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**ARO Awards Committee Call Minutes**Date: Friday, January 21, 2022  
Time: 12:00 PM- 1:00 PM ET

***Attendees***

Dr. Julie Arenberg, Chair Dr. Katie Kindt

Dr. Mark Warchol, Chair Dr. Ruth Litovsky

Dr. Caroline Abdala Dr. Mario Svirsky

Dr. Yuri Agrawal Ally Jevens, Executive Office

Dr. Michael Deans Julie Hiscock, Executive Office

Dr. Nace Golding

Dr. Karl Kandler

***Agenda***

1. ***Discuss what steps can be taken by the committee which will result in a more diverse pool of nominees?*** The committee discussed a variety of ideas on how to increase the overall diversity of future nominees.
   * Limiting the number of nominees one member can submit
   * Addressing the wording of the Award of Merit to place less focus on the idea this award is meant for nominees who are reaching the end of their careers
   * Addressing the wording of awards to include more qualities reflecting the future of ARO; mentoring, thinking outside the scientific box, and service work
   * Making the Award of Merit eligible only to those who have been ARO members for a certain number of years; 20 was suggested
   * Committee members reaching out to their colleagues for all forms of nominations while highlighting the need for more diversity in nominations
   * Differentiating the new awards (Young Investigator, Pioneer, Innovator) by adding Mid-Career to the name of the awards
   * Adding a strong statement of diversity and the need for diversity from this committee and ARO as a whole
2. ***Discuss whether the committee should re-open nominations for the 2023 Award of Merit or not select from the current nominees? –*** Currently the committee has 11 total nominations, 9 male and 2 female. This is reflective of nominations in recent years and perhaps representative of ARO’s membership when the nominees were in the early and mid-years of their careers, however this is not reflective of ARO’s current membership. It was noted the nominees for the Yong Investigator Award reflects a more even split between male and female nominees. The committee agreed to re-open Award of Merit nominations after the MidWinter Meeting. The announcement will include a strong statement on the need for an increase in diversity among those nominated and note the committee is uncomfortable with the lack of diversity within the current nominees. The committee does not want to send a message implying the current group of nominees are not good enough to warrant review, the committee does want to provide the opportunity for a more diverse group of nominees be reviewed. Committee members are encouraged to send follow up emails to their colleagues as a follow up to ARO’s email announcing the reopening of nominations. The chairs will work together to draft the email for review at the next meeting.