

Minutes of the DEDB Business Meeting, San Francisco, California 2013

Division Chair Chris Lowe called the meeting to order.

Chris acknowledged outgoing and incoming officers. He then mentioned the outstanding attendance this year and representation by our division (50 talks, 42 posters, 3 symposia). He also thanked the judges for the Best Student Paper competitions and noted that the electronic judging system was improved over last year.

Outgoing Program Officer Patricia Hernandez urged members to contact incoming Program Officer Louise Page with ideas for symposia at future SICB annual meetings. She mentioned that symposium selection is getting increasingly competitive. She suggested that symposium proposers should contact Louise Page or other DEDB officers for feedback before submission to make proposals more competitive.

Student/Postdoc Advisory Committee representative Jake Musser summarized the "Evo-Devo Dinner Dates" program, currently in its second year. This program pairs DEDB students and faculty for informal interactions over a meal, paid for by faculty participants. Participation increased over last year, with 27 faculty and 43 students taking advantage of the program.

Chris Lowe acknowledged and thanked Pauly Cartwright for her five years of service as the DEDB representative to the SICB-sponsored journal *Integrative and Comparative Biology*. Bob Zeller has agreed to serve as the new DEDB representative.

Chris led a discussion of the new NSF pre-proposal system for IOS and DEB, which has been in operation for one year. He noted that DEDB has not issued an official member-initiated response to the new system, despite concern by some members about the functioning of the system. He raised the possibility of sending a questionnaire to DEDB members to solicit feedback, and suggested partnering with the Society for Developmental Biology (SDB) to issue a joint response since DEDB and SDB represent broadly similar interests.

Chris led a discussion about increasing participation in DEDB at the annual meeting. Our division has a large number of members, but participation at annual meetings is comparatively low (31 students, 20 faculty in 2012, 47 students and 27 faculty in 2013). He said that the field of evo-devo might be becoming more fractured than in the past, and SICB could be a natural home for organismal-level evo-devo. He noted that PIs should be reminded that SICB provides generous financial support for students to attend the annual meeting, so the barrier to sending lab personnel to the meeting is lower than in most societies that serve our field. Unlike many other societies, the annual SICB meeting also offers a good chance for students to give talks. Members at the meeting thought the low participation could be due to spotty attendance by high-profile scientists, decreased attendance by members of the former Division of Cell Biology, and decreased attendance by members who now regularly attend SDB meetings. Suggestions to attract more members to the annual meeting included: hosting more explicitly development-oriented symposia, sponsoring "frontiers in evo-devo" symposia that feature younger faculty doing innovative research, multi-year symposia to attract members to the annual meeting for consecutive years, and better advertising of symposia to spark interest among current members and potential recruits to SICB including the possibility of recruiting student reps from different departments to help advertise the meeting and inform fellow students about available support and ability to give platform talks. Patricia Hernandez also reminded attendees that symposia with broad appeal are the most likely to be appreciated by program officers from other divisions, who vote on all symposia.

The SICB Executive Committee visited and reminded members that the next two annual meetings will be held in Austin, Texas (2014), and West Palm Beach, FL (2015). The 2016 meeting will be held in either Portland, OR, San Diego, CA, or Phoenix, AZ. This year's meeting had 1651 abstracts submitted and more than 2100 pre-registrants.

Two NSF program directors and the Assistant Director for Biological Sciences visited the meeting. They reported that NSF is on a continuing resolution until March 2013, and is currently operating at 80% of last year's budget. They encouraged DEDB members to submit forward-looking symposium proposals that bring together groups of people who wouldn't ordinarily interact. They also encouraged Research Coordination Network (RCN) proposals, and suggested that potential applicants contact program officers for advice. When asked about funding strategies under tight budgetary constraints, the NSF representatives said that program officers have autonomy to balance their portfolios and make funding decisions. They also called attention to the new web form for grant proposals that will become active on January 14 (see NSF 13-1 in the Grant Proposal Guide for details).

Billie Swalla encouraged DEDB members to write a review for *Integrative and Comparative Biology* that helps define the Grand Challenges of evo-devo and call attention to frontiers in the field. She noted that the field is very broad and this presents challenges in identifying a central theme.

The meeting was adjourned by Chris Lowe.

Respectfully submitted by Secretary Michael D. Shapiro and incoming Secretary Brad Davidson