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K. Description/Abstract

The 11th International Conference on Arabidopsis Research was held in Madison, Wisconsin June 24 through June 28, 2000. *Arabidopsis thaliana* has been the subject of genetic study for many years. However, during the last decade, the number of research laboratories using Arabidopsis as a model system has increased tremendously, and Arabidopsis is currently being used to study all aspects of plant biology. The rapid rate of progress in Arabidopsis research, including the completion of the genomic sequence, underscores the usefulness of holding a meeting every year. These conferences provide an important opportunity for the Arabidopsis community to interact and exchange information. The meeting opened with an evening keynote address on the global impact of plant biology delivered by Richard Jefferson, the Executive Director of CAMBIA (Center for the Application of Molecular Biology to International Agriculture). This was followed by short updates from each of the NSF-funded Plant Genome groups. Many of these groups are carrying out projects that impact the Arabidopsis community. Each of the 17 platform sessions consisted of talks from two invited speakers followed by two short talks that were chosen from the submitted poster abstracts. A concerted effort was made to invite junior investigators, including graduate students and postdocs, to give these talks. Posters were available for viewing during three formal sessions, and because the poster session will be adjacent to the lecture hall, it was easy for participants to go back and forth between posters and lectures. Finally, a mixer and an informal banquet provided opportunities for participants to meet new people and renew acquaintances. Furthermore, the registration package included all lunches and dinners together in a cafeteria next to the posters and lecture hall, thus encouraging the meeting of established investigators with students and postdocs. The North American Arabidopsis Steering Committee (elected by electronic ballot by North American subscribers to the Arabidopsis electronic bulletin board) served as the program committee for the 2000 meeting (Kathy Barton, University of Wisconsin; Chuck Gasser, UC Davis; Mary Lou Guerinot, Dartmouth College; Steve Kay, The Scripps Research Institute; Peter McCourt, University of Toronto; and Michael Sussman, University of Wisconsin). Mary Lou Guerinot, Jeff Dangel (University of North Carolina) and Detlef Weigel (The Salk Institute) served as co-chairs for the meeting. Rick Amasino (University of Wisconsin) served as the local organizer of the meeting.

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