Science Societies

Graduate Student Committee: 2022 in Review

By Maria Teresa Tancredi, Ph.D. student at the University of Georgia and the 2023 Chair of the ASA, CSSA, and SSSA (ACS) Graduate Student Committee; and Rachelle Davenport, Ph.D. candidate at Cornell University and the 2022 Chair of the ACS Graduate Student Committee

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Some of the 2022 ACS Graduate Student Committee members with a fellow student at the Annual Meeting in Baltimore.

As the new year rolls in, we take a moment to look back at all the activities the ASA, CSSA, and SSSA (ACS) Graduate Student Committee organized and sponsored in 2022.

Webinars

Last spring, we hosted our second series of webinars directed to improving students' communication skills. We explored participation in writing groups, described how to write a compelling introduction and navigate the manuscript submission process, and finally talked about what editors and reviewers look for in a good paper. Our fellow graduate students responded positively, and many attended the webinar series. The webinar recordings are accessible at agronomy.org/gradstudents, crops.org/gradstudents/, and soils.org/gradstudents. As we get ready to launch our third webinar series, we would love to hear your suggestions on the topics we should explore in 2023. If you have any ideas or recommendations, let us know! (You can reach us through the contacts at the bottom of this article).

Travel Scholarship

Our group also ramped up the efforts to promote the Graduate Student Travel Scholarship to reach both students and new donors. We created two raffles, one taking place during the summer and one at the Annual Meeting, and raised a total of $1,624. Those who purchased raffled tickets each had the opportunity to win a cash prize of $500! All donations are matched by the Agronomic Science Foundation (ASF) (up to $5,000 annually, until 2025) and help us get closer to creating a permanent, endowed fund for our Scholarship, so that we can continue awarding graduate students and supporting their participation at the Annual Meeting. At the same time,

graduate student nominations for the travel scholarship increased, from 80 in 2021 to 110 in 2022. We were able to award 10 students, who each received $750 to cover their registration, travel, food, and lodging costs. Finally, we promoted the travel scholarship at the Annual Meeting by presenting it at several division and section business meetings. We believe that allowing other students to attend the meetings will have a positive impact on their career and are committed to supporting them in the process!

If you would like to learn more about the scholarship or are interested in donating, please visit: a□s□f.org/content/graduate□student□travel□scholarship.

Annual Meeting

Once in Baltimore, we started off with one of our favorite events, the Graduate Student Leadership Conference (GSLC), sponsored by ASF. The 50 students who attended the event had a chance to learn about how to grow their leadership skills on many different fronts.

We also attended a session on how to be an ethical leader, led by Dr. Julena M. Bonner, Assistant Professor of Management in the Marketing and Strategy Department of the Jon M. Huntsman School of Business at Utah State University. The students especially enjoyed Dr. Bonner's workshop as most of them had not had a chance to explore the topic of ethics before.

Later that day, the students heard from Christopher "CJ" Gross from Ascension Worldwide, a company specializing on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) issues. CJ highlighted how to create inclusion and positivity in the workplace environment. Cathleen Hanson, the Director of The International School of Protocol, spoke about business etiquette.

On Sunday during the day, Dr. Sherry Harsh Porter, President and Owner of The Porter Bay Group, Inc., guided the students through a DiSC assessment activity to learn about their leadership personality and talked about how to manage conflicts in the workplace.



Christopher "CJ" Gross from Ascension Worldwide presenting on "Understanding and Managing Differences" to the Graduate Student Leadership Conference cohort.

On Sunday evening, our committee hosted our annual networking session, sponsored by Corteva, which was open to all graduate students. This session was a hit, with 130 student attendees! Students had a chance to interact with 30 mentors from different backgrounds, from academia, to industry, to government. The students sat at roundtables while the mentors moved around the room, in a "speed date" style, to offer a chance to everyone to interact with different mentors and learn about several possible career paths.

Finally, the day was concluded by the Graduate Student Social, which saw a terrific response and high participation. Students had a chance to mingle, connect, and get excited in preparation for the remaining busy days of the Annual Meeting.

On Monday, Dr. Harsh Porter detailed best practices for preparing for your next interview. Our committee also hosted two workshops, "Grad School Workshop for Undergrads" and "Spark Creativity and Increase your Research Impact by making DIY videos." During the first workshop, undergraduate students interested in or about to begin graduate school received advice on finding the right school, the right adviser, and writing their application as well as tips on how to succeed in graduate school. The

second workshop was open to a broad audience, including both graduate students and any other members of the Societies. Dr. Eric Brennan led a hands-on, interactive, practical workshop to learn about some basic video-making skills and tools, and then practice using these by making a short (two to three minute) DIY research video.



Mala Ganiger (left) and Emmanuella Owusu Ansah, members of the Graduate Student Committee, next to the committee's poster at the ASA, CSSA, and SSSA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Showcase at the 2022 Annual Meeting in Baltimore.

On Tuesday, we promoted the special session "Expanding Opportunities to Diverse Career Paths" in collaboration with the Early Career Members Committee. Graduate students who attended the session had a chance to converse with experts involved in industry, government, academia, and nonprofits and discussed how to develop a career in each area. Students had both the option to rotate among the different experts (changing seats every 15 minutes) or stay for a longer time if they already had an idea about which career path they would like to pursue. The session was very informative, and all the speakers were very helpful in highlighting the key points for succeeding in their field!

Our committee also participated in the ASA, CSSA, and SSSA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Showcase. Our poster presented how we serve and support the graduate students in our community, highlighting many of the efforts also explored in this article.

Connecting With Us

We are looking forward to working for our fellow graduate students in 2023 and are already discussing workshops, events, and other opportunities to promote in this new year. If you would like to give us feedback on our work or want to volunteer to join the committee to help plan any of the mentioned activities, please reach out to Maria Teresa (mariateresa.tancredi@uga.edu), the 2023 Chair of the committee!

If you would like to stay up to date with our committee, learn more about our work, contribute to one of our *CSA News* articles or suggest activities you would like us to promote, watch your emails, connect with us on Twitter (@ACSGradStudents) and Facebook (ACS.gradstudents), or visit: agronomy.org/membership/committees/view/ACS238/members, crops.org/membership/committees/view/ACS238/members, or soils.org/membership/committees/view/ACS238/members.

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