Science Societies

What's your story?

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This column invites ASA, CSSA, and SSSA members to talk about their personal experiences with the Societies. Every member has a story. What's yours? We'd love to hear from you. Email Send Message.

Katie Lewis



Katie Lewis, *ASA, CSSA, SSSA · Associate Professor · Texas A&M AgriLife Research & Texas Tech University*

As a first-year graduate student, I attended my first ASA, CSSA, SSSA International Annual Meeting in Houston, TX. There, I was exposed to the intricacies of research, and my passion for agricultural and environmental research was born.

Throughout my graduate career, I attended many more conferences where I developed communication skills and networked with my peers and future colleagues. I participated in graduate student competitions and educational trainings. Now, as an associate professor, I strive to ensure my graduate students have the same opportunities I was given through the Societies.

At the 2013 Conference in Tampa, FL, I became aware of the position I currently hold. I have the Societies to thank for bring this career opportunity to my attention and making it possible for me to develop relationships that have helped me grow as a scientist and in my career. They have also provided me with many leadership and career development opportunities, which have helped bring success to my career. The Societies have been a significant building block of my career, and I will forever be grateful.

Jarrod Miller



Jarrod Miller, *ASA, SSSA Member · Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist in Agronomy · University of Delaware*

I became a member of SSSA in 1999 as a graduate student at Virginia Tech and eventually joined ASA as well. I was not necessarily aware of what I was joining, but I knew I loved soil science and the idea of being part of a larger group was appealing. Shortly after, I attended my first ASA, CSSA, and SSSA International Annual Meeting in Charlotte, NC, observing research talks and presenting a poster of my graduate work. As my poster session ended, Nyle Brady walked up and discussed the project with me. As a young graduate student, I felt like I had spoken with a celebrity.

Those first experiences were formative for me, realizing how the land grant system was duplicated across the U.S. with similar minds and goals. Since then, I have watched my friends become my colleagues. We pursue scientific goals and outreach together, much of it through the support of the Societies.

The Societies provide great options to publish our research, particularly recognizing how negative results and new methodology need an outlet in our complex applied sciences. I was proud when the *Soil Science Society of America Journal* published my first manuscript. It still feels like a significant achievement because I enjoy belonging to the Societies.

The opportunities to participate and grow with a larger, laid-back community are available and encouraged for anyone who wants to join.

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