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AIBS NAMES EMERGING PUBLIC POLICY LEADERS ***Boston University and University of Colorado Graduate Students Receive Award***

WASHINGTON, DC – The American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS) has selected two graduate students to receive the 2012 AIBS Emerging Public Policy Leadership Award (EPPLA). **Lida Beninson** is a Ph.D. candidate in Integrative Physiology at the University of Colorado Boulder. **Andrew Reinmann** is a Ph.D. candidate in Biology at Boston University.

“We applaud Lida and Andrew for their leadership and accomplishments at the interface of science and policy,” said **AIBS Executive Director Dr. Richard O’Grady**. “AIBS is committed to fostering a productive dialogue between policymakers and scientists, and the EPPLA program is an important part of this work.”

Since 2003, AIBS has recognized the achievements of biology graduate students who have demonstrated an interest and aptitude for contributing to science and public policy. AIBS will bring Beninson and Reinmann to Washington, DC in March to meet with their Congressional delegations. The winners will also participate in a training program on communicating with policymakers and will be briefed on the federal budget for scientific research. These events are in conjunction with the annual Biological and Ecological Sciences Coalition (BESC) Congressional Visits Day. The winners will also receive a certificate and one-year membership in AIBS, which includes a subscription to the journal *BioScience*.

“Lida and Andrew are great role models for scientists who are interested in working at the interface of science and policy,” said **AIBS President Dr. Susan Stafford**. “The leadership and enthusiasm they demonstrate will help bridge the communication gap between our nation’s policymakers and the scientific community.”

“I believe that attending the trainings associated with Congressional Visits Day will substantially broaden my experience and insight into how policy decisions are made and what factors influence those decisions,” said **Lida Beninson**.

Lida Beninson is pursuing a Ph.D. in integrative physiology at the University of Colorado Boulder. She is an editor of *The Journal of Science Policy and Governance* and a founding member of the Forum on Science Ethics and Policy, which seeks to facilitate communication between the scientific community and the public. Lida previously interned at the National Science Foundation’s Division of Biological Infrastructure, where she evaluated the success of two programs designed to expand undergraduate participation in scientific research. Lida has

also been active in science education; she developed and taught a curriculum for middle school students on human anatomy and physiology. She earned a bachelor's degree in neuropsychology and a certificate in elementary education from Princeton University.

“I look forward to the opportunity to enhance my ability to communicate science and the importance of science to policy makers and to further my understanding of federal science budgets and the legislative process,” said **Andrew Reinmann**.

Andrew Reinmann is pursuing a Ph.D. in biology at Boston University. He has extensive experience communicating science to policymakers and the public. Reinmann developed a protocol for quantifying the carbon footprint of development and worked with local municipalities to mitigate climate change through land-use planning. He is currently organizing an interdisciplinary forum for graduate students in the Boston area to improve their communication skills. Reinmann is a member of AIBS and the recipient of a Science to Achieve Results Graduate Fellowship from the Environmental Protection Agency. He has a Master's degree in forestry from the University of Maine and a bachelor's degree in environmental studies from Binghamton University.

This year, AIBS will also recognize **Lindsay Chura**, a Ph.D. student in psychiatry at the University of Cambridge, as EPPLA Honorable Mention.

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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. AIBS is sustained by a robust membership of nearly 160 professional societies and scientific organizations; the combined individual membership of the latter exceeds 250,000. AIBS advances its mission through coalition activities in research, education, and public policy; publishing the peer-reviewed journal *BioScience* and the education website ActionBioscience.org; providing scientific peer review and advisory services to government agencies and other clients; convening meetings; and managing scientific programs. Website: www.aibs.org.

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