

Human Diversity Committee

Committee Members: R. P. Anderson, A. S. Chavez, L. J. Dizney, T. Giarla, J. D. Hanson (Chair), D. W. Kaufman, and K. C. Rowe.

Mission:

The purpose of the Human Diversity Committee is to ensure active participation in the ASM by all members, regardless of gender, race, ethnic background, age, physical disabilities, or sexual preference. Further, we remind all ASM members that our ombudspersons (R. W. Thorington and F. A. Smith) are available to listen, mediate, or advise on issues regarding discrimination, inappropriate conduct, or other unprofessional behaviors (see *Journal of Mammalogy* 78:268 [1997]).

Information Items:

(1) The HDC seeks to have wide participation in our efforts to promote and support diversity in all aspects of the ASM—*especially related to ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, gender, and gender identity*—and our efforts work best when we receive substantial feedback and input from ASM members. Remember that we are here to help implement activities and initiatives to make our collective society more inclusive and welcoming, as part of the HDC’s mission to serve the entire membership. “*Increasing the Dimensions of Human Diversity*” is our current theme.

(2) To that end, we will be conducting one Committee Meeting at this year’s conference. We will meet at **12:30 pm on Saturday, 25 June**, to discuss current and ongoing activities being conducted by our Committee; we welcome anyone who is interested in knowing more about the HDC’s efforts and, especially, those who think they may be interested in joining the Committee.

(3) We continue to pursue efforts to design an electronic survey of the entire membership to complement the information that we collect at the Annual Meeting. In doing so, our challenge is to maintain the tremendous success of our onsite surveys, with responses ranging from ~33% to over 50% of attendees (dating back to the first survey in 1999)—a remarkable return rate for surveys. Further, meeting surveys are unique in that they give us access to the population of attendees who come to at least one meeting but are not yet members. Being able to gain information about these potential members is invaluable and gives us an opportunity to gain insight into recruitment of new members. (*We thank past, current, and future meeting attendees for taking the time to complete onsite surveys that help to better inform us as a professional society.*)

(4) As always, we welcome input and ideas to address what the membership views as *its* needs, with regard to diversity. Much of what our Committee can accomplish springs from grassroots efforts to understand and fulfill the needs of members. We encourage greater involvement by members to further participate in the development of additional *online* programming in order to support the ASM membership, promote recruitment and retention, and serve wider outreach goals.

(5) We are starting a new initiative to try and increase the presence and participation of underrepresented groups in our Society. Our goal is to focus on minority undergraduate students, primarily, and masters level students, secondarily, who come from programs with little to no mammalogical presence and/or funding. We would like to offer 3-5 students full support to the Annual Meeting in Idaho, including airfare, lodging, food, and registration. We would also recruit “hosts” who would help facilitate networking and connections for the awardees. The award criteria will have a research component as well as a need based requirement.

(6) ASM is a very welcoming society that has made great strides in including people of all different groups. However, this may not be super obvious to a new attendee who may feel insecure about being “different”. We will have a sign at the registration table that states “ASM is a safe place to be who you are without fear. All are welcome to participate who love mammals and want to contribute to expanding what we know about their biology. Please feel free to take a ribbon to express your support of science for all people. If you would like to help us increase diversity in ASM, please join us at the Human Diversity Committee meeting.” Next to the sign will be a bowl of rainbow ribbons.

(7) Immediately before the capstone talk, Corey Welch will be speaking on improving diversity in our efforts to train future mammalogists. This is directly related to item (5) in this report and should be an informative talk.

(8) Finally, we would like to thank Dawn Kaufman for her many years of service as Chair of this Committee.

Action Items:

(1) The HDC requests \$10,000 to cover the costs for up to 5 students to attend the 2017 Annual Meeting. We estimate that airfare, lodging, registration, and food will cost between \$1500 and \$2000 per student.

Respectfully submitted,
John Delton Hanson, Chair
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