



Graduate students – this was for you!

This year's **ASA, CSSA, and SSSA Annual International Meeting** held in sunny Long Beach, California was a huge success, with 984 graduate students taking part and a total of 4,205 attendees in total, from 51 countries.

Highlights of the program for Graduate Students included:

Fifty graduate students were selected from across the Societies to take part in the two-day inaugural **Graduate Student Leadership Conference** prior to the annual meeting, to help them develop the leadership and professional skills required to excel in their fields. The conference included sessions on communication, leadership characteristics, conflict resolution, extension and teaching. Participants had the opportunity to develop their networks and meet with Society leaders. Speakers at the conference included Sheri Harsch-Porter of Porter Bay, and professional communications expert Preston Ni. Consider applying for next year's Graduate Leadership Conference.



Sevilla Café played host to the **Graduate Student Social Saturday 1st November**. Students had the opportunity to network, socialise and mix informally in the best Spanish restaurant in Long Beach (as seen on the Food Network and Rachel Ray).



Career Fair and Consultations



It wasn't all socializing at this year's meeting! Graduates had the opportunity to meet with potential employers at the career fair (sponsored by Dow Agrosciences). STEM Career Consultant Alana Levine also conducted one-on-one 20 minute consultations, sponsored by the ASA, CSSA, and SSSA Career Center, covering topics such as resume writing, interview skills and more. This was a unique opportunity for job-seeking graduates to get expert advice on furthering their career.

The ASA-CSSA-SSSA Early Career Committee ran a series of **Professional Development Workshops** aimed at enhancing the skills required in the job application process, preparing a manuscript for publication and succeeding as an early career researcher. These sessions were made up of expert panels and provided guidance in some of the biggest challenges faced by graduate students. And, the ASA-CSSA-SSSA Graduate Student Committee developed a Networking and Mentoring Session!



Monsanto generously sponsored this year's popular **Science Policy Luncheon**. This event featured a panel of speakers including science policy officer Julie McClure and 2014 Congressional Science



Fellow Jennifer Burks, who demonstrated the critical role scientists at all stages of their career, have to play in developing effective policy, and discussed how and why graduates should engage in advocacy. Graduates interested in this vital area should consider applying for this year's Congressional Science Fellowship on the [ASA](#), [CSSA](#), or [SSSA](#) science policy webpage – deadline for applications is January 15, 2015.

Elevator Speech Contest - What is truly essential about your research? Can you sum it up during just an elevator ride? This fun (and fast) session challenged students to explain the key points of their PhD research in just one minute. There were lots of laughs, not to mention prizes for the winners!

1st Place: Zack Valdez

2nd Place: Andrea Basche

3rd Place: Rosemary Bulyaba



Despite this very busy schedule, the focus of the meeting was still science, and there were 29 **Graduate Student Research Contests** across the three Societies, designed to encourage students to participate in oral and poster presentations. These sessions rewarded the outstanding work done by ASA, CSSA, and SSSA graduate students and helped increase the visibility of participants throughout the meetings.



Next year's Annual Meeting will be held in Minneapolis, MN, from the 15th to the 18th of November. The theme will be 'Synergy in Science: Partnering for Solutions,' and the meeting will be conducted in conjunction with the Entomological Society of America. Abstract submission opens on the 17th March 2015. Start planning now! The Annual Meetings have so much to offer; science, social and skills.