**Birds of Different Feathers: Increasing Diversity in Ornithology**

**Wednesday, August 3 1:30-3:00 pm in Kellogg Center Auditorium**

**Organizers: Nancy Chen, Scott Taylor, Nandadevi Cortes-Rodriguez, Sara Kaiser and Kevin Omland**

Promoting the recruitment and retention of underrepresented groups in science is important. This symposium will feature four speakers from established programs aimed at increasing diversity in STEM at various career stages (undergraduate, graduate, postdoc, faculty, and non-academic biologists), followed by a breakout session during which attendees brainstorm concrete steps we can take to increase diversity and inclusion in our fields. Increasing diversity in ornithology is a key goal of the current AOS leadership, and ideas generated during this symposium will be considered and implemented by the newly formed AOS Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

**AOS diversity and inclusion: Attracting and retaining a broader range of ornithologists for the 21st century.**

Kevin E. Omland, University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), Chris Balakrishnan, Eastern Carolina University; Karl Berg, University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley; Susanna Campbell, University of Michigan; Nancy Chen, UC Davis; Nanda Cortes-Rodriguez, Ithaca College; Scott Edwards, Harvard; Mark Hauber, University of Illinois & CUNY; Susannah Lerman, USFS, University of Massachusetts; Irene Liu, University of Maryland, College Park; Viviana Ruiz-Gutierrez, Cornell; Kim Sullivan, Utah State; Scott Taylor, University of Colorado; Sara Kaiser, Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center

Last year at the NAOC meetings, President Steve Beissinger and the AOS Council initiated a new effort to increase the diversity of the AOS to help secure the long-term viability of our mission and organization. Furthermore, developing a broader constituency for birds and environmental conservation will help ensure a sustainable future for our planet. Kevin Omland was named chair of the Ad-Hoc Committee on Diversity and Inclusion (“Diversity Committee”). The selected committee includes a range of ages, career tracks, genders, orientations, ethnicities, etc. Although our societies became more gender balanced in the 1990s, in recent years, membership became older and more male. This trend does not bode well for the future of the AOS. The Diversity Committee has embarked on several pilot projects including efforts to attract more diverse students to meetings, to help all members feel welcome and valued, and to help retain more women in ornithological careers and the AOS. The Committee is tasked to lead this effort, but to be successful, diversity and inclusion must become important goals of the whole organization: from students to established scientists to leadership. The Diversity Committee hopes that all AOS committees can develop strategies within each committee’s mission to directly address diversity challenges. We have a new Society, and we find ourselves at a tenuous and crucial moment for ornithology and for science more broadly. Becoming more relevant to a greater diversity of students, researchers and citizens is paramount.

**Biography**: Dr. Kevin Omland, Professor of Biological Sciences at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, currently chairs the AOS Committee on Diversity & Inclusion, and serves on the AOS Council. Dr. Omland received his B.A. from Dartmouth College and Ph.D. from the University at Albany, SUNY, and after postdoctoral fellowships at Duke University, University of Minnesota, and the Smithsonian National Zoological Park, he has been a faculty member of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County since 2000. His research focuses on understanding recent speciation in birds, reconstructing population and species relationships, and studying plumage and song evolution in ducks, New World orioles, and ravens. He mentors students in avian conservation genetics, molecular phylogenies, divergence population genetics, and character evolution. Dr. Omland has served on the University of Maryland, Baltimore County’s “STRIDE” committee for faculty diversity since 2015. He has led the AOS Diversity and Inclusion efforts since 2016.

Honors include a Visiting International Scholarship to the Australian National University and election to Fellow of the AOS in 2009.

**Fish and Wildlife Service Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives**

Rickey Siggal, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has executed initiatives and strategies to attract and retain diversity in its workforce. The Service’s representative speaking at the Conference will elaborate and highlight the specifics of those initiatives and strategies. The Service has implemented a Five-Year Strategic Diversity and Inclusion Implementation Plan (Plan) FY 2015- 2019, which identifies the highest priorities and essential actions to assist the Directorate, project leaders, managers and supervisors, and employees in their efforts to build and maintain a diverse, inclusive, and highly qualified workforce. Leadership’s commitment and accountability across the organization is the key to its success. The Plan has four strategic goals to increase the diversity. The first goal is to Build Diversity as a Core Value. To attain this goal, senior leadership and all employees must be involved. The second goal is to Establish Partnerships that will assist the Service in meeting its recruitment goals. This requires managers to develop relationships with key personnel at identified organizations to attract minorities to conservation and biology careers. The third goal is to Conduct Targeted Recruitment to reach all segments of the population where the talent exists. The fourth goal is to Maintain a Highly Skilled and Diverse Workforce through Talent Management. This requires the Service to be a deliberately developmental organization in which all employees can reach their full potential.

**BIOGRAPHY:** Mr. Rickey Siggal was named the Deputy Director, Office of Diversity and Inclusive Workforce Management, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Service), Department of the Interior on June 7, 2015. He is responsible for overseeing, and evaluating the day-to-day activities of the equal employment opportunity (EEO) programs of the Service and developing and implementing Service-wide policies, procedures, guidelines, and standards relating to EEO and Diversity Programs including Affirmative Employment, Special Emphasis, discrimination complaints processing and conflict/dispute resolution. Most recently Mr. Siggal served as the Deputy Director, Equal Employment Opportunity Programs, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), Goddard Space Flight Center. In this position, Mr. Siggal developed and implemented EEO programs formulated, planned, coordinated, managed, and directed development and implementation of affirmative action policies, goals, objectives, procedures, and programs. Additionally, he conducted studies and analysis of management practices, organizational structures, and employment patterns, within specific career fields to determine their impact on EEO and upward mobility goals.

Mr. Siggal has received numerous military and civilian awards including, the Director's Pinnacle Award for Outstanding Leadership, the Distinguished Leadership Award (2nd Award), and the Major General Aubrey "Red" Newman Leadership Award. He holds a Bachelor in Business Administration from Campbell University.

**Improving Undergraduate Diversity and Training of Future Ornithologists**

Corey Welch, Iowa State University

There is a growing body of literature demonstrating the barriers (and solutions) to improve the successful selection, retention, and development of underrepresented (UR = low income, minority, and first generation) undergraduate students in ecology and evolutionary biology. A summary of recommendations and examples of successful programs will be highlighted including undergraduate research training conferences (SACNAS, AISES, and ABRCMS) will be presented as an under-utilized pool for recruitment and training of UR undergraduate and graduate students. Time will be given for questions from the audience to discuss ways to broaden the pool of future ornithologists.

**BIOGRAPHY:** Dr. Corey Welch is Director of the STEM Scholars Program at Iowa State University. His career goal is to diversify who succeeds in science, thereby benefiting both STEM disciplines and our larger society. Dr. Welch is a member of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe and from a first generation, low income background. He is passionate about diversifying field biology, museum based research, and improving retention of underrepresented populations from undergraduates to the professoriate.

Dr. Welch’s biology training is in ecology and evolution with an emphasis on mammals and birds. He was co-advised by Scott Edwards at the University of Washington. Additionally, he was a biology lecturer at Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, KS and worked as a program coordinator for the UC Berkeley Biology Scholars Program. Lastly, he is on the National Board of Directors for [the Society for the Advancement of Hispanics/Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS)](https://sacnas.org/).

**Approaches to diversifying the faculty**

Deborah Goldberg, University of Michigan

Diversifying the faculty of colleges and universities is a critical task, both as a moral imperative and because of the advantages to our diverse student bodies. This is especially urgent for STEM disciplines, which tend to be even less diverse than other fields. I describe two programs at the University of Michigan that focus on diversifying the STEM faculty, both nationally and at the institution. NextProf is a workshop to encourage talented scientists and mathematicians with a demonstrated commitment to diversity to strengthen their ability to pursue an academic career. This annual three-day event focuses on how the search process works, building a research program, and developing a teaching and mentoring philosophy, as well as creating a supportive network of peers and mentors for participants. Started in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts in 2015, more than 120 scholars have participated to date. A longer-term program is STRIDE, which conducts training on implicit bias and stereotype threat, as well as shares best practices to mitigate their impact and attract and recruit a diverse faculty. A part of the U ADVANCE Program, the STRIDE workshops is developed by a group of faculty, including many in STEM, who read the social science literature on these issues and decide how best to present to their peers. All faculty on search committees in the liberal arts college and the engineering college at UM are required to attend a STRIDE workshop at least every three years.

**BIOGRAPHY:** Dr. Deborah Goldberg received her B.A. from Barnard College in 1975 and her Ph.D. from the University of Arizona in 1980 and has been on the faculty at the University of Michigan since 1983, where she is an Arthur F. Thurnaue Professor and the Elzada U. Clover Collegiate Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology. Professor Goldberg focuses on processes that underlie patterns in plant community dynamics, structure, and function and their response to global change drivers, including climate change, nutrient deposition, and invasive species. Dr. Goldberg has also worked actively as a faculty member and administrator to make the science community look more like the general population by increasing recruitment and improving the climate for under-represented groups. As a department chair, she started the Frontiers Masters Program to recruit students from under-represented groups to EEB in a fully-funded Masters program and prepare them for top-ranked Ph.D. programs in EEB. She has served on the STRIDE Committee of the ADVANCE project and works with NextProf Science. She also founded the M-Bio Academy, is co-director of the broader M-STEM Academies to support students from under-represented groups in all STEM majors and increase their retention to graduation and beyond, and is the director of the Authentic Research Connections project to increase research experiences in introductory science courses.

Honors include election as Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Fellow of the Ecological Society of America, and Vice President for Science for the Ecological Society of American, along with the Sarah Goddard Power Award from the Women’s Caucus of the University of Michigan, the Harold R. Johnson Diversity Award, and the Distinguished Diversity Leaders Team Award from the University of Michigan.