

Agronomic Science Foundation

Cherishing the Fruits of Past Funds

This is the time of year when most people realize how many things there are to be thankful for, especially when they are around the company of good friends and family. Personally, I always try to look back on the past year by remembering the experiences and relationships that have impacted my life. I cherish these gifts as they provide me with a perspective on where I have been and where I am going.

My grandmother used to tell me, “Cherish yesterday’s experiences and what they have taught you because the life you are living today is just practice for tomorrow.” I now see slogans like this on t-shirts and on signs in yoga studios, but it has special meaning to me. It has encouraged me to enjoy the experiences and relationships I have now while providing space to dream about ways to improve for tomorrow.

The same can be said for an entity like the Agronomic Science Foundation (ASF), which has such a rich history and promising future. ASF is currently promoting two new funds called the **Gateway and Pathway Funds**, which are designed to find the best young talent available and train them in the disciplines of agronomy, crop science, and soil science so that they become the next generation of scientists in industry, government, and academia.

Success of Past Funds

This approach will be instrumental in developing professionals for the future who will provide the life sciences with bright minds and will have the energy to keep up with



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the changing landscape. As we look ahead, it is important to remember the past and cherish some of the funds that have helped provide the resources so far.

The Sergei A. Wilde Distinguished Lectureship on Forest Soils Fund has supported an Annual Meetings

lectureship on forest soils for many years. The lectureship focuses on current and emerging developments with an emphasis on science and technology, education, and policy issues. This lectureship was established in the name of Dr. Wilde to honor his leadership role in the evolution of forest soil science during the 20th century.

Another one is the Robert F Barnes Graduate Education Award, which has supported a graduate student award in the Forage and Grazing Lands division (C06) at the Annual Meetings. The award honors Dr. Barnes, a renowned USDA-ARS forage scientist and administrator who joined CSSA in 1960. Dr. Barnes also served as president of CSSA in 1985 and has made numerous contributions to developing new talent.

The Richard R. Johnson Graduate Student Program is another important fund that is used to enhance programming for graduate students that helps them learn about networking, finding mentors, and working with advisers at future Annual Meetings. This fund was originally created to recognize the impact Dr. Johnson made on the profession with such fine works as the book titled *Modern Corn and Soybean Production*.

The final one I would like to mention is the L.R. Ahuja Ag Systems Modeling Award. This fund supports an award for an early career soil scientist, agronomist, or crop scientist who has shown significant contributions towards agricultural system models in field research. Dr. Ahuja has made major original research contributions to the physics of soil water processes, water quality, and modeling of agricultural systems and has mentored many young scientists, graduate students, and post-doctor students in the development and application of models.

All of these individuals have led by example, and ASF is proud of their contributions in talent development. We expect the new Gateway and Pathway Funds to follow in this success. What we do today directly affects the blessings of tomorrow. Please consider how best that you can get involved with these initiatives.

