

# 2022 Executive Director's Report

STEVEN RATHGEB SMITH | AMERICAN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

It is once again a distinct privilege to submit my executive director's report in 2022. This report provides an opportunity to share information about APSA programming and operations and to invite feedback and accountability from our members. The past year has created many challenges for people across the world, and APSA has continued to devote particular concern to the effects of this upheaval and uncertainty on our members and on higher education. This year has also required changes to APSA work and programming, as in-person events have resumed but significant virtual programming has also continued. APSA staff have been working remotely since March 2020 and many APSA programs, from symposia to workshops, have shifted to a virtual format. At the same time, we were excited to welcome our members back in-person to the 2021 APSA Annual Meeting in Seattle. While the continued uncertainty has posed challenges for APSA and our staff, it has been a great privilege to work to support our members and political science more generally through this unprecedented time.

## 2021 APSA ANNUAL MEETING

In 2021, the APSA Annual Meeting & Exhibition was held in Seattle, WA alongside a substantial virtual component. From Tuesday, September 28 through Sunday, October 3, political science professors, scholars, in-field practitioners, and students gathered in-person at the Washington State Convention Center in Seattle, WA, as well as virtually. The event provided opportunities to network and reconnect with colleagues, present and discuss research, and engage with timely topics. The 2022 APSA Annual Meeting had nearly 6,000 attendees and featured more than 1,200 panels and events.



The meeting kicked off with

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a Presidential Address by APSA President Janet Box-Steffensmeier on “Engaged Pluralism: The Importance of Commitment.” Program co-chairs Valeria Sinclair-Chapman, Purdue University, and Dino P. Christenson, Washington University in St. Louis, oversaw panels centered on the program theme, “Promoting Pluralism.” The program theme was highlighted by three plenary addresses: Scott Page on “Appreciating and Leveraging the Diversity of Political Science,” US Election Assistance Commissioner Thomas Hicks on “Running an Election during a Pandemic,” and a plenary discussion with political scientist and Congresswoman Robin Kelly. We appreciate the many members and volunteers who helped make the 2021 APSA Annual Meeting a success.

APSA was thrilled to be able to welcome our members back in-person in Seattle, and to offer a significant virtual component to make the meeting accessible for participants who were not able to travel. Hosting both an in-person meeting and a large virtual meeting simultaneously required a significant investment of time and resources by staff and I would particularly like to recognize the efforts of the staff who helped ensure that both components of the meeting ran smoothly. For the upcoming year, we are looking forward to returning to an in-person Annual Meeting, while maintaining a small virtual component to meet the growing demand for virtual content.

We look forward to welcoming political scientists from across the world to share research and connect with colleagues at the 2022 Annual Meeting in Montréal, Québec, Canada.

## MEMBER SUPPORT AND GRANT INITIATIVES

For many years, APSA has been proud to host robust grants and member assistance programs, providing support for our membership to conduct their research, strengthen their teaching, engage with their communities, and share their work. Over recent years, we have worked to significantly increase the amount of grant funding and other support available to members across a variety of initiatives:

### 2021 APSA Support Contributions and Membership Initiatives

Approved by the APSA Council, all renewing, returning, and new APSA members were offered a \$25 instant credit toward their 2021 Annual Meeting registration or APSA membership. Through this initiative, APSA provided \$150,650 in support to its members. Alongside the \$25 credit, APSA members were

presented with the ability to give a donation based on a percentage of their membership dues to provide further support to individuals who, due to financial hardship, are unable to renew their membership or join APSA. A staggering 650 members gave APSA Support Contributions—by far the most donations to any one APSA fund in 2021, and more donors than all of APSA's funds received in 2020 combined. Our membership team is working to distribute these funds to subsidize membership for individuals who need support to begin or renew their APSA membership.

In addition, beginning in March 2021, APSA has offered a trial membership option: a complimentary 90-day membership option to provide prospective members, including graduate students, and political science job seekers access to APSA's professional development and career resources. Since its launch, more than 300 people have utilized trial memberships to explore the benefits that APSA has to offer.

### APSA Member Relief Grant Program

In recognition of the health, social, and economic changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, the APSA Member Relief Grant Program launched in 2020 to provide urgent financial support to members with pressing needs, including Coronavirus-related needs. Through additional contributions from APSA members, including past presidents and APSA Council members, the grant program assisted forty-nine scholars from seventeen states and eleven countries in 2021. Since the program was established in 2020 it has disbursed a total of 112 grants.

### Centennial Center & Ivywood Foundation Grants

The APSA Centennial Center continued to provide vital support for research, teaching, and public engagement in the discipline. Through the spring and summer research grants programs, the Centennial Center disbursed more than \$150,000 in research funding to support 52 different projects. For 2021, these grants maintained the increased flexibility introduced in 2020, recognizing that research needs have changed during the current crisis. This change included the availability of per diems for research regardless of travel or location and allowing for direct salary support and has allowed APSA to continue to provide assistance for member research even as the opportunities and challenges for conducting research evolve.

The Centennial Center also provided grants through the Research Partnerships on Critical Issues, Growing Democracy, and Institute for Civically Engaged Research programs, which are initiatives of the APSA Presidential Task Force on New Partnerships. In Spring 2021 the Centennial Center issued the first two \$6000 grants of its Growing Democracy initiative. The Growing Democracy grant program was inspired by a member-led civic engagement project called Growing Democracy, Community Conversations, which was founded by Ashley Nickels and Casey Boyd-Swan of Kent State University and designed to bring together community members, scholars, and practitioners to share information, experiences, and insights on issues of democracy and civic engagement. The Centennial Center is proud to carry on the work of the Growing Democracy Project by funding collaborations between political scientists and their local communities aimed at supporting informed, engaged, and effective citizens. In addition, the Centennial

Center awarded a \$10,000 grant through the Research Partnerships on Critical Issues as well as continuing the Institute for Civically Engaged Research, described in more detail below. These programs are made possible thanks to the generous support of the Ivywood Foundation.

### Diversity and Inclusion Advancing Research Grants

The APSA Diversity and Inclusion Advancing Research Grants are a fulfillment of the APSA Strategic Plan to expand support for the advancement of scholars from underrepresented groups and for research that examines political science phenomena affecting under-served communities and underrepresented groups. The Advancing Research Grants complement APSA's existing diversity and inclusion fellowships and grants—namely the APSA Diversity Fellowship Program (DFP), the Lee Ann Fujii APSA Diversity Fellowship Travel Grant, and the Fund for Latino Scholarship—providing additional research funding opportunities for scholars at multiple points in their professional careers.

In 2021, APSA awarded the second annual cycle of Diversity and Inclusion Advancing Research Grants for Early Career Scholars and Indigenous Politics. The Early Career Scholars Grant supported 10 projects for a total award amount of \$25,000. The Indigenous Politics Grant supported eight projects for a total award amount of \$20,000.

### Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant

In 2021, the National Science Foundation (NSF) made an award to APSA to administer the Political Science Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant program (DDRIG), which promotes the progress of science by identifying and supporting doctoral dissertation research projects that have the potential to advance knowledge of citizenship, government, and politics. In 2021, the program's second year, APSA received over 140 applications and was excited to disburse over \$306,000 across 23 grants.

### Travel & Accessibility Grants

Over the past year, APSA expanded funding for travel and accessibility grants to support both in-person and virtual attendance at the APSA Annual Meeting. Thanks to generous donations to funds like the Lee Ann Fujii Grant Program and the Walter E. Beach Travel Fund, APSA awarded \$81,900 in the form of 70 travel grants and 205 accessibility grants.

APSA sections and committees also stepped in to provide support for members attending the Annual Meeting either in-person or virtually. The Status of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Individuals in the Profession Committee provided 11 travel and accessibility grants, while twelve APSA Organized Sections gave a total of forty-eight grants totaling \$28,900.

### Special Projects Fund

In addition to the above grants, the APSA Special Projects Fund awards grants biennially, so while APSA did not award Special Projects Fund grants in 2021, keep an eye out for information about 2022 Special Projects Fund grants.

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND ELECTION ASSISTANCE

## AND POLICY STANDING COMMITTEE

APSA continues to develop public engagement programming to support, develop, and encourage member engagement with their communities, policymakers, the media, and the broader public. In 2021, we welcomed a new class of public scholarship fellows. The Public Scholarship Program, supported by the Ivywood Foundation, is a remote, part-time fellowship for graduate students in political science to write accessible, engaging summaries of new research published in the *American Political Science Review*. This year also saw the continuation of the Public Service Fellowship Program, supported by the Democracy Fund. In September, the second Public Service Fellow began a twelve-month placement with the bipartisan Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress to provide political science insight, research support, and general staffing.

At their April meeting, the APSA Council also approved the creation of a standing committee for election assistance, building upon the work of the 2020 Election Assistance Task Force. The Task Force leveraged the expertise and experience of political scientists to foster broader knowledge and understanding of non-partisan election assistance, including resources on non-partisan voter mobilization organizations, poll worker recruitment, technical aid to election officials implementing new systems, voter registration, the prevention of voter intimidation and disenfranchisement, and an understanding of how political scientists empirically identify and measure voter fraud. This work was in support of free, fair, and open elections in the United States on November 3, 2020 and thereafter. The Election Assistance and Policy Standing Committee is a permanent committee created to continue the work of the Task Force through building continuing relationships with existing organizations and efforts within and outside of higher education. The committee's work is nonpartisan and research focused. Drs. Erik Herron and Lee Ann Banaszak are co-chairing the Election Assistance and Policy Standing Committee, which began its work in September 2021.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND NEW CAREER DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

In 2021, APSA was also pleased to not only continue offering professional development resources for members, but to make a particular point to think broadly about the format and approach to professional development, ensuring that these resources are accessible and address the variety of careers that political scientists pursue. Throughout 2021, has worked to provide professional development resources virtually, to continue to serve members. This has included professional development, teaching, and pedagogy workshops as well as the newly-launched department chairs quarterly newsletter.

Additionally, in 2021 APSA launched the new Career Diversity Committee, made up of members both inside academia and in a variety of roles outside academia. The committee's primary objective is to help identify ways that APSA can help build career opportunities for doctoral students and faculty outside of the academy, which will provide more opportunities for political scientists, create capacity within institutions to constructively engage outside of academia, and work to address the limited supply of university positions. The committee hopes to work to make APSA more inclusive of political scientists who have built careers outside of the academy, but who are still

using and building on disciplinary concepts and methods, creating a more inclusive discipline, in terms of career paths.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING PROGRAMMING

APSA is committed to supporting teaching and learning in political science, and as the pandemic has required instructors to navigate changing classroom protocols, hybrid environments, and sometimes sudden shifts in teaching modalities this support has become even more important. In 2020, APSA launched APSA Educate, supported by the Ivywood Foundation. APSA Educate is a dedicated online library for political science teaching resources. The website hosts teaching materials for undergraduate and graduate courses, across all sub-fields, and ranging from syllabi to simulations. All materials are free and allow users to easily search, upload, and "favorite" materials.

In addition, APSA has continued to offer a variety of programming to offer resources and support to instructors. The 2021 TLC at APSA event was held as a hybrid event at the APSA Annual Meeting in Seattle and virtually and will continue to be an annual event in conjunction with the Annual Meeting, focused on teaching and learning. While the standalone Teaching and Learning Conference for 2022 was postponed due to uncertainties around COVID, we look forward to holding this biannual event again in February 2023 in Baltimore, MD. APSA has also offered a variety of teaching and learning programming throughout the year, including several webinars in 2022 on topics such as "Strategies for Teaching the Insurrection and Impeachment" and "Strategies for Success in the Online Political Science Classroom" and "Building an Inclusive Syllabus." In 2022 we are looking forward to the return of our Teaching & Learning Symposia, three-day workshops aimed at bringing together faculty with similar teaching interests to share best practices and develop new teaching resources.

## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PROGRAMMING

APSA values diversity, equity, and inclusion. The APSA strategic plan states that one of APSA's overarching goals is to promote and encourage diversity and inclusion in the profession, and the APSA Diversity and Inclusion Programs include long-standing programs to increase diversity, inclusion, and access within the discipline of political science across all levels and at APSA meetings and events.

### Ralph Bunche Summer Institute and Ralph J. Bunche Fund Goal Attainment

One of the most prominent of APSA's diversity and recruitment programs is the Ralph Bunche Summer Institute (RBSI), established in 1986 to increase diversity within the political science discipline. In 2020, the RBSI accepted 20 students to attend the program at Duke University. The 2021 institute, funded by the National Science Foundation, was held May 23 – June 23 as a completely virtual program with 15 scholars successfully completing the program. The virtual sessions included talks by faculty and RBSI Alumni, research writing sessions, professional development sessions, GRE prep courses, and a virtual graduate school fair.

In addition, APSA is very pleased to announce as a major accomplishment of 2021 that we have reached the Ralph J. Bunche Fund development goal of \$2.5 Million. We would

like to offer a special thank you to those who contributed to the Bunche Generation to Generation Campaign since its establishment in 2013, namely the RBSI Class Leaders and Alumni, APSA members, political science departments, and Friends of the APSA Diversity and Inclusion Programs. Over 500 donors made 1,055 contributions to the Fund over the course of the campaign. The full funding of the Ralph J. Bunche Fund will help APSA ensure the continuity of the Ralph Bunche Summer Institute regardless of potential uncertainty in other funding sources.

### RESPECT Campaign

A key component of APSA's efforts to create a diverse, inclusive, and respectful environment at APSA meetings and events is the RESPECT Campaign, which encourages "professional respect" by and towards all APSA annual meeting attendees and participants at all times, was featured at the in person and virtual 2021 Annual Meeting through signage, buttons, and postcards. RESPECT stands for Respectful, Equitable, Safe, Professional, and Ethical Conduct Towards All. The APSA Sexual Harassment Survey Report and Anti-Harassment Policy (code of conduct) addresses the importance of facilitating a climate of respect at the annual meeting. The goal is to promote a respectful climate throughout the profession. The presence of APSA resources like the APSA Meetings Ombuds and Bystander Intervention Training, which were available during the virtual portion of the 2021 meeting, also embody this message of RESPECT.

### McClain Task Force

Another major accomplishment of 2021 was the completion of the final report from the APSA Presidential Task Force on Examining Issues and Mechanisms of Systemic Inequality in the Discipline. Convened by former APSA President Dr. Paula D. McClain, The task force conducted research in the following four areas of concern, led by four co-chairs:

- Tenure and Promotion Standards: Burdens of Faculty of Color: Cathy Cohen, University of Chicago
- Citation Patterns and Inequities: John A. Garcia, ICPSR
- Climate and Context: Carol A. Mershon, University of Virginia
- Graduate Training and Graduate Student Experiences: Niambi Carter, Howard University

Dr. McClain and task force co-chairs presented their report, findings and recommendations to the APSA Council during the Fall 2021 Council Meeting. The task force members issue recommendations for APSA and for departments of political science regarding strategies for ameliorating the effects of, and removing, systemic inequalities. In general, the task force report features data and analysis shedding light on how marginalized members of our discipline experience their scholarly lives in the profession, at annual and regional meetings, and in their home departments.

### PUBLICATIONS

APSA's academic publishing efforts have completed another busy year, as APSA journals have continued to publish cutting-edge, top-notch political science research while planning for leadership transitions and continuing program innovation. Following a rigorous search process, in September 2021 APSA announced new editorial teams for the *Journal of Political Science Education* and *PS: Political Science and Politics*, which will begin their terms in August and September 2022, respectively.

In 2021, the APSA publications team also celebrated the first full year of the new association magazine, *Political Science Today*. The magazine includes news about the discipline, member spotlights, association updates, and other content and replaces "The Association" section of *PS: Political Science and Politics*. The magazine provides a new venue to share news about the discipline and APSA events, and to connect with APSA members. *Political Science Today* is released quarterly in February, May, August, and November in print and online.

APSA Preprints continues to expand its reach and is a valuable resource for the political science community to share early research. As of January 2022, the site had more than 450 papers and presentations with a combined 180,000 downloads and 270,000 views. Downloads have doubled from March 2021 to January 2022

### APSA OPERATIONS

Through 2021, APSA staff have worked hard to provide increased support and resources for members, all while working remotely since March 2020. To ensure effective and high-quality programming, APSA has also worked to increase staffing where appropriate, adding several staff members in 2021. In addition, while staff have been working remotely the APSA headquarters in the Dupont Circle neighborhood of Washington, DC has undergone a renovation that includes a new HVAC system, replaced rear windows, and refurbishment of the original front-facing windows that date to the 1880s. Additional renovations have taken place at an adjacent property that APSA leases to a small private school. APSA's rental income helps provide a diversified income and investment portfolio that, through careful fiscal management, maintains APSA's strong financial position and allows for more opportunities to serve the membership and the discipline.

### CONCLUSION

APSA, as an association, is very fortunate to have many, many members who devote time and resources in support of APSA's extensive programming including the annual meeting and its publications. This past year has continued to create challenges for everyone, and it is impossible to overstate how grateful we are for the tremendous service work of our members under these trying circumstances. Our volunteer leadership and our staff have also provided terrific support to APSA's programming and APSA members and we very much appreciate their work. I look forward to working with our members and the APSA staff in 2022, as we address the continued challenges facing the discipline and higher education as a whole, and as we continue to develop programs to support the research and pedagogical interests of our members and their professional development and engagement in the public sphere. ■