

American Society of Mammalogists Human Diversity Committee Annual Report 2023

Co-Chairs

Rhiannon Jakopak and John Hanson

Committee members

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Mission:

The mission of the Human Diversity Committee is to ensure the opportunity for active participation in the ASM by all members, regardless of gender, race, ethnic background, age, physical disabilities, or sexual orientation.

This committee serves the Society by working to encourage and facilitate an increase in the diversity of active participants of the Society by working to reduce any and all barriers to participation, service, and governance (especially those associated with under-represented groups). Accordingly, the committee is examining approaches and efforts to increase diversity within the Society, especially the diversity of the participants in societal activities and functions. This committee also plans and conducts various workshops, symposia, and other activities associated with its mission.

Information items, June 2022 to date

- 1) We worked with the organizers of Black Mammalogists Week to award 2 rounds of **Black and Indigenous Scholars Awards**. We worked to refine the application and evaluation process, and, after these refinements, we feel that we have a straightforward and sustainable process. We received 10 applicants in fall 2022 and 2 applicants in spring 2023. These awards went to Veronarindra Ramananjato and Ingrid Beatriz Ferreira Paixao in fall 2023 and Tommy Herrera and Ilana Mosley in spring 2023. We are grateful for the support of S. Maher and the Informatics Committee for helping to facilitate the application process for this and all awards.
- 2) We selected 4 undergraduate students to attend the IMC-13 meeting fully supported as part of the **Rising undergraduates in mammalogy travel support**. We received 14 applications. We coordinated travel and conference attendance logistics for Cara Munro, Raven Moore, Rayne Billings, and Jacob Martinez. Participants will attend the *Conferencing 101: Optimize the ASM/IMC Conference Experience* workshop, facilitated by members within both the Education and Graduate Students and Human Diversity Committee, to prepare them for the conference. Through generous support from the

Board, we are able to bring 4 students to Anchorage who otherwise would not have been able to attend the conference, and introduce them to the world of mammalogy.

- 3) We worked with the Office of Ombuds to award the **J. Mary Taylor Award**, although we are not releasing the name of the awardee at this time. The Office of Ombuds took the lead on efforts this year. However, the recipient of this award has had a profound impact on those that surround them, and their dedication has significantly improved the field of mammalogy.
- 4) We worked with the Program Committee to coordinate a **LGBTQIA+ social at IMC-13** during one of the coffee breaks. This will be an opportunity for conference attendees who are queer or allies to come together and be in community.
- 5) We have been developing a **guide to making conference oral presentations and posters more accessible**, and we anticipate those guidelines being available on the IMC-13 website to help guide presenters.
- 6) We **developed infrastructure within the committee** to facilitate smoother operations into the future. We created housing and storing procedures for relevant documents, a listserv to facilitate fast and efficient communications, and have attempted to create guidance documents and to take notes of various processes.

Goals for June 2023 - June 2024

- 1) We will continue to administer the Black and Indigenous Scholars Award, but we would like to move the grant cycle occurring in the fall and the spring to only occurring in the fall. This will help alleviate some of the effort on behalf of the organizers, and we will hopefully be able to have a broader pool of applicants with an annual, instead of twice annually, cycle. We are also hoping to identify additional avenues for soliciting applications.
- 2) We will work with the Office of Ombuds to award the J. Mary Taylor Award, although the HDC will be the primary facilitator of the award.
- 3) We will work with the Program Committee and other relevant people to provide guidelines on where ASM can host future annual meetings. There are increasing challenges with finding locations that are outside of the 23 states included in [California's no-fly zone](#) that are accessible to the membership and can host a meeting of ASM's size. We will form a subcommittee of members from the Human Diversity Committee and other relevant committees; these guidelines will be presented to the Board for consideration.
- 4) With Board support, we hope to have more substantial social gatherings for affinity groups at the upcoming conference. These social gatherings are ways for mammalogists from similar backgrounds to come together in community, and support of these

gatherings helps to show that ASM is committed to making an equitable, inclusive professional society.

- 5) With Board support, we hope to bring another round of undergraduate students to the annual meeting, with a focus on individuals who have backgrounds that have been marginalized in society or in science. We hope to connect with undergraduate students primarily in Colorado and surrounding states, and we will work with ASM members that have connections in relevant places to solicit applicants.
- 6) If Black Mammalogist Week happens in the upcoming year, we will provide support and resources as appropriate.
- 7) With Board and Program Committee support, we hope to host a workshop at the ASM 2024 meeting that focuses on making field work safe for all. We would like to bring [Building a Better Fieldwork Future](#) to facilitate this workshop.
- 8) With Board support and in collaboration with the International Relations Committee, Informatics Committee, and Program Committee, we hope to build an interactive database of mammalogists across the globe. This database will allow users to search for mammalogists based on a variety of characteristics, including geographic location, languages spoken, racial or cultural background, taxonomic focus, interests/expertise, etc. We hope that such a database would facilitate interactions within the global mammalogy community, ranging from finding panel speakers who have underrepresented backgrounds to identifying future research collaborators. An example of such a database is linked [here](#).

Action items

- 1) Budget request
 - a) \$350 - to purchase the physical award for the J. Mary Taylor Award
 - b) \$10,000 - to support undergraduate students to attend the annual meeting in Boulder, Colorado, in 2024.
 - c) \$500 - to support purchasing of snacks and beverages for social gatherings for affinity groups (e.g., LGBTQIA+ social, BIPOC social, etc.)
 - d) \$2,000 - to support the speaking fee to host a workshop on Field Safety in Mammalogy at the ASM 2024 meeting. We will also be applying for support for the workshop through the Program Committee.
 - e) \$3,000 - to support building an interactive, searchable database of mammalogists across the globe. This database will allow users to search for mammalogists based on a variety of characteristics, including geographic location, languages spoken, racial or cultural background, taxonomic focus,

interests/expertise, etc. Additional details of this proposed database will be shared at the IMC-13 meeting. This will be a joint effort between the HDC, International Relations Committee, Informatics Committee, and Program Committee.

- 2) To bolster engagement and collaboration with mammalogists across the world, the Human Diversity Committee and International Relations Committee propose the Board adopts a policy of trilingual (English, Spanish, and Portuguese) official communications for the Society and support the budget request of the Informatics Committee to make this possible on our webpage. The joint motion is attached.
- 3) In order to facilitate these efforts and effectively manage our digital presence, the Human Diversity Committee, Informatics Committee, International Relations Committee, and Program Committee propose that the board investigate and move toward hiring a dedicated online content manager (whether as a standalone contract or in conjunction with the business manager contract). The joint motion is attached.

Respectfully submitted,
Rhiannon Jakopak & John Hanson
Human Diversity Committee Co-Chairs