



Community Digest July 2022

Hello Wonderful MGC members!

Welcome to the first ever Maize Genetics Cooperation **Community Digest!** This occasional newsletter is designed to keep you informed of the activities of the MGC leadership and to give you more opportunities to interact. We are always happy to hear from you! bod.mgc@gmail.com. You can always find out what is going on at the MGC website! It is easy to get there by clicking the MGC button in the middle of the MaizeGDB home page. <https://www.maizegdb.org/mgc/index.php>. Calendar: <https://www.maizegdb.org/mgc/calendar2022.php>

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1. Annual Survey Results are in!

Every year, the MGC sends out two very important surveys to yet YOUR feedback on priorities and activities of the MGC- one specifically for the Maize Meeting, the other for broader community issues. While completing a survey may be low on your list, the results are very important: they allow the MGC to document community thoughts and priorities, which enables us to better advocate for the needs of Maize researchers to our funding agencies; and also influences actions and initiatives in the MGC itself. And the squeaky wheel gets the grease- If you don't tell us your needs, we cannot advocate for you! The MGC was created to support maize researchers and we need to know what YOU want!

- **MGC 2022 Survey results:** <https://q1.tc/zAWx7l>
- **Compare with past results on the MGC webpage:** <https://www.maizegdb.org/mgc/advocacy/docs.php>

2. Call for Nominations for CODIE Membership

CODIE is the MGC Committee on Outreach, Diversity, Inclusion and Education, and has been VERY active this past year (see report below)! **CODIE is currently accepting applications for membership, deadline July 14 2022** - online application is here: <https://forms.gle/xRnZY7ZZQ9yNxFvs9>

CODIE is also accepting suggestions for speakers in the 'Fostering Diversity in the Maize Community' plenary address, **deadline July 14 2022**, for the 2023 Maize Meeting: <https://forms.gle/ZDiGuT9PXcTkLeyQ6>

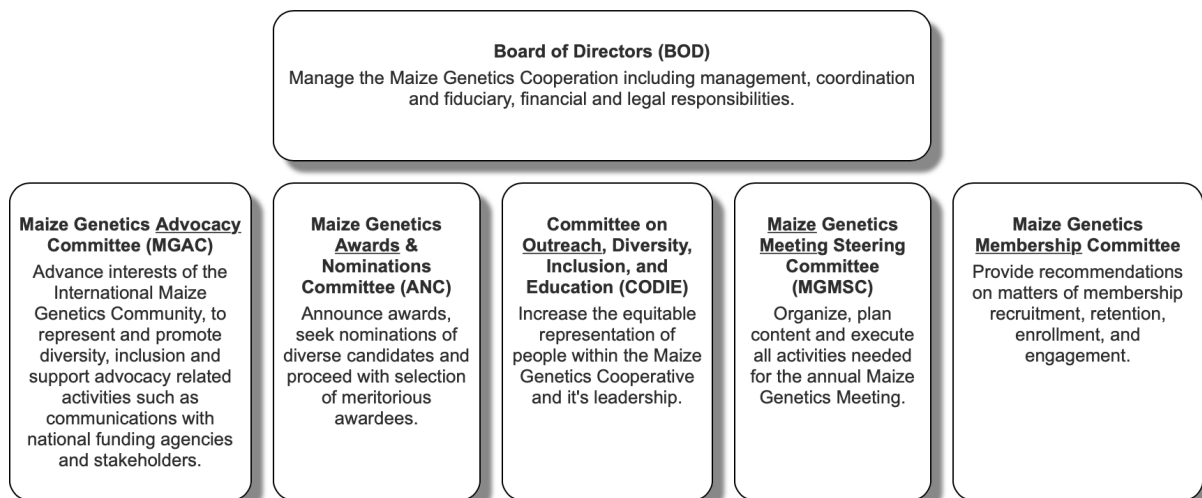
3. Did you Know?

- **MGC members** can attend the first 15 minutes of each monthly Board of Directors meeting. See the calendar for dates and zoom links: <https://www.maizegdb.org/mgc/calendar2022.php>
- **The MGC Board of Directors (BoD) oversees 5 committees:** Maize Genetics Advocacy Committee (MGAC), Maize Genetics Cooperation Awards and Nominations Committee (ANC), Committee on Outreach, Diversity, Inclusion, and Education (CODIE), Maize Genetics Meeting Steering Committee (MGMSC), and the MGC Membership Committee. To learn more about each committee's mission, and current members, check out <https://www.maizegdb.org/mgc/index.php>
- **Maize History Timeline on MaizeGDB:** Have you seen the History Timeline on MaizeGDB? Check it out here (https://www.maizegdb.org/maize_history) and send items to add to the timeline to lisaharper@me.com! Keep our history alive!

4. Annual Committee Reports

Each year during the Maize Meeting, the MGC leadership reports on their activities of the past year in the Community Session. In case you missed it, here is a summary of each committee's report.

MGC Organization and mission (<https://www.maizegdb.org/mgc/index.php>):



MGC Board of Directors (BoD) Activities for the 2021-22 year:

Current Chair: Jay Hollick (hollick.3@osu.edu)

<https://www.maizegdb.org/mgc/bod.php>

Business Operations

- Received our official 501(c)(3) status
- Obtained sales and use tax exempt status in WI
- Obtained certificate of good standing in WI (state of incorporation)
- Obtained Certificate of Authority in MO
- Obtained sales and use tax exempt status in MO

- Filed 2020 and 2021 Taxes
- Renewed Standard Insurance Policy
- Obtained Meeting Liability Insurance

Policies and Procedures

- Created the Membership Committee
- Established Membership Committee charge document
- Established Membership Code of Conduct Policy
- Established Membership Data Privacy Policy
- Developed procedures and action tree when code of conduct violations are reported
- Worked with MGMSC to develop meeting COVID policy
- Updated all committee charge documents to contain clear succession plans for committee leadership

Recognizing our Community

- Discussed and voted on the Lifetime Achievement Awards
- Sent end of year Committee Chair and Member letters of appreciation
- Ordered name badge ribbons for committee members, sponsors, awardees, and speakers

Maize Meeting Contracts

- Signed 1 year contract with Conference Direct for 2022 conference management services
- Renegotiated 2022, 2023, 2025 contracts with Union Station following 2021 meeting cancellation due to COVID-19
- Signed 2022 virtual platform contract
- Signed 2024 Raleigh MGM contracts
- Worked with MGMSC and UW-Madison to re-budget RCN funds to provide additional student financial support and virtual platform support this year
- Signed 3 year contract with Conference Direct for 2023-2025 conference management services

Recognizing our Community

- Discussed and voted on the Lifetime Achievement Awards
- Sent end of year Committee Chair and Member letters of appreciation
- Ordered name badge ribbons for committee members, sponsors, awardees, and speakers

Maize Genetics Meeting Steering Committee (MGMSC)

Current Chair: Matt Hufford (mhufford@iastate.edu)

<https://www.maizegdb.org/mgc/maizemeeting/2022/committee.php>

During the 2021-2022 academic year, the Maize Genetics Meeting Steering Committee (MGMSC), led by Chair Erin Sparks (University of Delaware), spearheaded a successful return to in-person meetings using enhanced safety measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19. In addition, a virtual meeting provided broader access to recorded talks with support for this option made available to international attendees and others who otherwise could not have attended. New features of the MGM in 2022 included over 20 lightning talks that briefly described the content of posters, and engagement opportunities with platinum-level industry sponsors including informational dinners. The

MGMSC also expanded to include a graduate student and postdoc representative who were elected by their peers. During the 2022-2023 academic year, Chair Matthew Hufford (Iowa State University) will work with the MGMSC to organize the 2023 (March 16 – 19) meeting in St. Louis and expand access to the meeting with further virtual features. The committee will work toward a more inclusive meeting by incorporating measures suggested by CODIE and refining the short-talk selection rubric.

Membership Committee

Current Chair: Natalie Nannas, (njnannas@hamilton.edu)

<https://www.maizegdb.org/mgc/membership/>

In 2019 the maize genetics community voted to incorporate our group as the Maize Genetics Cooperation, Inc. (MGC) to provide legal status and protection to our members, expand our community, and ensure its longevity. We are now a 501(c)(3), defined by the IRS as a "charitable, educational, or scientific organization". The incorporation was spearheaded by elected members of the former MGEC, who invested a huge effort in completing the incorporation process. We are happy to see incorporation has not changed the incredible character of the maize community, and we thank the community for their support throughout this process.

All previous maize cooperators were invited to opt-in as MGC members free of charge in September 2019 and 2020. To support activities related to managing our 501(c)(3) organization and important community initiatives (e.g. the great work being done by CODIE!) we need to generate income through the collection of annual dues, with tiered membership categories. These dues are in line with the previous costs contained within Maize Meeting registration fees. **To maintain the spirit, diversity, and global reach of the community, anyone who wishes to become an MGC member, but is unable to afford the annual dues, or for whom payment would create hardship, may have their dues waived, simply by petitioning in our Membership Portal.**

Become a Member here: <https://mgcmembership.org>

What did we do in the past year?

- Created charge document
- Developed membership code of conduct, data privacy policy, dues, and perks
- Launched Membership Platform and membership database with >350 members!!
- Organized 2-day Career Development Workshop

Our plans for next year:

- Develop additional membership perks
- Work with CODIE to expand and diversify MGC membership base

CODIE (Committee on Outreach, Diversity, Inclusion and Education)

Chair, John Fowler (john.fowler@oregonstate.edu); Secretary, Irina Makarevitch (imakarevitch01@hamline.edu). <https://www.maizegdb.org/mgc/outreach/>

CODIE had an exciting and productive year, with an expanded volunteer membership, including an initial cohort of Early Career Researchers (graduate students and postdocs). The year's major effort for the CODIE team was organization and facilitation of the virtual 'Building Better Together' Workshop, held in Jan 2022 (supported by the NSF and MGC). For two days, over 100 attendees met for panel and breakout discussions that addressed topics related to pervasive systemic vulnerabilities in

our scientific communities: Wellness & Wellbeing and Equity & Inclusion. CODIE's next task is to integrate information gathered at the workshop into a manuscript which provides guidance for the broader community, as well as ideas for initiatives for the MGC to tackle in the future.

CODIE also coordinates the awards that support broader participation in the Maize Genetics Meeting - for researchers from marginalized groups, at primarily undergraduate institutions, from other disciplines, and historically-underrepresented countries (the [MaGNET, PUI, DB and BIP Awards](#), respectively). This past year saw the largest support for these participants ever - a total of 49 awardees! Newly implemented aspects to the MaGNET program include a pre-meeting meet up, 'Meeting Mentor' for all awardees at the meeting, and other networking initiatives, to help orient and welcome new participants to the MGM. Thanks to all of the established maize researchers who supported this effort; achieving the goal of an inclusive conference requires this type of widespread community support.

CODIE is active throughout the year, too. For example, new publications relevant to enhancing DEI in the community are highlighted and summarized on MaizeGDB's 'Hot Papers' page - https://maizegdb.org/hot_new_papers. CODIE and the MGC are also engaged with the NSF-supported ROOT & SHOOT RCN project (<https://rootandshoot.org/>). The goal of this five-year project, which brings together a coalition of professional organizations (e.g., MGC, ASPB, BSA, APS) and partners (SACNAS, MANRRS, oSTEM), is to catalyze cultural change that leads to a more inclusive and equitable plant science. There will be opportunities for MGC community members to participate in ROOT & SHOOT activities (public forums, working groups addressing specific issues). If you are interested, follow the project on Twitter (@RootandShootRCN), the project blog (https://rootandshoot.org/?page_id=255), or contact your MGC representatives to the project (John Fowler, fowlerjo@oregonstate.edu; or Laurie Smith, lgsmith@ucsd.edu).

Opportunity for community participation: the 21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge. CODIE will again facilitate a group of interested community members in this process of personal growth, enabling participants to more clearly see systemic racism and to develop the tools to make racial equity a habit. Note that participants control the daily time commitment over the 21 days, and even engaging with the process for a short period (3-10 minutes) each day is impactful. The current goal is for the next Challenge to be held in summer, based on participant availability. Sign up here: <https://forms.gle/jqhChGPvWvdxGaZH7>

For more details, see the 2022 MGM poster that documents CODIE's efforts <https://tinyurl.com/3v3uckpd>

Awards and Nomination Committee (ANC)

Chair: Paula McSteen. mcsteenp@missouri.edu

<https://www.maizegdb.org/mgc/awards/committee.php>

See the 2022 Award Winners: <https://www.maizegdb.org/mgc/awards/>

The ANC is charged with Coordination of nominations for the elected Board of Director positions, and conduct the nomination and selection process for the MGC and McClintock awards. The ANC works to support diversity in the nominations. THANK YOU to

everyone who submitted a nomination or who ran for office! Here are the breakdowns for 6 Nominations in 2022:

- 2022-2025 BoD Incoming Chair Nominations: 14 total, 57% female, 7% diverse, 0% non-US. Of the 2 Nominee that ran for office: 100% female
- 2022-2025 BoD Secretary Nominations 13 total, 54% female, 7% diverse, 0% non-US. Of the 4 Nominee that ran for office: 75% female
- 2022-2025 BoD Member at Large Nominations 14 total, 50% female, 7% diverse, 0% non-US. Of the 8 Nominee that ran for office: 37% female
- 2022 Leadership and Cooperator Community Awards Nominations 10 total, 33% female, 16% diverse, 0% non-US
- 2022 Early and Mid-Career Maize Genetics Awards Nominations 18 total, 45% female, 27% diverse, 33% non-US
- 2022 Lifetime Maize Genetics & 2023 McClintock Awards Nominations 11 total, 36% female, 0% diverse, 1% non-US

ANC Plans of next year

- Update charge document
- Provide guidelines for letter writers based on rubric
- Work on further expanding the pool of nominations to better represent the entire community, including outside the US.

How can you help?

- Do you have suggestions for nominations for next year, but don't feel comfortable writing the nomination letter? Send names to any ANC member and we will solicit a nomination from someone else in the community. See members here: <https://www.maizegdb.org/mgc/awards/committee.php>
- Send suggestions to any member of ANC for additional awards and other ways to nominate people to better represent our entire community.

Maize Genetics Advocacy Committee (MGAC)

Chair: Mark Lubkowitz mlubkowitz@smcvt.edu

<https://www.maizegdb.org/mgc/advocacy/>

A new Mentoring Program was launched in June 2021 to build stronger connections between industry scientists and early career scientists. Mentor Volunteers came from 7 industry partners including BASF, Bayer, Corteva, Inari, KWS, NRGene and Pairwise. Together these volunteers mentored over 60 scientists. In the after survey, about 90% of respondents said they would recommend the program to a friend! In the coming year, we plan to expand industry participants and incorporate feedback from current participants. We will work with the Membership committee on the mentoring program.

RCN Activity: The annual meeting within the RCN was conducted with the CODIE team: "Building Better Together; Strategies for a Healthy and Inclusive Committee Workshop", and was a huge success (see the CODIE section above for more details).

Annual MGC Community Survey: The timing of the survey was shifted to "soon after the Maize Meeting" to increase participation and effectiveness of feedback. The new survey includes questions from all MGC Committees

McClintock Prize: While the Awards and Nomination Committee (ANC) solicits nominations for the McClintock Prize, the MGAC reviews and vote on the awardee. The 2023 Awardee will be announced in October 2022. The MGAC also updated the award description to provide clarity for nomination & ANC review.

5. Want to get involved with the Community Digest?

We need some ideas! Please send you suggestions to improve this community newsletter to Lisa Harper (BoD, Communications) at lisaharper@me.com. Send ideas on a catchy name, format, sections, what types of information you would like to see, do you want to submit an article on the community? Send it all!