

2022-23 Activities Report from the Committee on Diversity of the AABA

Submitted by Susan Antón (Chair, AABA COD)

Equity, inclusion and community building are truly everyone's work. Although we report here on the formal work of the COD only, we do not mean to diminish the important work being done across the AABA by many constituencies.

The aim of the AABA Committee on Diversity (COD) is to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion within the field of biological anthropology. Established in 2006 and incorporated into the (then) AAPA bylaws as a standing committee in 2011, the COD is a consortium of member-developed subgroups overseen by an appointed chair and a steering committee. There are now eight (!) formalized interest groups¹. We encourage AABA members to join groups that interest them and/or develop missing groups. The overarching COD has a Chair appointed by the AABA Executive Committee and a Steering Committee comprising at least one member from each of the interest groups. The subgroups are organized along standards that are developed independently by each subgroup.

AABA COD is a 'bottom-up' organization and we are excited to recognize a new, and much needed, interest group, COD-DISABILITY. AABA Early Career Liaison Katie Kinkopf had a vision and has been amazing to work with. See more about Katie's work below.

We are delighted to congratulate this year's AABA Lasker Award winner, Andrea Taylor. Andrea was the Founding Co-Chair of COD-WIN. We cannot think of anyone more deserving. Please join the AABA Business Meeting on Friday the 21st to celebrate Andrea!

COD Events at the 2023 AABA Conference

COD will host a number of activities at the 2023 meeting, both virtual and in-person. Many are open to all attendees, a few are by invitation. Event details may be found in the subcommittee reports that follow.

Virtual Events

Tuesday April 4th - 6-8pm – VIRTUAL - *AABA Forum and Listening Session on Disability w/ COD Disability* (open to all)

Wednesday April 5th – noon PST - VIRTUAL - *COD URS Undergraduate Research Symposium* (open to all)

¹ Committee on Diversity Increasing Diversity in Evolutionary Anthropological Sciences (COD-IDEAS); COD Women's Initiative (COD-WIN); COD Undergraduate Research Symposium (COD-UGRS); COD LGBTQQIAA interest group; COD Anthropologists Outside of Anthropology Departments, Contingent, and Teaching Focused Faculty (COD-AACT) Task Force; COD International (COD-I); COD Transforming Anthropological & Scientific Knowledge (COD-TASK); COD Disability.

In-Person Events

Wed April 19th – 2:30-5pm *COD WIN Workshop: Experiencing and negotiating the dynamics of power: beginning the conversation* (open to all)

Wed April 19th – 5-6 pm *COD WIN Happy Hour* (open to all; cash bar)

Wed April 19th – 6-8 pm *COD URS Undergraduate Research Symposium* (open to all)

Thurs April 20th – 8-9 am *COD IDEAS Working Group* (Working group members)

Thurs April 20th – 10 am -12 pm *AABA Forum and Listening Session on Disability with COD Disability* (open to all)

Thurs April 20th – 12-2pm *COD LGBTQQIAA Business Meeting* (open to all)

Thurs April 20th – 5 pm *COD IDEAS & COD International Mixer* (open to all, cash bar)

Fri April 21st – 12-2pm *COD IDEAS Alumni Network Event* (open to all)

Sat April 22nd – 7-9am *COD Steering Group* - (COD Subcommittee Liaisons)

Sat April 22nd – 9-10 am *COD International Committee Brainstorming Meeting* (open to all)

Sat April 22nd –10 am -12 pm *COD-Disability Workshop: Dialogues and Pathways towards a more accessible Biological Anthropology Open Discussion* (open to all)

Sat April 22nd – 12:30-2:15 pm *Committee on Diversity, Committee on Community Partnerships and AABA Presidential Panel: Community Engaged Research* (open to all)

COD Works with the AABA Executive Committee and the AABA Early Career Liaison

The COD regularly brings initiatives to the AABA executive committee and likewise serves in an advisory capacity when the President and board seek our input. To this end, the COD Chair attends executive committee board meetings as an ex-officio liaison.

In 2022-23 the AABA Early Career Liaison, Katherine Kinkopf, aimed to work with COD to surface issues related to disability and access to the discipline generally and AABA meetings in particular. Over the year she worked on initiatives related to meeting accessibility (you'll have noticed new questions on the registration and abstract forms, that's Katie and AABA Executive Board members) including possibilities for accessing ASL and Simultaneous Translation for some presentations. Katie is a key mover in the Listening Sessions and Workshop on Disability that will be held in Reno. And she is the core of the 8th COD interest group, COD-Disability. Katie Rocks!

The COD Steering Committee (which includes at least one member from each subgroup) proposed several ideas to AABA President Leigh for the Presidential Panel. One of these, *Community Engaged Research*, has been developed as a joint Presidential, COD, and Committee on Community Partnerships Panel. Panelists include COD-IDEAS members Phoebe Stubblefield, Jada Benn Torres, and Zaneta Thayer as well as others. The panel is Saturday the 22nd at noon.

Highlights of 2022-23 activities by COD groups (mostly in order of founding):

NEW! COD-DISABILITY (est. 2022; chair Katie Kinkopf): COD-Disability's mission is first and foremost to foster belonging and provide a cultural space for disabled biological anthropologists (broadly conceived), to advocate for cultural change in the AABA with regard for disability as an intersectional and politicized identity, as well as devise long-term, sustainable, accessibility recommendations to amend the existing AABA poster and presenter guidelines. COD-Disability is sponsoring two AABA Fora at the 2023 AABA Annual Meetings: a virtual listening session and an in-person workshop/dialog. (See above).

ESTABLISHED

COD-IDEAS (est. 2006; co-chairs Jada Benn Torres, Agustín Fuentes, Ripan Malhi, & Susan Antón): COD-IDEAS held planning and alumni events and a mixer (with COD-International) at the AABA 2022 Meetings in Denver. Several virtual follow-up sessions laid the ground work for the submission of a second NSF grant to continue the COD-IDEAS workshops (previous NSF-funding of which has ended). The new NSF submission was made in January (by PIs Graciela Cabana and Zaneta Thayer and Co-Is Susan Antón and Ripan Malhi). The programming extends and expands the COD-IDEAS workshop (at the AABA meetings) for developing pathways into biological anthropology, adds regional in-person COD-IDEAS workshops in different parts of the country, and adds programming for faculty development through the career lifecycle. Fingers crossed that we will have funding for renewed COD-IDEAS workshops next year!

COD-IDEAS continues to sponsor and staff an AABA booth at SACNAS, the STEM Diversity Conference (Sacnas.org). Dartmouth and NYU supported faculty and student participation to staff the booth in 2022. This was the first post-pandemic, in-person event featuring the name change, a move that has raised the discipline's legibility to STEM students.

In 2023, IDEAS will reprise the events of AABA 2022 adding a networking challenge to both the Thursday mixer and Friday lunch.

COD-URS (est. 2010; co-chairs Cara Wall-Scheffler & Marcie Myers): In 2022, we held our 11th Annual Committee on Diversity Undergraduate Research Symposium (COD URS). We had 32 posters from 26 universities and colleges for the in-person session. Eleven (34%) of the first-author presenters are first generation college students. Nine of these programs do not have graduate options in anthropology, and three do not offer undergraduate degrees either, so this symposium offered a crucial opportunity for these students to meet and talk with graduate students and potential graduate advisors. We had fantastic representation from across AABA

elected officers (all past presidents back to 2012!) and other senior members who came to support the students. We had a further twelve presenters who presented only at the virtual symposium. Seven of the programs represented at the virtual symposium were unable to attend the in-person session, representing an important option for departments who might not have undergraduate funding to attend conferences. Across all the presentation options, we were able to support a total of 79 undergraduate students in their biological anthropology research.

This year (2023) COD-URS will again be having both an in-person and a virtual symposium in order to allow students from a diversity of backgrounds to present their work. The in-person COD-URS will be held on Wednesday, April 19 in Reno. We have accepted 49 posters representing 34 labs for the in-person session. We have four presenters who will be presenting only at the virtual symposium (noon PST on Wednesday, April 4), although we expect many of the other presenters to attend as well. Eleven of the fifty-three first-authors (21%) are first generation college students, and at least ten of the 34 labs do not offer advanced degrees in anthropology. Across all the presentation options, we are able to support a total of 81 undergraduate students in their biological anthropology research.

COD-WIN (est. 2013; co-chairs Michelle Bezanson & Anne Stone): The subcommittee held virtual committee planning meetings and hosted an interactive panel discussion at the 2021 AABA meetings. The panel was titled: *'Mentoring for Mental Health'*. Mental health expert Nicole Banks and Michelle Bezanson were the main speakers and 21 AABA at all career stages attended the workshop. It was a very successful event with most participants wanting more. Sadly, we only received six responses to our post-workshop survey, but these were positive and informative. We have had several virtual meetings to discuss the 2023 COD-WIN event: *Experiencing and negotiating the dynamics of power: Beginning the conversation*. The event will be held Wednesday April 19th 2023, in person.

In 2022-23, the following new committee members have been invited and will join COD-WIN: Meghan Holms, Stephanie Poindexter, and Rebecca Rogers-Ackermann.

COD-LGBTQQIAA (est. 2013; steering committee liaison Stephanie Meredith): COD-LGBTQQIAA held their business meeting at the 2022 AABA meetings, during which time the group resolved to explicitly make connections with some of the other identity-based minority COD related groups and several small groups of people connected to collaborate on bringing forth topical invited sessions and workshops at future meetings. To that end, Austin Lawrence and Chris Stantis hosted a January *"Bite-sized Bioanth"* Zoom meeting in which Isis Dwyer from the IDEAS scholar program presented her research, and Samantha Archer and Alexandra Kralick put together an excellent invited symposium on *"Queering research: uses of LGBTQIA+ perspectives and queer theory in biological anthropology."*

COD-AACT (est. 2013; chair Jessica Westin): COD-AACT is regrouping. The subcommittee has an open discussion meeting at the AABA (see above). If you identify with or are interested in any part of our acronym (non-anthro department or teaching-heavy positions, contingent or contract faculty assignments), please attend our meeting to discuss ideas for workshops, panels, sessions or anything else for future meetings and the AABA in general. Ideas may also be sent to current chair Jessica Westin.

COD-International (est. 2014; chair Rebecca Ackermann): The International Scholars group is co-hosting a mixer with COD-IDEAS on Thursday night, and will hold a brainstorming meeting on Saturday morning. Please join us!

Interested in starting another COD subgroup? Please contact Susan Antón the COD Chair.

Interested in joining a subgroup? Please contact the subcommittee Chair or attend their events.