



*Improving University Scientist Participation in K-12 Education – June 29, 2009*

As outlined below, the American Society of Plant Biologists (ASPB) offers multi-tiered, adaptable resources for K-12 use. These resources are freely available to the general public, teachers, ASPB members, and other scientists via [www.aspb.org/education](http://www.aspb.org/education). These web resources are available to the general public as well as our members. Most of our members are professional plant biology researchers; many have a keen interest in outreach and education. Members can serve on the Education Committee <http://www.aspb.org/committees/education.cfm> or the Education Foundation Board <http://www.aspb.org/education/foundation/>.

1. Annual Meeting

- a. During the Education Minisymposium and the Education Workshop presenters offer themes designed to inspire their peers to greater outreach activity. These events include practical tools for successful teaching.
- b. Winners of the Education Booth Competition <http://www.aspb.org/meetings/pb-2009/educboothwinners.cfm> share compelling outreach activities with meeting attendees at the ASPB booth in the main exhibit hall. This competition is an incubator for the best teaching and outreach ideas created by and useful to professional plant biologists and other educators.
- c. ASPB is considering granting plenary speakers 5 minutes of extra time to address education and outreach during their presentations. This is an effort to inspire peers to apply their research and expertise directly to educational outreach efforts.

2. ASPB sponsors exhibit booths at major national teacher conferences each year. Members from nearby institutions help staff the booth and interact directly with teachers. They do teaching demonstrations, offer free handouts and activities, and field questions all within the context of helping teachers to inspire K-12 learning and to prepare students for success in undergraduate biology. Per request, we also send materials to large regional events where we don't have a full booth. We also participate in the AAAS's Family Science Days each year.

3. The *ASPB News* (the society's bi-monthly newsletter) carries a series of Teaching Tips designed to help our members improve their teaching skills. The newsletter also runs a column on grassroots ideas for bringing plant biology into the community. Many of these ideas include simple, direct methods for getting materials and techniques to local schools.

4. ASPB has participated in a variety of NSF-sponsored conversations on improving education. The meeting titles emphasize undergraduate education but the conversations often include adequate preparation of K-12 students for college studies.

- a. NSF & ASPB Annual Meeting July 2007 Session: Teaching Biology to Undergraduates - What is necessary to reshape undergraduate education in biology to reflect the 21st century approach to the discipline?
- b. NSF & HHMI November 2008: Vision and Change in Biology Undergraduate Education - A View for the 21st Century *The Role of Disciplinary Societies*
- c. Mobilizing STEM for a Sustainable Future May 2009 <http://mobilizingstem.wceruw.org/>

5. The ASPB Education Foundation sponsors the Grant Awards Program (GAP)

<http://www.aspb.org/education/foundation/gap.cfm>. GAP is a professional level grant available for ASPB members to create education and outreach activities that reach a wide audience. Recent winners include a competition for new plant biology videos on YouTube [www.ChloroFilms.org](http://www.ChloroFilms.org), a website for plant science news [www.greenseedling.com](http://www.greenseedling.com), and an interactive plant genetics video game <http://www.aspb.org/education/GDLProject.CFM>.