

2024 BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Development Committee Members (last year of service)

Jennifer Cruse-Sanders (2026), At-Large Director of Development, Chair

Ned Friedman (2024)

Rebecca Rooney (2024)

Peter Wilf (2024)

Joe Williams (2024)

Katherine Charton, graduate student (2024)

Jennifer Ackerfield (2025)

Heather Cacanindin, Executive Director, ex officio

Critical Fundraising needs

Due to trends in the publishing (including increased movement toward open access and transitional deals), BSA publications revenue has been significantly reduced in the latest agreement with our publishing partner Wiley. This, in turn, impacts the BSA budget where publications revenue is not expected to increase for the foreseeable future. In response, BSA will need to pull down 4% from the unallocated amounts within our investment account annually for the foreseeable future to support BSA operations and mission. **Donations to BSA Endowment, Graduate Student Research Awards and unrestricted gifts are more important than ever.**

Graduate Student Research Support

Surveys of professional members of the society indicate strong support for larger and more graduate research awards. This remains a high priority for the society.

GSRA Revenue

Since 2020, the Society has seen a significant increase in donations to support student research through the Bill Dahl Grad Student Research Award. The focus on giving in support of students is evident in the summary of revenue since 2019.

FY2019 - \$ 8,415

FY2020 - \$30,075

FY2021 - \$29,442

FY2022 - \$32,024

FY2023 - \$32,002

FY2024 - \$28,317 (Oct 1, 2023-May 29, 2024)

Fiscal year is Oct 1-Sept 30

Impact:

In parallel with increased revenue for the Bill Dahl Grad Student Research Award, the number and amounts of awards given to students has also increased. In 2019 the society awarded 20 research awards for the amount of \$500 each, totaling \$10,000. In 2020 the society provided 25 awards for an increased amount of \$1500 per awards, totaling \$37,500. Support for student research increased again in 2021 with 40 awards in the amount of \$1500 per award for a total of 60,000 in student research support. Graduate student research support in 2022 was \$46,000, 31 awards provided at \$1500 per awards. In 2023, 32 awards were given at \$1500 each totaling \$48,000. In 2024, 25 GSRA awards were given at \$1500 each, totaling \$37,500 and, for the first time, an AJ Harris GSRA award was given at the \$1200 level.

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It is also notable that in general, sections of BSA are also working to give more and larger awards in support of student research and participation, although a few sections were adversely affected in the last two years by the market fluctuations and have had to suspend providing student travel awards in FY2024.

Endowment Giving

FY2024 Endowment Giving = \$21,197 (as of May 29, 2024)
FY2023 Endowment Giving = \$22,439 (GSRA and AJ Harris giving focus)
FY2022 Endowment Giving = \$20,870 (GSRA giving focus)
FY2021 Endowment Giving = \$16,809 (GSRA giving focus)
FY2020 Endowment Giving = \$17,544 (GSRA giving focus)
FY2019 Endowment Giving = \$27,300 (endowment was a major focus that year)
FY2018 Endowment Giving = \$22,734 (endowment was a major focus that year)

Historical Data on BSA Fundraising: Total Giving

FY2024 - \$59,240 (as of May 29, 2024)
FY2023 - \$94,236 (AJ Harris Fundraising started ~ \$22,400)
FY2022 - \$391,727 (\$311,526 award gift to start an award in Comparative Plant Biology)
FY2021 - \$68,817
FY2020 - \$82,014 (includes a major gift of \$14K for the D&S section)
FY2019 - \$420,000 (\$355,000 Kaplan Award gift)
FY2018 - \$74,457

AJ Harris Award

New last year, a fundraising effort was launched in April 2023 in memory of BSA member AJ Harris with the hopes of raising at least \$20,000 to pay for an endowed student research award. A total of \$22,396 was raised. Right now, an award of \$1200 annually can be provided. With an additional \$7500 in donations, the award can be raised to \$1500 to match the other GSRA awards.

Planned Efforts for 2024-25

Efforts currently planned include:

- “A Day for BSA” – Endowment campaign in August that commemorates the date of the first BSA Council meeting and helps secure BSA’s future financial security for our mission
- Reaching out to members nearing retirement with messages regarding planned giving- specifically charitable lead trusts, retirement plan gifts and Legacy Society. These types of gifts can provide significant support for BSA.
- Legacy Society event at Botany 2024 with speakers who have benefited from past giving and BSA’s support with awards and grants

Respectfully submitted:

Jennifer Cruse-Sanders, At-Large Director of Development, Chair