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UNH Students Receive Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowships

January 24, 2012

DURHAM, N.H. – University of New Hampshire graduate students Wan-Jean Lee and Michelle Walsh have each been awarded a John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship for 2012. Sponsored by the National Sea Grant College Program, the year-long fellowship matches current and recent graduate students with hosts in the legislative and executive branches of government.

Beginning in February, Lee will spend one year in Washington, D.C., working in the National Sea Grant Office as the coordinator for natural resource focus areas. Walsh will have an opportunity to examine fisheries bycatch reduction measures at the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in the Office of Sustainable Fisheries — Domestic Fisheries Division.

Lee, who is originally from Singapore, received both her undergraduate degree in biology and her master's degree in marine ecology from the National University of Singapore. She is currently working on her Ph.D. in zoology at UNH with advisor Jeb Byers (Byers is now at University of Georgia) and focusing on the impacts of horseshoe crabs on the soft sediment invertebrate communities in Great Bay.

"Growing up in a coastal city, I was always close to the ocean and aware of the impacts of development on the marine environment," Lee said. After studying coral reefs and rocky shores in Singapore's tropical climate, she wanted to move north and study soft sediments in temperate climates to get a more well-rounded perspective of marine ecosystems.

Lee said she would eventually like to work in the science extension or education fields, translating academic research and knowledge to local communities. The Knauss fellowship will allow Lee to learn how the National Sea Grant Office coordinates and supports marine-related extension and education efforts on a larger scale, she said.

Walsh, originally from Lodi, N.J., received her B.A. in biological sciences at Rutgers University and her M.Ed. in education at St. Peter's College. She is studying flounder stock enhancement strategies for her Ph.D. research at UNH with advisors Elizabeth Fairchild and Hunt Howell. Walsh previously received a Fulbright fellowship to conduct collaborative research on Japanese flounder and marbled flounder at Kyoto University in Japan. Her placement in NMFS will add a policy element to her fisheries knowledge.

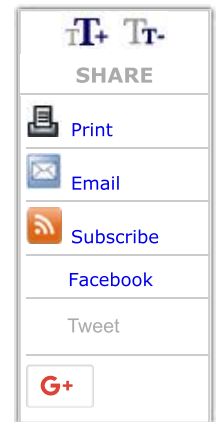
"Fisheries regulations can change so much from one year to the next," Walsh said. "The Knauss fellowship will help me to learn about these changes, how they are implemented, how they impact the end users, and how a government agency then responds to the feedback given in regards to those policies."

She credits recreational fishing trips with her dad in her youth as the reason she became interested in biology, and in turn hopes to teach others about marine science at the college level.

The Knauss Fellowship Program is named in honor of John A. Knauss, a former administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and a founder of the Sea Grant program. Sea Grant is a national network of more than 30 programs that provide support, leadership and expertise for university-based marine research, extension and education.

Sea Grant is now accepting applications for the 2013 Knauss fellowship. The program is open to graduate and professional students in the marine- or aquatics-related fields. The deadline for applications is Feb. 17, 2012. For more information, visit <http://www.seagrants.unh.edu/fellowships.html>.

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http://unh.edu/news/cj_nr/2012/jan/bp24seagrant_01.jpg

University of New Hampshire Ph.D. student Michelle Walsh received a Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship for 2012.

http://unh.edu/news/cj_nr/2012/jan/bp24seagrant_02.jpg

University of New Hampshire Ph.D. student Wan-Jean Lee received a Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship for 2012.

Photo credit: Rebecca Zeiber, N.H. Sea Grant

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