

AIBSnews

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AIBS*news*

SEPTEMBER 2009/VOLUME 59 NUMBER 8

AIBS Recognizes Four New Members

AIBS is pleased to announce that four new organizations have become member societies of AIBS.

Grambling State University, Department of Biological Sciences. The Department of Biological Sciences at Grambling State University (GSU) has recently joined AIBS. The Biological Sciences Department, which is headed by Felix I. Ifeanyi, aims to (a) provide an intellectual climate for the development of critical thinking; (b) provide training in preprofessional areas of study; (c) provide training for in-service secondary school biology teachers; (d) offer service courses for nonmajors; and (e) share knowledge through community service, seminars, and workshops. The department offers concentrations in general biology and wildlife biology. Additionally, an active biology club at GSU encourages cooperation and friendship among biology majors to assist students in preparing for the future, to promote an interest in biology and other sciences among college and grade-school students, and to encourage collaboration with other science clubs. For more information about GSU, please visit www.gram.edu.

George Mason University, Undergraduate Biology Program. AIBS is excited to have the undergraduate biology program at George Mason University (GMU) become a part of its membership. The biology program at GMU offers the undergraduate student a comprehensive yet liberal education in the biological sciences. With diverse interests in biology and environmental science, the faculty offer a broad range of courses. Student internships in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area are encouraged to supplement the student's

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.

university education. The programs offer field studies in plants, animals, and ecology, and provide the background necessary for careers in many areas of biological science, such as environmental management, microbiology, molecular biology, biotechnology, genetics, secondary education, and medical technology. Students are also prepared for advanced studies in the life sciences, medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, and allied disciplines. For more information about GMU, please visit www.gmu.edu.

Genetics Society of America. AIBS is glad to welcome the Genetics Society of America (GSA) to its membership. The GSA aims to serve researchers, scientists, teachers, engineers, breeders, and geneticists-in-training by (a) facilitating communication between geneticists, (b) promoting research that will bring new discoveries in genetics, (c) fostering the training of the next generation of geneticists so they can effectively respond to the opportunities provided by our discoveries and the challenges posed by them, and (d) educating the public and their government representatives about advances in genetics and the consequences to individuals and to society. The GSA endeavors to be the collective voice of its members on subjects for which a deep knowledge of genetics and biological science is critically important.

Founded in 1931, the GSA is the professional membership organization for geneticists and science educators. Its

nearly 4000 members work to advance knowledge in the basic mechanisms of inheritance, from the molecular to the population level. The GSA is dedicated to promoting research in genetics and to facilitating communication among geneticists worldwide through GSA conferences, including the biennial conference "Model Organisms to Human Biology," an interdisciplinary meeting on current and cutting edge topics in genetics research, as well as annual and biennial meetings that focus on the genetics of particular organisms. The GSA publishes *Genetics*, the leading journal in the field. For more information about GSA, please visit www.genetics-gsa.org.

Association for Biology Laboratory Education. We are pleased to have the

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Association for Biology Laboratory Education (ABLE) join AIBS. The ABLE was founded in 1979 to promote information exchange among university and college educators actively concerned with teaching biology in a laboratory setting. The focus of ABLE is to improve the undergraduate biology laboratory experience by promoting the development and dissemination of interesting, innovative, and reliable laboratory exercises. Developing interesting and proven laboratory activities, identifying reliable suppliers of biological materials, maintaining and managing living laboratory organisms, training assistants for laboratory teaching, addressing animal-use issues, and implementing safe laboratory practices are some of the challenges that the organization addresses through its annual conference, its Web site, and its newsletter, *Labstracts*. For more information about ABLE, please visit www.ableweb.org.

“Evolution in Extreme Environments” Cosponsored by AIBS and NESCent

AIBS and the National Evolutionary Synthesis Center (NESCent) are cosponsoring the sixth annual evolution symposium on Friday, 13 November, at the National Association of Biology Teachers' 2009 Professional Development Conference in Denver, Colorado.

The four speakers who will discuss the symposium's theme, “Evolution in Extreme Environments,” are Cynthia M. Beall, of Case Western Reserve University; Jody W. Deming, of the University of Washington; Steven Haddock, of Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute, and William R. Jeffery, of the University of Maryland. A workshop will take place in the afternoon for educators seeking resources to incorporate evolution in extreme environments into their classrooms. Conference registration is required to attend the symposium and workshop. Visit www.nabt2009.org for information about conference registration. To learn more details about the symposium and workshop, visit www.aibs.org/special-symposia.

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AIBS Public Policy Office at Evolution 2009

AIBS public policy associate Jenna Jadin traveled to Moscow, Idaho, in mid-June to participate in Evolution 2009, the annual meeting of the Society for the Study of Evolution, the Society of Systematic Biologists, and the American Society of Naturalists.

Jadin shared with conference participants the various science and education policy initiatives that AIBS conducts on behalf of the science community. She also highlighted the new AIBS Legislative Action Center.

The Public Policy Office (PPO) was represented at a booth in the vendor area where meeting participants could learn about AIBS and the PPO, purchase AIBS publications, and sign up for the Legislative Action Center. During the closing banquet, Jadin gave a brief presentation about AIBS policy initiatives and the Legislative Action Center to an audience of about 400.

If you are interested in learning more about AIBS policy initiatives or securing an AIBS policy or media training program for your society's conference, please visit www.aibs.org/public-policy or send an e-mail to publicpolicy@aibs.org.

Presentations from the 2009 Annual Meeting Online at the AIBS Media Library

The AIBS Media Library holds recordings of plenary lectures delivered by eminent biologists at AIBS annual meetings from 2000 onward. Recordings of other AIBS events are also included. You can view synchronized audio and video presentations, and slides and transcripts of most presentations are available as well.

Presentations from the 2009 AIBS annual meeting, “Sustainable Agriculture: Greening the Global Food Supply,” are now online. To view the presentations, go to www.aibs.org/media-library.

AIBS Recognizes Diversity in the Biological Sciences

AIBS is committed to advancing participation in the biological sciences for individuals from traditionally underrepresented groups, including women, minorities, and persons with disabilities.

Each year AIBS recognizes either exemplary students from these groups or a program dedicated to broadening participation in the biological sciences. The AIBS Board of Directors and the awards committee are pleased to announce the 2009 Diversity Scholar: Danielle N. Lee.

Lee is a candidate for a PhD in biological sciences at the University of Missouri–St. Louis. Lee’s current research is an examination of individual differences and behavioral syndromes; her dissertation title is “Individual differences in exploratory behavior of prairie voles, *Microtus ochogaster*.” Lee is an active member of the Animal Behavior Society, and serves on its Education and Diversity Committees. Her interest in outreach to underserved groups, particularly African-Americans, includes mentoring undergraduate and high-school students and participating in after-school science programs. Lee also writes a science blog geared to young people from the inner city about urban ecology and environmental science. You can visit her blog, Urban Science Adventures! at <http://urban-science.blogspot.com>. Lee’s research awards include grants and fellowships from the National Science Foundation, the American Society of Mammalogists, and Sigma Xi. Lee will complete her degree program in 2009 and plans to pursue an academic career that emphasizes science outreach to and the participation of underserved audiences.

AIBS Honors Outstanding Contributions to the Biological Sciences

Each year AIBS recognizes eminent individuals or groups for outstanding contributions to the biological sciences. The AIBS Board of Directors and Awards Committee are pleased to announce the following award winners for 2009:

- **Distinguished Scientist Award:** Joseph Felsenstein, University of Washington
- **Outstanding Service Award:** Robert T. Pennock, Michigan State University

- **Education Award:** Bruce Alberts, *Science* magazine, University of California, San Francisco

- **President’s Citation Award:** Michael Pollan, author of *In Defense of Food: An Eater’s Manifesto*, University of California, Berkeley

- **Past-President’s Award:** Rita Colwell, University of Maryland, Johns Hopkins University

- **Media Award:** Chip Rowe, *Playboy* magazine

These awards were presented at the AIBS annual meeting, “Sustainable Agriculture: Greening the Global Food Supply,” on 18 May.

AIBS President May Berenbaum and Executive Director Richard O’Grady said in a joint statement: “AIBS is pleased to honor such exceptional and dedicated individuals. Though they are from diverse backgrounds, they have all made significant positive contributions to the field of biology.”

For more information about AIBS award programs, please visit www.aibs.org/about-aibs/awards.html.

AIBS Sponsors Biological Sciences Congressional District Visits Week

Each August, representatives and senators spend time in their congressional districts and home states. This time presents an outstanding opportunity for individuals to meet with members of Congress and to share the value of their research with those who cast the votes that shape the nation’s science policy. In August, AIBS, with the support of event sponsors (Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Sevilleta Field Station, Society for Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry–North America, and Natural Science Collections Alliance), launched the first Biological Sciences Congressional District Visits Week.

This nationwide event allowed scientists to meet with their elected officials in their own district rather than in Washington, DC, and enabled elected officials

to learn firsthand about the science and research facilities in their district.

This year’s Biological Sciences Congressional District Visits Week was 17–21 August, during which participating scientists and representatives of research facilities (e.g., field stations, natural science collections) met with their members of Congress to discuss the importance of sustained federal investments in biological science research and education. Participants and their elected officials met at the congressional district office or at a research facility, laboratory, or classroom.

Participants were prepared for congressional meetings by an interactive online training session that helped them create and refine their message. The AIBS Public Policy Office also gave participating scientists tips and guidance for scheduling meetings.

Organizations that wish to support the 2010 Congressional District Visits Week should contact Robert Gropp, AIBS director of public policy, at 202-628-1500, extension 250, for additional information.

Recent Executive Director’s Blog Entries Online at <http://blogs.aibs.org/richardogrady>

- You really should join the Facebook group for Transforming Undergraduate Biology Education and Mobilizing the Community for change
- AIBS DC office sublease available
- Twitter—me? You bet. U should 2.

Recent Education Reports Online at www.aibs.org

The AIBS Education Report is distributed broadly by e-mail six times a year to AIBS membership leaders and contacts, including an association’s president, president-elect, secretary, treasurer, executive director, AIBS council representative, journal editor, newsletter editor, public policy committee chair, public policy representative, and education committee chair. All material from these reports may

be reproduced or forwarded. Please mention AIBS as the source; office staff appreciate receiving copies of materials used.

Anyone interested may subscribe to receive these free reports by e-mail or RSS newsfeed by going to www.aibs.org/education-signup. If you would like to share information about your organization's education initiatives with the AIBS community, please send an e-mail to the AIBS Education Office at educationoffice@aibs.org.

Education Report for July/August 2009

- Symposium and teaching workshop on "Evolution in Extreme Environments"
- Using issues to teach biology
- Opportunities for support through the National Institute for Mathematical and Biological Synthesis
- BSCS in search of high-school and middle-school field test teachers
- Enhance your understanding and practice of evidence-based teaching
- EarthTrek: Operation RubyThroat
- The Encyclopedia of Life for teaching and learning
- Your input needed for a new Smithsonian exhibit
- National Science Foundation releases *Science Nation*

Education Report for May/June 2009

- "Evolution in Extreme Environments," a symposium cosponsored by AIBS and the National Evolutionary Synthesis Center
- The National Association of Biology Teacher's BioBlog: Talking about biology teaching

- NESCent's evolution speaker series
- ChloroFilms' plant life video contest results
- How can we improve the AIBS Education Report?

Recent Articles Online at www.actionbioscience.org

"Technology: An Education Issue?" is a blog about issues in educational technology and discusses ways to learn and teach the biological sciences using technology at <http://teachissues.blogspot.com>.

"Technology: An Education Issue?" Blog Posts

- Understanding science
- Web conversations
- Process of science

Original article in English

- "Can Agricultural Biotechnology Be Green?", interview with Fred Gould, North Carolina State University. In this interview Gould discusses genetically engineered crops, environmentally friendly farming, and insects for biocontrol. You can read the interview at www.actionbioscience.org/biotech/gould.html.

Spanish translation of a previously posted article

- "Control de Enfermedades Transportadas por el Aire" [Airborne Disease Control: Is the Air Indoors Safe?], by Wladyslaw Jan Kowalski, Pennsylvania State University. In this article, Kowalski suggests ways to minimize aerobiological health hazards such as allergens, mold spores, bacteria, and viruses that cause infectious diseases. You can read the article in English at www.actionbioscience.org/newfrontiers/kowalski.html and

in Spanish at www.actionbioscience.org/esp/nuevas-fronteras/kowalski.html.

Recent Public Policy Reports Online at www.aibs.org

Public Policy Report for 3 August 2009

- Natural science collections campaign for presidential executive order
- Congress authorizes new research programs for Department of Energy
- New report profiles undergraduates majoring in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) fields
- Congress advances energy, National Institutes of Health appropriations
- Obama fills key science post at State Department
- Registration deadline approaching for Biological Sciences Congressional Districts Visits Week

Public Policy Report for 20 July 2009

- New report reveals American attitudes toward science
- Communicating science Webinar: Register today
- Call for participants: First Biological Sciences Congressional District Visits Week
- Agriculture and energy spending bills advance in both chambers
- President announces nominations for National Institutes of Health, US Geological Survey
- NOAA seeks nominations for science advisory board, announces grants

- Evolution education update

Public Policy Report for 6 July 2009

- AIBS Public Policy Office to host communicating science Webinar: Register today
- House passes climate change bill
- Interior appropriations moving through Congress
- Senate committee proposes fiscal year 2010 funding for National Science Foundation, NOAA spending
- Comments sought on ocean research plan
- National Science Foundation funds stimulus study

Public Policy Report for 22 June 2009

- House approves fiscal year 2010 appropriations for the National Science Foundation, NOAA: US Geological Survey, Environmental Protection Agency, US Department of Agriculture could be next
- Help influence FY 2010 science funding: Write Congress today
- Auditor reviews scientific integrity at the Environmental Protection Agency
- The National Science Foundation releases guidelines for new BREAD program
- White House orders new ocean policy task force

- President nominates biologist to lead Fish and Wildlife Service
- Environmental research parks approved by House panel
- New conservation corps engages youth in natural resources
- New report on national climate impacts
- Call for nominations: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change special report



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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)

For more information, contact: Henry R. Owen, Ph.D.
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