

## Report from the Education Committee of the BSA

**SIP3:** During the past year, Education Committee members worked on several long-term BSA education projects initiated in previous years. First, interactions between the Teaching Section and the Education Committee of BSA continue to develop. The two groups are working on the Scientific Inquiry through Plants (SIP3) project with BSA members serving as online mentors for middle school, high school, and college students conducting research using plants. Online mentors review contributions that have been posted by students engaged in the SIP3 activities. Claire Hemingway, along with Bill Dahl, has been key in the continued development of SIP3. The main issues currently are: finding funding to continue the work of the SIP3 project; improving the website; determining how to evaluate the project; and ramping up the project to include more students, teachers, and faculty mentors. One major focus of the project this year has been the introduction of the SIP3 project into Chicago public schools. At a recent informational session in Chicago led by Susan Singer and Claire Hemingway, 16 Chicago teachers indicated an interest in using the SIP3 program either next fall or next spring. Two Chicago representatives will attend the Chico Education Forum this summer: the manager of the teacher professional development program and one teacher who'll use SIP next year. Hemingway will return to Chicago in the fall to provide teachers with an in-depth program orientation.

The SIP3 committee has been expanded to include teachers, members of the ASPB, and project evaluators. The committee organization currently is:

**Steering Committee:** Gordon Uno, Jeff Osborn, Mary Williams, Larry Griffing, Barb Schulz, Valdine McLean, plus individuals on the working committees below.

**Inquiry Development Committee (to develop new "activities"):** Paul Williams, Marsh Sundberg, Susan Singer, Valdine McLean, Carol Packard, Peggy Skinner

**Web Development Committee:** Patrick Sweeney, Beverly Brown

**Evaluation Committee:** Carol Stuessy, Sandy Honda, Barb Schulz

A second continuing interaction between BSA members of the Teaching Section and Education Committee is the formal review of teaching slides and images. This review is being coordinated by the Teaching Section, with assistance from the Education Committee.

**ASPB/BSA Collaborations:** Collaborative education efforts continue to evolve between ASPB and BSA. First, as noted above, two members of ASPB have joined SIP3 committees, and a small group of individuals from both groups submitted a proposal to the ASPB Educational Foundation to support the development of a genetics unit for SIP3. Richard Cyr, of ASPB, has invited a SIP3 presentation at the Sunday Evening Education Workshop on "Broader Impacts and Beyond" at this year's ASPB convention. It is hoped that through that presentation and BSA's presence at the ASPB education booth at least 40 new faculty mentors will be recruited for SIP3.

On April 1, 2006, Bill Dahl and Gordon Uno met with the ASPB Executive Director and several other BSA and ASPB members at the ASPB headquarters in Rockville, MD. One goal of this meeting was to discuss how our organizations could help members address the challenge of the "Broader Impacts" aspect now required in all NSF-funded projects to help disseminate scientific knowledge and train a wider audience of students. A panel of national experts considered how the ASPB and the BSA could help their respective memberships recognize activities that ensure continued, vigorous growth of science and technology in this country. The panel composition was diverse and included science professionals with expertise in K-12 and undergraduate

education, professional development (including graduate student and post-doctoral training, and mentoring those in the professorial ranks), and informal education/outreach.

An additional point of discussion at this meeting was the intent to bring together the expertise of BSA and ASPB members, as well as other plant scientists and educators, to develop a set of educational materials for pre-college students, focusing on the high school level. The goal is to work with the ASPB on a few major educational projects, targeting both pre-college and college-level classrooms, teachers, and students. One of the projects is SIP3, and the other is the development of new and the revision of existing pre-college classroom materials on plants. A timeline will be outlined that leads to an unveiling of coordinated activities at the 2007 joint ASPB/BSA annual convention.

A proposed Education and Outreach Forum at the 2007 joint annual meeting in Chicago now includes individuals from the Chicago Botanic Garden and Morton Arboretum as well as members of both BSA and ASPB. Planning for this Forum has now begun in earnest and will continue throughout the next year.

Submitted by Gordon E. Uno, Chair  
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