

Human Diversity Committee

Committee Members: A. Castellanos, C. Calderon-Acevedo, L. D'Acunto, N. de la Sancha, L. Dizney, E. Flaherty, T. Giarla, J. Hanson (Chair), R. Jakopak, M. Matocq, D. Maxwell, K. Neil, T. Orr, K. Rowe, R. Rowe, K. Smith, J. Taing, L. Walsh.

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:

(1) The committee proposed to host a symposium on diversity at the DC meetings. The board gave us \$3000 to do this (this was money we asked the board to carry forward from our 2018 budget). During our committee meeting a suggestion was made to use a group called PowerPlay out of the University of New Hampshire. This group uses interactive theater to demonstrate scenarios that could be encountered in real life and build discussion around them. The cost for this group was almost double what we planned (between travel and the booking cost). We approached the officers to determine if we could take this approach or move on to a cheaper approach. Based on current scenarios facing the society we determined this was an opportunity we did not want to miss. The officers provided funding out of contingency money and we modified our budget as well. This presentation will be held Saturday the 29th from 5-7pm. We are very excited about this. For more information please visit www.unh.edu/powerplay/.

(2) In addition to the event above, we will be hosting an open forum at the DC meeting for members to have a time of discussion with the President, President-Elect and Ombudspersons regarding diversity related topics.

(3) The committee discussed the issue of meeting location in regard to legislation from different states preventing state employees from travelling to other states which have codified discrimination. We have discussed this with the Program Chair who does not see this as an undue burden. We have also talked with the Latin American Fellowship Committee and together are encouraging the board to expect a meeting in Latin America every 4-5 years. Please see action item 2.

(4) The committee has worked with informatics to start providing more bilingual communication (specifically with the MondayMammal posts of Facebook and Twitter) based on a discussion

during a social hour in Manhattan on the last night. We are proposing a more official stance on bilingual communication. Please see action item 3.

(5) We voted to modify our committee statement of diversity to match the society's list.

(6) We will have a board near the registration desk that will provide an opportunity for people to graphically display their individual diversity. We think this is a good exercise to allow our members to visualize all the aspects of humanity we represent.

(7) This year the rainbow stickers will also have pronouns on them so each person can select their pronoun of choice. The purpose of this exercise is to provide awareness that diversity in gender identity exists and to provide a non-intrusive way for people to describe themselves.

(8) We hope to have an LGBTQ+ social off site, but this is still in the works.

(9) Our travel award nomination period is still in full swing. This year we had 37 nominations resulting in 31 applications which we are reviewing. Last year we were able to provide funding for 6 students to attend the meetings. The students interacted with two ASM student members (Adrian Castellanos and Rhiannon Jakopak) who provided them with mentorship and led them through a list of activities. Thank you to Liz Flaherty and Laurie Dizney who helped coordinate this.

(10) We are working with the Ombudspersons to create a diversity award.

(11) We are working with Program Committee and Publications Committee to create an award for early career scientists that are tied to journal publications.

(12) We are working with International Relations and the African Grad Student Research Fund Committees to find support for a Symposium on Recent Advances in the Conservation of African Mammals which we believe is an important way to increase representation in the society of researchers from this under represented part of the world.

Action Items:

(1) Budget Request

Under Represented Groups Travel Awards
\$10,000 - this is a continuation of the program

Diversity Symposium/Forum/Power Play event
\$8,000 (NOTE: This request is contingent on the PowerPlay event this year being deemed a success, if not a cheaper event will be planned. This will be coordinated with the officers. We are asking for a higher budget this year with the understanding it may be significantly less)

\$ 18,000.00

(2) Language regarding meeting location

Proposal to Adopt Language Regarding Meeting in States Under Travel Bans.

Purpose: A number of states currently have travel bans forbidding government employees from using state funds for travel to certain states. This policy is to protest codified discrimination in place that adversely affects LGBTQ+ persons. ASM as a society actively works to increase diversity and reduce hurtful policies and opposes codified discrimination and exclusion. As such the society supports these bans and wants to ensure all of our meetings are held in places where our members can attend and will be protected when they attend.

Proposal: The Human Diversity Committee requests the Board of Directors to adopt the following statement:

The Board of the American Society of Mammalogists supports efforts to increase diversity and reduce discrimination. As such we support efforts to boycott states that have codified discrimination. Further, to ensure as many of our members as possible are able to attend annual meetings, the Board instructs the Program Committee to make every effort to avoid holding meetings in states under travel bans based on codified discrimination.

Proposal to Adopt Language Regarding Meeting in Countries Besides the USA.

Purpose: ASM has developed into a society representing mammalogy in countries throughout the Americas, not just in the United States. However, our annual meetings are currently held in the United States. This makes it hard for non-US based researchers to attend the meetings and serves to limit our diversity and reduces our relevance. Many international societies regularly hold their meetings in countries other than the United States, and best practices would suggest the ASM should as well.

Proposal: The Human Diversity Committee and the Latin American Fellowship Committee requests the Board of Directors to adopt the following statement:

The Board of the American Society of Mammalogists supports efforts to increase diversity and inclusion. As such we support efforts to make our meetings accessible to more researchers. The Board of Directors of the American Society of Mammalogists encourages the Program Committee to actively recruit Local Hosts and institutions in non-US countries, with an emphasis on Latin American countries. Ideally, the annual meeting will be held outside the US once every 3-5 years.

(3) Bilingual Communication

Proposal to modify the Rules.

Purpose: When we use the name American Society of Mammalogists our current practice is to describe that as a hemispheric “America”. The two dominant languages in the western Hemisphere are English and Spanish, however, the society functions in English. This practice

does not fully represent the diversity present in our society and may serve to exclude many researchers.

Proposal: The Human Diversity Committee in conjunction with the Latin American Fellowship committee are proposing to add a new rule to the Bylaws that would establish the society as a bilingual entity. It is also appropriate to discuss including Portuguese in this rule.

Rule VI – Language

The website, social media and all print communication of the society that is mailed or emailed for consumption by a broad audience shall be provided in both English and Spanish. This does not apply to communication provided on site at the annual meeting, communication within or among committees, or publications of the society.

Implementation

This rule shall be implemented in two stages. First by January 1, 2020 all print communications and social media of the society shall be provided in English and Spanish except for the website. A committee should be formed to provide translations, and an official timeline of official communication should be established to provide a reasonable lead time to get all communication translated prior to sending.

Second, after the 2019 meeting the officers shall investigate the fiscal and logistical impacts of adding a Spanish version of the webpage. They should present this to the board for discussion and a determination of a timeline for implementation of a bilingual website.

Respectfully submitted,

John D. Hanson, Chair

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