



Center for Responsible Travel

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2020 RECIPIENT OF THE
LEGACY IN RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL AWARD:
Judy Kepher-Gona



CREST Board of Directors and staff are honored to present the 2020 Martha Honey Legacy in Responsible Travel Award to Judy Kepher-Gona, Founder and Principal Consultant at Sustainable Travel and Tourism Agenda (STTA).

The inaugural Legacy in Responsible Travel Award was made last year to Dr. Martha Honey on the occasion of her retirement to honor her incredible leadership and accomplishments in responsible travel. At that time, the Board and staff of CREST decided to make this an annual award from the CREST Board of Directors to someone in the global tourism industry making a significant difference in pushing the envelope in responsible travel.

This year's award winner, Judy Kepher-Gona, is a thought leader in sustainable tourism with over 20 years of experience championing responsible tourism in Africa and beyond. From setting up Africa's first ecotourism society to working with countless communities in tourism and conservation, Judy's contribution to sustainable tourism transcends continents. She has dedicated her career to a pioneering model of ecotourism worldwide.



“
This recognition is a much-needed boost to my commitment to stand up for responsible travel. A renewal.
”

Judy Kepher- Gona

By serving on the boards of global and regional organizations like the Global Sustainable Tourism Council and Fair Trade Tourism, Judy has made significant contributions to shaping the practice of sustainable tourism. She has served as an onsite assessor for World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) Tourism for Tomorrow Awards and for the National Geographic Unique Lodges of the World, as well as a judge for the Tourism Resilience Council IIPT Awards and the Responsible Tourism Awards Tanzania.

In 2018, Women Academics in Tourism (WAIT) recognized Judy as among the Top 50 Awesome Scholars in Tourism. In 2019, she was awarded the Sustainable Citizen Award by Forbes Woman Africa, in recognition of her outstanding contribution to awareness and knowledge of sustainability in tourism in Africa and beyond.

Judy is currently serving as Director and Lead consultant at Sustainable Travel & Tourism Agenda (STTA), an organization she founded in 2013 to contribute and lead the modeling of a sustainable future for Africa's tourism, to mentor youth in sustainable tourism to ensure tomorrow's leaders are grounded in critical thinking and sustainable tourism, and to influence sustainable tourism practices globally.

Judy was selected for the 2020 Legacy in Responsible Travel Award from a distinguished list of potential candidates due to her long legacy of work with a vast number of organizations. Her on-the-ground work in ecotourism, certification, women's empowerment, and community-led wildlife conservancies provide both concrete examples of the principles CREST espouses, as well as a legacy of successful endeavors that are influencing sustainable tourism work across Africa, and beyond.

"This recognition is a much-needed boost to my commitment to stand up for responsible travel. A renewal," Kepher-Gona relays. "Until the last tourism company responds. Until the last traveler responds. Until the last DMO & DMC responds. Until global tourism organisations respond. Until tourism media responds. Until policy makers and investors respond to the call for responsible travel; I have my work cut out."

"[Judy's] long legacy of work with a number of organizations demonstrates concretely how to 'transform the way the world travels' so that host communities, the country, conservation, the environment, and the traveler all benefit," writes Mike Robbins, CREST Board Chair. "Her on-the-ground work in ecotourism, certification, women's empowerment, and community-led wildlife conservancies provide both concrete examples of the principles CREST espouses, as well as a legacy of successful endeavors that are influencing sustainable tourism work across Africa, and beyond."



CREST Executive Director, Greg Miller, along with CREST staff and Board of Directors extend a hearty congratulations to Judy Kepher-Gona! Thank you, Judy, for your extraordinary work and life-long commitment to sustainable and responsible tourism and community engagement.
