

## **ad hoc Student Science Policy Award Committee**

**Committee Members:** J. A. Cook, A. V. Linzey, A. Shenko, S. A. Smiley (Chair).

### **Mission:**

This Committee administers the Student Science Policy Award, which can be bestowed upon multiple graduate students each year. This Award was created to facilitate ASM student members' involvement in science public policy. The Award would not be possible without the collaboration of the American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS).

### **Information Items:**

(1) In January and February 2020, our committee advertised the ASM Student Science Policy Award available to graduate student members. We utilized social media (Facebook and Twitter), and Mammal-L to advertise the 2020 award announcement. The award was also advertised at the 2019 ASM meeting in DC. We received few applications during a first call and sent out a second call. In total, 8 student applications were received. The quality of student applications was high.

(2) Our 2020 award recipients were Antonia Androski of the University of New Mexico and Barbara Sugarman of Sul Ross State University. Both graduate students accepted the award. Because of the global pandemic, AIBS postponed Congressional Visits Day. The face-to-face event will possibly take place this fall in Washington, DC. In the meantime, student award recipients received training on science communication via a workshop held virtually April 20-21, 2020. The committee will continue to communicate with AIBS concerning honoring these award recipients.

(3) Committee composition decreased by one member this year. Prospective committee members are encouraged to contact the chair!

(4) The SSPA committee members desire to continue to offer this program. We ask ASM members to help promote the award to current graduate students who have interest in science policy. The committee chair will seek out additional advertisement avenues to increase the visibility of this award. We anticipate next year's application deadline to be in late January 2020, contingent on funding renewal.

### **Action Items:**

(1) The SSPA Committee requests \$4,750 to sponsor two students to attend Congressional Visits Day in Washington DC in spring 2021. This is the same amount as requested last year. The Award cost includes transportation, lodging, food, planning, logistical support, and a full day of policy training (Communications Training Boot Camp) provided by AIBS.

This award will continue to engage mammalogy students in conversations with policymakers on Capitol Hill. These interactions increase the scientific awareness of policymakers through discussions with awardees concerning the benefits of funding mammalian research, natural history collections, biological field stations, the National Science Foundation, and other

programs. The awardees benefit from policy training, experiential learning, and interactions with federal scientists and respected policy decision-makers. The award is important for creating a future generation of mammalogists who are engaged in the science-policy interface and can serve as an active voice for our community. We've had very positive feedback from past student participants.

**Respectfully submitted,**

Sarah Smiley, Chair

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