

## **Honors and Awards Committee Report**

**Lynn Welton, chair**

**November 15, 2023**

The Honors and Awards Committee thanks Ian Jones, who will be completing his second term on the committee as of the end of 2023. The committee will thus be looking for one new Wright sub-committee member for 2024. Announcements requesting nominations will be made in forthcoming *ASOR News* emails.

Committee members Ra'anan Boustan and Jessie DeGrado will be completing their first term on the committee at the end of 2023 and will be asked to stay on for a second term. The Honors and Awards Committee also welcomed two new members to the committee: Susan Ackerman (Cross sub-committee) and JP Dessel (Wright sub-committee), who began their terms at the beginning of 2023.

The Honors and Awards committee changed the deadline for nominations for book awards last year, moving it earlier from its traditional date in September to the spring (the deadline this year was April 28). Having now had a two-year trial period, this change will be made permanent, as it has given the committee a longer period of time to consider the book award nominees, improving the committee's evaluations of the individual books, and helping somewhat to distribute the committee's workload so that there is less of a rush in the fall. There does not seem to have been a significant impact on numbers of nominations.

In 2023, the committee received a total of 13 nominations across all of its service awards. For consideration for its book awards in 2023, the committee received 21 nominations for the Frank Moore Cross Award. We also received 16 nominations for the G. Ernest Wright Award, and 9 nominations for the Nancy Lapp Popular Book Award. 12 posters were considered for the Joy Ungerleider poster award. The committee also considered 5 candidates for the Student Paper Award.

The list of awardees (see below) will be made available after the Members' Meeting on Friday, November 17. Each of the awardees will be featured in upcoming issues of *ASOR News*.

### **DEI Actions**

One of the consistent and persistent challenges the H&A committee has encountered has been the problem of increasing nominations for awards, particularly for the non-book awards. Various methods have been tried over the years, and none have been particularly effective in this regard. Anecdotal feedback received by the chair indicates that the biggest perceived barrier for people thinking of making nominations is the time believed to be required to make a strong and compelling nomination, which leads to fewer nominations. A related problem is that many nominations received by the committee, particularly for service-related awards, do not include much information, which can make it difficult for the committee to fairly assess a candidate's

suitability for an award. As a result, the committee is currently considering options for revamping the nominations process to address these problems and will be discussing this issue during its meeting at the AM in Chicago. Making the nominations process easier and, ultimately, increasing the numbers of award nominations is critical to making ASOR's awards accessible to a broader range of nominees, particularly those from groups that have traditionally been under-represented among ASOR's awards recipients, and therefore is critical to achieving the committee's DEI goals.

Fieldwork and publication have traditionally been the primary kinds of activities (other than those directly related to service to ASOR) for which ASOR recognizes its members. One avenue for increasing the diversity and inclusivity of ASOR's awards is through increasing the range of activities for which ASOR rewards its members, by considering rewarding alternative kinds of service to the field that tend to be under-recognized. As a result, last year, the Honors and Awards Committee created the Community Engagement and Public Outreach Award. Other awards that the committee is considering include awards for mentorship.

The committee has also been working to create evaluation rubrics for as many of its awards as possible, to ensure that the selection criteria are transparent and fair. For example, the committee has created a rubric that is used for evaluation of the Joy Ungerleider Poster Award nominees. The criteria used in this rubric were posted on ASOR's website, along with the instructions for poster submission, so that individuals submitting their posters for nomination knew how they would be evaluated. The committee is currently in the process of creating a similar rubric for the Student Paper Award.

## **Honors and Awards Committee Membership**

Lynn Welton, Chair

### *Cross Sub-Committee:*

Mahri Leonard-Fleckman (Class of 2024, 2<sup>nd</sup> term) (Student Paper Sub-Committee)

Ra'anana Boustan (Class of 2023, 1<sup>st</sup> term) (Student Paper Sub-Committee)

Jessie DeGrado (Class of 2023, 1<sup>st</sup> term) (Joy Ungerleider Poster Sub-Committee)

Susan Ackerman (Class of 2025, 1<sup>st</sup> term) (Joy Ungerleider Poster Sub-Committee)

### *Wright Sub-Committee:*

Ian Jones (Class of 2023, 2<sup>nd</sup> term) (Joy Ungerleider Poster Sub-Committee)

Bob Mullins (Class of 2025, 2<sup>nd</sup> term) (Student Paper Sub-Committee)

Pinar Durgun (Class of 2025, 2<sup>nd</sup> term) (Joy Ungerleider Poster Sub-Committee)

JP Dessel (Class of 2025, 1<sup>st</sup> term) (Student Paper Sub-Committee)