



**Science  
Societies**

# **Membership: What's your story?**

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## **Jim Specht**

As an M.S. graduate student at the University of Illinois (UI), I was first convinced of the value of becoming a member after my enjoyable experience of delivering an oral slide presentation of my research at the 1968 Annual Meeting in New Orleans. Though my M.S. was interrupted when I was drafted to serve in U.S. military service, I used the GI Bill to return to UI to complete my M.S. in 1971 before then moving to the University of Nebraska–Lincoln (UNL) where I obtained a Ph.D. in Genetics in 1974 and subsequently joined the UNL Department of Agronomy as soybean physiologist–geneticist faculty member. Over the next 40 years before my retirement, I enjoyed conducting and publishing research in my discipline and was actively involved in CSSA, attending the Annual Meeting each year to present research findings to peers. I also served as an elected chair of Divisions C-1 (Crop Breeding and Genetics) and C-7 (Genomics, Molecular Genetics, and Biotechnology) as well as an associate editor and technical editor of *Crop Science*. These roles provided a great opportunity for me to hone my skills in leadership and the art of preparing solid publishable peer-review-ready manuscripts. I was honored with multiple CSSA and ASA awards, and I have attempted to pay that forward by nominating deserving colleagues for some of those same awards. Though long retired, I am still an ASA–CSSA member and enjoy the emeriti benefits. I highly recommend that newly minted young crop and agronomic research scientists join the Societies to foster their forthcoming careers like it did mine.

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