SSSA President’s Message

Expanding Our Soils Tent

I would like to follow up on my last letter in CSA News magazine. I was encouraged by the responses I received via phone and email, making excellent constructive suggestions. From this, I feel even more strongly that we need to expand our soils “tent” to embrace all those working on the science of soils.

This includes those who provide a better understanding of basic physical, chemical, biological, and pedological properties and processes as well as those as those elucidating the role of soils sustaining agricultural production; ecosystem resilience in natural, rural, and urban settings; water and air quality protection; and moderating climate change impacts. We need to embrace our scientific diversity and not let it polarize us.

In my tent, I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to conduct basic research on nutrient availability and cycling in soils and then transition into conservation and water quality applications. Looking back, that tent grew to encompass most of our soil disciplines.

To expand our “soils tent” we are establishing a SSSA Task Force to tackle the critical issue of membership growth and retention. This task force will be comprised of SSSA members representing a broad range of geographic, scientific, and career-path backgrounds. The main charge of the task force will be to grow SSSA membership among scientists and professionals and non-traditional scientists involved in soils who are members of other professional societies but not SSSA. If you have any interest in serving on this task force, please let me know.


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