



# The SS-ASPB

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

February 2025

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



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### *From the 2024-2025 SS-ASPB Chair: Welcome to 2025: Snowstorms, Commitment, Elections, and Our Annual Meeting*



Dear SS-ASPB Community Members,

Well, 2025 sure has made an impact and we are not even two months into it. Winter weather hit most of in the Southern Section harder than it has in years, especially in the deep South where we had record snow – and multiple days off. While it was wonderful for many to experience snow for the first time, it had a strong impact on the school semester that myself, like I assume many others, are still working to dig your way out of.

Perhaps a stronger impact has been coming from the new federal administration that I feel has added a lot of uncertainty to our lives. One part of this is the cuts in federal funding via NIH, NASA, USDA, and NSF grants and employees that are essential to keeping our labs running and personnel employed. I don't have any great insight into how this is going to turn out, but I am glad to see that our parent society ASPB has been [voicing its support for science](#) in relation to these issues. This is something that impacts us all, and I hope we can all work together to try to find a path moving forward. A second part of this impact is in relation to Diversity and Inclusion. I was proud to see our parent society ASPB announce their [strong commitment to this issue](#). "The Society (ASPB) remains committed to robustly supporting and strongly advocating for diversity and inclusion in the plant sciences, period." We here in the executive leadership of SS-ASPB add our commitment and support as well. These are issues that are foundational to our society, the way it runs, and its future.

Moving forward SS-ASPB has an Election for new leadership, which we will send out for your vote very soon. These positions are critical to the future of our society. Please let any of us in the current leadership know if you are interested in running.

Last, but not least our [Annual Meeting](#) is right around the corner – March 28-30<sup>th</sup> in Raleigh, NC. It looks to be a good one, as we have three excellent speakers set for the Kriton Hatzios Symposium focused on this year's theme of Gravitropism. I hope to see you all there.

Aaron Rashotte (2024-2025 SS-ASPB Chair)

Save the Date SS-ASPB 2025 Raleigh, NC

# 2025 Annual Meeting

## 86TH ANNUAL SOUTHERN SECTION MEETING

**KRITON HATZIOS  
SYMPOSIUM THEME:  
GRAVITROPISM**



**March 28-30th, 2025  
Raleigh, NC**



**FEB 17TH - SUBMIT  
ABSTRACT TO BE  
CONSIDERED FOR A TALK**

**MARCH 1ST - EARLY  
REGISTRATION ENDS**

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

The 86th Annual 2025 SS-ASPB meeting will be held March 28-30, 2025, in Raleigh, NC, at NC State University. This meeting will continue the tradition of presenting, discussing, and celebrating research pursuits from all areas of plant science. The topics presented at the meeting are varied in the subject to encompass a diverse group of scientists who work with plants and agricultural systems or in several related disciplines, including soil science, engineering, genomics, and bioinformatics. Scientists from all career stages and diverse positions are invited to attend and encouraged to showcase their research through poster and oral presentations. In particular, the meeting provides early career researchers, including undergraduate and graduate students and postdoctoral associates, the opportunity to present their plant-related research.

## Kriton Hatzios Symposium Theme: Gravitropism

### Keynote Speakers

Simon Gilroy, University of Wisconsin-Madison

John Z. Kiss, Florida Institute of Technology

Sarah Wyatt, Ohio University

**Registration:** Registration is now open and will close immediately when the maximum attendee capacity (150 attendees) is reached. Early Registration rates end March 1st.

**Abstract Submission:** Abstract submission is now open. **Submit by February 17th to be considered for a talk**, by March 1st to be included in the program

**Southern Section Travel Awards:** to support student travel, **applications open through February 17th**

### Join our Meeting LinkedIn Group

We created a private LinkedIn Group for communication about the meeting and to help connect those looking for roommates or carpooling.

Join using this link (<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/13152386/>).

**Event Venue:** James B. Hunt Jr. Library – Duke Energy Hall  
1070 Partners Way, Raleigh, NC 27606

### **Parking (free after 5pm and on weekends):**

Poulton Lot: Hunt Library at Partners Way, Raleigh, NC 27606

Partners Way Parking Deck: Monteith Engineering Research Center,  
Campus Shore Dr, Raleigh, NC 27606

For any questions, contact organizers Amanda Storm ([arstorm@wcu.edu](mailto:arstorm@wcu.edu)) and Colleen Doherty ([cjdohert@ncsu.edu](mailto:cjdohert@ncsu.edu))

**Area Hotels:** There are many hotels within 20min drive of James B. Hunt Jr. Library. Some of the closest include:

Approx 3mi, ~5min drive

- Holiday Inn Express & Suites Raleigh SW NC State  
3741 Thistledown Dr, Raleigh, NC 27606
- TownePlace Suites Raleigh-University Area  
3771 Thistledown Dr, Raleigh, NC 27606

Approx 5mi, ~10min drive

- Wingate by Wyndham Garner/Raleigh South  
1542 Mechanical Blvd, Garner, NC 27529
- Best Western Plus Edison Inn  
1595 Mechanical Blvd, Garner, NC 27529

Approx 6mi, ~15min drive

- Holiday Inn & Suites Raleigh-Cary (I-40 @Walnut St)  
5630 Dillard Dr, Cary, NC 27518
- Hilton Garden Inn Raleigh-Cary  
131 Columbus Ave, Cary, NC 27518
- DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Raleigh – Cary  
500 Caitboo Ave, Cary, NC 27518

## SS-ASPB Highlights

Spotlight Women in Plant Bio Highlights our Very Own Southern Section Member Dr. Aruna Kilaru.

Check out the post for a little inspiration for your own career.



A quote from Dr. Kilaru: “***My advice for future generations is, don’t be afraid to act or ask for help, when in doubt.***”

<https://plantae.org/a-wipb-interview-with-aruna-kilaru-a-stellar-scientist-driven-by-her-passion-and-curiocity/>



## SS-ASPB OFFICERS 2023-2024

More Information:

<https://climatesymposium.botany.org/plant-resilience-and-conservation-for-a-changing-climate>

Chair	Aaron Rashotte	Auburn University
Vice-chair	Andrew Palmer	Florida Institute of Technology
Secretary	Amanda Storm	Western Carolina University
Treasurer	Ana Alonso	University of North Texas

### ***Executive Committee***

Ashlee McCaskill	University of North Georgia
Aruna Kilaru *Representative to ASPB Council & Membership Committees	East Tennessee State University
Colleen Doherty	North Carolina State University
Nihal Dharmasiri	Texas State University

### ***Financial Oversight Committee***

Nihal Dharmasiri	Texas State University
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***If you are interested in serving on an SS-ASPB Committee or know someone who would be great, please let us know. Now Welcoming Nominations.***