

## Ombudspersons

**Ombudspersons:** Erika Barthelmess, John Koprowski, Jessica Light, Marjorie Matocq

**Mission:** Members of the Office of Ombudspersons are appointed at the discretion of the President to hear and respond appropriately to complaints of unprofessional behavior by any member of the ASM at its annual meeting or in the governance of the ASM through its committee structure. All issues brought before either (or both) of the appointed individuals are resolved as discreetly as possible. The Ombudspersons are entrusted to deal with each situation as they best see fit.

### Information Items:

(1) The Code of Professional Conduct was updated in 2020. There is always room for continued improvement.

(2) The Office was part of several discussions and initiatives with the Human Diversity Committee regarding diversity and inclusion issues (drafting racial equity support statements, #BlackMammalogists, #BlackMammalogistsWeek, etc.). There continues to be a good bit of overlap between the Human Diversity Committee and the Office of the Ombudspersons.

(3) We have contracted with Sherry Marts of Smarts Consulting (<http://smartsconsulting.com/>) to receive professional ally training before the Virtual 2021 meeting. This training will occur on June 11<sup>th</sup>.

(4) The *J Mary Taylor Award for Diversity and Inclusive Excellence* was approved by the Board of Directors. We hope to give the first award during the Virtual 2021 meeting.

(5) The Office continued to be active throughout 2020, mostly via email.

(6) The Office of the Ombudsperson continued to be an active member of the Societies Consortium. Jessica Light attended multiple webinars throughout the year.

### Action Items:

(1) We request funds (\$500) to support the *J Mary Taylor Award for Diversity and Inclusive Excellence*.

(2) In the coming year, we would like to establish more structure to the committee, in consultation with the President or BOD. For example: should there be a Chair of the Office of the Ombudspersons? Should there be a maximum length of service? Should there be a rotation schedule?

(3) In the coming year, would like to discuss how to make our office work more efficiently for the society, including the possibility of some restructuring. There is some overlap between our

interests and what we do with the Human Diversity Committee. Other Academic Societies have recognized the importance of diversity, inclusion, and safety issues and have elected positions within their leadership to focus on these goals.

(4) In the coming year, we should re-assess the Code of Conduct and determine if any updates or changes are necessary.

**Respectfully submitted,**

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