

## AIBSnews

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# AIBS *news*

DECEMBER 2009/VOLUME 59 NUMBER 11

## Policy Office to Participate in Faculty Training Program

AIBS is pleased to announce that in January, director of public policy Robert Gropp will conduct a day-long policy and media training workshop as part of the annual New Mexico Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (NM EPSCoR; [www.nmepscor.org/](http://www.nmepscor.org/)) Junior Faculty Training Program. AIBS participated in this innovative faculty development program last year as well.

Early-career faculty from higher-education institutions across New Mexico will participate in a three-day program that includes a variety of workshop activities designed to enhance leadership skills and increase competitiveness for national-level funding opportunities. In 2008, program topics included communication with decisionmakers, proposal development, management of large research projects and laboratories, meeting facilitation, and broadening impacts through education and outreach.

"AIBS is pleased to once again be participating in this important program," Gropp said. "We often hear from graduate students and early career professionals that they want to develop skills that will help them communicate their science. The NM EPSCoR program helps to cultivate communication and other leadership skills that will serve faculty members throughout their career."

The NM EPSCoR is designed to enhance research competitiveness through investment in three strategic areas: critical research infrastructure, cyberinfrastructure, and human infrastructure. These investments are intended to help establish New Mexico as a laboratory for climate change research and as a model for science-based public policy. The multidisciplinary, multiscale effort aims to transform climate-change sci-

## COMING SOON

AIBS will publish an electronic newsletter starting in 2010. We need your e-mail address to send it to you—please verify your contact information at [www.aibs.org/individual-membership](http://www.aibs.org/individual-membership).

ence and policymaking in New Mexico by providing the tools required for quantitative, science-driven discussion of difficult water policy options facing the state in the 21st century.

The NM EPSCoR program gathers resources and expertise from academic institutions, national labs, private industry, and state and federal sources to benefit education, the environment, and the New Mexican economy. The initiative focuses on ensuring that New Mexicans gain access to superior education, state-of-the-art research, and the quality of life and employment that comes with an active and competitive science and technology base.

For more information about AIBS policy and communication training programs, please visit [www.aibs.org/public-policy/policy\\_training.html](http://www.aibs.org/public-policy/policy_training.html).

## NSC Alliance President to Lead Woods Hole Research Center

The president of the Natural Science Collections Alliance, William Y. Brown, will be the next president and director of the Woods Hole Research Center, an independent, nonprofit institute focused on environmental science, education, and public policy. The center, located in Falmouth, Massachusetts, has projects in the Amazon, the Arctic, Africa, the mid-Atlantic, and New England, as well as integrative efforts at continental to global scales. Brown will begin his appointment at the center on 1 February 2010. He is currently the president and chief executive officer of the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia. The previous

director of the Woods Hole Research Center, John Holdren, was appointed to be science adviser to President Obama and director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy.

## AIBS Welcomes New Member Society

AIBS welcomes the American Society of Primatologists (ASP; [www.asp.org/](http://www.asp.org/)) into membership.

As described on its Web site, the purposes of this society are both educational and scientific. Its goals are to promote and encourage the discovery and exchange of information regarding primates. Anyone engaged in scientific primatology or interested in supporting these goals may apply for membership. The society is established as a nonprofit corporation under the nonprofit laws of the state of Washington and the United States.

Robert Gropp, the director of public policy at AIBS, has been corresponding with the leadership at ASP about potentially sponsoring a policy fellow or making a public policy contribution. We are pleased to have them among our member organizations.

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## Participate in the ActionBioscience.org Visitor Survey

ActionBioscience.org, the bilingual educational Web site produced by AIBS, is running an online survey in English and Spanish to learn more about the site's visitors and to gauge user satisfaction with the site's content and usability.

Some educators use the Spanish version of the site with students whose first language is not English. The resource may improve students' scientific literacy skills, especially if they experience difficulty reading scientific information in English.

Is ActionBioscience.org of value to you? What do you prefer to read, teach, or study? How can AIBS better meet your needs? Please let us know by participating in our visitor survey. The English version is located at [www.actionbioscience.org/2009-survey.html](http://www.actionbioscience.org/2009-survey.html) and the Spanish version is at [www.actionbioscience.org/esp/encuesta.html](http://www.actionbioscience.org/esp/encuesta.html).

## Recent Articles Online at [www.actionbioscience.org](http://www.actionbioscience.org)

### Original articles in English

- "Coral Reefs Under Stress," by Peter J. Mumby, of the University of Exeter, United Kingdom. In this article, Mumby explains why coral reefs are more critical to an ocean's health than you might think, and investigates the effects of climate change and ocean acidification on coral reef ecosystems. Read the article online at [www.actionbioscience.org/environment/mumby.html](http://www.actionbioscience.org/environment/mumby.html).
- "Investigating Foodborne Illness," by Robert Tauxe, Deputy Director of the Division of Foodborne, Bacterial, and Mycotic Diseases, National Center for Zoonotic, Vector-borne, and Enteric Diseases, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In an interview at this year's AIBS annual meeting, Tauxe talked about multistate outbreaks and how they are tracked. Read the

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interview at [www.actionbioscience.org/newfrontiers/tauxe.html](http://www.actionbioscience.org/newfrontiers/tauxe.html).

## Recent "Technology: An Educational Issue" blog posts

This blog about issues in educational technology discusses ways to learn and teach the biological sciences using technology. Recent posts and discussions include copyright-friendly wikis, tech tools for schools, and student copyright awareness. Visit the blog at <http://teachissues.blogspot.com/>.

## Spanish translations of previously posted articles

- "Una Vez en un Millón de Años: Como Enseñar el Tiempo Geológico" [Once in a Million Years: Teaching Geologic Time], by Susan E. Lewis, Kristen A. Lampe, and Andrew J. Lloyd, of Carroll University. In this article, the authors offer suggestions about how to help students understand the magnitude of geologic time. Read the article in Spanish at [www.actionbioscience.org/esp/educacion/lewis\\_lampe\\_lloyd.html](http://www.actionbioscience.org/esp/educacion/lewis_lampe_lloyd.html) or in English at [www.actionbioscience.org/education/lewis\\_lampe\\_lloyd.html](http://www.actionbioscience.org/education/lewis_lampe_lloyd.html).

- "Comparación de los genomas de las especies" [Species: Comparing their Genomes]. This is an adaptation of a report from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute that illustrates why there are discoveries to be made by mapping the genome of different species. Read the article in Spanish at [www.actionbioscience.org/esp/genomic/hhmi.html](http://www.actionbioscience.org/esp/genomic/hhmi.html) or in English at [www.actionbioscience.org/genomic/hhmi.html](http://www.actionbioscience.org/genomic/hhmi.html).



**Recent Public Policy Reports Online at [www.aibs.org/public-policy-reports](http://www.aibs.org/public-policy-reports)**

**Public Policy Report for 26 October 2009**

- **AIBS, scientific organizations reaffirm consensus on climate change.** AIBS and other leading scientific organizations have reaffirmed the scientific consensus that climate change is occurring and is caused primarily by human activities. In a statement sent to all US senators on 21 October, the presidents of 18 scientific organizations stated that “rigorous scientific research” demonstrates that the greenhouse gases emitted by human activities are the “primary driver” of climate change.
- **New evolution hall to open at Smithsonian.** On 14 October, the Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History announced the new Hall of Human Origins. The hall, which will be dedicated to the discovery and understanding of human origins, is scheduled to open on 17 March 2010, a date that marks the 100-year anniversary of the museum’s opening.
- **Science elevated within National Park Service.** The National Park Service (NPS) has appointed

Gary Machlis to be the first science adviser to the director. As science adviser, Machlis will play a key role in advancing science within the NPS and advising the director on science policy and programs.

- **McNutt confirmed as director of the US Geological Survey.** On 21 October, Marcia McNutt was confirmed as the new director of the US Geological Survey. She will also serve as science adviser to Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar.
- **Policymakers should consider the environmental impacts of biofuels.** When considering the life-cycle impacts of biofuels, assessment of greenhouse gas emissions is not enough, according to two recent reports from the United Nations Environment Program and the US Government Accountability Office.

**Public Policy Report for 13 October 2009**

- **Congress continues work on fiscal year 2010 appropriations.** In an effort to pass all 12 fiscal year 2010 spending bills, including the various measures that fund biological science research, Congress is working through its appropriations processes.

- **Climate legislation introduced in Senate.** Senators Barbara Boxer (D–CA) and John Kerry (D–MA) introduced climate change legislation on 30 September 2009, weeks after the anticipated release. The Kerry-Boxer bill (S. 1733) would seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve energy efficiency, promote renewable energy, transition to a green economy, and adapt to the impacts of climate change.
- **Federal agencies take action on climate.** Even though Congress has not enacted legislation to address climate change, President Obama and the federal agencies are nonetheless pressing forward with initiatives to respond to climate change.
- **Another blow for science education in Louisiana.** On 16 September 2009 the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education ignored education professionals in the state’s Department of Education and allowed a religious lobbying group, the Louisiana Family Forum, to dictate procedures for complaints on creationist supplementary materials used in school science classes.

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*Phi Sigma*

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The Academic Honor Society for the Biological Sciences

- established in 1915 for the recognition of academic excellence and research in the biological sciences
- member of the American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS)
- member of the Association of College Honor Societies (ACHS)
- affiliate of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)

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