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African Studies Association Announces Mahmoud Mohamed Taha Student Travel Award

PISCATAWAY, New Jersey – The African Studies Association is pleased to announce the establishment of the Mahmoud Mohamed Taha Student Travel Award to support research and the exchange of ideas for African studies students.

The Mahmoud Mohamed Taha Student Travel Award will be awarded to competitively selected students who have displayed outstanding scholarship in their area of study. The ASA will invite nominations from ASA members or applications from currently enrolled students for funds to facilitate research, study abroad, and/or travel to present research at the ASA Annual Meeting. Applications for African and African descended students in the U.S. will be prioritized during the selection process. Applications will open online in December 2023 for the 2024 award cycle.

The Mahmoud Mohamed Taha Student Travel Award was made possible by a generous gift from Dr. Steve Howard. Dr. Howard grew up near Boston, Massachusetts, graduated from Georgetown University, and decided to pursue a scholarly career in African studies following his Peace Corps service. He earned his PhD in sociology at Michigan State University, writing a dissertation on Sudan. Sudan has continued to be the center of his research interests, writing particularly about the progressive Muslim social movement known as the Republican Brotherhood. Dr. Howard taught for 36 years at Ohio University and served 24 years as the institution’s African Studies Program director – directing approximately 60 dissertations of African scholars. In 2022, Dr. Howard was awarded the ASA’s Distinguished Africanist Award in celebration of his lifetime achievements as a scholar, mentor, and author.

The award is named in honor of the life, work, and teachings of Mahmoud Mohamed Taha (1909-1985), an author and founder of the “Republican Brotherhood,” a Sudanese Islamic reform movement. He played a significant role in setting the course for Sudan’s independence from Anglo-Egyptian colonialism. His best-known book, The Second Message of Islam, published in 1967 offered a new understanding of Islam in the modern world. This prize honors his progressive ideas, his promotion of democracy and gender equality, and his vision of a universe at peace. A more complete biography can be found on the award page and in Dr. Howard’s book, Modern Muslims: A Sudanese Memoir.

About the ASA

Established in 1957, the African Studies Association is the flagship membership organization devoted to enhancing the exchange of information about Africa. The ASA is based in the United States and aims to cultivate a better understanding of the continent, taking a holistic approach to its areas of focus. Our members include scholars, students, teachers, activists, development professionals, policy makers, donors, and others. ASA provides access to path-breaking research and key debates in African studies and facilitates interdisciplinary exchanges with African scholars and institutions. The ASA Annual Meeting fosters global networks by convening people with scholarly and other interests in Africa, and ultimately broadens professional opportunities in the field. The organization publishes two leading multidisciplinary journals on Africa, African Studies Review and History in Africa and promotes an informed understanding of Africa to educational institutions, as well as to the public. Businesses, media, and other interested communities. Through a diverse number of initiatives and programs, ASA’s members have developed an expansive pool of experts, educators, policy makers, and students who positively impact the field.

Enhancing the Exchange of Information About Africa Since 1957