SSSA President’s Message

It’s Your Meeting

In 2019, SSSA will meet independently in San Diego, CA, and we want to hear your ideas for this meeting. I know this is the second time that I have requested your input for this meeting, but it never hurts to ask more than once. I also thought it would be a good opportunity for those of you attending the upcoming Annual Meeting in Tampa to share your ideas for the 2019 meeting with your respective division chairs or program planning committee members.

The theme of the 2019 meeting is “Soils Across Latitudes,” and it will be jointly hosted with the Canadian and Mexican Soil Science Societies, with outreach to other U.S. and international societies involved in soil science. More information on this meeting will be available at www.sacmeetings.org when it becomes available. We are discussing co-sponsoring symposia and sessions with interested European and Australian colleagues, which would expand the “latitudes” to being global.

As there are no plans to have an independent SSSA meeting in the future, this is a unique opportunity to hold an international soil science summit, which showcases SSSA and its international activities. It is also an opportunity to bring new members who work with soils in agricultural, rural, and urban settings into our Society.

We have an excellent organizing committee that includes Chair-Elects of all our Divisions, ably led by Ron Turco from Purdue University (rturco@purdue.edu) and Randy Southard from the University of California (rjsouthard@ucdavis.edu), who have already started planning for 2019.

For instance, at the SSSA San Diego meeting, the Program Planning Task Force is organizing a conference-wide graduate student contest. This contest will be tournament style where the winners from each division’s traditional contests will compete in a head-to-head rapid oral session held on the last day of the San Diego meeting. This conference-wide competition will give our students the opportunity to showcase their work to the broader soils community and give all of us the opportunity to hear research outside of the divisions we typically associate with.

The Task Force is developing programming for undergraduate students at this time. If you or your colleagues have any suggestions for sessions or career development opportunities for our undergraduate attendees, please feel free to contact Aaron Daigh (aaron.daigh@ndsu.edu) or Susan Chapman (schapman@sciencesocieties.org).

Please contact Ron, Randy, the chairs-elect of your divisions of interest, or myself (sharpley@uark.edu) with ideas for San Diego. We are working on “bottom up” planning, so that all SSSA division members will have a unique opportunity to craft this meeting to meet their respective needs.

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Worth 1,000 Words

Each month, we highlight a photo that demonstrates great techniques to illustrate research. This month, we thank John White for this photo of wetland research from The Nature Conservancy. This photo includes (i) a researcher in the field, bringing human interest to the image; (ii) good focus and lighting on the subject, despite shade and water reflections; and (iii) display of sampling equipment.


Don’t let those photo opp moments pass you by! Keep your camera or cell phone ready to capture the exciting visuals of your science!

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