



Looking Forward to Seeing the Fruits of Your Labor in St. Louis

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By Joann Whalen, ASA President, joann.whalen@mcgill.ca

Greetings! I am sure you are looking forward with anticipation to the upcoming ASA, CSSA, and SSSA International Annual Meeting. In the past months, you thought about how to transform your research findings into a presentation. You cultivated and nurtured your idea, and it flourished. You carefully pruned the stray branches to

express your message more beautifully and succinctly. Soon, your idea will spring into bloom as a fully developed talk or poster. Congratulations on your hard work to date! We are very much looking forward to see the fruits of your labor in St. Louis from October 29 to November 1.



ASA members attending the TriSociety meeting for the first, second, or ninth time comment on how smoothly the meeting proceeds. From the opening plenary sessions to the closing ceremony, ASA members are treated to a rich selection of keynote

lectures, award presentations, section and community meetings, special symposia, and crossDivisional talks. Every year, I am amazed by the diverse topics covered in the thousands of talks and posters volunteered by our members. I listen to talks and view posters that make me envious, in the best way possible: I was so impressed with the originality, quality, and presentation that I wish I had done the research!

Thank You Volunteers and Staff

Considering the number of events that must be coordinated to make a great meeting, you will not be surprised to learn that planning started approximately one year ago. A BIG thank you to Jim Ippolito, our ASA Program Planning Officer, and Kristen Veum, our ASA PresidentElect, for volunteering to lead the coordination of "Open Science Inspires..." in cooperation with the CSSA and SSSA program planners and presidentsElect. They have worked closely with the chairs of your community and your section to integrate the topics that are important to you as well as topical sessions and events on emerging research areas.



Our exceptional ASA headquarters staff have worked tirelessly behind the scenes to turn the program plan into reality. Please join me in congratulating everyone with a special thank you to Nate Ehresman, our Technical Program Manager. With a big smile, Nate makes the job of scheduling the keynote and volunteered talks into concurrent sessions look like child's play. He has introduced us to a mobile application for the TriS Society meeting, which allows you to create a daily schedule, so you don't miss your favorite speakers and preferred sessions (search for "SciSoc Mtg" in your app store). Of course, you can still receive daily reminders and search for presenters and events on the conference website. These options should make it easy for you to plan your meeting, your way.

I also appreciate the Annual Meeting because of the opportunities it gives to our ASA student members, from undergraduate to Ph.D. graduates. It was with great pride that we celebrate the activities and accomplishments of student agronomy clubs from across the nation with prizes for superior community engagement. We encourage undergraduate and graduate student researchers to share their findings and award the best presenters with prizes for excellent oral and poster presentations. ASA supports student mentoring and graduate leadership training at the Annual Meeting and throughout the year. We are committed to encouraging these bright young scientists in the agronomic sciences to instill in them a culture and value for continued professional development, which we hope will carry through their entire career.

The ASA meeting is also a time for us to acknowledge and thank our meritorious members, at all career stages, for their exemplary accomplishments. You make us proud!

Please join me in sincerely thanking the hundreds of ASA volunteers who contribute to the great success of the ASA meeting. These colleagues have served on committees that organized the topical sessions and workshops, invited keynote speakers, and selected award recipients. Still other ASA members will volunteer as judges for student competitions and as mentors during the conference. We are grateful for all the ways that you help us out! A shout-out and warm thank you to our ASA student volunteers, who are supporting peers and animating student mixers and training events. Thanks so much to all for your dedication and energy!

Many Reasons to Volunteer

When asked why they volunteer for ASA, our members give many reasons. For some, it is an opportunity to gain new skills and knowledge while making new scientific and professional friends. Others are curious about and wish to deepen their understanding of agronomy to gain confidence and better awareness of the current advances in agricultural research, education, and science policy. For those whose job requires them to devote a certain proportion of their time to service activities, it is their preferred way to demonstrate to their employer that their research is connected to, and valued by, the broader society. Finally, volunteering is good for your health! Many studies show that volunteering reduces stress. This is because focusing on how you can help someone else interrupts the tension-producing patterns that bring your mood down.

Are you interested in being an ASA volunteer to support colleagues and activities at our Annual Meeting? Is there a particular event or cause within ASA that speaks to you where you would like to contribute for your professional development and personal satisfaction? To learn more about ASA volunteer opportunities and become involved, please contact Lauren McCann at lmccann@sciencesocieties.org or 608-268-4952 or visit agronomy.org/membership/committees.

Please do not hesitate to contact me and the other members of your ASA Board of Directors, as well as your section leaders and community leaders, with your ideas, stories, comments, questions and concerns. We look forward to hearing from you!

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