Connecticut’s Sea Grant Knauss Fellows- Coming and Going

The National Sea Grant College Program Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship, established in 1979, provides a unique educational experience to students who have an interest in ocean, coastal and Great Lakes resources and in the national policy decisions affecting those resources. The program matches highly qualified graduate students with “hosts” in the legislative and executive branch of government located in the Washington, D.C. area, for a one year paid fellowship. The program is named in honor of one of Sea Grant’s founders, former NOAA Administrator, John A. Knauss.

Up and Coming: Three candidates from Connecticut universities for the NOAA John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship Program were endorsed by the Connecticut Sea Grant program and have been selected to serve in 2011. The fellowships allow young people just finishing graduate programs in college to gain valuable experience working in federal offices on policy issues.

James (“Jamie”) Reinhardt, who is receiving a PhD from UConn Marine Sciences, will be the new Habitat Restoration Officer for the NOAA Coastal Habitat Restoration Program. He has specialized in studying benthic organisms (those that settle on the bottom, underwater), particularly invasive sea squirts. He received an Excellence in Research Award while at UConn.

Hui W. Cheng, who received a Masters degree in Environmental Studies from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, will work in the National Ocean Service’s Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program. Hui brings to her new duties extensive experience in marine resources management experience in the Pacific and Pacific Northwest.

Henry Debey, who also received a Masters degree from the Yale School of Forestry, will be the new Foreign Affairs Fellow at the NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service’s Office of International Affairs. Henry is especially accomplished in marine policy and marine spatial planning, and has worked on these issues for Environmental Defense, and for the Alliance of Small States at the United Nations. Henry was a coral reef ecologist at a park in the Netherlands Antilles, and a research fellow in Bremen, Germany, so he is particularly suited for this position.

Going... Outgoing John A. Knauss Fellows who just finished their 2010 terms are Corey Ridings, and Terill Hollweg.

Corey Ridings, who has a Masters degree in Public Health from Yale University, served in the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, Oceans and Wildlife. Her specialty is linking health and resource management.

Terill Anne Hollweg earned her PhD in marine chemistry at the University of Connecticut by studying mercury cycling in the environment. She has been serving in the NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service Office of Habitat Conservation, Habitat Protection Division.

Did you know that 22% of 1500 NOAA employees responding to a survey are Sea Grant “alumni,” supported or trained by Sea Grant as students, fellows, interns, researchers, or employees? The same survey showed that 82% of NOAA Sea Grant alumni believe that the Sea Grant experience helped them get their NOAA job. These bright young people will have the experience of a lifetime to remember, and are helping to keep our nation strong.