



**International Union for the Study of Social Insects
North American Section**

**2025 Turner Collins Outreach Award
Dr. Hongmei Li-Byarlay**

The Turner-Collins Award recognizes efforts (both short- and long-term) using social insects to promote interest in biology among African Americans and Native Americans. This award is inspired by the work and advocacy of two African American researchers. Charles H. Turner (1867-1923) was a noted student of social wasps, ants and bees. Margaret Collins (1922-1996) was a taxonomist and natural historian of termites. This award encourages scientists, students and community members to use their special interests for humanitarian ends: improvement of public access to knowledge, especially among children, young people, and concerned parents in these historically excluded groups.

The IUSSI-NAS Turner-Collins Advisory Board and DEIJ committee are proud to name Dr. Hongmei Li-Byarlay a Turner-Collins Awardee for 2025, the inaugural year of this program.

Dr. Li-Byarlay is a research associate professor at Central State University whose research program explores questions related to the behavioral genetics and ecology of honeybees and native North American bees. Dr. Li-Byarlay regularly teaches bee keeping skills and scientific literacy to the public in her community through collaborations with local schools, the Boonshoft Museum, and the Oakwood Historical Society. However, her efforts to advocate for positive change at a state and national scale are also noteworthy. While serving on the Diversity and Inclusion board of the Entomological Society of America, Dr. Li-Byarlay was instrumental in the creation of the Alate Award which provides financial support to student researchers at HBCUs and MSIs as they present research at annual meetings. Dr. Li-Byarlay was a key co-founder of Interdisciplinary Studies in Entomology Computer science and Technology Network (INSECT Net), a program that represents a cross-institutional collaboration with Penn State University and three Midwest HBCUs. Dr. Li-Byarlay has also represented her institution at the state legislature's on the White House Initiative HBCU PARTNERS Act.

Sincerely,

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