



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 26, 2008

Contact: Holly Menninger
hmenninger@aibs.org
202-628-1500 x229

AIBS NAMES 2008 EMERGING PUBLIC POLICY LEADERS
Graduate students from Stanford and UC–Riverside will travel to Washington, DC to speak to lawmakers about federal funding for research

WASHINGTON, DC – The American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS), a scientific organization based in Washington, DC dedicated to advancing biological research for the benefit of society, named **Cheryl Logan**, a doctoral candidate in biological sciences at Hopkins Marine Station of Stanford University, and **Caroline Ridley**, a doctoral candidate in plant biology at the University of California–Riverside, as recipients of the 2008 AIBS Emerging Public Policy Leader Award (EPPLA).

Since 2003, AIBS has recognized promising biology graduate students with demonstrated leadership skills and an interest in science policy. Logan and Ridley receive an AIBS membership, including a subscription to the journal *BioScience*, and will travel to Washington, DC, in April to participate in a congressional visits event sponsored by the Biological and Ecological Sciences Coalition. They will meet with members of Congress and their staffs and attend briefings on federal funding for research by senior members of the science policy community.

“Participation in the Congressional Visits Day will allow me to utilize and build my communication skills, interact with members of Congress, and convince them of the value of federal funding for basic and applied biological research,” **Cheryl Logan** said of her upcoming trip. “This opportunity will provide me with preparation for my desired role as a well-rounded professor in educating communities and students as well as influencing critical environmental management decisions.”

Before her doctoral studies at Hopkins Marine Station, Logan earned undergraduate degrees in molecular and cell biology and integrative biology from the University of California–Berkeley in 2002. She was awarded a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship in 2005 to study the effects of environmental change on marine fishes. Logan’s dissertation research examines how long-jawed mudsuckers, a common estuarine fish, are able to adapt to changes in water temperature that might occur with climate change or heat effluent from power plants.

Logan is active in the Partnership for Interdisciplinary Studies of Coastal Oceans (PISCO), a research consortium involving marine scientists from four universities along the western coast of the United States who are working collaboratively to develop a comprehensive understanding of how coastal marine ecosystems function. As part of her involvement with PISCO, Logan has

engaged in public outreach at Hopkins Marine Station and has participated in workshops on science communication and public policy.

“Science policy is a long-standing interest of mine,” **Caroline Ridley** said. “My central concern is the disconnect that exists between scientists who practice their discipline and lawmakers who allocate funding for it. I look forward to speaking with my congressional delegation and persuading them that a strong financial commitment to scientific research is deeply important to the health and welfare of people and the environment.”

Before her graduate work at the University of California–Riverside, Ridley earned an undergraduate degree in biology from Grinnell College in 2001. She was awarded a US Environmental Protection Agency Science to Achieve Results Fellowship in 2005 to support her doctoral research investigating how hybrids formed between the cultivated radish species and a wild cousin have developed into a weed that has successfully invaded areas prone to human and natural disturbance throughout California. By understanding the genetic and evolutionary factors that have led to this new invasive radish hybrid, Ridley hopes her research will inform invasive plant management throughout the state. Ridley is a member of AIBS, the Society for the Study of Evolution, and the California Invasive Plant Council.

In addition to her research, Ridley has served her university community. Most recently, she chaired the Registration Fee Advisory Committee, a group composed of undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and staff that determines what and how student services on campus will be supported by the mandatory registration fees.

“AIBS is committed to improving the public understanding of science and communicating its value to society,” said Executive Director **Richard O’Grady**. “We applaud Cheryl Logan and Caroline Ridley for exemplifying this commitment through their work.”

Robert Gropp, AIBS director of public policy added, “By participating in the 2008 Congressional visits event, Cheryl and Caroline are playing an important role in bridging the communication gap between our nation’s policymakers and the scientific community.”

AIBS is also pleased to recognize **Allison Leidner**, a PhD candidate in zoology at North Carolina State University, and **Yiwei Wang**, a PhD candidate in environmental studies at the University of California–Santa Cruz as 2008 EPPLA honorable mentions.

###

ABOUT AIBS

The American Institute of Biological Sciences is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) scientific association dedicated to advancing biological research and education for the welfare of society. Founded in 1947 as a part of the National Academy of Sciences, AIBS became an independent, member-governed organization in the 1950s. Today, headquartered in Washington, DC, with a staff of approximately 50, AIBS is sustained by a robust membership of some 5,000 biologists and 200 professional societies and scientific organizations; the combined individual membership of the latter exceeds 250,000. AIBS advances its mission through participating in coalition activities in research, education, and public policy; publishing the peer-reviewed journal *BioScience* and the education Web site *ActionBioscience.org*; providing scientific peer-review and advisory services to government agencies and other clients; convening meetings; and managing scientific programs. Web site: www.aibs.org.