BY-LAWS

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Registered Office (QLD)

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1 Definitions

1. **AHTA**: The Australian Hand Therapy Association Inc. – referred to in these rules as “the Association”.
2. **AHT**: Accredited Hand Therapist
3. **AHSS**: Australian Hand Surgery Society
4. **IFSHT**: International Federation of Societies for Hand Therapy
5. **Hand Therapy**: The art and science of rehabilitation of the upper extremity. Hand Therapy has developed from the professions of physiotherapy and occupational therapy and requires comprehensive knowledge of the upper extremity and special skills in assessment and treatment. The aim of Hand Therapy is to prevent dysfunction, restore function, or reverse the advancement of pathology in the upper limb.
6. **Hand & upper limb conditions**: Disease, trauma or congenital deformity affecting the upper extremity, including biomechanical dysfunction secondary to a central nervous system disorder.
7. **Continuing membership obligations**: Those obligations as set from time to time by the management committee, with which AHT’s must comply in order to maintain Membership of the Association.
8. **AGM**: Annual general meeting.
9. **Management Committee**: The committee elected at an AGM to conduct the affairs of the Association for a term of two years.
10. **Member**: Members of the AHTA can be defined as either AHTA Accredited Hand Therapists or Associate members of the AHTA, Affiliate members of the AHTA, and Newsletter subscribers. In this document all groups will be referred to as ‘Members’ when discussing the entire membership of the association.
11. **Honoured member**: An honour conferred upon a member by the management committee, being either Honorary membership or Life membership.
12. **Associate**: A Physiotherapist or Occupational therapist with an interest in Hand Therapy but who is not eligible for, or chooses not to apply for, AHT status.
13. **Affiliate**: A person, corporation or other entity, not eligible for AHT or Associate status of the Association, but with an interest in Hand Therapy, for whatever reason.
14. **Division**: An Australian State or combination of States or State and Territory
15. **Divisional Coordinator**: An AHT or Associate responsible for coordinating member activities within a division. The divisional coordinator reports to the management committee via the divisional representative.
16. **Practitioner**: A Registered Physiotherapist or Occupational Therapist.
2  Membership

2.1  Fees
The Management Committee shall determine membership fees at levels necessary to fund the activities of the Association each year. The due date for membership renewal will be the 12-month anniversary from the date of their membership acceptance.

Members will be offered a bi-annual payment option.

Annual membership fee amounts are outlined in the “Membership Fee Schedule” to be updated annually.

2.1.1  Late Fees and Cancellation
A late fee of 20% of the annual or bi-annual membership fee will apply to membership fees that are not paid within 30 days of the due date. Members will receive one reminder notice and be invoiced with the 20% late fee.

If a member is non-financial for 2 months their membership will be cancelled, and they will be notified in writing that their name will be removed from all AHTA databases, mailings and promotional materials.

A non-financial member, who has had their membership cancelled, may re-apply and are required to meet the obligations for a new membership as specified in these By Laws.

2.2  Membership Responsibilities
All classes of membership:

a)  have an obligation to be financial (excluding honorary & life members)
b)  must comply with all policies and procedures as outlined by the Management Committee
c)  Must remain respectful and professional in all dealings with staff, management committee, contractors, volunteers, members and any other person or entity they come into contact with through their dealings for or with the AHTA. See the Code of Conduct
d)  All members are required to notify the office regarding any change in contact details

3  Application and Acceptance Procedures
Application forms, Information for Applicants and Professional Development Guidelines shall be available from the AHTA office and on the AHTA website. These documents may be revised, as and when necessary and without prior notice.

Applicants for any class of membership shall comply with all guidelines and where required, submit the appropriate forms together with the non-refundable application fee to the AHTA office.

3.1  AHTA Accredited Hand Therapist (AHT)
Must be a clinician or educator and may be a Life Member.
3.1.1 Eligibility (AHT)

3.1.1.1 Clinician
A Clinician applying for AHT status shall be a qualified Occupational Therapist or Physiotherapist, have national registration and:

1. Have a minimum of three years equivalent full-time experience post-graduation as an Occupational Therapist or Physiotherapist
2. Be a current Associate of the AHTA
3. Have a minimum 3600 hours' clinical hand therapy experience within the maximum time frame of the last five years
4. Have engaged in a range of learning activities as per the AHT guidelines within the maximum time frame of the last five years.
5. Submit evidence of completion of the learning activities as per the guidelines to the Credentialing Council
6. Have taken part in a 12-month mentorship program as per the guidelines.
7. Have been recommended for the title of AHTA Accredited Hand Therapist by the Credentialing Council of the AHTA and approved by the Management Committee.
8. Paid the application fee at the commencement of the mentorship period.
9. Parental leave: The hand therapy practice requirement of 2000 hours per five-year reaccreditation period may be reduced by 400 hours for each newborn child for whom the AHT is a primary caregiver. A letter from employer must be submitted detailing parental leave agreement. The reduction may not be carried across reaccreditation periods. Category 2 (Ongoing Education) and 3 (Contributions to the Hand Therapy Profession) requirements must be met in full, within the reaccreditation period of five years.

3.1.1.2 Educator
An Educator applying for AHT status shall be a qualified Occupational Therapist or Physiotherapist with current national registration and have:

1. An appointment to the teaching staff of an Occupational Therapy or Physiotherapy school at an Australian university.
2. Shown evidence that the primary focus (50%) of his/her educational practice is related (teaching, research or clinical practice) to the management of upper extremity conditions.
3. Shown evidence of equal contributing authorship of a publication in a peer-reviewed journal in the past 2 years, directly related to the management of upper extremity conditions.
4. Been recommended for the title of AHTA Accredited Hand Therapist by the Credentialing Council and approved by the Management Committee.
5. Paid the application fee at the commencement of the assessment period.
3.1.1.3 Life Member of the AHTA
A life member of the AHTA can apply for AHT status providing they are a qualified Occupational Therapist or Physiotherapist, have national registration and meet the requirements as either a clinician or educator as outlined in sections 3.1.1.1 and 3.1.1.2

3.1.2 Application Procedure (AHT)
1. The Applicant is responsible for ensuring that all requirements for application for AHT status have been met as per the guidelines.
2. The AHTA office shall receive all applications, ensure that all requirements for application have been met and provide to the Credentialing Council for consideration
3. After the receipt of an AHT application and the non-refundable application fee, such application shall be considered by the Credentialing Council as appropriate, who shall thereupon recommend the admission or rejection of the applicant to the Management committee who shall determine the outcome of the application.
4. Upon acceptance as an AHT, a certificate of Attainment of the AHT Credential will be issued indicating the year in which the credential commenced and the date of renewal. This certificate remains the property of the Association.
5. The Credentialing Officer will publish all new AHTA Accredited Hand Therapists names in the AHTA newsletter.
6. Applicants who have not been approved as an Accredited Hand Therapist have the right to appeal to the Management Committee as per the Own Rules.

3.1.3 Continuing Membership Obligations (AHT Reaccreditation)
- AHTA Accredited Hand Therapists are required to comply with the continuing membership obligations within five years from the commencement of their obligation period - Refer to Reaccreditation Guidelines for Accredited Hand Therapists. Failure to comply will result in the removal of the AHT credential. Associate or life membership status will then apply.
- The obligation period for new AHTs shall commence upon approval of their AHT application. AHTs shall submit their Online Continuing Professional Development (CPD) log at least 4 months prior to the end of their 5-year obligation period for reaccreditation. Refer to the guidelines for using the online CPD Tracker available on the AHTA website.
- Any AHT who fails to submit a (CPD) log and supporting documents by the due date shall be notified in writing.
- Any requests for extensions or exceptional circumstances must be received, in writing, by the Credentialing Council three months prior to their anniversary date for reaccreditation.
- Verification of compliance with continuing membership obligations shall occur each year, by audit. The Credentialing Officer shall select, at random, 5% of the AHTs whose obligation period is nearing its end and request they provide, within 30 days, documentary evidence of their claimed activities.
3.2 **Honorary or Life Member**
Honorary or life membership is an honour bestowed by the Association.

3.2.1 **Eligibility (Honorary or Life Member)**
Honorary membership may be granted to a person, nominated by an AHT of the Association, who is of acknowledged eminence in some activity related to hand therapy or who, by reason of position, eminence or experience, has rendered outstanding service in promoting the growth and development of the association, but is no longer an active member of the Association, or is not eligible for AHT or Associate membership of the association.

Life membership may be granted to an AHT of the Association in recognition of outstanding achievement in some activity relating to hand therapy, or outstanding service to the Association by way of bearing office, promoting the objects of the Association and making a significant contribution to its growth and development.

3.2.2 **Nomination & Approval (Honorary or Life Member)**
Nominations for Honorary and Life membership shall be:

1. Proposed and seconded by AHTs of the AHTA
2. Accompanied by a citation in support of the nomination
3. Submitted to the Management Committee
4. Voted on by the Management Committee
5. Announced at the next Annual General Meeting of the Association, where the citation shall be read with a certificate and award presented, by the President of the Association, to the person being honoured.

3.3 **Associate**

3.3.1 **Eligibility (Associate)**
An applicant for Associate status shall be a qualified Occupational Therapist or Physiotherapist and have national registration

Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists who are members of hand therapy associations in all countries which are IFSHT members, can apply for the AHT credential as per the guidelines.

3.3.2 **Application Procedure (Associate)**

1. The AHTA office shall receive all applications and ensure that all requirements for application have been met.
2. The Executive Support Manager (operations) decides the outcome of the application and will inform the Management Committee of all new Associates at the next Management Committee meeting.
3. Following approval, new Associates shall be welcomed to the AHTA in writing, reminded of their rights and obligations and invoiced for annual membership fees.
4. The Membership Secretary will publish all new Associates names in the AHTA newsletter.
3.4 Affiliate

3.4.1 Eligibility (Affiliate)
This class of membership is open to individuals, corporations and businesses with an interest in hand therapy, but who are not eligible for AHT or Associate status. The Management Committee shall negotiate fees, privileges and obligations individually.

3.4.2 Application Procedure (Affiliate)
1. The AHTA office shall receive all applications and ensure that all requirements for application have been met.
2. The Executive Support Manager (operations) decides the outcome of the application and will inform the Management Committee of all new Affiliates at the next Management Committee meeting.
3. Students may apply to join AHTA under the Affiliate status and shall also provide proof of their student status.
4. Affiliates may not advertise or represent themselves as members of the AHTA.

3.5 Newsletter Subscriber
AHTA digital newsletters will be forwarded to any person who pays an annual subscription as determined by the Management Committee. A Newsletter Subscriber will neither receive, nor be entitled to receive, any other benefits.

4 Termination & Downgrading of Membership

1. AHT’s may choose to downgrade to Associate status at any time.
2. AHT’s who fail to meet the Continuing Membership Obligations (AHT) noted at 3.1.3 will be downgraded to Associate or Life membership status as applicable.

All other instances of termination by either the Association of any class of membership are outlined in the AHTA Own Rules.

5 Reinstatement Procedure

1. An AHT who has downgraded to an Associate and is financial, who has previously been an AHT of good standing and submitted a CPD log prior to downgrading, may be reinstated as an AHT on presentation of 30 hours of CPD in each 12-month period preceding the application to reinstate within 2 years from the date of downgrading.
2. An AHT who downgrades after failing to comply with continuing membership obligations may be reinstated as an AHT on evidence of gaining 30 hours of CPD per year and at least 400 clinical hours per year (as per CPD log requirements and Reaccreditation Guidelines) within a 2-year period, as long as it is within 2 years of the downgrade.
3. Any Associate who has previously been an AHT and who wishes to upgrade to AHT member status must fulfil all the requirements for a new AHT application, if more than 2 years have passed since downgrading.
4. An AHT or Associate who has been non-financial for a period of longer than 2 months as per the Own Rules, has been given adequate warning, and exceptional circumstance do not apply, must reapply and meet all the requirements for the category of membership in which they are applying.

6 Use of AHTA Logo & Member Credentials

The AHT Credentials:

a) “AHTA Accredited Hand Therapist” (preferred post-nominal)
b) “AHT (AHTA)”
c) “AHT (as awarded by the Australian Hand Therapy Association)”
d) “Accredited Hand Therapist (as awarded by the AHTA)”
e) “Accredited Hand Therapist (as awarded by the Australian Hand Therapy Association)”
f) AHTA Accredited Hand Therapist Logo

Shall be for the exclusive use of current AHT’s to identify their status as an Accredited Hand Therapist of the AHTA and cannot be used by any other class of AHTA membership, the public or stakeholders. Associates may market themselves as an “Associate of the Australian Hand Therapy Association” but shall not use the AHTA logo in any of its forms.

Other Credentials:

g) AHTA Accredited Education logo
h) AHTA Association logo

And any other logo or credential owned by the Association cannot be used without prior express written consent of the AHTA Management Committee.

Use of any AHTA owned credentials or logos must be in strict accordance with the AHTA Logo Policy

7 Organisational Structure

For a visual representation of the Association’s Organisational Structure on the website.

7.1 Management Committee

The Management Committee shall consist of AHTs elected to the following positions, with the exception of the Secretary, who must reside in Queensland and may be a non-member appointed by the Management Committee.

7.1.1 Composition (Management Committee)

The Management Committee shall be composed of the following roles: responsibilities, duties and restrictions shall be documented in the Position Descriptions relating to each role as follows:

1. President
2. President Elect
3. Immediate Past President
4. Treasurer
5. Secretary
6. Five general members

Each position holds one vote on the Management Committee.

Position Descriptions are developed, administrated and held by the AHTA Office.

7.1.2 Duties and Obligations of the Management Committee
In addition to those listed at section 7.5 Members of the AHTA Management Committee have the following duties:

7.1.2.1 Fiduciary Duty
   a) Must act honestly, in good faith, and to the best of their ability in the interests of the Association.
   b) Must not allow conflicting interests or personal advantage to override the interests of the association, see Conflict of Interest Policy
   c) The Association must always come first.

Note: Members have no similar fiduciary duties – they can act in their own interest, subject to the Objects

7.1.2.2 Statutory duties
   a) To act with reasonable degree of care and diligence s180 (1)
   b) To act in good faith in the best interests of the association and for a proper purpose (s181).
   c) To not improperly use the position or information obtained in the position (s182, s183) to:
      d) Gain advantage for themselves or someone else or
      e) Cause detriment to the association

To prevent insolvent trading, the Management Committee requires good, accurate and clear financial information regularly.

Criminal Offences fall into:
   a) Reckless or intentional dishonesty and
   b) Failure to exercise powers and discharge duties (s184). That is, not acting in good faith in the best interests of the association or for a proper purpose.

Ref. Corporations Act 2001, Section 180

7.1.3 Induction (Management Committee)
New Management Committee members must undertake the AHTA induction process and complete the following:

1. Read the Management Committee Handbook
2. Read and sign all policies and complete all requirements as outlined on the MC handover checklist including the Management Committee charter, code of conduct and conflict of interest and work health & safety policies.
3. Signed induction documents and policies shall be kept on electronic record at the AHTA office.

7.1.4 Handover Procedure (Management Committee)
Where a new incumbent, elected at an AGM takes over a current Management Committee role, a handover period of 2 months shall occur from the date of the AGM. The handover timeline shall be:

a) 1 month post AGM – formal handover complete including completion of Management Committee Handover Checklist

b) 1 – 2 months post AGM - shadowing and where possible, dual attendance at the first meeting of the new committee

The new incumbent should have reasonable access to the ex-Management Committee member for guidance and assistance within the 2 months immediately following the AGM and where possible thereafter.

The Management Committee handover process shall be carried out as per the Management Committee Handbook.

The current AHTA President shall be responsible for ensuring adherence to and completion of handover procedures with the administrative support of staff.

7.1.5 Remuneration (Management Committee)

7.1.5.1 President
President remuneration package contains the following:

1. Airfare, accommodation and registration costs at the AHTA National Conference
2. $600 sitting fee for attendance at each Management Committee meeting
3. Membership fee waived for term in office
4. Full requirement of CPD per year for term in office
5. Registration costs, airfares and accommodation to attend the CEO Symposium with Associations Forum

Additional expenses may be approved by the Management Committee.

7.1.5.2 Other Management Committee (excluding the President)
Other Management Committee members, excluding the President, remuneration package contains the following:

1. Registration fee for AHTA National Conference
2. $300 sitting fee for attendance at each Management Committee meeting
3. Membership fee waived for term in office
4. Full requirement of CPD per year for term in office
Additional expenses may be approved by the Management Committee.

7.2 Committees and Subcommittees
The Following committees and Sub-Committees are directly accountable to the Management Committee

7.2.1 AHTA Credentialing Council
Responsibilities, duties, restrictions and composition shall be documented in the Credentialing Council Terms of Reference.

7.2.2 Finance, Audit, Risk and Governance Committee
Responsibilities, duties, restrictions and composition shall be documented in the Finance, Audit, Risk and Governance Terms of Reference.

7.2.3 Advocacy Committee
Responsibilities, duties, restrictions and composition shall be documented in the Advocacy Committee Terms of Reference.

7.2.4 Professional Practice Committee
Responsibilities, duties, restrictions and composition shall be documented in the Education Subcommittee Terms of Reference.

7.2.5 Membership Committee
Responsibilities, duties, restrictions and composition shall be documented in the Research and Scholarships Sub-Committee Terms of Reference.

7.2.6 Research and Scholarships Sub-Committee
Responsibilities, duties, restrictions and composition shall be documented in the Research and Scholarships Sub-Committee Terms of Reference.

7.2.7 Conference Sub-Committee
Responsibilities, duties, restrictions and composition shall be documented in the Conference Manual.

7.2.8 States & Territories Affairs Subcommittee
Responsibilities, duties, restrictions and composition shall be documented in the States & Territories Affairs Sub-Committee Terms of Reference.

7.2.9 Other Committees
Any other committee may be convened by the Management Committee from time to time to fulfil a particular function.
7.3 Employees & Contractors
The Management Committee shall appoint or delegate powers to appoint Employees and Contractors as required to fulfill the requirements of the Association.

7.3.1 Employees
Responsibilities, duties, remuneration, reporting structure and restrictions shall be documented in the Position Description relating to each role.

Employee Position Descriptions are developed, maintained and held by the AHTA office.

7.3.2 Contractors
Responsibilities, duties, remuneration, reporting structure and restrictions shall be documented in the Position Description relating to each role as follows:

1. Course Developers
2. Course Presenters
3. Trainees
4. Auditors
5. Assistants

Position Descriptions are developed, maintained and held by the AHTA office.

7.3.3 Induction (Employees & Contractors)
New Employees and Contractors must undertake the AHTA induction process where applicable and complete the following:

1. Read and sign all policies/contracts where applicable
2. Signed induction documents, policies and contracts shall be kept on electronic record at the AHTA office.

7.3.4 Handover Procedure (Employees and Contractors)
Where possible employees and contractors must attempt to hand over any ongoing projects or tasks to the new incumbent into the role. Where there is no new incumbent or that person is not available to accept handover. Handover should be completed with an appropriate staff or management committee member.

7.3.5 Lines of Reporting (Employees and Contractors)
Reporting structures are outlined in the employee’s or contractor’s position description where no direct manager is listed on an employee or contractor position description the President shall act as Manager

The President shall ultimately oversee all staff and contractors by either direct or indirect means
In the event an employee’s or contractor’s needs are not adequately met by the President, employees and contractors shall approach an alternative Management Committee member, ideally the Secretary, who will assist to bring the complaint to the attention of the Governance Committee.

The Governance Committee shall excuse the President from discussions relating to employee or contractor complaints where their needs were not first met by the President.

All employee or contractor complaints shall remain confidential and be dealt with in a timely manner.

7.4 Volunteers
The Management Committee shall appoint or delegate powers to appoint Volunteers as required to fulfill the requirements of the Association.

Volunteers may be subject to a position description, where required the Volunteer shall receive a position description upon commencement of the role.

Volunteers may also be appointed to assist in various areas without the need for a position description.

All Volunteers may be engaged either in an ongoing capacity or on an as needs basis, this is to be negotiated directly with their reporting officer.

7.4.1 Induction (Volunteers)
New Volunteers must undertake the AHTA induction process where applicable and complete the following:

1. Read and sign all policies/contracts where applicable
2. Signed induction documents, policies and contracts shall be kept on electronic record at the AHTA office.

7.4.2 Handover Procedure (Volunteers)
Where possible Volunteers must attempt to hand over any ongoing projects or tasks to the new incumbent into the role in conjunction with their manager. Where there is no new incumbent or that person is not available to accept handover. Handover should be completed with an appropriate staff or management committee member in conjunction with their manager.

7.4.3 Lines of Reporting (Volunteers)
Reporting structures are outlined in volunteer’s position descriptions or in the absence of a position description, by either verbal or written agreement with a Management Committee member or employee of the Association.

In the absence of a position description or where no direct manager is listed on a volunteer position description or where no other arrangements, either written or verbal have been made for the management of that volunteer the President shall act as manager.

The President shall ultimately oversee all volunteers by either direct or indirect means.
7.5 Duties and Obligations of all Workers

The following relates to all Management Committee members, Employees, Contractors and Volunteers:

a) Must comply with all policies and procedures of the Association including, but not limited to the AHTA Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest and Work Health & Safety Policy

b) Must carry out their role as agreed, or as per their position description and/or contract (where applicable) with the best intention and to the best of their ability and with the interests of the Association in mind

c) May from time to time be reasonably required to perform duties outside of their agreed role, position description and or contract (where applicable) and must ensure that these duties are carried out with the best intention and to the best of their ability with the interests of the Association in mind

d) Must execute their role with professionalism, respect and courtesy

e) Must respect the Associations missions and pillars and at all times work towards achieving them

All workers of the Association are also required by law to ensure they meet the following:

f) Have a responsibility to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and that of others

g) The duty to act in good faith and for a proper purpose

h) The duty to act with reasonable care, skill and diligence

i) The duty to not misuse information or position

j) The duty to disclose and manage conflicts of interest

A breach of any of the duties above may have legal consequences for both individuals and the Association. Further information is available in the Incorporated Associations Act 1981 (QLD) or by contacting the Department of Fair Trading (QLD).

8 Annual General Meetings

8.1 Proceedings of Annual General Meetings

In addition to the business stipulated in the Own Rules, the following shall be included in the agenda of an AHTA Annual General Meeting

1) Appointment of:
   a) Subcommittee members
   b) Conference Convener for following year

2) Inform all members at each Annual General Meeting of the amount of public liability insurance, and provide a copy in the Annual Report

3) Other business as notified

4) Awards (as applicable)
   a) Such presentation shall be made at the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting or at some other appropriate time.
9 National Conference

9.1 Awards to be made at National Conference
The conference committee shall select a judging panel to award the following three prizes at the Annual Conference:

9.1.1 The Jill Chapman Award
First presented in 1988 to honour the first President of the AHTA. This award is awarded to the author(s) of the best clinical free paper at the AHTA Annual Conference. The value of the award is to be determined by the AHTA (currently $300.)

9.1.2 The Australian Hand Surgery Society Award
First presented in 1998. The AHSS Award is awarded to the author/s of the best research free paper presented at the AHTA Annual Conference. The value of this award is to be determined by the AHSS (Currently $300).

9.1.3 The Leanne Breen Memorial Award
First awarded in 2010 in recognition of the value and importance of poster presentations to the scientific program of an AHTA conference, in formal recognition of the efforts of poster presenters. The value of the award is to be determined by the AHTA (currently $300). Mrs June Retallick (Leanne’s mother) donates $100 each year towards this award.

9.1.4 AHTA Founders Lecture Award
Nominations for the AHTA Founders Lecture shall be in recognition of an outstanding contribution to the association, or to the practice of hand therapy through office bearing, clinical excellence, research and publication, or education in hand therapy.

The nominee shall have been an AHTA member for a minimum of 5 years and shall be proposed and seconded by AHTA members. The nomination shall include documentation of the nominee’s contribution to the AHTA or hand therapy and an indication of the scope of the proposed AHTA Founders Lecture.

The Management Committee shall consider nominations and, if approved, inform the conference committee. The awardee would be expected to present a 50-minute address on issues of experience, research or philosophy, to an annual conference. Value to include conference registration, economy airfares to the conference venue, and a memento of the award to the value of $200. The AHTA shall fund the annual Founders Lecture Award.

9.1.5 The Amy Geach Hand Therapy Innovation Award
The AHTA sponsors this award and a member of the Management Committee is to sit on the judging panel.

First awarded in 2014 and developed to recognise, showcase and share successful innovation in hand therapy that improves products and/or services. The value of the award is determined by Amy Geach, AHTA sponsorship is in line with annual AHTA awards (currently $300).

This award is dependent on appropriate candidates and may not run every year.