



Improving Plants to Improve Lives
National Association of Plant Breeders
2022-23 Annual Report
[Committee / Working Group Name]

This year's committee: NAPB Graduate Student Working Group (NAPB-GSWG)

Officers	Advocacy and Communications Team
<p>Chair: Mala Ganiger, North Dakota State University, Fargo, ND</p> <p>Vice Chair: Jhon Concepcion, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI</p> <p>Secretary: Andrew Herr, Washington State University, Pullman, WA</p> <p>Past-Chair: Lance Merrick, Corteva Agriscience, Research Scientist, Corteva Agrisciences</p>	<p>Social Media Representative: Cassondra Newman, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC</p> <p>Graduate Student Outreach: Maria Roberta de Oliviera, North Dakota State University, Fargo, ND</p> <p>Graduate Student Highlight</p> <p>Coordinators: Amaka Ifeduba Texas A&M University, College Station, TX and Lovepreet Singh, Mississippi State University, MS</p> <p>Planning Committee Liaison: Akash Datta, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, IL</p> <p>African Plant Breeders Association (APBA)</p> <p>Liaison and Outreach: Mawulawoe Anato-Dumelo, West Africa Center for Crop Improvement (WACCI), University of Ghana, Legon</p>

Major Goals for the Year 2022-23:

1. Organize a comprehensive series of professional development webinars featuring esteemed guest speakers, with a focus on diversity in topics and speakers. This will provide an invaluable platform for graduate students to engage with and seek insights from accomplished individuals from diverse backgrounds. By including speakers with diverse experiences and perspectives, we aim to create an inclusive space for both formal and informal discussions, allowing students to explore the illustrious career paths and current positions of these guests.
2. Arrange a social event during the annual tri-society meeting, and online social events, where NAPB and APBA members can connect and exchange ideas on plant breeding.
3. Showcase monthly graduate student highlights through a photo series accompanied by a paragraph or two. The highlights should focus on how the student got into plant



breeding, why their research matters, their career goals, and what a typical day at work is like, among other relevant details.

4. Graduate student survey for the 2022 Annual Meeting
5. Incorporate NAPB graduate student feedback on:
 - Graduate student activities at the 2022 NAPB annual conference
 - Activities throughout the year such as webinars and virtual socials
6. Provide feedback and ideas for the new NAPB website

2022-2023 Major Highlights / Accomplishments

1. Recruited and elected subcommittee liaisons.
2. Conducted a survey to provide graduate student feedback for the 2022 Annual Meeting and experience as a member during 2021-2022.
3. Engaged in social media activities to share information regarding:
 - a. The focus of the NAPB-GSWG Social Media chair is to engage with the community of students and disseminate information about seminars, training, social events, job opportunities and other relevant activities.
 - b. Highlighting graduate students and their research is an important aspect of our work.
 - c. Over the past two years, we have showcased the careers of 10 graduate students from various universities in the United States and from Africa.
 - d. Throughout the past two years, we increased the frequency of posts and interacted more with our network, resulting in significant community growth.
- ✓ Our twitter account gained followers, increasing from 1441 to 1894 (as of 06/12/2023).
- ✓ Our Instagram following increased from 210 to 266 (as of 06/12/2023)
- ✓ We established a LinkedIn account, and the number of followers grew from 709 to 1,133 (as of 06/12/2023).
- ✓ We expanded our online activities to strengthen our web presence and we became a vital source of information for the Plant Breeding students worldwide.



Professional Development Webinar Series:

1. November 15, 2022 – Role of High-throughput Phenotyping in Plant Breeding,
 - a. Dr. Nonoy Bandillo, North Dakota State University, Fargo, ND

2. January 24, 2023: Rice Breeding: The SUB1 Journey and Beyond
 - a. Dr. David J. Mackill, Adjunct Professor, Department of Plant sciences, University of California, Davis, CA

3. February 22, 2023: Ignite Your Spark: Breeding the Next Generation of Agriculture Leaders!
 - a. Dr. Megan Lewis, Lead, Equipment, and Automated Field Sensing, Bayer Crop Science

4. March 27, 2023: Genomic Selection from the Industry Perspective, in collaboration with NAPB Commercial Plant Breeding Committee (Education Committee took the lead)
 - a. Dr. David Habier, Senior Research Scientist, Corteva Agrisciences
 - b. Dr. Hasio-Yi Hung, Quantitative Geneticists, Driscoll

5. April 25, 2023: Breeding for Diverse and Specialty Crops
 - a. Dr. Cholani Weebadde, Associate Professor and Plant Breeder for International Programs, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI

6. May 15, 2023: Thoughtful Insights: NAPB Graduate Student DEI Panel Discussion
 - a. Dr. Ron Walcott, Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Graduate School, University of Georgia, Athens, GA
 - b. Dr. Tabare Abadie, Distinguished Research laureate, Corteva Agrisciences
 - c. Amaka Ifeduba, PhD student in Potato Breeding and Variety Development, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX

7. June 2, 2023- Delivering Crops for the Future
 - a. Dr. Allison Bentley, Director of Global Wheat Program, CIMMYT, Mexico

8. June 5, 2023- Plant Breeder of the Future, Preparing Yourself for a career in Plant Breeding, in collaboration with NAPB Commercial Plant Breeding Committee
 - a. Dr. Klaus Koehler, Global Talent development Lead-Seed product Development, Corteva Agrisciences
 - b. Dr. Brittney Jones, Soybean Product Development Scientist, Bayer Crop Science



2022-2023 NAPB-GSWG Social Events:

1. Nov 9, 2022: We had a graduate student social event at a restaurant near the convention centre during the Tri-society meeting in Baltimore, MD. Thirteen people were able to attend, and it was a fun event that allowed us to connect with the graduate students in person.
2. December 21, 2022: NAPB-APBA social event
Dr. Namaale Amissah, senior lecturer, University of Ghana
3. February 13, 2023: Leadership Insights: Navigating through the Leadership Role
Dr. David Bubeck, Research Director of Seed Product Development, Corteva Agrisciences
4. April 12, 2023: NAPB-GSWG Social Meeting, Let's talk about GMO.
Dr. Kevin Folta, Professor of Horticultural Molecular Biology and Genomics, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL

2022-2023 NAPB Student Highlights:

1. November 23, 2022
Student Name: Sheryl N. Sierra, PhD student
Department: Agronomy and Horticulture
University: University of Nebraska Lincoln
2. Dec 9, 2022
Student name: Rodrigue Ogougra Akomonla Adjibogoun, PhD student
Department: Plant Breeding, West Africa Centre for Crop Improvement
University: University of Ghana, Legon
3. December 15, 2022
Student Name: Luis Salazar, PhD student
Department: Horticulture and Agronomy
University: University of California, Davis, CA
4. January 26, 2023
Student Name: McKena Lipham Wilson
Department: Department of Horticulture, Plant Breeding, Genetics, and Biotechnology program, NRT-IMPACTS Program
University: Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI



5. March 3, 2023

Student Name: Raju Thada Magar, PhD Student

Department: Plant Breeding, Genetics and Biotechnology

University: Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI

6. March 3, 2023

Student Name: Justice Adzigbe, PhD Student

Department: Plant Breeding, West Africa Centre for Crop Improvement

University: University of Ghana, Legon

7. March 29, 2023

Student Name: Georgina Lala Ehemba, PhD Student

Department: Plant Breeding, West Africa Centre for Crop Improvement

University: University of Ghana, Legon

8. April 17, 2023

Student Name: Renan Souza, PhD candidate

Department: Plant Breeding, Genetics, and Genomics

University: University of Georgia, Athens, GA

9. May 5, 2023

Student Name: Nathan Fumia, PhD Student

Department: Tropical Plant and Soil Sciences

University: University of Hawai'i at Manoa

10. June 5, 2023

Student Name: Foster Kangben, PhD student

Department: Plant and Environmental Sciences

University: Clemson University, Clemson, SC

Lessons learnt [eg that will benefit the wider NAPB or other committees]

1. **Effective Communication:** Ensuring timely and efficient dissemination of information is crucial. Engaging in various communication channels, such as in-person discussions, email exchanges, and WhatsApp group chats with both group members and other NAPB committee members, has greatly enhanced collaboration and coordination.
2. **Inclusive Decision-Making:** Recognizing the importance of diverse perspectives and inclusivity in decision-making processes can lead to better outcomes. All the topics for the professional development webinar series, social events, and student activities for the annual meeting were finalized through extensive discussions with the members of NAPB-GSWG, ensuring that a wide range of viewpoints were considered.



3. Collaborative Webinars: Collaborative webinars were organized in partnership with the Commercial Plant Breeding Committee, which has facilitated enhanced networking opportunities, resource sharing, and collective efforts in advancing common goals. This collaborative approach has fostered a sense of unity and cooperation within the NAPB community.

Loose ends &/or Goals for Next Year 2023-24

1. Continue increasing social media presence (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn) through graduate student highlights, event advertisements, and other related NAPB news and announcements.
2. Further strengthen collaboration with the African Plant Breeders Association (ASPB) through online social events and webinar collaboration.
3. Establish and strengthen collaboration with plant breeding associations and graduate students from other regions (e.g., Australia, Asia-Pacific)
4. Plan and relaunch the NAPB GSWG Three-Minute Thesis Competition to further highlight the excellent research conducted by NAPB graduate student members.

Incoming Secretary [name & affiliation *or* process & date for appointing new secretary]

The self-nomination for the secretary position was announced on 06/07/2023 and will remain open until June 23, 2023. The election will be held, and we anticipate announcing the winner of the secretary position during the second week of July 2023.

Details on any collaborations between committees

NAPB-GSWG collaborated with the NAPB Commercial Plant Breeding Committee to host two webinars as part of the professional development webinar series. Additionally, we partnered with the African Plant Breeding Association (APBA) to host the NAPB-APBA social event, with the aim of ensuring diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). APBA graduate students were specifically invited to participate in all the webinars and social events, fostering a diverse and inclusive environment for knowledge sharing and networking.