



# 2024 Vice President Candidate



Courtney Gallup | Corteva Agriscience

## Leadership Experience

The American Phytopathological Society is unique among scientific societies for its very high level of member engagement. Following nearly 20 years of volunteerism with APS, I continue to find fulfillment by creating value for our members in ways that grow connections, grow careers, grow scientific impact, enhance scientific knowledge, and strengthen our society.

As a graduate student at North Carolina State University, the plant pathology faculty and students were highly involved in the society, with rising enthusiasm each summer surrounding upcoming annual conferences. I first joined the society in 2004, which felt like a rite of passage. With graduate students from across the country, I quickly found connections and motivation to do meaningful work beyond my own research.

Since 2004, I have served in several leadership roles, including Graduate Student Committee chair, Industry Committee chair, Office of Private Sector Relations director, and councilor-at-large. Serving APS through these roles facilitated a broad perspective of diverse member needs across university, Extension, education, government, and industry, as well as APS' ambitions to create member value through various strategic initiatives.

I'm proud of a few specific contributions that still persist today. As a vice chair and chair of the Graduate Student Committee, we started the Art in Phytopathology program. Twenty years later, I continue to be impressed by the creativity and artistic talent of our members!

As chair of the Office of Private Sector Relations (OPSR), we focused heavily on creating career development opportunities for graduate students and early-career professionals. For this, in collaboration with the APS Foundation, we created an endowment through the Don and Judy Mathre Education Endowment, with additional funds raised to support the [OPSR Plant Pathology Experiential Grants](#). Established during my term, OPSR continues to offer the Individual and Departmental Experiential Grants, which sponsor extended visits to support research endeavors and offer learning opportunities about careers outside of academia, respectively. Also continuing today, we organized multiday site tours for graduate students and post-docs interested in understanding how government and private organizations operate and types of career offerings. Additionally, we partnered with the Public Policy Board to draft a response to an EPA Draft Pesticide Registration Notice regarding proposed requirements around label language for resistance management.

As councilor-at-large, I worked with APS Council throughout the design process of our newly updated mission, vision, purpose, and strategic goals. To achieve our five-year goals, we closely examined APS' organizational structure and the purpose of our many committees, offices, and boards. Through a large communication and education effort, we focused each committee's

objectives toward internal and external impact, career pathways, and subject matter expertise. Refocusing the committees will enable APS Council to achieve its strategic goals more effectively by elevating the involvement and influence of the committees toward a shared vision. Committee effectiveness and impact are further elevated via a re-envisioned Leadership Institute, whose role is focused on facilitating smooth transitions from chair to vice chair, in part by providing leadership development learning sessions and sharing best practices. We are already experiencing positive outcomes through greater connectivity between committees and initiatives more strongly in tune with overall society goals.

I am a long-time advocate of volunteerism, mentorship, and professional leadership. In addition to the official capacities described above, I also have contributed on an ad-hoc basis to several task forces or initiatives, including Careers 101, Mid-Career Professional, 2026 Professional Development Forum, and others. These efforts resulted in decisions to support family needs during annual conferences and target more professional development opportunities for mid-career professionals.

Since concluding my term as councilor-at-large in 2023, I have joined the APS Annual Meeting Board as a member and the Global Fungicide Resistance Action Committee Steering Committee as the communications officer and Corteva Agriscience representative. Lastly, I've changed positions within my company and am now serving as global biology R&D leader for the fungicide portfolio.

## Statement of Vision for APS

Agriculture is posed with the challenge to feed a growing population in the face of climate change, endangered species, pesticide resistance, shifts in societal demands for protein and organic food sources, shifting availability of productive acreage, and invasive pests. To help tackle this daunting task, we stand on the edge of a technological revolution. How do we embrace and advance technological innovation to navigate these threats to agriculture and ensure food security at home and abroad?

In my career as both an APS volunteer and as a R&D Leader in industry, I have experience bringing together diverse perspectives and broad expertise, across scientists and sectors to achieve a shared vision.

As a vibrant and forward-thinking organization, APS recognized the changing needs of the planet and society and redefined an inspiring mission, vision, and purpose for which ambitious strategic goals are set. Fulfilling these strategic goals will increase the member value of the society, broaden our scientific impact nationally and internationally, and create new mechanisms to generate innovative revenue streams. The strategic goals below, for which I discuss tactical ideas, are already set forth by APS Council. These goals were established with member input, and I anticipate that the tactics in achieving these goals would be similarly member driven.

### **Goal A: Advancements in plant health science are accelerated through professional collaboration and data sharing.**

As a scientific society, APS can elevate itself as a trusted source for transdisciplinary research collaborations across government, industry, academia, and nontraditional

science stakeholders. More than ever before, basic and applied research can incorporate emerging technology (artificial intelligence, machine learning, and data/decision science) toward scientific and technological advancements. For this, APS can facilitate think tanks or incubators with nontraditional/nonmember participation for new transdisciplinary collaborations that reach beyond ourselves with heightened impact. By making data availability through journals, APS also can reduce barriers to research collaborations.

**Goal B: A growing workforce has the skills necessary to ensure sustainable plant health.**

APS is comprised of plant pathology educators and organizations that benefit from talent development via recruitment and hiring. Our society can readily enhance member value by working with Academic Unit Leader Forum Officers (AULF), industry and government members, and the APS Education Center to understand workforce skill-set demands and determine how APS can support them. APS also can provide professional development resources or access to resources for members at all career stages to maximize effectiveness in our professions. We already have strong mentoring and career development programs for early-career professionals, which we'll sustain and strengthen. However, we can greatly grow our engagement with mid-career professionals to offer meaningful professional development for managing research programs, people, and budgets, as well as staying abreast of new research technologies.

**Goal C: Our science impacts decisions leading to a sustainable future.**

Sustainability can mean many things: organic production; biologicals; recommending fungicide application timings for greatest efficacy and fewer sprays; delaying pesticide or trait resistance; ensuring secure sources of food and fiber; controlling invasive pests; advocating for data-driven policy; and more. We all do our part in working toward a sustainable future. Communicating our science and impacting decisions is proving more challenging. As experts in the plant sciences, we have a collective opportunity to serve as thought leaders in the agricultural sector. Through annual programming and year-round dialog, APS can continue to bring together professionals in the plant sciences to communicate science impact and inform stakeholders in advocacy and public policy. We also can elevate the visibility and partnership of the Public Policy Board with our subject matter committees to draw on member expertise more heavily for science advocacy.

I picture strength in connectivity, momentum through volunteerism, and energy in leadership. Our army of volunteers creates a culture in which we can all find purpose and a place to belong with connection through profession, interests, research, and initiatives. I am excited by the opportunity to serve as APS vice president and to see our society grow its value to our members and advance impactful science for a sustainable future.