The United States was well represented at the Third International Soil Judging Contest on 11 Aug. 2018 in Seropédica near Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. There were 48 students on 12 teams representing 10 different countries. The U.S. Teams received support from the Agronomic Science Foundation, SSSA, and ASA, and SSSA was a sponsor of the contest.

To qualify for this contest, the students placed as top individuals at the 2018 National Collegiate Soils Contest. Andrew Sherfy, John Galbraith, and Brian Needelman worked together to learn about the area soils and geology and to craft student assignments. Volunteer assistants Erin Bush and Sara Mack, two former soil judges, were instrumental in helping with team building. Before the contest, the teams participated in three days of training, field trips, and practice pits in the area surrounding the Rural Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. The contest was held in areas of infertile soils in what was once the Atlantic Rain Forest but is now dry pasture on moderately eroded hillslopes. Students learned to interpret and classify tropical soil properties to make land use decisions.

In the overall competition, combining individual and team scores, USA Team 2 placed first and USA Team 1 placed second, followed closely by Spain, Brazil, and South Africa. USA Team 1 won the team-judging event with USA Team 2 close in second. The individual champion was Georgianna Scott (USA 2) with teammate Ben Smith placing second. There was a four-way tie for third among Braden Povah (USA 2), David Gentry (USA 1), Karin Azzam (Australia), and Alberto Lázaro López (Spain). Other U.S. contestants were Dan Brumm in a tie for seventh, Kelli Roush and Emma Thompson in a tie for 11th, and Joey Loffredo in a tie for 13th. Congratulations to all U.S. teammates on a job well done!

International Champion, Georgianna Scott, is a recent graduate from Clemson University. She began soil judging last fall with the intent of fulfilling a course requirement. Scott never imagined how far her success would take her! “I really couldn’t believe it!” she says. “Since this was my first year soil judging, I was already blown away by my success at the Southeast Regional Competition where I placed first. I thought I would do well at the National Collegiate Soils Contest, but I did not expect to make the top 8 to qualify for Brazil.” Scott is now pursuing her M.S. in Munich, Germany and plans to...

U.S. Soils Teams (left to right): Ben Smith, Braden Povah, Kelli Roush, Brian Needelman (volunteer), Georgianna Scott, Emma Thompson, David Gentry, Joseph Loffredo, Sara Mack (volunteer), Erin Bush (volunteer), and Dan Brumm.

Winning Team (left to right): Braden Povah, Georgianna Scott, Emma Thompson, and Ben Smith.

USA Team 1
Kelli Roush, Iowa State Univ.
Joseph Loffredo, Univ. of Rhode Island
Dan Brumm, Univ. of Wisconsin–Platteville
David Gentry-Univ. of Tennessee–Knoxville
Coach: Dr. Andrew Sherfy, Univ. of Tennessee–Knoxville

USA Team 2
Braden Povah, California Polytechnic State Univ.
Emma Thompson, Utah State Univ.
Georgianna Scott, Clemson Univ.
Ben Smith, Virginia Tech
Coach: Dr. John Galbraith, Virginia Tech

Volunteers
Brian Needelman, Univ. Maryland,
Sara Mack, Univ. Maryland,
Erin Bush, Kansas State Univ.

Contest Organizing Team Member
Maxine Levin, SSSA
Braden Povah pulls soil samples during the individual contest.

Why do you enjoy coaching soils?

**Sherfy:** It is easily one of the best educational experiences within our discipline. The nature of this field necessitates fieldwork to understand important concepts. Soil judging highlights and trains students in important skills such as observation, discovery, intuition, and critical thinking. With the nature of soil judging teams and the small number of students, I can work closely with them and see that moment they learn something new or they have never thought of, and it is an uplifting moment to witness as an instructor.

**Galbraith:** I enjoy coaching soil judging because I get to know students at our university much better than I can in a regular class. With our soils club activities, we are more like a family. I get to go outside, teach them one-on-one, and learn more myself. I enjoy the competition and the strategy involved, but I try not to lose sight of the overall education aspect of the event. I enjoy helping the students develop their field skills and their resume through judging and related soils club activities.

What is one of your favorite memories from the International Contest in Brazil?

**Galbraith:** My most memorable experience, besides the awards ceremony in front of 3,000 soil scientists from across the globe, was seeing the students from the USA mixing with students from so many other countries. I was so proud of what a fine group they are and how well they conducted themselves while representing the USA. The teams from Russia, Spain, Australia, and South Africa were especially friendly to us. I also enjoyed answering questions from students of many countries.

**Sherfy:** I will always remember getting caught up in a moment doing something familiar, sitting on the side of a hillslope, watching other students working to color, texture, and describe horizons while I was furiously reading through the manual. I stopped to take account of what was going on and realized everyone around me was doing the same thing but speaking other languages. Without making a scene, I stopped some of the students from what they were doing, asked them to sit back, and give themselves a moment to take in how special this experience was. They were among a select group of individuals to represent their country while doing something they love.
Career Center

Annual Meeting Career Center

Check out the Career Center at the Annual Meeting in Baltimore, MD, conveniently located in the convention center exhibit hall, where employers and job seekers meet to connect and communicate.

- **Don’t miss this year’s Career Fair:** Learn about jobs, internships, and other opportunities from a wide array of industry, government, and NGO employers at the Career Fair on Monday, 5 November from 3–6 pm. Come prepared to make an impression at this high-energy event.

- **Job and internship seekers:** Upload your resume/CV and create your professional profile now at [www.careerplacement.org](http://www.careerplacement.org). You can search the employers and job postings and then visit us in Baltimore for on-site, face-to-face interviews with motivated employers.

- **Employers:** Visit [www.careerplacement.org/meetings](http://www.careerplacement.org/meetings) now to reserve your Career Fair and Career Center interview table. Post your positions online using this **25% discount code: BALTIMORE18**. All online openings will be printed for our jobs boards at the meeting. You can also browse resumes to connect with the most qualified job seekers in our sciences and professions. As always, internship postings are FREE online.

- **Exhibitors:** You can participate in the Career Fair on Monday afternoon for FREE. Contact Rebecca Polk at 608-268-3972 or rpolk@sciencesocieties.org for details and to reserve your Career Fair table.

Don’t delay! Make your Career Fair and interview table reservations today!

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**The Career Center and Graduate School Forum Hours**

- **Sunday, 4 November, 7–9 pm:** Exhibit Hall Welcome Reception
- **Monday, 5 November, 9 am–6 pm:** Career Fair from 3–6 pm
- **Tuesday, 6 November, 9 am–6 pm**
- **Wednesday, 7 November, 9 am–4:30 pm**

**Graduate School Forum**

The Graduate School Forum is located next to the Career Center in the exhibit hall.

- **University representatives:** There are still a few tables available to promote your school to the best and brightest. Visit [www.careerplacement.org/meetings](http://www.careerplacement.org/meetings) to reserve your table today.

- **Students:** Make one trip to the Grad School Forum in Baltimore to meet with representatives from top graduate schools from around the country without spending travel time and money to visit each school individually.

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