

## **Annual Report: SETAC North America Awards & Fellowships Committee (SNA AFC)**

**Submitted by: Kim Fernie and Diane Nacci**

**17 October 2016**

**Chairs: Outgoing,** Diane Nacci (Government) and Jennie Gunderson (Government); **Incoming,** Ryan Prosser (Government)

**SETAC Board of Directors (BoD) Contact: Outgoing,** Kim Fernie (Government)

**SETAC Office Liaison:** Laura Swanson

### **Executive Summary**

**The SETAC North America Awards & Fellowships Committee (SNA AFC)** is comprised of several subcommittees that help administer the many award opportunities within SETAC North America. These awards recognize and honor outstanding contributions in the environmental sciences by professionals, and enhance the professional development of students and pre-professionals.

### **Organization**

Continuing this year, subcommittee chairs were:

- Burton Suedel (Government) - Professional Awards Subcommittee (9 members);
- Jennie Gunderson (Government) - Student Travel & Minority Awards Subcommittee (11 members);
- Kay Ho (Government) - Student Presentation Awards (3 members);
- Laurel Royer (Industry) – Fellowships (3 members).

### **Key activities in 2016**

1. A major activity and accomplishment of the SNA AFC in 2016 was to review and make recommendations for revising (or not) the criteria of the SNA Awards and Fellowships (A&Fs) presented each year at the SNA annual meeting. A description of the revised awards and fellowships recommended by SNA AFC and approved by the SNA BoD in 2016 is provided in Table 1.
2. In relation to Key Activity 1, the SNA AFC formed an ad hoc committee to develop recommendations concerning eligibility that were submitted to the SETAC NA BoD. The approved changes or clarifications are described in detail in Attachment A. These revisions are reflected in the revised SOP.
3. With the assistance of the SNA BoD liaison and Executive Committee, a new incoming chair for the SNA AFC has been identified. Ryan Prosser (Government) will be the new chair and has been transitioning for the past 6 months with the support of the SNA AFC chair, Diane Nacci.
4. Also in preparation for the annual meeting, Student Travel Awards were evaluated by 12 members of the Applicant Review Subcommittee, including some new volunteers. Each of the 249 applicants was evaluated by at least 2 different reviewers making for a total of over 500 reviews! Specifically, the SNA AFC awarded 143 student travel awards to 14 undergraduates, 67 Masters, and 153 PhD students. These included 15 awards from the SETAC Minority Travel Fund, four awards from the SETAC North America Endowment Fund (Carlos Barriga Vallejo, Kristin

Bridges, Krittika Mittal, Blanca Andrea Sanchez Gonzalez), and one award to a Masters student from the Kevin Johnson Memorial Fund (Chelsea Willis).

5. During this year (2016), the student presentation subcommittee continued to work with the Program Committee and the SNA staff to improve the processes by which student presentations are judged and winners are selected. This year's annual meeting will include 255 student presentation competitors, requiring 765 judging events! Much thanks to Laura Swanson for recruiting ALL judges prior to the meeting. As an additional incentive this year, judges will be entered into a drawing to win next year's registration fees (thanks to Greg Schiefer for implementing this.) The student presentation awards committee continues to solicit support from our membership to minimize the number of student entries for presentation awards that occur late on Thursday - this implemented strategy is expected to help the AFC efficiently and accurately complete student presentation awards in time for the closing ceremony.
6. Dr. Charles Menzie, sponsor of the SETAC/Menzie Environmental Education Award, initiated actions to re-envision this award and honor the memory of one of SETAC's long-standing, major contributors, Dr. Steve Klaine who sadly passed away this year. Following approval by the SNA BoD, at the Orlando meeting, Dr. Menzie will announce that the award will be renamed in honor of Steve Klaine and the specifics of that name will then be determined (possibly SETAC/Klaine Environmental Education Award).
7. The SETAC BoD recruited volunteers for committees, referring about 50 potential members to the SNA AFC. Each interested member was contacted, thanked for their interest and invited to the face-to-face meeting at the annual SETAC NA/Globe meeting this year. Additionally, each was notified that he/she would be recontacted after the annual meeting with more specific information about how each of them may contribute to the SNA AFC.
8. A new opportunity was presented to the SNA AFC to advertise itself at the annual meeting of SETAC NA. Ryan Prosser, incoming chair, took this opportunity to take the lead in developing a slide presentation for this event.
9. Revisions to SOP (last revised in 2008) were completed with the review of existing and evolving processes for SNA Awards and Fellowships (A&Fs). For example, this revision incorporated new guidelines concerning eligibility of certain SNA A&Fs to the SNA geographic area. The SOP will be submitted to the SETAC BoD for approval.
10. Consideration is underway for renaming the SETAC Best MSc Student Presentation Award to the Don Cherry MSc Best Student Presentation Award. Greg Schiefer is currently the lead contact for this activity.

#### **Coordination with Other Advisory Groups and Committees**

Throughout 2016, the SNA AFC interacted with the Program Committee, the SETAC Global Awards Committee, and the CAG and ERAAG. Continuing from 2014, the SNA AFC is working with the Chemistry Advisory Group (CAG) on an SOP for their student presentation award (established in 2009) and suggested changes consistent with other award procedures that are being considered by the CAG this year.

**Future Plans**

In place of the *ad hoc* AFC Visibility Subcommittee, the AFC will form a 'Recruitment subcommittee' to identify and resolve possible issues with recruitment of applicants for the SETAC awards. For example, the Fellowship subcommittee is working on new ways to target academia to enhance the applicant pool. The SNA AFC will work with the Global Awards Committee on strategies to recruit more women applicants. Review of the Committee's SOP will be completed and sent to the Board of Directors for approval.

**Business and Planning Meetings; Membership Communications**

The AFC communicates primarily by email, with periodic calls among the AFC members working on specific projects, and the Steering Committee, who helped to establish and further develop specific projects, activities and future directions of the AFC. A face-to-face meeting of attending AFC members occurs each year at SETAC; this year's meeting in Orlando will occur on Wednesday, Nov. 9 at 1 pm.

**Issues/Problems.**

Soliciting volunteers for evaluating award applicants was challenging despite the assistance of appropriate groups/leads. While the SETAC NA staff continues to do an extraordinary job in managing the application process for awards and fellowships, the committee will work closely with SETAC staff to optimize the usefulness of the electronic review process to ensure timely reviews.

**Table 1: SETAC North America Awards and Fellowship Committee awards, 2016**

Awards and Fellowships	Short Description	Approved (2016)
Eugene Kenaga SETAC Membership Award	This member of SETAC has been instrumental in the developing of and working with the Society's membership at either the national or chapter level	Dr. Bryan Brooks, Department of Environmental Science, Baylor University, Waco, Texas, US
SETAC/Menzie Environmental Education Award	The awardee has made significant contributions to environmental education either through educating other educators or by working with community groups and K-12 programs. The award is alternated between these two categories.	Nature Vision, Woodinville, WA, US
SETAC/EA Jeff Black Fellowship	This fellowship is given to this outstanding Masters student who has been accepted to or is participating in an environmental science or engineering program at college or university	Chantilly Higbee, Eastern Washington University, Cheney, WA, US
SETAC/Best Regional Chapter Award	This regional chapter member of SETAC has been consistently contributing to the development or functioning of the Society at the Regional Chapter Level	Dr. David M. Janz, Department of Veterinary Biomedical Sciences, University of Saskatchewan, CA
SETAC Government Service Award	The awardee has given exemplary dedication and service as a scientist toward promoting the collective applications of environmental toxicology and chemistry to risk assessment in a government function.	Dr. Tom Custer and Dr. Christine Custer, USGS Upper Midwest Environmental Sciences Center, La Crosse, WI, US

**ATTACHMENT A: Revised Criteria for the SNA Awards & Fellowships Approved by the SNA Board of Directors Based on the Recommendations of the SNA Awards & Fellowships Sub-Committee April 2016, Kim Fernie (BoD liaison with SNA AFC; Member-at-Large, SNA BoD)**

In November 2015, following discussions by SWC and the SNA BoD, the SNA BoD asked the SNA Awards & Fellowships Committee (SNA AFC) to review and make recommendations for the eligibility criteria of each award that they oversee, specifically to determine if eligible candidates should be:

1. Current members of SETAC in good standing?
2. And if so, in which Geographic Unit (GU) of SETAC should they be (e.g., North America)?

Following, the SNA BoD approved on the expanded recommendations of an SNA AFC Subcommittee for the Government Service Award: the revised criteria for that award identify that eligible candidates must be SETAC members in good standing and must be from the North America GU only.

Below are the SNA BOD-approved revisions to criteria for the various SNA awards and fellowships, some of which were slightly expanded on from the unanimous recommendations of the same SNA AFC Subcommittee for all but one of their remaining awards and fellowships. The SNA AFC Subcommittee consisted of AFC members-volunteers from academia and government: Diane Nacci (Chair, SNA AFC), Charles Wong (BoD, 2012-15), Adria Elskus (AFC), Burton Suedel (AFC), Laura Swanson (SETAC Office, AFC liaison/support), and Kim Fernie (SNA AFC-BoD liaison). In addition, Laurel Royer (AFC; contact – SETAC/EA Jeff Black Fellowship) was engaged and concurred with Subcommittee recommendations for this particular award. Contact was established with Alan Jones (contact - SETAC-ACS ENVR Student Exchange Program) but recommendations are not presented here.

*Based on the approval by the SNA BoD at their Face-to-Face Meeting in Orlando, Florida (14-16 April 2016), please make the following revisions to the two criteria (1. SETAC member in good standing? 2. SETAC member of the North America Geographic Unit?) for each of the following awards and fellowships of SETAC; all other criteria for eligible candidates are to remain unchanged:*

1. SETAC/ Menzie Environmental Education Award <http://www.setac.org/?page=SNAAwardsSMenzie>  
*Approved, Revised Criteria – please change on website as follows:*
  1. On this award's website, explicitly identify the targeted recipient group for each year. For example, in 2016, identify that the award targets programs that enhance environmental literacy and awareness in youth, K-12 and the general public. In 2017, the award will target individuals or groups 'educating other educators'. Please identify the appropriate targeted recipient group for each year.
  2. An eligible candidate does not have to be a current SETAC member in good standing.
  3. Preference will be given to a person residing in North America, or group located in North America (alternating years according to targeted recipient group).

NOTE: These eligibility criteria for this award have been confirmed with the sponsor, Charlie Menzie.
2. Eugene Kenaga SETAC Membership Award <http://www.setac.org/?SNAwardsEugeneK>  
*Approved, Revised Criteria – please change on website as follows:*

Eligible candidates must:

  1. Be a current SETAC member in good standing for a 5-year period prior to receiving the award;
  2. Reside within the North America Geographic Unit of SETAC;
  3. Other existing criteria remain unchanged.

3. SETAC/Best Regional Chapter Award  
<http://www.setac.org/?page=SNA AwardsSOutstand>  
*Approved, Revised Criteria – please change on website as follows:*  
Eligible candidates must be:
  1. A current regional chapter member of SETAC in good standing and their SETAC chapter must be within the North America Geographic Unit of SETAC.
  2. Other existing criteria remain unchanged.
  
4. SETAC/EA Jeff Black Fellowship  
<http://www.setac.org/?page=SNA AwardsSEAEEng>  
*Approved, Revised Criteria – please change on website as follows:*  
Eligible candidates must be:
  1. A current SETAC student member in good-standing;
  2. Restricted to SETAC student members who reside within the North America Geographic Unit.
  3. Other existing criteria remain unchanged.

NOTE: Discussed with and supported by Greg Schiefer who confirmed that these recommended changes are consistent with intentions of sponsors.
  
5. SETAC Student Travel Awards Program  
<https://www.setac.org/?page=SNA AwardsSTravel>  
*Approved, Revised Criteria – please change on website as follows:*  
Eligible candidates must be:
  1. A current SETAC student member in good standing in any of the SETAC Geographic Units. Regional/Language Chapter membership alone is not sufficient.
  2. Other existing criteria remain unchanged.
  
6. SETAC Student Travel Minority/ Mentors  
<https://www.setac.org/default.asp?page=SNA AwardsMinority>  
*Approved, Revised Criteria – please change on website as follows:*  
Eligible candidates must be:
  1. A current SETAC student member in good-standing residing in/affiliated with any of the SETAC Geographic Units. Regional/Language Chapter membership alone is not sufficient.
  2. Other existing criteria remain unchanged.
  
7. SETAC/ Best Student Platform & Poster Presentation Awards  
<https://www.setac.org/?page=SNA AwardsBestStu>  
*Approved, Revised Criteria – please change on website as follows:*  
Eligible candidates must be:
  1. A current SETAC student member in good-standing residing in/affiliated with any of the SETAC Geographic Units. Regional/Language Chapter membership alone is not sufficient.
  2. Other existing criteria remain unchanged.

8. Student Training Exchange Opportunity

<https://www.setac.org/?SNAwardsStudentTrai>

Not reviewed by SNA AFC: Under management of NASAC.

Award: Monetary support up to \$1000 and equal to or greater than the Training Exchange Award (matching support) must be provided by the student's institution, advisor, or other sources. A maximum of one award will be given to any one person.

**Effective immediately, and as a result of the above approved revisions, please revise the language on the two webpages** serving as entrance pages to all SETAC awards and fellowships (both global and NA):

<https://www.setac.org/?page=Awards> and <http://www.setac.org/?page=SNAwards>

*Background Information:* Currently, the wording on these two webpages encourages members of the Asia/Pacific and Latin America GUs to apply for SNA awards and fellowships, and this was included ~20 years ago when the Asia/Pacific and Latin America GUs were first established. As yet, they have not established awards for SETAC members residing within these Geographic Units of SETAC.

*9a. Approved Revision:* On the first website <https://www.setac.org/?page=Awards>, please remove the wording: “Because Asia/Pacific Awards and Latin America Awards are currently under development, candidates from these geographic units are encouraged to apply for awards from North America and Europe.” Subsequently, this webpage should read as follows:

“Geographic units also have award committees. Both the SETAC Europe Awards and the SETAC North America Awards support the development and participation of students in the Society's activities, as well as recognizing the professional and technical contributions of its members. Although many awards are open only to members of SETAC, some are open to nonmembers as well. Candidates for all awards may be self-nominated, or nominated by another individual.”

*9b. Approved Revision:* On the second website <http://www.setac.org/?page=SNAwards> please remove the wording “2) be from the North America, Asia/Pacific, or Latin America geographic unit” to read as follows:

“Each award category is evaluated by separate guidelines but maintains the intent of the Society's award process. Unless an award specifies otherwise, candidates may 1) be self-nominated or nominated by an individual or group; 2) reside within the North America Geographic Unit of SETAC; and 3) be SETAC members or non-members. Recipients of these awards are announced each year at the SETAC North America Annual Meeting.”

10. All of these changes should take effect immediately.

11. Please revise the SNA AFC Standard Operating Procedures to reflect these revisions that were approved by the SNA BoD.

March 10, 2016

Hello Diane, Burton, Everyone on the SNA AFC Ad Hoc Committee,

This afternoon, the SNA BoD reviewed your recommendations. First, we thank you for volunteering your time and efforts to review the criteria for the Government Service Award (GSA) to date. We also appreciate that most of you will be involved in continuing to review the eligibility criteria of remaining awards managed by the SNA AFC.

It's my pleasure to tell you that the BoD has accepted most of your recommendations for the GSA, with some modifications. Specifically, the SNA BoD approved the following criteria for the GSA:

1. Eligible candidates for this award will be restricted to public sector employees of a government in the SNA GU: the U.S., Canada, Mexico, or subnational jurisdictions thereof e.g., states, provinces, territories, and local governments.
2. Eligible candidates must be SETAC members.
3. This wording is to be added to the Government Service Award webpage ([https://www.setac.org/?page=SNAAwardsS\\_Gov](https://www.setac.org/?page=SNAAwardsS_Gov)).
4. This change should take effect immediately.
5. The SNA AFC Standard Operating Procedures will be changed to reflect these changes as per the final decision by the BoD.

In light of these changes, the wording describing the SNA GSA should read as follows on the website ([https://www.setac.org/?page=SNAAwardsS\\_Gov](https://www.setac.org/?page=SNAAwardsS_Gov)):

“Created in 1997, this award is intended to recognize exemplary dedication and service by a scientist or scientific organization toward promoting the collective application of environmental toxicology and chemistry to risk assessment in a government function; promoting the implementation of programs that can be used for the development of ecologically sound and acceptable practices and principles; and providing a forum for communication among professionals in government, business, academia, and other segments of society involved in the protection of the welfare of the general public. Eligible candidates for this award will be restricted to public sector employees of a government in the SETAC North America geographic unit: the U.S., Canada, Mexico, or subnational jurisdictions thereof e.g., states, provinces, territories, and local governments. In addition, eligible candidates must be SETAC members.”

In reviewing the remaining North American awards and fellowships that the SNA AFC manages, please continue to evaluate the criteria for SETAC membership and SETAC geographic unit restrictions, including such wording as it appears on the SETAC website (<https://www.setac.org/?page=SNAAwards> and <https://www.setac.org/?page=Awards>). Discussion amongst the BoD indicated that a sufficiently lengthy period of time has progressed since the establishment of all GUs, and that SETAC membership was desirable. I would appreciate it if your review of the remaining awards and fellowships could be completed in time for me to present at our July face-to-face meeting, but I also appreciate that it is a busy time period for us in reviewing incoming applications.

Thank you once again for your time and efforts with this important task.

Kim

**Kim Fernie, PhD**

Member-at-Large, SETAC Board of Directors