

## ASPT MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE (*ad hoc*)

2008-2009 Report

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The major task of this committee during the past year was to administer the new ASPT Student Travel Grant program. The program was conducted as a lottery, with a total of 20 awards of \$300 each available. Winners also received a ticket to the banquet, where they will pick up their checks. Fourteen of the 20 awards were dedicated to students presenting contributed talks (as first author); the remaining six awards went to students who were either presenting a poster or simply planning on attending the meeting. We received 52 applications, with 41 in the “presenting” category and 11 in the “non-presenting” category. Molly Nepokroeff drew the winners for the presenters while Lynn Clark drew the winners for the non-presenters, and Emily Gillespie notified applicants of the results. The recipients of travel awards were as follows:

### **Presenting Category (14)**

1. Stephen Stern (Bohs)
2. Hari Chhetri (Columbus)
3. Andrew Wheeler (Wilson)
4. Charlotte Germain-Aubry (Gitzendanner)
5. Nicholas Tippery (Les)
6. Daisie Huang (Friar)
7. Carl Rothfels (Pryer)
8. Alejandra Vasco (Moran)
9. Craig Barrett (Freudenstein)
10. Amanda Grusz (Pryer)
11. Kristen Hasenstab (M. Simpson)
12. Andrew Gardner (Emshwiller)
13. Janelle Burke (Luckow)
14. Matthew Parks (Liston)

### **Non-presenting Category (up to 6)**

15. Debra Hansen (B. Simpson)
16. Jacquelyn Howell (Morris)
17. James Riser II (Roalson)
18. Jeffrey Sanders (Moore)
19. Kevin Weitemier (Fishbein)
20. Michael Wright (Costea)

Subsequent to the awards, two students (Chhetri and Hasenstab) withdrew, so we picked two alternates from among the applicants in the presenting category who had submitted abstracts: Lucas Majure (D. Soltis) and Melanie Schori (Cantino).

Overall, the lottery system worked well, but a few issues surfaced that merit consideration by the Council. **First**, even without a lot of advertising for the program, we received 52 applications, so it is clear that there is demand for this type of support. We therefore recommend that the program be continued and expanded if possible. **Second**, given this level of interest and need, we recommend that anyone who won an award this year be ineligible for another travel grant for at least the following year. The Council may also wish to consider whether a student may win a travel grant only once, or only once in each category. **Third**, with regard to the application form, the major advisor's name should be printed in addition to having the signature. Many of these were virtually illegible and it just makes more work to do for Linda to confirm these names. **Fourth**, we did get multiple applications from students working for the same advisor. Just by luck of the draw, we had one instance in which two students of the same advisor both won grants. As a way of spreading the wealth a bit, in the future, the Council may wish to consider limiting the award to one student per major advisor, but without limiting the number of students who can apply per major advisor. However, this is not a strong recommendation and the Committee can easily maintain a strict lottery system within each category. **Fifth**, the presenting category was limited to those students presenting contributed talks (as indicated on the application form), so we included students presenting a poster in with those who simply planned on attending the meeting. On one hand, this would seem to devalue poster presentations, but on the other, given the distribution of applicants, those who were presenting posters or not presenting at all had a higher chance of receiving a grant. We do not have a strong recommendation with regard to this issue, but note it for the Council's consideration. **Sixth**, current membership in ASPT is required for eligibility. Not surprisingly, a number of applicants renewed or joined up at the last minute, which created a bit of burden for Linda Brown to process these payments. Since one goal of the grants is to increase student membership and participation, the Council may not wish to take any action, but perhaps when the program is advertised for the coming year, students should be strongly encouraged to renew their memberships sooner rather than later.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn G. Clark on behalf of the Membership Committee