

Dear USAIN Members:

We have closed another year in USAIN business (June 1, 2015 – May 31, 2016), and I am happy to share this report on behalf of the USAIN Executive Council and organization. The Executive Council continued its practice of monthly meetings this year, culminating with our annual meeting preceding the 15th USAIN Biennial Conference in Gainesville, Florida. It was a very productive year, and I want to thank everyone who contributed their time and energy to making USAIN a great organization.

It has been an honor to serve as USAIN President last year, and I look forward to working with incoming President Sarah Williams and the Executive Council in the coming year.

Respectfully,

Philip Herold

### **USAIN Highlights, 2015-2016**

*Goal 1. Strengthen membership and increase participation in USAIN by members and other food and agricultural information professionals.*

- Membership in USAIN continues to be strong, with current membership of 144, which is a net gain of 3 for 2016. This includes 13 new members this year, nine of whom attended the biennial conference.
- In fall 2015 USAIN conducted its annual membership survey, which focused this year on new member recruitment, geographic expansion, and member dues. The survey provided valuable member input that informed the USAIN Budget Committee decision not to pursue moving to a biennial budget cycle, and not to raise dues this year. It also led to efforts by the Executive Council and Treasurer to make the USAIN financial picture more transparent to the membership. Jessica Page made a budget presentation in the 2016 USAIN Business Meeting as a first step in this plan. Further investigation into potential geographic expansion by USAIN is planned for the coming year.
- USAIN awarded the Student Scholarship to Shelby Hallman, a MLS graduate student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and the New to USAIN/profession Scholarship to Patricia Hartman at Auburn University.
- USAIN awarded the Service to the Profession Award to Allison Level at Colorado State University, and the Special Achievement Award to Connie Britton, recently retired from the Ohio State University.

- USAIN awarded Honorary Memberships to three university professors, Dr. Karen Launchbaugh (University of Idaho), Dr. George Ruyle (University of Arizona), and Dr. John Tanaka (University of Wyoming). All were instrumental in forming the Rangelands Partnership and [globalrangelands.org](http://globalrangelands.org).

*Goal 2. Advocate for public policy, legislation, and institutions which support agricultural research and information communities.*

- As a representative of USAIN, Philip Herold served on the Executive Search Committee for a new National Agricultural Library director. The search resulted in the hiring of new director, Paul Wester.
- USAIN became a sponsor for the Ithaka S+R agriculture study, in which 19 institutions are participating. Many of the individuals and institutions participating are USAIN members, and both participant training sites were hosted by USAIN member institutions, one in conjunction with the biennial conference. We expect this study will provide great benefit locally for participating institutions and individuals, but also for the agriculture information profession broadly, with opportunities for follow-up actions based on themes that emerge from the study.
- Many USAIN members were involved in the AgNIC-led project to open extension and experiment station publications in HathiTrust by pursuing Creative Commons licensing with publication rights holders.
- The Preservation and Digital Library Committee developed a document exchange mechanism, in which libraries can advertise offers of withdrawn experiment station and extension publications, and notify others if they have publications needed to fill gaps.

*Goal 3. Provide educational and professional development opportunities for members and others.*

- Led by conference chair, Valrie Minson, and co-chair, Jessica Page, the USAIN conference committees planned and provided a rich and expansive range of professional development and learning opportunities at the USAIN 15<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference, hosted by the University of Florida, in Gainesville, FL. The theme was "Interdisciplinary Agriculture: Meeting Tomorrow's Global Challenges," and the conference was well attended, expertly run, and tremendously successful.
- Cornell University migrated the USAIN digital conference proceedings archive to a new Dspace repository platform, and made special efforts

to fill gaps in historical USAIN conference proceedings and to capture and archive content from Project Ceres and from the six-phase NEH-USAIN State and Local Literature preservation projects that were conducted from 1996 to 2008.

- The Project Ceres Awards Committee, with CRL and AgNIC, administered rounds 3 and 4 of this project, which sponsors award funding for small and mid-sized projects that preserve print materials essential to the study of the history and economics of agriculture and make those materials accessible through digitization. Round three awards were made to 7 projects involving 9 institutions, with a total of \$50,000 awarded. Fourth round awards [were announced](#) at the biennial conference.
- The USAIN Website Task Force, led by Connie Britton, continued to work with the firm contracted to develop USAIN's new website as a platform for content delivery, communication, and skill sharing.

## **Organizational Business**

- This was the first year in which USAIN operated with separate Secretary (Claudine Jenda) and Treasurer (Jessica Page) positions, following a bylaws change approved in 2014, and the 2015 election cycle. The separation of responsibilities into the two positions worked well this year and reduced the administrative burdens by dividing roles among two elected individuals.
- The Nominations Committee, chaired by Valrie Minson, developed a strong set of candidates for this year's election. Voting was conducted electronically, and the Executive Council will welcome USAIN's new president-elect, Leslie Delserone, and new directors Megan Kocher, Necia Parker-Gibson, and Amy Paster for the 2016-2017 year.
- The Bylaws Committee, chaired by Valrie Minson, prepared updates to the Procedures and Rules (P&Rs) for review by the Executive Council. Revisions were approved and updated P&Rs are accessible on the USAIN website.
- A USAIN special committee (Peter Fernandez, Philip Herold, and Necia Parker-Gibson) developed a set of Interest Group Convener Guidelines and Best Practices to be shared and employed with all Interest Group Conveners in 2016-2017 and beyond.

## **Executive Council 2015-2016**

President: Philip Herold

Past President: Valrie Minson

President-Elect: Sarah C. Williams  
Secretary: Claudine Jenda  
Treasurer: Jessica Page  
Directors: Cristina Caminita, Leslie Delserone, Peter Fernandez, Kristen Mastel, Amy Shannon, Natalie Waters  
NAL Representative: Chris Cole

**Outgoing Executive Council Members for 2015-2016:** Valrie Minson (past president), Amy Shannon (director), Natalie Waters (director)

**Incoming Executive Council Members for 2015-2016:** Megan Kocher (director), Necia Parker-Gibson (director), Amy Paster (director)

### **Committee Chairs 2015-2016**

Awards and Honors: Sarah C. Williams  
Budget: Jessica Page  
Bylaws: Valrie Minson  
Communications: Megan Kocher  
Conference Planning 2016: Valrie Minson  
Legislative and Government Relations: Leslie Delserone  
Membership: Melody Royster and Julie Kelly  
Nominations and Elections: Valrie Minson  
Preservation and Digital Library: Michael Cook  
Professional Development (Special Project Committee): Noel Kopriva

### **Interest Group Conveners 2015-2016**

Agricultural Economics Research, Information, and Education (AERIE): Innocent Awasom and Linda Eells  
AgNIC: Bradley Brazzeal and Rob McGeachin  
Animal Health Information: Sandra Weingart and Kyrille DeBose  
Collection Management: Jodee Kuden and Natalie Waters  
International Agriculture: Marty Kesselman and Jim Morris-Knowler  
Social Issues/Rural Information: Kathleen Monks and Necia Parker-Gibson  
Technology Trends: Netta Cox and Luti Salisbury