

BSA Past-President report
Dr. Vivian Negrón-Ortiz
August 2023- June 2024

A. Election Committee

Committee members: Vivian Negrón-Ortiz (Chair), Imeña Valdes, Graduate Student Representative, Lauren Eserman, Kathleen Pryer, Christopher Ivey, Norm Wickett (Secretary, ex officio)

This year we implemented a two-step nomination process, each with its own respective forms. The BSA Board Nomination Form was used by the members to nominate people or self-nominate for the open positions. A second form, the Nomination Acceptance Form, was shared with the nominees to get more detailed information. These forms offered a more efficient way to collect, process, and share data.

Nominations were solicited for four open Board positions. About 21 people were nominated or nominated themselves to run for BSA office. Only 10 accepted, but one nominee withdrew their acceptance to run for a BSA position, leaving nine nominees for consideration. Once the Chair received a spreadsheet with nominees and background information, a zoom meeting was convened with the members of the Election committee to discuss the process and lessons learned during the 2023 election. It was unanimously decided to discuss each 2024 position and nominees by email.

The Election Committee carefully evaluated the nominees via email and selected eight listed below. The Chair contacted these eight nominees via email and determined they were willing to stand for election. Below is the 2024 BSA Slate with the election results in red. About 20.3% of eligible voters/members participated in the election.

President-Elect

Kenneth Cameron (University of Wisconsin), Charles Davis (Harvard University)

Secretary

Norm Wickett (Clemson University)

At-Large Director - Education

Rachel Jabaily (Colorado College), Madhav Nepal (South Dakota State University)

Student Representative

Benjamin Ajayi (Florida State University), Emma Greenlee (Kansas State University), and Sierra Hubbard (Oklahoma State University)

Note that in one case (Secretary), incumbent candidate ran unopposed. The Committee favored this approach on the view that it would benefit the BSA to draw his experience in this position.

B. Corresponding Committee

Committee members: Vivian Negrón-Ortiz (Chair), Michael Donoghue, Cynthia Jones, Shan Shengchen

We received two nominations for the 2024 Corresponding member: Drs. Else Marie Friis (Professor emerita, Department of Palaeobiology, Swedish Museum of Natural History, Stockholm) and Mark Olson (Instituto de Biología, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México City). Dr. Else Marie Friis was nominated by Susanne Renner; detailed letters of supports were received from Peter Crance and William Friedman. Dr. Mark Olson was nominated by Cynthia Jones; detailed letters of supports were received from Marcelo R. Pace, Erika J Edwards, and William Friedman. One of these letters was from a relevant colleague in the nominee's country or, in the case of Else M. Friis from the Oak Spring Garden Foundation where she currently spends time working with American paleobotanical colleagues. The committee reviewed their nomination packets, and recommended honoring both as corresponding members of the BSA.

C. Ad Hoc Committee on Climate Change

Committee members: Vivian Negrón-Ortiz (Chair), Heather Cacanindin, Vinita Gowda, Jeremy Rentsch, Loren Rieseberg, Emily Sessa

The Ad Hoc Committee on Climate Change was formed in the fall of 2023 with the purpose to develop and implement a climate change action initiative to advance botanical knowledge and engage the BSA community in research, synthesis, and communication. In spring of 2023, the BSA Board and Council offered several ideas for this effort, which were further discussed by the committee mentioned above and with the participation of two other members, Klara Scharnagl and Julieta A. Rosell, who stepped down early from the committee due to other commitments. Our immediate efforts for 2024 are the developing of a 1) fall symposium with an overall theme 'Plant Resilience and Conservation for a Changing Climate,' and 2) virtual issue of published articles in the American Journal of Botany (AJB) and Applications in Plant Sciences, which will be released in social media, concomitantly with the symposium; and in 2025 we propose to 3) produce a special issue of the AJB that explores the topic "Resilience in a Changing World; this effort is led by Jeremy Rentsch. A pre-proposal was drafted and submitted to NSF (Organismal Response to Climate Change funding opportunity) to finance the symposium and the AJB special issue; unfortunately, it was not funded.

The virtual symposium is scheduled for November 14 and 15, 2024 from 11 AM to 3:30 PM ET. As part of the structure of the symposium, we will invite and accept submitted talks for the two main topics: *Responses of plants and plant populations to shifts in climate factors* and *Conserving endemic species in the face of habitat loss and long-term shifts in climate*. For invited speakers, we assessed 41 possible participants approving six top choices and three second choices. Currently, we extended invitations to the top choices. Amelia Neely (BSA Membership & Communications Manager) is working on the logo for the event and preparing a prospectus for sponsors where their sponsorship ranges from \$500-\$2000.