

local governments; and we will, over time, enhance the cost-effectiveness and strategic capacities of marine, coastal, and water resource governance and economic development.”

“The Coordination Team and its partners offer plenty of compelling vision, but we have a long way to go,” Colt added. “Nevertheless, it was particularly encouraging to have the General Assembly endorse and support our efforts through passage

of Budget Article 30 last summer, despite an enormously challenging state budget situation that we all must cope with and help to resolve.”

—Chip Young

KNAUSS FELLOWS WORKING IN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ON OCEAN, COASTAL ISSUES

This year, Rhode Island Sea Grant has sent four graduate students to Washington, D.C., for one-year, \$41,500, National Sea Grant College Program Dean John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowships. **Marselle Alexander-Ozinskas, Karen Hyun, Jennifer Mehaffey, and Christine Patrick** are among 48 Knauss Fellows who began working in the federal government on marine and coastal issues in February.

Alexander-Ozinskas, who recently received her master’s of science from the Brown University-Woods Hole Marine Biological Laboratory Program, has studied climate change in Alaska and received honors and awards for her scientific research, but a semester studying coastal ecology in Tanzania, where her work was constrained by cultural, political, and economic issues, taught her some of the limitations of science. Even in the United States, she says, society and technology “make it possible for most individuals to overlook the fact that we exist in a fragile living system that we affect and are affected by.” Through her Knauss Fellowship, she wants to bridge the gap between science and public knowledge and policy. Alexander-Ozinskas is working in the office of Guam delegate Congresswoman Madeleine Bordallo. Bordallo is a member of the House Committee on Natural Resources and serves as chair of the Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife and Oceans.

Hyun, a doctoral candidate in marine affairs at URI, earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in Earth systems, what she calls “science with a socially responsible conscience,” from Stanford University and received a Fulbright Scholarship to study fisheries management in South Korea. Her graduate work involves ecosystem-based management in the Colorado River Delta, and her interest is in reconciling jurisdictional boundaries with the ecosystems that cross those boundaries. Hyun is working for the Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife and Oceans in the House Committee on Natural Resources.

Mehaffey recently graduated from the joint-degree program that offers a master’s in marine affairs from URI and a law degree from Roger Williams University. Her experience ranges from volunteer work with prison inmates in New York to researching and drafting a municipal harbor management plan for the city of Warwick on behalf of the R.I. Coastal Resources Management Council. She is currently working with the Northeast Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel on a regional ballast water management plan to control invasive species. Mehaffey had dropped out of high school at 16, but went on to become a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society and graduate magna cum laude from Mount Holyoke College. She also received the 2006 National Association of Women Judges Award for Access to Justice. Mehaffey calls her work with city decision makers inspiring: “I had read numerous reports, legal opinions, and policy rationales, but nothing was more instructive than learning from these people whose lives are impacted on a daily basis by these concerns.” Mehaffey is working as an assistant to the Committee on the Marine Transportation System (a Cabinet-level interagency partnership).



Rhode Island Sea Grant’s 2008 Knauss Fellows are (from left): Christine Patrick, Jennifer Mehaffey, Marselle Alexander-Ozinskas, and Karen Hyun.

Patrick, who is pursuing her master’s in marine affairs from URI, worked for the American Fisheries Society in Bethesda, Md., where she saw conscientious scientists “shy away from questions about how their research informs policy” to the frustration of policymakers and environmental activists. Volunteering with the Washington, D.C., chapter of the Surfrider Foundation revealed another struggle: that of citizens unsure of how to use research to help improve their local environments. She says she “knew then that I wanted to serve as a translator of scientific information” for the benefit of scientists, policymakers, and users. Patrick is working as the Government and Public Affairs Fellow in the office of Ocean Exploration and Research, and is helping with the Smithsonian Ocean Hall, which opens September 25, 2008.

The Knauss Fellowship, established in 1979, matches highly qualified graduate students interested in ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes resources and in the national policy decisions affecting those resources with hosts in the federal, legislative, or executive branches of government.

—Monica Allard Cox