

## African Graduate Student Fund Committee

**Committee Members:** J. Alston (co-chair), T. C. Demos, M. A. Dyck, J. Goheen (past chair), P. Kaleme, D. Kamaru, M. Lasky, A. V. Linzey, M. M. McDonough, P. D. Moehlman, R. W. Norris, L. E. Olson (co-chair), S. Rabiou, C. Warret Rodrigues, R. K. Rose, D. A. Schlitter, M. Snider, S. R. Stephens

### **Mission:**

The African Research Fellowship Committee grants awards to African nationals pursuing graduate degrees in the form of \$1,500 grants and online membership in the American Society of Mammalogists. Eligible students must be citizens of African countries and currently enrolled in a degree-granting graduate program.

### **Information Items:**

(1) Together with the ASM International Relations Committee, we co-sponsored and co-hosted a symposium titled “*Recent Advances in the Conservation of African Mammals*” on 20 July 2023 during the joint ASM/International Mammalogical Congress (IMC) meeting in Anchorage, AK. The invited speakers were all able to attend and present and will also contribute articles to a Special Feature in the *Journal of Mammalogy*. We thank the Board of Directors for its support of this very successful experience, which showcased both conservation mammalogy in Africa and ASM’s growing support thereof and commitment thereto.

(2) In 2023, the Committee awarded grants to the following three recipients. **Katinka Botha** (MS student, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa), **Judicaël Régis Kema Kema** (PhD student, University of La Rochelle, France, and Omar Bongo University, Gabon), and **Kiros Welegerima** (PhD student, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Tanzania). In addition, **Eliette Noromalala** (PhD student, University of Texas at Austin), **Fefy Ravahatramananjaraso** (PhD student, University of Antananarivo, Madagascar), and **Ortega Bavary** (PhD student, University of Antananarivo, Madagascar) were recognized with Honorable Mention. More information about each recipient’s research can be found on our web page.

(3) In 2024, we received 41 eligible applications from citizens of 15 African countries enrolled in 28 institutions spanning 16 countries and 3 continents. This is up from 14 eligible applications received in 2023 and includes the first applicants from Niger and Togo.

(4) In response to ASM’s campaign to strengthen its international and diversity programs coordinated by Past President Enrique Lessa and the Development Committee under Past Chair Ed Heske, 51 donations to the African Research Fellowship fund from 50 donors totaling \$30,894 received between 15 November 2022 and 31 May 2023 qualified for a 1:1 match from the Reserve Fund, resulting in a combined \$61,788. Six of these donations were received in late 2022 and were reported last year. Four additional donations totaling \$11,000 were received on or after 31 May 2023 and did not qualify for match. A total of \$36,494 was received in donations during calendar year 2023. The Committee thanks all of these donors, especially Alicia Linzey and Art Hulse (\$4,000), Diane and Doug Goheen (\$5,000), John D. Haweeli (\$3,000), Dirk Van

Vuren (\$3,000), Bryan McClean (\$1,500), Mary Price (\$1,500), an anonymous donor (\$1,500), and Jim and Carol Patton (\$12,500).

(5) As of 31 December 2023, the fund balance stood at \$189,421 (up from \$122,518 the previous year) and the rolling three-year average of the 4.5% interest was \$6,822, more than enough to sustain four traditional \$1,500 awards annually from the fund's interest (up from three the previous year, the first time that threshold was reached). However, in 2023, the Board approved awarding five 2024 fellowships at \$1,750 each to compensate for inflation, an award amount we hope to maintain going forward.

(6) Link Olson will step down as ARFC Co-chair and Jesse Alston will become Chair.

**Action Items:**

(1) The Committee seeks board approval to make five \$1,750 awards in 2025, each also carrying a Carol & Jim Patton Award (3-year sponsored membership).

**Respectfully submitted,**

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