

The SS-ASPB

January 2022

Newsletter of the Southern Section of the American Society of Plant Biologists

TO ENCOURAGE AND PROMOTE THE GROWTH OF AND THE WELFARE AND
GOOD FELLOWSHIPS OF PLANT BIOLOGISTS GENERALLY...

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*Greetings from
Dr. Mustafa Morsy
2021-2022 SS-ASPB Chair*

Dear member of the SS-ASPB community,

I wish the SS-ASPB members a happy new year. Despite the success of the 2021 SS-ASPB virtual meeting, we felt that nothing would replace the in-person encounters at the poster sessions, the talks, opening mixer and dinner, and gathering with old friends, and getting acquainted with new ones. Therefore, we plan to hold the section's 83rd annual meeting in-person in Birmingham, AL, from March 26 to 28, 2022. However, we realize that we live in uncertain times, and the COVID19 pandemic is still with us. The in-person meeting will depend on the COVID19 status. Our priority is the health and safety of all attendees and presenters, and we will convert the conference into a virtual format if needed. The event is hosted by Dr. Colleen Doherty, SS-ASPB Secretary. Please mark your calendar and encourage your students to attend and present their research.

The theme of the 2022 Kriton Hatzios symposium is "Plant Microbiome: Ecology, functions, and application trends." We will have three internationally renowned speakers whose research centers on plant

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Letter from the Chair, continued from page 1.

microbiome and their application and effects in agriculture production and plant ecology. We will have exciting seminars delivered by Dr. Pamela G. Marrone, CEO of Marrone Bio Innovations, Dr. Rusty Rodriguez, CEO, Adaptive Symbiotic Technologies; and Dr. Jan Leach, Distinguished Professor and Associate Dean for Research, College of Agriculture, Colorado State University. A brief biography of the speakers is presented in the newsletter. SS-ASPB Chair and Vice-Chair organize the symposium. The continuous success of the SS-ASPB annual conference is due to the contributions of its outstanding members and leadership and their willingness to serve. On this note, I want to express our gratitude to Dr. Marc Cohn, who passed away in June 2021. Marc was one of the most dedicated ASPB and Southern Section members. Marc's contributions and vision helped develop SS-ASPB as we know it today. We are pleased that Professor Marc Cohn has been nominated as a Pioneer of the ASPB to recognize his contributions to the plant biology community.

Congratulations to our newly elected Secretary, Dr. Aaron Rashotte, Professor at Auburn University. Aaron has been an active member of ASPB and the Southern Section, and we are confident that he will be an excellent addition to our leadership. We want to thank Dr. Andrew Palmer (Florida Institute of Technology) for his continuous support and service and willingness to run for this office. We also congratulate other 2022-2023 elected officers; Dr. Ashlee McCaskill (University of North Georgia), Dr. Colleen Doherty (North Carolina State University), and Dr. Jay Shockey (USDA, New Orleans), who will serve as the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Treasurer, respectively.

The Southern Section is proud to be a venue that fosters student development and collegiality among plant scientists. We encourage students (graduate and undergraduate) to participate in the scientific process and actively present their research in a friendly and relaxed environment. So I would like to invite you and your students to this year's meeting in Birmingham, AL. Please plan to attend and meet old friends and newcomers! We will be in touch to share our plans for a robust conference; meanwhile, stay optimistic for an in-person meeting and stay healthy! We are looking forward to seeing you all in Birmingham, AL.

Mustafa Morsy

SS-ASPB 2022 COVID Health & Safety

In order to ensure a safer environment for all attendees, organizers, hospitality staff, and the broader Birmingham community, the SS-ASPB leadership has developed the following attendance guidelines. All attendees must provide **one** of the following:

- Proof of full vaccination (including CDC approved booster shot).
- Proof of a COVID-19 negative test (PCR or at-home antigen) taken within 72 hours **prior to arrival** at the meeting.

In addition to the above documentation, a photo ID (driver's license or other government issued ID) is required for all individuals to receive the conference name tag and enter the conference venue. Masks will also be required for all attendees for the duration of the meeting in all public settings. Please understand that these science-based requirements are what will allow us to hold an in-person meeting this year. We look forward to seeing your (masked) faces in person for the first time in three years!

SS-ASPB 2022

SAVE THE DATE

Greetings plant biologists!

Mark your calendar and plan to join us for the

2022 Southern Section of the
American Society of Plant
Biologists (SS-ASPB)

Birmingham, Alabama



The meeting will take place on March 26-28, 2021 and feature an outstanding lineup of speakers for the Kriton Hatzios Symposium "Plant Microbiome: Ecology, functions, and application trends".

- Papers covering all topics in plant biology are encouraged
- Student competition at the graduate and undergraduate levels
- Travel grants to support student attendance

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
<https://southern.aspb.org/>

or email Dr. Colleen Doherty
SS-ASPB Secretary at cjdoherty@ncsu.edu

Birmingham is conveniently located within driving distance of many schools
and the meeting site is about 10 minutes from the airport.

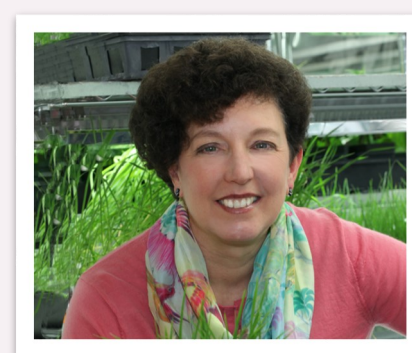
SS-ASPB 2022

Kriton Hatzios Symposium

Plant Microbiome: Ecology, Functions, and Application Trends



Dr. Pamela G. Marrone



Dr. Marrone spent her 30+ year career focused on biological products for pest management and plant health. In August 2020, Dr. Marrone retired as CEO of Marrone Bio Innovations (NASDAQ: MBII), a company she started in 2006 to discover and develop bio-based products for pest management and plant health and listed on NASDAQ (MBII) in 2013. She remains on the Board of Directors and is an advisor to the company and to its largest shareholder Ospraie Ag Sciences. Under her leadership, the company commercialized 10 products from six EPA-registered active ingredients (microbials and biochemicals) and in 2019 acquired Pro Farm Technologies (biochemicals from wood waste processed into bionutrients to accelerate growth in the multibillion dollar seed treatment market. From 2015 to 2019, the company grew its revenues by 32% CAGR and gross margins from 5% to 56%. Prior to establishing MBI, Dr. Marrone founded AgraQuest in 1995, where she served as its CEO, Chairman and President until 2006. Before AgraQuest, she was founding president of Entotech, Inc. (1990-1995), a biopesticide subsidiary of Novo Nordisk. Dr. Marrone started her career in biologicals by leading the Insect Biology group at Monsanto (1983-1990), which was involved in pioneering projects based on natural products and plant biotechnology. Dr. Marrone is a well-recognized leader in the biologicals industry as evidenced by the following awards: “Most Admired CEO, Distinguished Career Award” (Sacramento Business Journal), the “Sustie” award by the Ecological Farming Association, Agrow’s “Best Manager with Strategic Vision”, and the NRDC’s Growing Green Award in “Business Leader” category. She is the founder of the Bioproducts Industry Alliance, now a trade group of more than 150 companies. Through her Chestnut Bio Advisors and her association with Global BioAg Linkages and Primary BioAg Innovations, she advises several food and agtech companies, five founded and led by women, currently serves on the UC Davis Ag & Environmental Sciences Dean’s Advisory Council, and was an alumni-elected Trustee of Cornell University (2016-20). She is on the Executive Committee and is Treasurer of the Association for Women in Science and is a board member of the Foundation for Food and Ag Research. She also serves on the boards of the pharma life sciences companies Stem Express and 180 Life Sciences (NASDAQ:ATNF). She holds several hundred patents and is in high demand to deliver keynote addresses on the future and potential of biologicals for pest management, innovation and entrepreneurship. She was elected by her peers as a Fellow of AAAS (American Assoc. for the Advancement of Science). She has a B.S. in entomology with Honors and Distinction from Cornell University and a Ph.D. in entomology from North Carolina State University.

Dr. Jan E. Leach

University Distinguished Professor
Associate Dean for Research
College of Agriculture
Colorado State University



Dr. Jan Leach is a plant pathologist who studies the molecular basis of plant disease susceptibility and resistance and how these responses are influenced by interactions within the phytobiome. Leach is the current President of the International Society of Plant Pathology. She is a Fellow and a past President of the American Phytopathological Society (APS). She served on the APS Public Policy Board for 16 years. Leach is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and a Fellow of the American Academy of Microbiology. In 2019, Leach was awarded the Agropolis Fondation Louis Malassis International Scientific Prize for Agriculture and Food for Distinguished Scientist, and in 2020, she was presented the APS Award of Distinction, an award that has been given only 17 times in the 112 years of APS's history. Leach was elected to the US National Academy of Sciences in 2021.

Dr. Rusty Rodriguez

CEO, Adaptive Symbiotic
Technologies
Seattle, Washington



Dr. Rusty Rodriguez obtained a PhD in Microbial Physiology from Oregon State University in 1983 followed by postdoctoral work (Cornell University) in plant pathology before overseeing research programs on plant-microbe symbiosis in academic (University of California) and government (USFWS, NBS, USGS) institutions. His research programs allowed he and his colleagues to discover that plants in nature do not adapt themselves to abiotic stresses such as drought, temperature or salinity. Instead, plants establish symbiotic associations with microscopic fungi that confer abiotic stress tolerance. This remarkable observation was the basis for developing a new seed treatment technology (BioEnsure) to mitigate impacts of climate change in agriculture by generating climate-resilient crops. In 2012, he joined Adaptive Symbiotic Technologies (AST) to commercialize symbiotic technologies for addressing real world problems and work toward a sustainable future. AST is dedicated to ensuring food security by generating climate resilient crops for both large and small land holding farmers around the globe. AST is using BioEnsure in developing and emerging countries to empower: females by training them to be seed treaters, farmers by increasing crop yields & animal fodder, and families by increasing food security & agricultural revenues.

ASPB Council Report

By Dr. Nihal Dharmasiri

SS-ASPB Representative to ASPB Council

Several new members joined the ASPB Council recently. They are listed below.

Dr. Stacie Harmer, Secretary and Chair of the Program Committee

Dr. Elena Monte, elected member of the Board of Directors (BoD)

Dr. Patricia Leon, Chair, International Committee

Dr. Josh Gendron, Representative, Northeastern Section

Dr. Kathrin Schrick, Representative, Midwest Section

Dr. Karen Hicks, Representative, Primarily Undergraduate Institution (PUI) Section

Dr. Stefan de Folter, Representative, Mexico section

Dr. Alexander Meyers, Representative, Early Career Plant Scientists (ECPS) Section

Ms. Asia Hightower, Chair, Ambassador Alliance

Dr. Tessa Burch-Smith (Chair, Science Policy Committee) was elected to the BoD.

Dr. Eva Farre (Chair, Women in Plant Biology Committee) was elected to the Nomination Committee.

Due to a recent inquiry, Council decided that minutes of Council meetings may be voted on by any Council/Committee member serving at the time of the meeting, regardless of the presence or absence of the member at the meeting. Additionally, sections may now send an alternate member to the Council meetings, if their designated representative is unable to attend. However, alternate members may not vote in elections of Council members to the Board of Directors and the Nomination Committee.

The ASPB Education Committee has reviewed and revised Twelve Principles of Plant Biology that had been introduced for K-12 education to understand and appreciate plant biology. Recent revisions and amendments were introduced to align with the updated Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) principles of life sciences, which includes evolution, ecosystems, heredity, and molecules to organisms. These revised Twelve Principles of Plant Biology will be launched at the next meeting of National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) in 2022.

As a part of the Centennial Challenge to raise \$3 million dollars for the activities of ASPB, the Legacy Society Leadership Committee introduced the “Pioneer Members Initiative”. Under the initiative, scientists who have contributed to plant science through their research, teaching, and mentorship may be nominated and donations can be contributed on behalf of the nominee. When the contributions reach \$5000, the nominee will be recognized as a Pioneer of ASPB. Currently, 75 plant scientists have been recognized as Pioneers of ASPB, with contributions from more than 1000 members. So far, approximately \$1.5 million have been raised. If you need more information, please visit; <https://aspb.org/membership/aspb-pioneer-members/>.

Dr. Marc Cohn
Pioneer of
ASPB



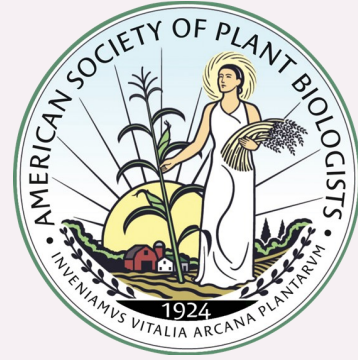
It is with great pleasure that the leadership of SS-ASPB announces that our community has successfully met the \$5000 fundraising goal required to officially recognize Dr. Marc Cohn as a Pioneer of ASPB. Dr. Cohn, a transformational member of the Southern Section, passed away in 2021. While the minimum contribution has been met, additional donations are still welcome. More information can be found at <https://aspb.org/membership/pioneer-legacy-donation/>.

Show your support for ASPB!
Include your ASPB affiliation in your
electronic email signature.



We're on the web!

<https://southern.aspb.org/>



2021-2022 SS-ASPB Officers

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