

## **Development Report**

Submitted by William (Ned) Friedman

This past year (my first), I launched a campaign to reinvigorate giving to the BSA *Presidents' Fund*. The solicitation email is attached at the end of this report. The terms of the endowment are that each year, the President-Elect will choose how to use the endowment payout for the coming year (during the term of his/her presidency) in consultation with the current Board of Directors of the BSA. I imagine use of endowment payouts could range from support for student travel and increased investment in student research awards/support, to underwriting symposia and new publication initiatives. The key is that this endowment will be specifically designed to *augment* the activities of the Botanical Society of America and allow our current and future leadership to undertake new initiatives that benefit the society as a whole.

The Presidents' Fund reached \$30,426 in total gifts for FY18. Total giving in all categories for the past fiscal year was \$68,985. This represents 596 donations from 352 individual donors. These numbers are a significant improvement over past years, and I hope that we will be able to maintain momentum. This coming year, solicitation for the BSA *Presidents' Fund* will be extended to a larger audience of potential donors, including all past BSA officers and section presidents.

Solicitation email:

Imagine. There are more than 30 living former presidents of the Botanical Society of America! That is a very robust number, and one that I hope can be leveraged into a broad-based support of the very institution that you have devoted considerable time and energy to in a host of leadership roles and scholarly activities.

As the person charged with development on behalf of the BSA, I am writing to ask you to take a leadership role (collectively) to let the current graduate students, post-doctorals, and junior faculty know that we want a home for botany writ large that continues to thrive well into the future. My goal is to report to the society that the past presidents of the BSA have donated \$50,000 at year's end (2017 ends in 11 days!) – so now is the time to act. These funds will be contributed to an endowment (*The Presidents' Fund*) in support of the Botanical Society of America. Each year, the President-Elect will choose how to use the endowment payout for the coming year (during the term of his/her presidency) in consultation with the current Board of Directors of the BSA. I imagine use of endowment payouts could range from support for student travel and increased investment in student research awards/support, to underwriting symposia and new publication initiatives. The key is that this endowment will be specifically designed to *augment* the activities of the Botanical Society of America and allow our current and future leadership to undertake new initiatives that benefit the society as a whole.

I have set a modest target for 2017: \$50,000. My great hope is that you will exceed this (considerably) and that we can announce (next summer) that each and every past president of the BSA remains fully committed to the future of the Botanical Society of America. And of course, if we keep this pace (or better) up for another decade, we can look back on having raised half a million dollars for an endowment that allows the BSA and its leadership to do even more!

This wonderful organization of colleagues and friends has been an intellectual home for each and every one of us, from our graduate school days (and first nervous presentations of our research) through our faculty careers and beyond. I hope you will join this botanist (me) who is married to a former president of the BSA in supporting the future of botanical scholarship.

I ask that each of you make a commitment to this endowment - *preferably \$1,000, \$2,000, \$5,000, and hopefully more*. To make this as easy as possible, below is a link that will take you to the BSA website page where you can select to donate to the Presidents' Fund. This should be part of an ongoing dialogue that will draw on your experience and seasoned perspectives.

In the meantime, thank you in advance for your past service to the BSA, as well as your ongoing and future support of the one scholarly society that I believe we all consider our intellectual "home."