The American Anthropological Association (AAA) has named Dr. Edmund “Ted” Hamann (University of Nebraska, Lincoln) and Dr. Barbara Rose Johnston (University of California, Santa Cruz & Center for Political Ecology) as the 2015 recipients of the Anthropology in Public Policy Award. The award honors anthropological insights and analyses that have resulted in the implementation of effective and beneficial policies within the last five years.

“We were impressed with both of these nominees and felt their work showcased the spectrum of policy contributions that we seek to honor with this award,” said Anthropology in Public Policy Award Committee Chair Susan Bibler Coutin. “Their collective research and insights have had lasting and significant impacts on global policy, and on the day to day lives of people around the world.”

Dr. Hamann has spent years working to improve the education of binational migrant children in Mexico. Thanks to Hamann and his collaborators, Mexico's federal education ministry initiated a program to better serve transnational students, and recently removed its requirement that students bring apostillated transcripts from the US – a major obstacle in receiving full credit before they enroll in Mexican schools. This research has spread to other corners of the globe as Hamann has been invited to speak to educators and researchers in Bangkok, Amsterdam, Pretoria, Buenos Aires, Toronto, and Boston.

Dr. Johnston's work addresses the linkages between environment, health and human rights with an aim to document human environmental rights abuse and strengthening accountability in international development, water resource management, and nuclear disaster. Her study documenting the consequential damages of the Chixoy Dam helped inform a reparations negotiation process, encouraged US restrictions on World Bank and other IFI financing in Guatemala, and led to the historic adoption of a formal reparation mechanism that explicitly addresses the varied injuries and immense impoverishment resulting from internationally-financed hydroelectric dam development. Other recent work includes educating global leaders about the key role of water in sustaining biocultural diversity and the environment and human rights implications of nuclear militarism in the Marshall Islands, work that has helped shape and encouraged the implementation of internationally recognized United Nations policies.

The award will be presented at the AAA Annual Meeting in Denver during a special event sponsored by the Committee on Public Policy on Friday, November 20th, from 12:15 to 1:30 p.m. Each honoree will give a brief talk on the specifics of their public policy work and showcase the ways they have translated anthropological knowledge into effective policy action.

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The American Anthropological Association, dedicated to advancing human understanding and addressing the world’s most pressing problems since its founding in 1902, is the world’s largest professional anthropology organization.