Science Societies

2025: A year to cultivate resiliency

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January 29, 2026



Members of the Women in Science Committee and workshop attendees at the 2025 CANVAS meeting in Salt Lake City, UT.

The Women in Science (WIS) Committee supports women scientists in the agronomic, crop, soil, and environmental sciences by encouraging them to achieve professional excellence, fostering mentorship and networks, and creating spaces to address issues

relevant to women in these fields. The committee's theme for 2025 was *Cultivating Resiliency*, and the topic was explored through multiple formats, from webinars organized throughout the year (Managing Stress, Mental Wellness, and Compassion Fatigue for Agriculturalists and Cultivating Respect in the Workspace) to a closing workshop at the 2025 CANVAS meeting. These conversations drew on perspectives shaped by varied career paths with an intentional focus on resiliency across career stages, roles, and lived experiences.

Doris Mold, co-CEO of the non-profit Annie's Project and President of Sunrise Agricultural Associates, shared insights grounded in a career spanning academia, industry, and entrepreneurship, framing resiliency as an ongoing process that grows through prioritizing self-care, embracing change, and cultivating respect and support within personal and professional networks.

Dr. Sindhu Jagadamma, Associate Professor at the University of Tennessee and recipient of the 2025 ASA, CSSA, and SSSA Mentoring Award, drew from her extensive experience mentoring students and early career scientists in academic settings, highlighting the importance of role modeling vulnerability and perseverance, along with individualized approaches to mentoring.

Dr. Cristine Morgan, Chief Scientific Officer at the Soil Health Institute, reflected on resiliency through leadership and career progression, focusing on navigating personal life events and the skills required to become a resilient and respected leader.

Dr. Aaron Daigh, Associate Professor at the University of Nebraska and the 90th SSSA President, contributed perspectives shaped by his and his wife's experiences managing research careers while raising a family, illustrating how resiliency emerges through shared responsibilities and adaptation rather than a perfect balance. Together,

these voices created a foundation for exploring resiliency as a dynamic process that evolves across careers and life stages.



The Women in Science (WIS) workshop at the CANVAS 2025 meeting was hosted by the 2025 WIS Chair, Dr. Lakshmi Manavalan (top left) and featured Doris Mold (bottom left), Dr. Sindhu Jagadamma (top right), Dr. Cristine Morgan (middle right), and Dr. Aaron Daigh (bottom right) as speakers.

A major highlight of the workshop was the interactive discussions among attendees. Creating clear goals and defining the values to guide decision-making, delegating when possible, and demonstrating adaptability and emotional regulation were identified as key attributes developed through resiliency. Participants also emphasized the role of community and peer support, noting that the most effective mentorship often comes from networks of individuals who support different needs and career stages. Peer

communities were discussed as spaces to normalize challenges, validate emotions, and foster honest conversations. Good mentors and leaders were described as empathetic guides who help point the way based on experience while recognizing that mentees remain the drivers of their own journeys. By the end of the workshop, attendees had a chance to reconnect with familiar colleagues while also creating new connections and building collective resiliency.

An important aspect of the WIS Committee's programming was addressing the theme without suggesting there is a single formula. Life and careers evolve, and as responsibilities grow, cultivating resiliency becomes an increasingly essential part of navigating both personal and professional paths.

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