A528. ASA CSSA SSSA Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee (DEIC) Report 2024

Submitted 12-31-2024

By
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The DEI Committee
The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in ASA, CSSA, SSSA Committee (DEI Committee) is a collaborative group of individuals that are dedicated to enhancing equity within our sciences, inclusion throughout our Societies, and increasing diversity in people and perspectives. The committee works to address the overall Societies' DEI initiatives as informed by members, the Board of Directors, the elected leadership and staff.

Our ASA, CSSA, and SSSA core values guide our efforts and long-standing commitment to proactively building an inclusive culture in which every person can develop and apply their limitless potential in the agronomic, crop, soil, and environmental sciences.

This year the overarching DEI Committee met on the dates listed below:
- January 23, 2024
- April 23, 2024
- July 23, 2024
- November 10, 2024

Working Groups
The DEI Committee focuses their activities on key areas that inform and grow a more diverse, equitable and inclusive Societies. The committee is guided by the 2021 DEI Recommendations Report. The committee activities are advanced by working groups specific to each of the recommendations. This year there were seven active working groups. The 2024 DEI Committee working groups include:
(1) Professional Conduct and Anti-Harassment Policy Development.
(2) Ethics
(3) Education and Training
(4) Policy and Procedures Review
(5) Measuring Success
(6) Mentoring

(7) Annual Meeting Planning

A brief summary of 2024 DEI working groups and committee activities is provided below.

Professional Conduct and Anti-Harassment Policy Development
This working group focuses its efforts toward providing opportunities for members and meeting attendees to have a place to express concerns around professional conduct and harassment.

Our DEI and Safe Space Advocate, Dr. Deanna Kimbrel, was available to receive any incident reports or concerns and any feedback (including positive feedback) on our DEI activities at the Annual Meeting. She was present in-person from Sunday-Wednesday and will be reporting any concerns, in the aggregate, to the DEI Committee. A leadership program was conducted via Zoom to inform members with a leadership role at the Annual Meeting about the DEI and Safe Space program.

The Report a Concern form was created so anyone in our Societies and scientific communities may provide feedback, concerns, ideas, and suggestions on DEI issues and may be done anonymously. Reports are sent to the Societies CEO, Jim Cudahy, and DEI Liaison Susan Chapman. The form is available at www.agronomy.org/diversity/feedback, www.crops.org/diversity/feedback, and www.soils.org/diversity/feedback

Ethics Committee
With approval of the new ASA-CSSA-SSSA Ethics Committee by the Boards of Directors at the end of 2023, the Committee's initial focus has been on a review and revision of the Statement of Ethics and cross-Societies Values Statement to better define expectations on ethical behaviors and values. To ensure transparency and input from members, the statement was sent out for a comment period in October with a final document presented to the ASA, CSSA, and SSSA Boards of Directors for approval at the November Meeting. The Codes of Conduct are currently in review to follow the same process – support by the boards of directors and a comment period by the membership (early 2025). A CSA News article on the Ethics Committee is forthcoming.

Education/Training
Building on the work done by the Education/Training working group in previous years, a matrix of relevant educational topics was developed. This year's working group has prepared 4 webinars around matrix topics:
- *DEI and Safe Space Training/Bystander Intervention* – October 3, 2024 – This webinar provided information for Society leaders on the availability of Dr. Deana Kimbrell, our DEI and Safe Space Advocate and what to do if someone comes to a Society leader with a concern.
- *Reducing Bias in the Assessment of Posters and Presentations*, October 8, 2024 – This webinar was built from the ground up and presented by Dr. Tiffany Carter, DEI Committee Chair. It was based on a suggestion from several members - there was very

little information on this topic, so we believe we are pioneers on this topic! The advertisement for the webinar is appended.

- *Inclusive Mentoring: Building Stronger Relationships and Fostering Growth* – December 6, 2024– As a follow-up to the Inclusive Mentoring presentation by Dr. Karina Vielma at the DEI Summit, this webinar was available to all members who were interested in learning more about the critical elements that set inclusive mentoring apart, including creating a safe space for dialogue and adapting mentoring practices to diverse learning needs and backgrounds.
- *Developing Inclusive and Safe Fieldwork Settings* – January 9, 2025 (originally scheduled for August) – Watch for announcements and join us for this webinar where we will discuss fieldwork safety and provide best practices and resources for field leaders and participants to ensure inclusive and safe environments, with a particular focus on ensuring minority groups are safe (e.g., groups with marginalized genders, sexual orientations, and ethnicities).

The working group will be assessing feedback from the DEI survey for future webinar planning in 2025.

Policy and Procedures Review
This working group is charged with doing an assessment of the written and unwritten policies and procedures in the following areas:
- Elections/Nominations
- Committees
- Awards
- Publications
- General Policies

Though this working group is in the beginning stages of their work, they have developed an initial list of questions to ask around each category, initialized an inventory of written policies and procedures, and developed a plan for initial review of the elections and nominations process. While the role of the working group is advisory in nature, we look forward to providing recommendations that maybe used in the future.

Measuring Success
The Measuring Success working group worked with staff to develop a statistics report that will be added to the website when the new ASA, CSSA, and SSSA websites go live (towards the end of 2024). These reports will provide members and others interested with the ability to see changes over time in demographics in membership, committees, leadership, reviewers, and annual meeting attendance. In addition, the working group has developed a follow-up survey to the 2021 DEI Survey which was sent to the membership in November. Outcomes from the survey will be developed in early 2025 for potential integration into a new Recommendations Report.

Mentoring

The 2021 DEI recommendations report calls for an assessment and development of a mentoring program for members of the Societies. The committee's Mentoring Working Group developed a mentoring report which served as a basis for assessment of options for a Mentoring platform. The Societies have selected a system that integrates with current operating systems and several pilot programs were launched for the Annual Meeting. In addition to the Golden Opportunity Scholars and Greenfield Scholars program, three divisions/communities volunteered to pilot Annual Meeting-focused mentoring programs. The Mentoring working group, as part of this pilot, is developing and gathering resources to build best practices for mentors and mentees and will be doing an assessment after the initial pilot project. They will be making recommendations for building additional resources, ensuring program quality is monitored, and then sunset their work in 2025.

We would like to thank the three divisions/communities for participating in the pilot program:
- Soil Physics and Hydrology Division
- Turfgrass Division
- Global Climate Change Community

Additional information regarding the mentoring working group can be found in the appended working group report.

Annual Meeting

This working group is tasked with planning DEI committee activities at the annual meeting. This year there were several amazing DEI activities at the annual meeting. CSA News articles regarding some of the annual meeting activities will be forthcoming.
- *Diversity Student Poster Contest*
- *DEI Summit*
- *Women in Science Workshop*
- *Sabor de San Antonio (including 6 Spanish-language scientific presentations)*
- *Special Session: Finding Common Ground - Merging Tribal Food Ways with Modern Organic and Regenerative Agriculture Practices*
- *Land Acknowledgement and Traditional Indigenous Dance and Drum Performance*

DEI Committee Planning for FY 2025

The DEI Committee plans to continue building upon our 2024 efforts. The committee plans to work toward:
- Review of the annual meeting programming format, including the DEI Summit, poster showcase, and provision of Safe Space Advocate services
  - Review of DEI Advocate Needs for 2025 CANVAS meeting
- Completion of the Code of Conduct Review
- Provide additional training to members via webinar series
  - Review webinar feedback and tailor to society training needs
- Bring the Communications Working Group online

- o Provide an initial set of monthly updates and outreach information via CSA News Articles
- Update current DEI recommendations based on information collected from the 2024 DEI survey
  - o Provide an update to the ASA, CSSA, and SSSA boards in December 2025

Remarks

We are grateful to all the DEI Committee members for their energy and commitment as all of these efforts are given on a volunteer basis. We are especially grateful to the working group leadership for overseeing the progress this year:

- Professional Conduct and Anti-Harassment Policy Development: Endy Lopes Kailer, Kansas State University
- Education/Training: Comfort Ateh, University of Providence
- Policy and Procedures Review: Sharon Weyers, USDA-ARS
- Measuring Success: Peter Ampim, Prairie View A&M University
- Mentoring: Elizabeth Gillispie, Washington State University and Donn Cummings, Emeritus
- Annual Meeting: Lisa Durso, USDA-ARS

Items Requiring Board Attention

- N/A

Attachments

- Webinar Advertisement Screenshot
- Mentoring Working Group Report

ASA-CSSA-SSSA DEI Committee

2024 Mentoring Working Group Report

December, 2024

Co-Chairs: Elizabeth Gillispie, Donn Cummings
Team Members: Tiffany Carter, Samira Daroub, Jeanette Norton, Chrissie Segars, Briana Wyatt
Staff Liaison: Susan Chapman

Mission Statement

In support of the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee (DEIC), the Mentoring Working Group will develop robust recommendations and guidelines for a mentoring program to foster relationship building across our Societies and among our members at various career stages.

Through these programs, we aim to empower a new generation of leaders from all backgrounds and career stages in the Tri-Societies and beyond, and to improve the retention of diverse scholars and young professionals as they transition from students into the workforce.

2024 Goals

1. Identification, Assessment and Promotion of Internal and External Mentoring Programs - Leader: no activity for 2024
2. Assessment and Engagement with Potential External Partners – Leader: Donn Cummings
3. Evaluation and Implementation of Mentoring Support/Software Partner – Leader: Susan Chapman
4. Identify and Develop Best Practices Mentoring Guidelines and Training Materials Emphasizing DEI and Workforce Development goals - Leader: Elizabeth (Liz) Gillispie

Background

These goals were adapted from the 2021 Recommendations Report by Elizabeth Gillispie and Susan Chapman. The report states: **"Mentoring is one of the most fundamental assets the Societies can offer members and is crucial for establishing an environment of inclusivity. We highly recommend the assessment, funding, and development of a robust mentoring program that connects members with mentors - regardless of career stage -within and across-Societies."**

Key Progress from 2023

1. A survey was conducted to inform our goals, guide our mentoring program development, and inform our development of the RFP for third-party mentoring software and services options.

2. A Mentoring Report was developed based on mentoring research and included information on mentoring and its benefits, best practices, and the best path forward for the Societies. [The report is available here](#).
3. An RFP was distributed and attracted six competitive bids from third party mentoring services providers.
4. Rubrics were developed and used to assist our group in identifying top-choice companies.
5. Three Demo/interview Sessions were conducted September 20-21.
6. A recommendation was made on a provider.
7. A proposal for funding was developed, presented to the ASF and approved

Update: Plans changed in 2024 when the decision was made to pursue Higher Logic as the new primary software provider for the Societies rather than our recommended supplier from 2023. Higher Logic offers broader functionality for the Societies overall resulting in a redirection of the Mentoring Working Group efforts for 2024. Higher logic has mentoring support functionality as one aspect of this bigger package, but without some of the supporting capabilities and resources as the previous supplier choice. However, considerable savings for the long run is being realized through this decision. Considerable momentum was lost in the first half of 2024 for our team as this process played out and we discussed redirection for our 2024 goals. While the Higher Logic mentoring component was being implemented, our goal was to bring its mentoring functionality to three pilot programs, working directly with the division/community leadership.

The goals of the Division/Community Annual Meeting mentoring programs were:

- Connect Division/Community student members with members who have experience navigating the Annual Meeting to navigate the meeting and enhance their meeting experience,
- Create an opportunity for students to talk with mentors on other topics of interest such as how to expand their network, become a better scholar, prepare for the job search/market, manage research projects, etc.
- Create stronger connections for our students with their primary division/community,
- Assist the Societies with piloting the mentoring program

Key Progress from 2024

1. Higher Logic mentoring software was configured by staff and the working group rolled out three programs as a beta test to gain experience with the new capabilities to solicit, enroll and connect mentees and mentors. Many thanks to the engagement team that worked closely with Higher Logic reps.
   Programs testing the software in 2024 include:
   - SSSA Soil Physics and Hydrology Mentoring program - Briana Wyatt/Josh Heitman

- ASA Global Climate Change Mentoring program - Susan Chapman/Gurjinder Singh
- CSSA Turfgrass Science Mentoring program - Chrissie Segars/Eric Watkins
- Golden Opportunity / Greenfield Scholars - Grace Moran

2. At the Annual Meeting, sponsor the DEI Summit keynote speaker, Dr. Karina Vielma, on Inclusive Mentoring: Building Stronger Relationships and Fostering Growth followed by a demo of the Mentoring system. In addition, the committee sponsored Dr. Vielma as the speaker at a follow-up webinar, open to all members, on the same topic. Approximately 40 members attended and the webinar was recorded and will be added to the mentoring resources document.

3. Assessment and Engagement with Potential External Partners: Discussed the new African mentoring opportunity via the NAPB Borlaug Scholars program at the Agricultural and Natural Resources Sciences Workforce Development Summit in August at the headquarters in Madison, WI. ASF approved a proposal to initiate the International Borlaug Scholars Fund during the annual meeting. Susan Dearing-Bond worked with Donn Cummings to initiate the fund prior to the ASTA conference in Orlando, FL in early December.

Resources

1. Many resources are available online and since Higher Logic did not come with extensive library mentoring resources, some effort was needed to organize or develop resource materials to support our mentoring programs going forward. The working group has developed a list of resources that can be found in Appendix A of this report. This list of resources will be provided to the Membership Engagement staff team.

2. Guidelines for mentoring developed by NAPB Borlaug Scholars Committee were reviewed and relevant materials adapted for our resources document.

2024 Pilot Mentoring Program Survey

Following the Annual Meeting, a mentoring survey was sent to all mentors and mentees that signed up to participate in the division/community program. Note that the division/community pilot was intended to be time-bound and just for the Annual Meeting. *Complete results are in Appendix B of this report.*

- The survey was sent to 103 members who signed up for at least one of the division/community programs,
- 35 members responded to the survey
- It was almost an equal split of mentor and mentee respondents
- 50% of mentors received a mentee and 95% of mentees received an accepted mentor – meaning that most all mentees did have a mentor
- The majority of the mentors received matches for the GO/Greenfield program
- 61% offered to mentor at least one mentee with 50% mentoring at least one mentee
- 75% of mentors and 69% of mentees will be continuing their mentoring relationship
- 95% of mentees requested a mentor and 95% had an accepted mentor

- Mentors and mentees communicated in-person at the meeting and via email primarily
- Topics of discussion included the job search, career options, grad school, mentee goals, networking/introductions, certification, research, and navigating the workplace
- 50% of mentors and mentees thought they had enough information on expectations – leaving 50% that could use more information
- Suggestions for information to help develop the mentoring relationship include
  - Online platform instructions, matching process
  - List of Society resources for use in the mentoring discussions (certification, publications, etc)
  - Delegating the mentoring work to someone not the division/community chair
  - More Golden Opportunity information
- Suggestions/feedback on the program and refining the program include frustration not getting a mentor (need more oversight), more visibility on the website, more mentors, education for effective mentoring/best practices, for divisions-more management consistency of their mentoring programs, allow only 1 mentee per mentor, highlight mentors/mentees in CSA News, more communications, portal glitchy (asked for 2 mentees, received 4)
- Almost 75% would participate again with another 18% a "maybe."

Recommendations
- For sustainability we recommend formation of a **member-driven Mentoring Oversight Committee** to oversee the mentoring programs as the new capabilities are implemented in 2025 and beyond,
- We recommend the mentoring program be an **ongoing program** rather than a time-bound (quarterly) program to ensure mentees can access mentors when needed rather than only on a quarterly basis. We recognize that a time-bound program may be best suited to the initial launch with a goal of moving to an ongoing program.
- Develop online, on-demand **training** for mentors and mentees to learn about best practices in mentoring relationships.
- It is recommended to **establish metrics** by which the Societies can measure, track and report success of the emerging suite of mentoring programs. We recommend that the Higher Logic platform have reports developed for ongoing tracking and trends. Initial metrics to track should include:
  - # of mentors and mentees in each program
  - # of acceptances by mentors
  - time taken to accept mentees by mentors
  - demographics of mentors and mentees to ensure inclusivity
  - # of mentees for each mentor
  - How did mentors/mentees connect (email, phone, online, zoom, etc)
  - Did mentors/mentees set up expectations for when/how often to meet, topics, etc? Were those expectations met?

- What topics did they discuss (if shareable) - use for potential topical mentoring areas.
- Did the mentors/mentees feel comfortable? If not, why not?
- Would they do it again (with the same or different mentor/mentee)?
- What, if any issues did they experience with the mentoring system?
- Responsiveness of Higher Logic/staff to issues with the system.
- There should also be a mechanism for mentors or mentees to report any issues with their mentoring relationship (harassment, implicit bias, etc)
- Consider an exit survey when a relationship ends that is automatically sent.
- There is a need to inform members of the rollout and availability of the new mentoring capabilities and addition of 1:1 mentoring and any other modern **mentoring programs** coming online in 2025. And, should include the personal benefits to mentors and mentees of participating in mentoring.
- Division and community mentoring program leaders need **access to information** on their group programs. A mechanism for direct access to Higher Logic reports and the ability to manually create relations would be necessary to manage the program.
- A plan for **recruiting and maintaining** an active pool of available mentors to match mentee demand needs to be developed and managed in order to roll out additional mentoring programs.
- An **annual report** of the mentoring program should be provided to the DEI Committee to help guide the success of the program and then for assessment of how mentoring builds diversity, equity, and inclusion in the Societies.

Mentoring Working Group Transition

The goal of the Mentoring Working Group was to develop robust recommendations and guidelines for a mentoring program to foster relationship building across our Societies and among our members at various career stages. The working group has succeeded in significantly leading and guiding the initial development of the Mentoring Program (mostly behind the scenes)!

With the initial implementation of the Higher Logic system, pilot program and survey work wrapped up, development of resources for mentors and mentees to enhance their mentoring experiences and learnings, and development of recommendations to see the Mentoring Program into the future:

The Mentoring Working Group of the DEI Committee will serve as a transition team for the Mentoring Oversight Committee for 2025. The efforts to launch the mentoring program happened with a significant commitment of the entire working group team who all participated regularly in team meetings, which often were at two week intervals or at least monthly. Thank you!
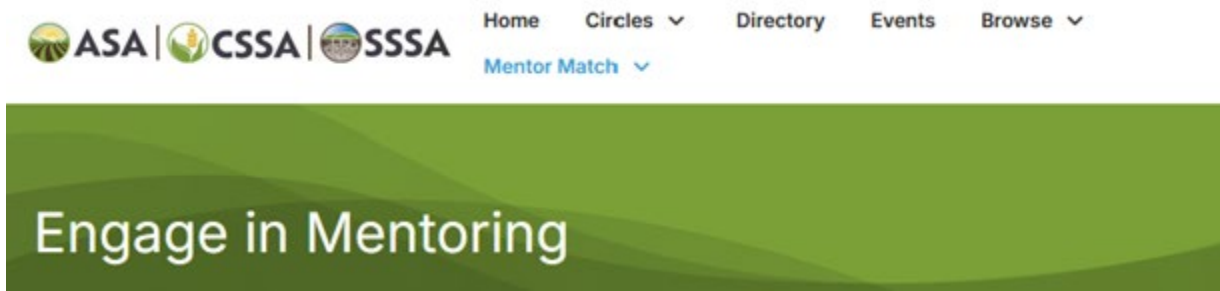
Mentoring Resources

Serving as a mentor and/or mentee is valuable for both and is an important part of professional development. A well-designed program:

- **Connects** those who want to develop mentoring relationships with those who are interested in mentoring,
- **Establishes** deeper connections and relationship-building between members (in similar fields of study and across cohorts),
- **Enhances** engagement which positively impacts member retention - particularly in our student and early career categories,
- **Builds** mentor and mentee skill sets for their mentoring and professional endeavors throughout their careers, and
- **Educates** members on best practices for mentoring and how to foster an effective mentoring relationship.

Mentors will experience personal growth and satisfaction through insights and experience sharing, continually developing leadership and communication skills, recognition, and mentors will also gain fresh perspectives from their mentees.

Mentees receive invaluable guidance and support, develop their interpersonal communication skills, expand their professional network, grow in accountability, and enhance their knowledge faster than peers who are not in a mentoring program/relationship.

However, the mentoring relationship doesn't simply happen. Both new mentors and mentees will learn more about mentoring – what it is, how to proactively engage with their mentor/mentee, setting expectations, manage challenges, create a plan, and develop a positive relationship.

The Societies have compiled a short list of resources that you may find helpful as you develop your mentoring skills. We encourage you to explore these and others:

Webinar

[Inclusive Mentoring: Building Stronger Relationships and Fostering Growth](#)

Inclusive mentoring goes beyond traditional mentoring, emphasizing the importance of diversity in professional development and can transform the culture in today's diverse scientific environments. This ASA, CSSA, SSSA webinar examines critical elements that set inclusive mentoring apart, including creating a safe space for dialogue and growth and adapting mentoring practices to diverse learning needs and backgrounds. Free to Members

CSA News Article Compilation

The monthly CSA News magazine contains a collection of articles written by members on the topic of mentoring. They include topics such as effective mentoring, mentoring students at conferences, mentoring from an early career perspective, informal mentoring, and finding a mentor as a graduate student. The article compilation (insert link) is available through the CSA News Magazine website.

NOTE: The article compilation link should be received from Matt when the new magazine website goes live.

Annual Meeting Mentoring Expectations and Suggestions - from the 2024 ASA, CSSA, SSSA Annual Meeting mentoring pilot program:

Mentors should:

- The meeting can be overwhelming for first-time attendees! If requested, provide suggestions on how to navigate the meeting and maximize the experience – what sessions to attend, events to consider, exhibit hall, social functions (optional), business meetings.
- Introduce their mentee to others at the division/community meeting to help them build their network,
- Attend the mentee's presentation (if possible),
- Find time to talk about anything else the mentee may have questions on (not necessarily the meeting).

Mentors and Mentees:

- Arrange a time to meet – either prior to the meeting or sometime at the start of the meeting,
- There is no obligation to continue the mentoring relationship after the Annual Meeting – but if it works, great.

- Provide feedback on the mentoring experience and mentoring system via a post-meeting survey from the Mentoring working group.

In this short amount of time prior to or during the Annual Meeting, there isn't time to build a formal mentoring relationship. However, a few tips from mentoring best practices (for both mentors and mentees) would be:

Mentors	Mentees
- Commit to making time for your mentee - Encourage your mentee to attend the Business Meeting (and attend with them) - Provide connections and introductions to senior scientists - Help your mentee be a good mentee – recognize that not all mentees have experiences or may be comfortable in this new type of relationship – your guidance is valuable - Share knowledge and experiences - Be approachable - Respect any confidential conversation - Follow up with a thank you	- Be respectful of your mentor's time - Be on time for meeting/calls - Consider your mentor's suggestions – while you don't have to take them, recognize that the mentor has valuable experiences - Be responsible for owning the relationship and ensuring communications happen - Keep your mentor up to date on how things are going at the meeting - Follow up with a thank you

Outside Resources

NAPB Mentoring Guide – Adapted by ASA, CSSA, SSSA from the NAPB Borlaug Scholars guide

University of Iowa Mentoring Resources: https://mentor.uiowa.edu/resources-and-toolkits

Appendix B

December 2024 Mentoring Platform Survey Results

The following are the charts and open-ended responses to the questions on the Mentoring Survey by participants of the division/community pilot program.
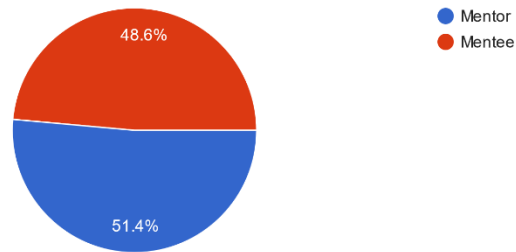
Which program(s) did you sign up for? (select all that apply)
35 responses
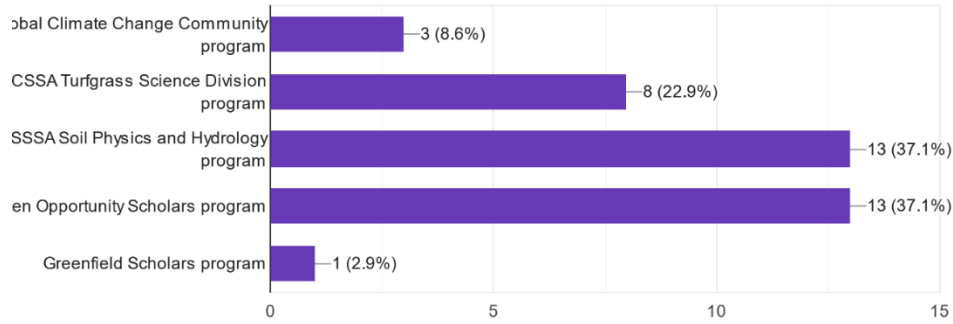
Did you sign up as a mentor or as a mentee? If you signed up as both, select your primary role.
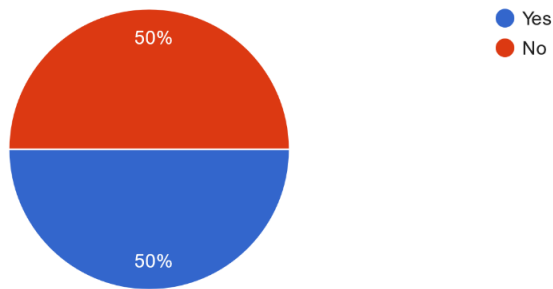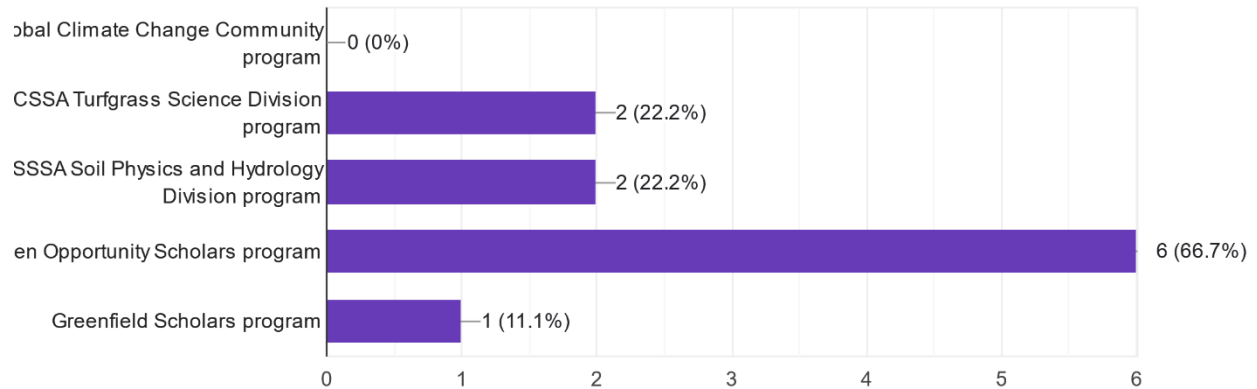35 responses

For Mentors:

Did you receive a mentee for any of the programs you signed up for?
18 responses
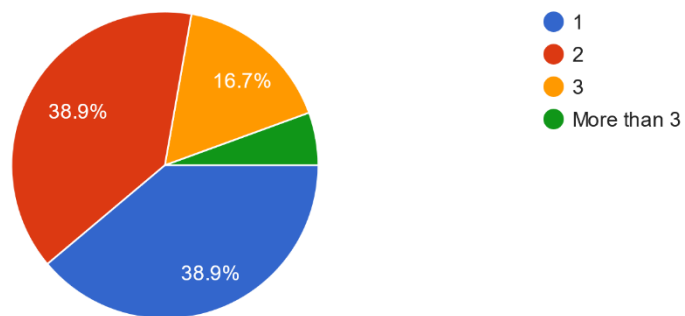

- Yes
- No

50%

50%

If yes, which program(s) did you receive a mentee for? (select all that apply)
9 responses

obal Climate Change Community program	0 (0%)
CSSA Turfgrass Science Division program	2 (22.2%)
SSSA Soil Physics and Hydrology Division program	2 (22.2%)
en Opportunity Scholars program	6 (66.7%)
Greenfield Scholars program	1 (11.1%)

How many mentees did you offer to mentor?
18 responses

- 1
- 2
- 3
- More than 3

16.7%

38.9%

38.9%

How many mentees did you actually mentor?
18 responses

- None
- 1
- 2
- 3
- More than 3

16.7%
16.7%
11.1%
50%
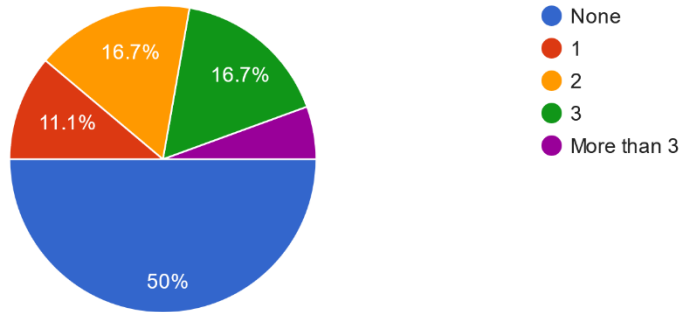
If you mentored at least one mentee, will you be continuing the relationship?
11 responses

- Yes
- Not at this time
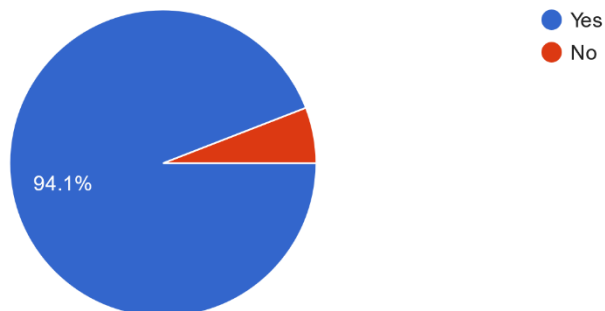- Maybe

9.1%
18.2%
72.7%
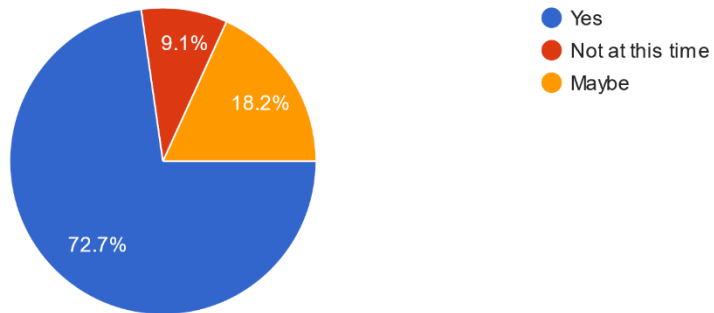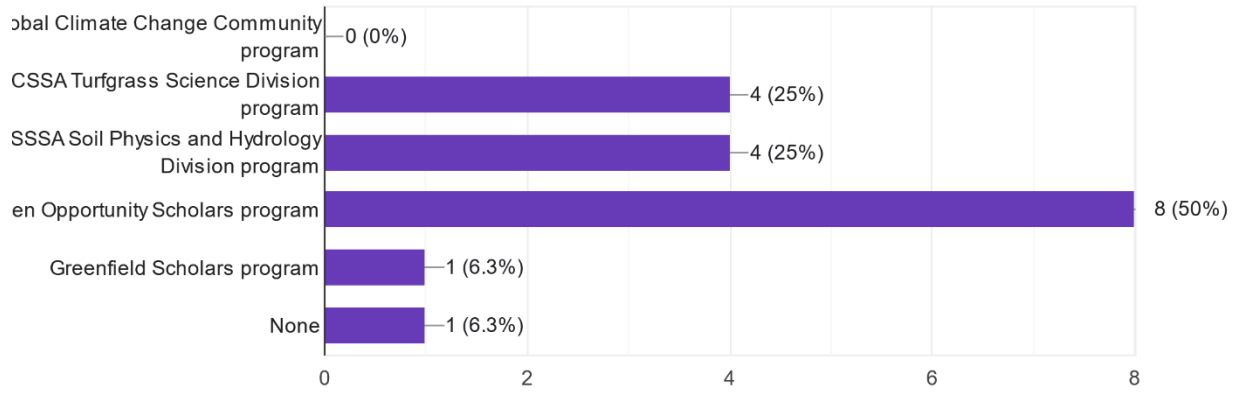
For Mentees

Did you request a mentor for any of the programs you signed up for?
17 responses

- Yes
- No

94.1%

If yes, which program(s) did you receive an accepted mentor for? (select all that apply)

16 responses

Program	Count
obal Climate Change Community program	0 (0%)
CSSA Turfgrass Science Division program	4 (25%)
SSSA Soil Physics and Hydrology Division program	4 (25%)
en Opportunity Scholars program	8 (50%)
Greenfield Scholars program	1 (6.3%)
None	1 (6.3%)

How many accepted mentors did you have?

17 responses

- None
- 1
- 2
- 3
- More than 3

70.6%
23.5%
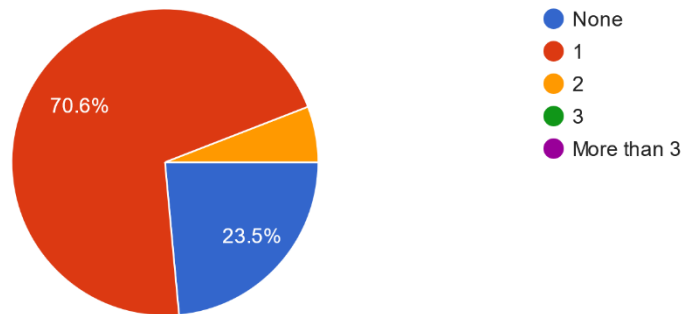
If you had at least one mentoring match, will you be continuing the relationship?
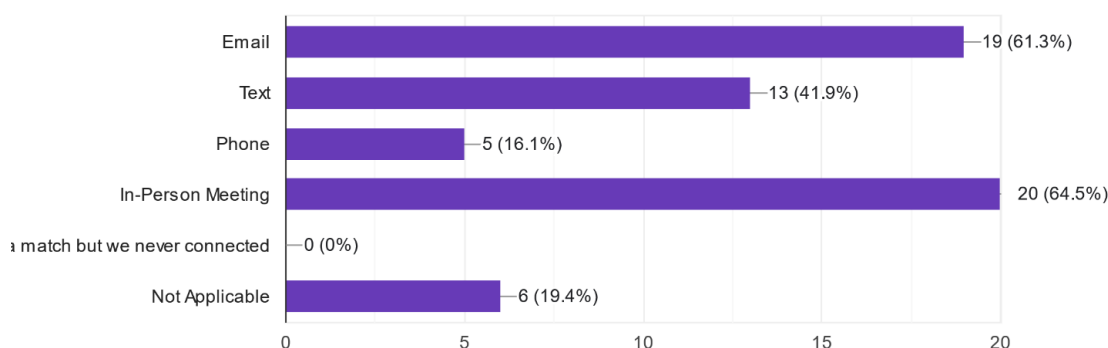
16 responses

- Yes
- Not at this time
- Maybe

25%
6.3%
68.8%
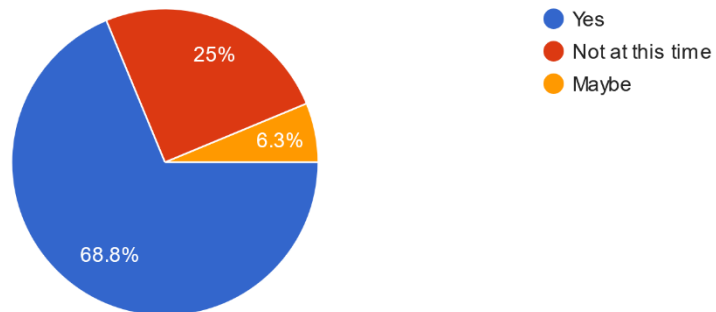
Both Mentors and Mentees

If you had a mentor/mentee match-up, how did you communicate during the relationship/Annual
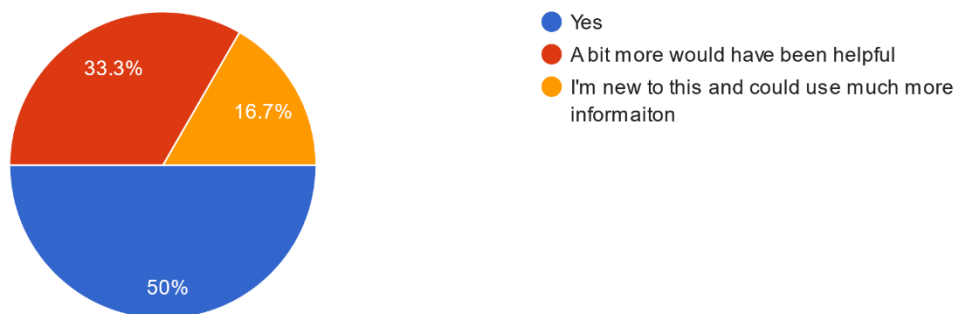Meeting? (select all that apply)
31 responses

Broadly, what non-confidential topics did you discuss (if you can share)?

Broadly, what non-confidential topics did you discuss (if you can share)?
I just enrolled for the program a few days back and got a mentor. I hope to soon have a zoom with my mentor to build the relationship.
future opportunities, grad school stuff
job application, choice of career after degree, way to search for job
The mentee's short- & long-term goals. Introductions to some professors from different universities in the area of their interest. Discussion regarding some of the classes that the mentee needs to consider before graduation.
networking, self-care, goals, leadership opportunities
How to get professional soil scientist certification
learned more about background and plans for graduation
Meeting times
Graduate school opportunities, how to best approach a potential graduate school advisor, soil judging.
Career paths and work environment
career goal, research strategies, current trend in academic research, and collaborations
Jobs, grad school, how to stay in contact
Careers, theses/dissertations, navigating graduate school and the workplace as women in a male-dominated industry
Career outlook, networking, speaking to older faculty
Career advice and opportunities
We discussed experiences in the academic and industry side of turf and how to determine which direction to go.
About work opportunities, my future career, studying soil science, etc.
Career paths, graduate school, awards and scholarships
developing the projects, setting up career goals
We mainly just talked about my plans for graduate school, my interests, and their research.

Did you have enough information on expectations in your role as a mentor or mentee?
30 responses

- ● Yes
- ● A bit more would have been helpful
- ● I'm new to this and could use much more informaiton

33.3%

16.7%

50%

Any suggestions for additional information that would have helped with developing the mentoring relationship?
More clear instructions or even training on how to use the online platform
I met with my mentee for an extremely short time (hardly 30 minutes of total contact) at San Antonio. I believe we should set up time to visit with each other's presentation/poster.
Not at this time
The society may provide a contact list for resources so that the mentor can easily direct the mentees some commonly asked questions like how to prepare for the professional soil scientist certification.
Get the Chair/Leader to delegate mentoring activities to a chair of that committee or other volunteer. Chairs are way to busy to be effective at managing the mentoring.
I was under the impression that we would meet more often than 1 time per year, but I was advised to reach out at next year's event.
This is my fourth year with the GO Scholars program, so I pretty much know what to do. But I feel more information came out in years past regarding expectations, not so much came out this year.
A designated time and activity to meet up 1 on 1 with a mentor as opposed to meeting with the mentor while there are two other mentees with me
ASA could sponsor full or partial travel funds for mentees to visit mentor's research location to learn more about the work.
Keep and open mind. Even if the person is not directly in your field, you never know what you can learn from them.
Reach out sooner about the mentorship
The process for matching and information about status of matching would have been useful.
It seemed to me that maybe my mentor didn't have a lot of knowledge of what the Golden Opportunity Scholars Program is and what their exact role in it was.

Would you sign up again?

34 responses

- Yes — 73.5%
- Maybe — 17.6%
- Not at this time — 8.8%
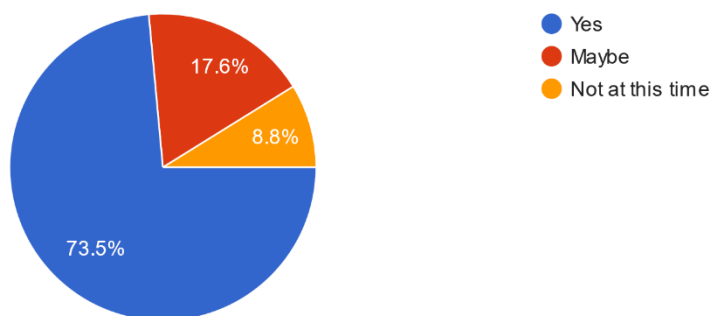
Based on your experience with this pilot program, what suggestions do you have for improvements/refinements?
I signed up for the program and I didn't get a mentor. I was so excited to have one or more mentors when I signed up. It was kind of frustrating.
I think a lot more advertising and information needs to be provided. Perhaps a good central location on the website similar to the division discussion boards.
I hope we could have more mentors as we move forward, it is a great opportunity for mentees and I really look forward to it getting continued.
No suggestion at this time. I will reach out if I have any suggestion in the future
I don't have a structured mentoring process and sort of "wing it" and trust that based on what the student is looking for, needing, and also based on personality. No two people are at all alike. I think its also important to convince prospective mentors to look for ways themselves will grow in the relationship. Too often mentors think of it as a one-way. "You should know that...", "Well, when I was your age...", "This is the way to succeed..." Listening deeply is most important and reflecting on that.
The mentees who contacted me did not attend the annual meetings. The students I can offer mentorship to came to chat with me during the conference without using this platform.
For the Soil Physics & Hydrology Division, we have a mentoring committee but they have become less effective over time. One of the challenges is keeping the new chairs aware of their roles and assignments for the annual meeting and more consistency year-to-year in managing the mentoring activities would be helpful. We used to acknowledge mentors and mentees at the business meeting, but have not done this for many years.
Mentors should be more readily available to speak with their mentees so they can provide better guidance. Once every 3 months would be my suggestion.
The year we didn't go around the room and have the mentees introduce themselves and their mentors during the organizational meeting. I enjoyed that in the past, seeing where the students were from and what they were looking to get out of their GO Scholars experience.
Only allow 1 mentee per mentor
I think mentors should also be highlighted in CSA magazine and encouraged to continue the relationship with mentees. This type of program can mutually benefit mentors and mentees.
I would have liked to have been emailed when it was time to find a mentor. I never got an email or was notified that mentors were available to match with, so the only reason I matched with my mentor was because I randomly went back to the mentorship portal and saw that mentors had been made available

Could not get the portal to work effectively. Said I only wanted 2 mentors and got invites for 4 even after I accepted 2. Myself or my mentees could not communicate or login to the portal easily.
Just what I said before of reaching out and deciding sooner
I do not believe my request was acknowledged or somehow there was not clear communication on how to follow through with the matching. I am also unsure how my personal email made it to the top of this page as opposed to my professional email msutherburg@trihydro.com
I liked that both mentees and mentors had choices based on CVs
Soil physics and hydrology
It would be useful to provide some form of updates about matching as the process proceeds.
I think that more mentors for the Golden Opportunity Program would be great. I would have liked to have seen more options for mentors in the academia setting.