduate student awards over the years, undergraduate students can only receive up to \$200 towards their research. Though \$200 did help me during my undergrad research, it is a very small amount. We only award 4-5 BSA Undergraduate Research Awards each year, with the budget allowing 6 grants per year.

As an undergraduate, I worked in a frog lab on the population genetics of *Spartina alterniflora*. At the start, no faculty in my department studied plants and no one was a member of BSA. My freshman year, my frog advisor and I decided that applying to the BSA undergraduate grant wasn't worth it since it would cost us \$115 (\$95 + \$20) for me to even apply - the grant currently requires that your mentor must be a member of BSA. For the time, I skipped out on this grant and didn't become a BSA member. I ended up applying for the grant when a new faculty member joined our department who happened to be a BSA member and he was listed as my faculty mentor - this mentor was not involved in the project. I'm not sure how many other students would face this issue, I'm not sure how many lone undergraduate botanists exist. However, one of the Student Representative candidates is an undergrad at an institution that has no BSA faculty members.

Proposal #1

We increase the 6 BSA Undergraduate Research Awards to \$500 each year and remove the BSA faculty mentor requirement.

STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

Overall in 2020, we had 878 Student Members (General: 713, 3 year: 144, Chapter: 21). This is a slight increase from 2019: we grew by 70 members. As of 03/01/21 we have a total of 545 student members (General: 383, 3 year: 153, S Chapter: 9), which is very comparable to 03/01/20 where we had 492 student members (General: 378, 3 year: 101, Student Chapter: 13).

The lower amount of student members in March compared to the end of the year could be due to a number of reasons:

- Students may be waiting to renew closer to the graduate grant application deadline, which was pushed back to April 1st.
- Students may be waiting to renew until they register for Botany 2021.

As outlined in the Membership and Communication report, we will continue to focus on renewing Student members.

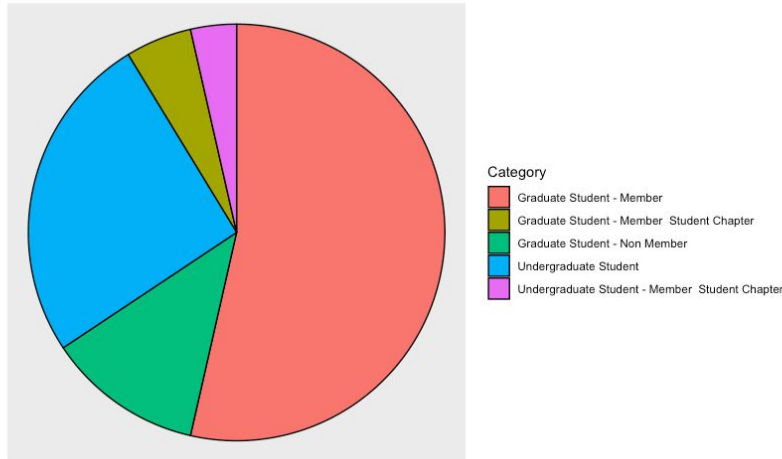
We also hope to increase student membership from the BSA student chapters - we have 21 student chapters and only 9 student chapter members. The low student chapter membership, and low renewal of student members, may reflect the lack of BSA student benefits outside of the annual Botany conference. In the last year, we have taken many steps to create opportunities for students:

- We compiled student resources in a [Google Doc](#) and actively interacted with student members via social media and slack.
 - We get lots of feedback from students and when applicable we bring this feedback forward.
- We invited students to contribute to social media, newsletter, and the Plant Science Bulletin. Students have been submitting [book reviews](#) for the newsletter and contributing short passages for PSB.
- We proposed the new committee application process, created the committee descriptions, and heavily advertised these positions to students (See [our initial proposal](#) and [our committee descriptions](#)). Creating accessible leadership positions for student members.
- We helped host a GRFP workshop for student members. We consulted about the Writing Webinars & Discussions and attended/promoted these efforts.
- We are currently working on Pre-Botany 2021 Networking Opportunities for students and opened the 2021 Botany Networking Sheet.
- We proposed the Early Career Professional Development Committee, which aims to boost student and early career related professional development within BSA.
- We started directly sending communications to BSA Student Chapters.

BOTANY 2020 RECAP

Summary

In total, Botany 2020 had 562 students, which was about 43% of the total registrations. Compared to 2019, there was a slight increase in students registered for the conference (2019: 497, 40.7%). Of the 562 students at Botany 2020, 398 were graduate students and 164 were undergraduates. In total, students gave 392 presentations (60.9% of total presentations). Within papers and lightning talks, students represented half of the total, respectively 50.2% and 47.1%. The majority of posters were presented by students (76.8%). Only 22.5% of the symposium and colloquium talks were given by students (120 symposium/colloquium talks total. Of those: 4 undergrad talks, 19 grad talks).



If students make up about 50% of the papers presented, why do they only make up 19% of the symposium and colloquium talks? Though symposium and colloquium submission instructions strongly encourage that career stage or “seniority” should be taken into account (see 2020 wording below), it seems that we are consistently accepting symposium and colloquium that do not take students into account with only 19% of the Botany 2020 symposium and colloquium talks being presented by students. This year, symposium proposals only included 6 students, with two symposiums not having any students as speakers - this means only 16% of the symposium talks would be from students. If those two symposium included 1 student each, 22% of the talks would have been from students, which still does not reflect the population of talks presented at Botany each year. We understand that symposia and colloquia are specialized, therefore students may not be at the stage to be included, however we believe students should be included in every symposium and colloquium. Below we propose a very conservative requirement to make sure students are included in colloquium and symposium.

- PLEASE NOTE** that when preparing proposals, colloquium organizers are expected to take into account gender, seniority, nationality, and other attributes traditionally underrepresented in conference colloquia. We encourage proposals whose topics concern newly emerging fields, are synthetic, or that differ from those that have been included in recent Botany meetings.

Proposal #2

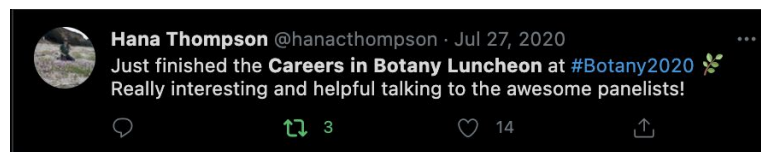
Starting during Botany 2022, we require all symposiums and colloquiums to include at least 1 student in their proposal to be approved and continue to encourage organizers to take into account the diversity, including the career stage diversity, of their speakers.

Note: This would have to be approved by the rest of the Botany conference societies.

Event Recap

Career in Botany Luncheon: We capped this event at 150 participants and had 14 speakers. This diverse set of panelists exposed all the participants to many different career options and the luncheon received lots of positive feedback from students.

[Profiles were added to Botany.org.](#)



SciComm Celebration Day Mixer: We featured 14 SciComm'ers throughout the day and in the SciComm Celebration Day Mixer panel. The panel was very popular and we allowed attendees and panelists to interact in a [google doc](#) during the event.



Student Social and Networking Event: We had over 100 students attend this zoom social. We had lots of positive feedback and I think this event was overall successful.



CV Review Sessions: We had 10 reviewers and 30 student participants. We had over 40 students contact us expressing interest in the event and we hope to add more slots in the coming years and member only CV reviews outside of the conference.

Botany 2020 Networking Board: 161 entries for 'ECR Looking For' and 63 entries for 'Open Positions'. We had issues with people messing up this form, so this year we attached google forms to the google sheet to help prevent these issues.

LOOKING FORWARD - BOTANY 2021

Networking

- Preconference Zooms (May - July) events for students and PIs to network
 - [Form to collect networking interest](#)
- [Botany 2021 Networking Board](#)

Conference events

- Workshop - Navigating the submission and peer review process with Brittany Sutherland
- Careers in Botany Luncheon
- SciComm Celebration
- CV Reviews
- 2 Student Socials (Monday and Thursday)
- BSA officer office hour/information session

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

GRFP-BSA Working Group

Led by Chelsea Pretz

71 students applied to participate in these working groups, however only 60 of the applicants qualified to apply to this fellowship. We ended up with 11 working groups with a total of 24 mentors and 60 students. Prior to forming these working groups, our initial workshop session with Amanda Ingram (NSF DEB), Chris Hill, Narcisha Norman, and Rick McCourt was attended by 51 people. Additionally, we created a database with 13 winning applications from BSA members, this was shared with all students in the working group.

Plant Science Bulletin

Summer 2020

Min Y, and Gaynor ML. 2020. Student Section. [Plant Science Bulletin 66\(2\): 129 – 138.](#)

- 16 Students shared their experiences during COVID-19
- New BSA student representative was highlighted
- 6 BSA members shared time management strategies

Fall 2020

Gaynor ML, and Valdes I. 2020. Student Section. [Plant Science Bulletin 66\(3\): 236 – 248.](#)

- 9 BSA members shared how they have shifted gears during the pandemic
- We included a section on mental health in response to one of those members
- New section on “Papers to read for Future Leaders”
- Getting Started in Tropical Fieldwork by Dr. Kadeem Gilbert

Spring 2021

- We compiled more than 50 grants/internships/workshops in the PSB spring issue
- Great section on “Papers to read for Future Leaders”

Summer 2021

- We have requested that student chapters share short articles about their recent events, innovative ways to keep your chapter active, etc.

Committee applications

32 applications in total were received for student committee positions from 16 students. We advertised in the student newsletter, on twitter, and directly to student chapters. Only two undergraduates applied for positions, we should make sure to revise our advertisements next year to reach more undergrads.

ASPB/BSA/ESA Collaboration

We are currently working on a collaboration on an Issue in Focus on COVID.

Connecting with Student Members

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