



## **Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship National Sea Grant College Federal Fellows Program**

### **Guidance & Requirements for Applying to the Class of 2010**

#### **Purpose of the Fellowship**

The National Sea Grant Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship was established to provide a unique educational experience to students enrolled in graduate programs in fields related to marine or Great Lakes studies. The program matches highly qualified graduate students with "hosts" in the Legislative Branch, the Executive Branch, or appropriate associations/institutions located in the Washington, D.C. area. For one year the recipients work on substantive national policy issues related to aquatic resources. The recipients are officially designated Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellows, after the University of Rhode Island's legendary former Dean of the Graduate School of Oceanography.

#### **History of the Fellowship**

In 1979, the National Sea Grant College Program Office (NSGCPO), in fulfilling its broad educational responsibilities, initiated the program to initially provide an educational experience in the policies and processes of the Legislative Branch of the Federal Government. Later the program was expanded to provide opportunities within the Executive Branch of the Federal Government. Recognizing the value of this program, in 1987 the U.S. Congress stipulated that the Sea Grant Federal Fellows Program become a formal part of the National Sea Grant College Program Act. Legislative Branch Fellows are funded by the NSGCPO and Executive Branch Fellows are funded by the host agency.

#### **Announcements**

Announcement of the Fellows Program is sent annually to all participating Sea Grant Institutions by the state Sea Grant Director upon receipt of notice from the NSGCPO, normally by late December of each year. See the National Sea Grant Knauss Fellow Web Site for details on application and timelines at:

<http://www.seagrants.noaa.gov/knauss/>

#### **Eligibility**

Any student who, on **February 20, 2009** is enrolled in a master's, doctoral or professional graduate degree program in marine/Great Lakes/aquatic related studies at any US accredited institution of higher education may apply to the NSGCPO through their local state Sea Grant Program.

#### **Length of Assignment**

The length of assignment is one-year (non-renewable). The inclusive dates of the official fellowship are February 1- January 31; however, these dates can be slightly adjusted to accommodate academic semester needs.

#### **Stipend and Expenses**

The total grant amount of \$44,000 made for each Fellow to a local Sea Grant program includes a \$34,000 stipend. \$8,000 of the total amount is to be used in accordance with the guidelines of the

receiving institution for: 1) travel associated with the educational experience; 2) health insurance; 3) moving expenses; and 4) institutional overhead costs. Of those items, primary emphasis is to be given to providing travel, health and moving expenses coverage - institutional overhead costs may receive the balance after the necessary direct costs are covered. The remaining \$2,000 can be used to cover Placement Week costs.

### **Class of 2010 Application Process**

National Sea Grant will accept 20-30 finalists for Executive Branch hosts and 10 finalists for Legislative Branch hosts. A total of 60-80 applications are expected.

- **Spring, 2009**—Applications are submitted to sponsoring state Sea Grant Directors by the deadline set in the state program announcement. *RI Sea Grant requires applications to be submitted by 12:00 PM Friday, February 20, 2009.* Interviews with the Rhode Island Sea Grant Program Director will take place on March 09 or March 10, 2009 at a time to be arranged.
- **April 03, 2009**—Sponsoring Sea Grant Directors submit fellowship applications for up to six qualified students to the NSGCP Office on or before this date (by 5:00PM).
- **May 23, 2009**—The National Sea Grant Office will complete selection of finalists and notify State Sea Grant Directors of their sponsored applicants' status. The Directors will immediately notify the applicants via email and/or phone and confirm their status in writing within two weeks of verbal/electronic notification.
- **Sunday to Friday, late November or early December—TBA—2009**—Finalists attend a week of interviews with potential hosts in Washington, D.C.
- **February 1, 2010**—Class of 2010 Knauss Fellows begin their assignments.

### **Application Requirements**

The fellowship application **MUST** include:

- **A personal and academic resume or curriculum vitae** (not to exceed 2 pages using 12 point font and 1 inch margins).
- **An educational and career goal statement** from the applicant which articulates what the prospective Fellow expects from the fellowship experience in terms of professional and career development (must not exceed 1,000 words in 12 point font). Placement preference in the Executive or Legislative Branches of the Government may be stated by the applicant, and will be honored to the extent possible. The sponsoring Sea Grant Director and Sea Grant staff will work with the applicant to refine the personal statement prior to submission to the National Program Office.
- **Two letters of recommendation**, including one from the student's major professor.
- **A detailed letter of endorsement from the sponsoring Sea Grant Director**, resulting from a personal interview, will address the applicant's demonstrated communication skills, attitude and ability to work with people.
- Copies of all **official undergraduate and graduate student transcripts**.

- Listing of classes and/or plans for the spring 2009, summer 2009 and fall 2009 (not to exceed 1 page),
- ***Thesis papers or other publications, letters of endorsement from individuals such as members of Congress, friends, or relatives, should not be submitted,***
- **Prior contacts/arrangements made with possible host offices will be cause for immediate disqualification from the application process.**

### **Selection Criteria**

The evaluation criteria and weighting of the criteria for selecting Knauss Fellows are as follows:

1. Academic record and statement of career goals and objectives of student (45 percent total)
  - a. Quality of the applicant's personal education and career goal statement (30 percent);
  - b. Strength of academic performance (15 percent).
2. Recommendations and/or endorsements of student (15 percent total)
  - a. Endorsement/content of the letter from the applicant's Sea Grant Program Director, the applicant's major professor, and the second letter of recommendation.
3. Additional relevant experience (40 percent total) related to:
  - a. Diversity of education, extra-curricular activities, honors and awards, and interpersonal, written, and oral communications skills. For the Knauss Policy Fellowship, relevant experience would be in marine or aquatic-related fields.

All qualified applicants will be considered regardless of age, race, color, sex, creed, marital status, national origin, lawful political affiliation, religious preference or physical disabilities. Academic discipline and geographic representation may be considered in balancing the class.

### **Selection Process**

Each step in the selection process is based on the evaluation criteria listed. The panel will include representation from the Sea Grant Association, the National Sea Grant Review Panel, and the current class of Fellows. Each panel member is assigned applications to review before the panel meeting. During the panel meeting each application will be individually discussed. Following this discussion, an individual score will be provided by each panel member. Once all applications have been discussed and scored, a numerical ranking will be created for each of the panel member's scores by the Knauss program manager or designee. An average ranking will then be computed for each applicant. The successful applicants will then be placed into either the legislative or executive group by the selecting official based upon the applicant's stated preference, the application materials submitted, and the individual comments of the panel members.

### **Guidance to Hosts**

The host offices realize that they are providing a major educational opportunity to an individual who will provide a substantial, professional contribution to their offices. The NSGCP Office seeks to ensure that Knauss Fellows will be provided with a desk with phone, computer and file storage space. Additionally, Hosts should recognize that Knauss Fellows still involved in their graduate studies may need time for completion of their academic requirements.

In advance of interview week, the NSGCP Office will coordinate with the potential host offices to determine the number of assignments that will be available to the Class of 2010 Fellows.

### **Placement Process**

Selected applicants technically do not become Fellows until they have been interviewed by potential hosts, accepted by a host office, and have had that acceptance ratified by the NSGCP Office.

In early November, the NSGCP Office will send each finalist a packet of information detailing the process through which they will interview with prospective hosts in Washington, DC. during late November or early December. This packet will include information on previous Fellows assignments that describes differences among positions in the executive and legislative (house and senate) branches. The present class will send out information to the finalists outlining their own assignments, housing possibilities, their experiences and other pertinent information. No contact between prospective hosts and finalists should be made before the interview week in December.

Prospective hosts will also be sent a package of the finalist's resumes and goals statements in preparation for interview week.

### **Interview Week**

During late November or early December, Knauss Fellow finalists must travel to Washington, DC. for a week of interviews with potential hosts. This trip will be funded by the sponsoring Sea Grant College program, and not the Fellowship award.

Prior to interview week, potential host offices shall provide NSGCP Office with one page position descriptions for distribution to the finalists. They also are advised to prepare sign up sheets in advance that will indicate available times, place, and person conducting the interviews. Half an hour is sufficient for most interviews. At the end of the interview process, finalists and hosts are responsible for working out mutually agreeable placements. Final placement must be ratified by the NSGCP Office Fellows Program Director. The role of the Fellows Program Director will be that of counselor and, where necessary, arbitrator.

It is the principal responsibility of each finalist to identify an appropriate host who will accept them the following year. The NSGCP Office will assist in this process by providing counsel, but cannot ensure placement in every case. However, over the life of the Knauss Fellow program only a very few finalists have not found a suitable assignment.

After a satisfactory interview week, finalists will be accepted as Fellows upon NSGCP Office approval. Immediately following ratification of all positions, the NSGCP Office will send formal letters of notification to hosts, Fellows and state Sea Grant Directors. Sea Grant Directors will immediately begin processing grant applications for support of Fellows for submission to NSGCP Office. Shortly after notification, sponsoring Sea Grant Directors will send Statements of Award to each student's home institution notifying them of the student's acceptance as a Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellow.

Fellows will start their assignments February 1, 2010; starting at a date other than that established for the class is not permitted. Upon acceptance, Fellows are committed for a full year, and early withdrawal from the program is frowned upon, leading to forfeiture of the status and privileges of the fellowship.

### **Reporting Requirements**

Sea Grant Fellows will be administratively responsible to their sponsoring state Sea Grant Directors during their terms in Washington, DC. but must be responsive to the administrative and technical direction from the host to whom they report. The role of the Director of the Federal Fellows Program

in the NSGCP office is one of ombudsman between the Fellow, the host, state Sea Grant Programs, and the sponsoring institution.

The NSGCP Office requires an Exit Evaluation Report from each of the Fellows that discusses their experience particularly as it relates to meeting their education objectives.

### **Travel Requests**

Travel funds have been allocated to facilitate the Fellow's educational growth and professional development. This may include work related to completion of their graduate degrees, research, conferences, workshops, short-courses, or similar opportunities.

Arrangements and expenditures for any grant-supported travel or other educational opportunities requested by the Fellow must be approved in advance by the host and the sponsoring Sea Grant Director. A letter of request initiated by the Fellow and approved by the host will be sent to the Sea Grant Director, with a copy to the Director of the Fellows Program, explaining the reason for the trip and approximate costs. This must be done well in advance in order to ensure adequate opportunity for state Sea Grant Director's comment and approval.

In the Executive Branch, the host may fund official trips, leaving the grant travel funds for use by the Fellow for symposiums, etc., that the Fellow may want to attend, but which are not directly related to the host office's mission. Approval by host and Sea Grant Director is mandatory in order to use grant funds for travel.

### **Host-Fellow Relationship**

The Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship Program is an educational opportunity. Through it, hosts provide Fellows with an education in marine policy formulation. The Fellow and the host must be sensitive to their mutual responsibilities in achieving a balance between office requirements and education. The Fellow should honor the working protocols of the host office and contribute to useful and relevant products. At the same time, the host is expected to provide opportunities for involvement in substantive issues that honor legitimate professional, educational, and developmental activities of the Fellow.

### **Conflict Resolution**

Participation in the fellowship program is a privilege not a right. To earn this privilege, Fellows must continue to justify this benefit by demonstrating diligence and adaptability to the host environment. Problems that may arise will be adjudicated by the Fellows Program Director after due consultation with and consideration of the mutual rights and interests of the Fellow, the host, the sponsoring Sea Grant Director and the National Sea Grant College Program.