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Dr. J Frances Allen: Pioneer of Women in Fisheries

Gwen White, Julie Claussen, Christine Moffitt, Brenda Norcross, and Donna Parrish



J Frances Allen, known as Jady to those who knew her. (Photo courtesy of Lochie Jo Allen)



Jady and Lochie Jo as young children. (Photo courtesy of Lochie Jo Allen)

Dr. J Frances Allen—Jady to those who knew and loved her—a pioneer of women's involvement in the field of fisheries, passed away on February 11, 2011. The combined talents of Jady and her sister, Lochie Jo Allen (of Front Royal, Virginia), significantly influenced the development of scientific publications and women's participation in the American Fisheries Society (AFS). However, many of us may know little about how these pioneering women came to excel in the field of fisheries at a time when few women were taken seriously. Here is the story of Jady and the women she touched—through her life and her scholarship.

Jady—a combination/derivation of her first name, J, combined with the endearment *Dear*—was born April 14, 1916, in New York. From the beginning, she was an outdoor adventurer. Two events helped formulate her career. She had a beautiful singing voice and thought of music performance, but a bout with pneumonia changed her voice and caused her to consider other interests, including the sciences. While attending junior high, she and Lochie Jo lost their father; however, their mother had a strong influence, so when she took her daughters hiking or to stop and sit at the edge of a stream to eat lunch, they fell in love with the natural world.



Jady and her first microscope. (Photo courtesy of Lochie Jo Allen)



Jady studying Striped Bass. (Photo courtesy of Lochie Jo Allen)

As a young student at the State Teachers College in Virginia (now Radford University), Jady's research paper on snails was written so well that her instructors strongly encouraged her to pursue science and provided access to fieldwork. Thus, she began a lifelong interest in marine systems at the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory, Solomons Island, Maryland, during the summer of 1937 and continued with a DuPont Scholarship in the summer of 1938 at the Mountain Lake Biological Station of the University of Virginia.

Jady received her B.S. degree (1938) from the State Teachers College and her M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in zoology (1948 and 1952, respectively) from the University of Maryland. Before graduate school she taught secondary school science in Virginia, West Virginia, and New York and was assistant professor of science at Radford College during the summers of the mid-1940s. At the time Radford was a women's college, except in the summer when some coed classes were offered.

While teaching in Virginia, Jady became one of the founders of the Virginia Junior Academy of Science. She was a graduate assistant at the University of Maryland (1947–1948), then an instructor, and, following that, she became assistant professor of zoology of the University of Maryland, where she taught, among other courses, fisheries biology and management, shellfisheries, animal ecology, and marine zoology.



Jady taking her students out on the Chesapeake. (Photo courtesy of Lochie Jo Allen)



Lochie Jo (left), co-founder and first editor of *Fisheries* magazine, with older sister Jady (right). (Photo courtesy of Lochie Jo Allen)

Jady never let being a woman dissuade her from participating in professional societies or conducting her own fieldwork. As a professor at the University of Maryland, she led her students on many scientific cruises into the Chesapeake Bay to study molluscs (clams, oysters, snails), blue crab, fish (Striped Bass), and prawns.

She felt very strongly about the community of scientists and truly enjoyed associating with her colleagues and supporting her students. She was reportedly the second woman to attend the annual meetings of the AFS. At her first event, she remembered meeting Dr. Emmeline Moore, who was an active member and—for many years—the only woman in a leadership position, having been elected as AFS president in 1927 (only 7 years after women were granted the right to vote in the United States. It was more than 55 years before the AFS installed another female president, in 1983.) For 9 years she was editor of the AFS retiree's newsletter, *Homopiscis rusticus*.

Her sister, Lochie Jo, was a pioneer in her own right. In fact, she started *Fisheries* magazine. At the time, her title was associate editor (1976–1983), although she truly was the first



Jady was often the only woman present during business meetings. (Photo courtesy of Lochie Jo Allen)

editor of the AFS flagship magazine (later the board changed the name of the position to managing editor). Needless to say, both sisters were accomplished, independent women whose complementary efforts supported the early scientific and publication mechanisms of the AFS.

In 1948, Jady joined the Systematic Biology Program of the National Science Foundation in Washington, D.C. In 1967 she left her position as associate program director to become chief of the Water Quality Requirements Branch, later named the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. At the time of her retirement in 1982 she was staff scientist—ecology for the Science Advisory Board, Office of the Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Jady lectured in 47 states and was the U.S. representative to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development World Conference on Water Quality in Paris, France, in 1973. Unlike many who went overseas to deliver a report written by others, Jady actually wrote the report she delivered. As successful as she was professionally, she was often met with curiosity and even disbelief over the fact that she was a woman. One summer lecture at a university, the hosts assumed that “Dr. Allen” was a man, so they reserved a room in the men’s dormitory. When Jady appeared, they had to send for a custodian to open the women’s dormitory, which had been closed for the summer. Clerks at some hotels refused to provide a room key, unconvinced that a “Dr. Allen” could be the woman standing in front of them. She had to produce a male scientist who could vouch for her, as she said with some exasperation, “Would you please tell this lady who I am?” Misidentification through her name led to other well-deserved recognitions before such recognition was typical for a woman. At a time when women were not considered for listing, Jady’s biography appeared in the *American Men of Science*, because they mistakenly thought Frances

was a man’s name. Interestingly—yet not surprising—one of Jady’s biggest fans was a young man she taught. His mother wrote to Jady to tell how she would always remember how happy her son was when Jady asked him to take a class on lobster fishing. He then went on to pursue a career in the fisheries profession.

The J Frances Allen Scholarship was set up in 1987. Before she retired to New York, two of her colleagues told Jady that they had started the scholarship for women Ph.D. in fisheries, complete with a committee to review applications.

Dr. J Frances Allen of Front Royal, and formerly of Roxbury, New York, died Friday, February 11, 2011, at her home at The Southerlands. She is survived by her devoted sister, Lochie Jo Allen, of Front Royal, Virginia.

Jady will be missed by all who knew her—and for those who were not lucky enough to know her, they will have missed being in the presence of a true pioneer. Thankfully, her impact will live on through the J Frances Allen Scholarship.

The AFS would also like to thank Lochie Jo Allen for continuing to make her own impact with continued funding into her sister’s scholarship—as well as for her very own important work as the first editor of Fisheries. For those who would like to know more about Jady, please send mail to:

*Lochie Jo Allen
c/o The Southerland
600 Mount View Street
Front Royal, VA 22630*

CREATION OF A SCHOLARSHIP TO ENCOURAGE WOMEN IN FISHERIES PROFESSIONS

Twenty-five years ago, the J Frances Allen Scholarship was created in honor of this remarkable woman pioneer. The award recognizes the highest levels of academic achievement and is intended to encourage women to become fisheries scientists. A sportfishing company provided the initial \$10,000 to endow the scholarship. At the 1986 meeting, the first and only Fisheries Women’s Caucus was convened, with Brenda Norcross, now Second Vice President Donna Parrish, and other important women fisheries professionals as organizers and/or participants. Led by Julie Claussen (the group developed the EOS in the next few years), the meeting began with a bit of tension, because there were rumors that some men would be showing up to protest (on the grounds that any money should go to men or women alike), but in the end the crowd (made up of both sexes) was supportive and the first AFS scholarship just for women was inaugurated.

The qualified applicant for the J Frances Allen Scholarship must be a female Ph.D. student who is a member of the AFS. The applicant must be conducting aquatic research in line with AFS objectives in some aspect of fisheries science, including but not limited to aquatic biology, engineering, fish culture, limnology, oceanography, and sociology. Award recipients are evaluated on (1) promise as a fisheries scientist, (2) the potential to complete their proposed work, and (3) the significance of the proposed research to the advancement of fisheries science.

Many of those serving on the scholarship review committee indicate that it is a true pleasure to serve, because the applicants are women who are avidly pursuing research interests that range widely and focus intensively on science needs in fisheries management and related disciplines.

The idea for the scholarship was spawned by a number of AFS members concerned with the lack of diversity in the professional society. Recently, a similar scholarship in honor of Dr. Allen was established by the Institute of Malacology.

Scholarships Provide a Boost to Young Professionals

Testimonies from J Frances Allen scholars reveal the great significance that such an award can have in the young professional lives of the recipients. Funds provided through the J Frances Allen Scholarship played a significant role for many of the recipients, often building on resources from their programs to expand the horizons of their work to allow them to pursue fieldwork, obtain equipment, finance publications, stretch personal finances to meet demands on time from family and school, and attend scientific meetings.

In addition to the financial resources, recipients frequently cited the encouragement that came with knowing that others valued their professional accomplishments and future potential, encouraging their participation in research and in leadership positions within the AFS at a time when women continue to be underrepresented in the fisheries disciplines. The scholarship is positioned at a key time in the professional development of many women who are nearing completion of their doctorate and may need added resources to meet the many demands of their family and scholarly lives.

J Frances Allen Scholarship Recipients

- 1987 Elizabeth Marschall
- 1988 Deborah A. Bodolus
- 1989 Susan Sogard
- 1990 Lisa L. Williams
- 1991 Nancy A. Auer
- 1992 Susan C. Sponaugle
- 1993 Gwen White
- 1994 Jodee Hunt
- 1995 Dorothy E. Medeiros-Bergen

- 1996 Sandra Diamond
- 1997 Karen Mumford
- 1998 Tracy Galarowicz
- 1999 Lisa A. Eby
- 2000 Kimberly Howland
- 2001 Cynthia Kolar
- 2002 Amy Schrank
- 2003 Maureen Walsh
- 2004 Julie Kay Henry Zimmerman
- 2005 Stephanie Carlson
- 2006 Virginia Shervette
- 2007 Anne M. Cooper
- 2008 Melissa Wuellner
- 2009 Karen Murchie
- 2010 Marie-Ange Gravel
- 2011 Neala W. Kendall
- 2012 Brooke Penaluna

THE STORIES BEHIND THE J FRANCES ALLEN SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

Elizabeth “Libby” A. Marschall (1987)
Professor in Evolution, Ecology, and Organismal Biology at the Ohio State University



This is the 25th anniversary of the J Frances Allen Scholarship that I was awarded at the 117th Annual Meeting of the American Fisheries Society in Winston–Salem, North Carolina. As I thought about this recently, I reread the proposal I submitted as part of my application. That proposal, on “The Early Life History of Brook Trout: Population Consequences of Interactions with Rainbow Trout,” was a bit far afield from the coastal marine systems I had moved to North Carolina State University to study with my advisors Larry Crowder and Leslie Real. Despite having their full intellectual support for my research pursuits, I was proposing work in a system in which neither of them could provide significant financial or logistical support. The J Frances Allen Award provided funding for my first field season, including travel to the mountains of Virginia, the site of my research. The results of that field season provided the basis for future successful proposals for funding that ultimately allowed me to complete my dissertation research. Receiving the J Frances Allen award early in my career did not just fund a field season; being selected to receive the award also provided a needed statement to me that my behavior- and ecology-based fisheries research was acceptable in the eyes of a panel of fisheries experts. And I received a beautiful, complimentary letter from Dr. Allen herself (which I still have) that made me take even greater pride in this award.

Susan Sogard (1989)
National Marine Fisheries Service

Receiving the award was very helpful for me in covering field expenses for the final stage of my dissertation research at Rutgers University. I am currently the ecology branch chief for the Santa Cruz Laboratory of the Southwest Fisheries Science Center of the National Marine Fisheries Service. I supervise other researchers and lead the Early Life History Team, which conducts research on the ecology of larval and juvenile stages of marine (primarily rockfishes) and anadromous fish (primarily Steelhead and Coho Salmon). We study life history strategies, oceanographic/climate effects on reproductive ecology, habitat requirements, and restoration effectiveness and maternal and epigenetic effects on early life stage traits. I have been actively involved in the AFS's Early Life History Section throughout my career and served as secretary from 2000 to 2002 and president of the section from 2010 to 2012.



Nancy A. Auer (1991)
Associate Professor, MTCWS Advisory Committee, Michigan Technological University

I received the J Frances Allen Scholarship in 1991. This was a critical stage in my career and the award was a much-appreciated boost. I obtained a B.A. in biology in 1973 at the University of Minnesota–Duluth. I immediately went to the University of Michigan for an M.S. degree in 1977 in resource ecology. After that I worked for many years at the Great Lakes Research Division Zooplankton and Fishery laboratories until my husband graduated with a Ph.D. and secured a job at Michigan Technological University in 1981. In the early 1980s little attention was paid to spousal accommodation, so I held various adjunct, soft money, and part-time posts. When we moved to Houghton we actually carried pedigree dwarf rabbits for show breeding in the back of the truck, because I thought I would be out of work and out in the woods. The latter proved true—I was out in the woods, but I could not quell my desire for science. In 1987 I began my life-long relationship with Lake Sturgeon by acquiring several small nongame wildlife grants the state provided. Because I was doing research and I had some grant money for a few years, I started a Ph.D. program. The money I received from the J Frances Allen scholarship gave me two things: (1) confirmation from other women that I could do worthwhile research even though I could not work full time and (2) a buffer of money that I squirreled away for manuscript publication costs. I actually entered the sum into our checking account but never incorporated it into the balance so it remained unspent until needed. The money al-



lowed me to publish three papers from my thesis, for which I am forever grateful. I feel tremendously blessed, even though it was a struggle at many times, and I am totally enjoying my career in academia and my work contributing to fisheries.

Susan (Su) C. Sponaugle (1992)
Professor and Chair, Marine Biology & Fisheries, University of Miami

I received the J Frances Allen Scholarship in 1992 about halfway through my Ph.D. dissertation research. The financial support was immediately valuable because it allowed me to purchase a computer; however, it was the professional recognition more than anything that was beneficial to my career. Receiving the scholarship was a huge vote of confidence and helped propel me through the low points to complete my doctorate. I likely will never know how the listing of the award on my curriculum vitae may have helped me obtain my first academic position, but I am now professor and chair of the Division of Marine Biology and Fisheries at the Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science at the University of Miami. For the past 8 years I have also served as the editor-in-chief of the international scientific journal *Bulletin of Marine Science*. My overarching area of research has evolved from my dissertation research and is primarily focused on the population replenishment of coral reef fishes. My students and I examine the microstructure of the otoliths of young fishes to investigate the relationship between environmental parameters, oceanographic features, and larval growth and survival. By investigating the biological and physical processes critical to the growth and survival of early life stages, we hope to better quantify the degree to which different local populations of fishes are ecologically connected. Our interdisciplinary studies of population connectivity have basic ecological and applied relevance to the management and conservation of coral reefs and the fishes that inhabit them.



Gwen White (1993)
Science Coordinator, Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers Landscape Conservation Cooperative

The J Frances Allen scholarship was instrumental in connecting me to the AFS community and facilitating a complicated shift in my research topic from forested streams in Rwanda to land use planning in Indianapolis. I purchased a backpack shocker that I needed to determine the impacts of urban construction on stream fish assemblages and for which I had no other source of funds. At the time, I was also shopping around for a



professional society to which I could commit myself, having attended a number of meetings hosted by several other societies related to aquatic resources and land use policy. In combination with a Skinner Travel Award, the scholarship motivated me to attend my first AFS meeting that year in Portland, Oregon. Many will remember a challenging conversation about management of salmon at that business meeting where we received our awards. How those strong differences of opinion were handled convinced me that the AFS was truly an association of people who took their mission seriously and were able to productively debate critical issues with each other. At a time when I was often the only woman in the room at many meetings, the awards sent a message that the society valued the participation of female students. The support fostered my desire to serve in leadership positions at many levels in the AFS, including president of the Equal Opportunities Section (EOS), AFS constitutional consultant, and North Central Division president. Recognizing the role that this award played in my career, I have worked hard to “pay it forward” by soliciting funding for the student travel awards in the EOS. With assistance from many other AFS units and external sources, the EOS raised over \$30,000 during the past 10 years to support annual meeting attendance of over 60 female and minority students from 42 institutions. I will always be very thankful for a scholarship that not only gave me the physical tools to carry me along an amazing career trail but also ushered me into a community of lifelong friends and colleagues.

Jodee Hunt (1994)
Professor, Biology Department, Grand Valley State University



I completed a Ph.D. in systematics and ecology at the University of Kansas in 1995 after being awarded the J Frances Allen Scholarship. My dissertation research took a nontraditional approach to Largemouth Bass reproductive ecology, focused on parental behavior, and the J Frances Allen Scholarship award money supported critical captive experiments that yielded insights about effects of spawning habitat on parental behavior. Following graduation, I began a tenure-track position at Grand Valley State University (GVSU) near Grand Rapids, Michigan, continuing my research on Largemouth Bass but primarily teaching courses in ecology, environmental science, animal behavior, fish ecology, and environmental ethics. I have coauthored articles in a variety of AFS publications, including *Black Bass 2000*, and have remained active in AFS activities, including reviewing J Frances Allen Scholarship applications, judging student presentations, reviewing journal submissions, and serving on the steering committee of the 2005 Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference. I love working at GVSU, a growing, vibrant regional university, and was promoted to professor in 2008, received an Outstanding Faculty Mentor Award from our Graduate and Professional Student Association in 2010, and was named to the Faculty of Distinction by our Omicron Delta Kappa Honor Society Circle in 2012. Recently, I have focused

on molecular-based research, investigating horizontal transmission of microbes via parental care in *Amatitlania nigrofasciata*, as well as interdisciplinary work in Nicaragua with colleagues from GVSU and Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua (UNAN) Estelí. My favorite work, however, is mentoring students and helping them identify and pursue their dreams. None of these accomplishments would have been possible without the support I received from the J Frances Allen Scholarship award, the AFS, and other AFS members.

Sandra Diamond (1996)
Senior Lecturer, School of Science and Health, University of Western Sydney



Receiving the J Frances Allen award was an extremely important event in my life. It came at a very tumultuous time and helped me to stay in graduate school and continue in my fisheries career. At the time I received the award, I was about midway through my Ph.D.

at North Carolina State University, but as a returning older student (38 years old at the time), I was married and had a 3-year-old daughter. My husband, who is also an academic, had gotten a job offer in Texas, so I was facing the decision to quit my degree to move or to try to continue my education long distance. Receiving the award made me feel good about what I was doing and helped me decide to, indeed, continue long distance. Completing my degree was very difficult because of the isolation and lack of resources away from my home institution, but every time I needed a boost in spirit, I looked at that award certificate and went back to work. I have now been a professor for 12 years, and I spend half the year at Texas Tech University and the other half at the University of Western Sydney in Australia. I am still an AFS member, and until I moved to Australia I rarely missed the annual AFS meeting. Based on my life and what I see of the lives of my female graduate students and fellow professors, women still face more difficult career decisions and pathways than men. The recognition of hard work and excellence represented by the J Frances Allen award helps women to validate these difficult life choices and encourages women to continue to pursue their dreams of working in fisheries. I have never regretted my decision to continue in fisheries science, and will always be grateful to the AFS for giving me the J Frances Allen award.

Tracy Galarowicz (1998)
Department of Biology, Central Michigan University



Receiving the J Frances Allen Scholarship was an honor at the time, but the award has had longer term effects on my career and

involvement in the AFS than I would have ever imagined. As a professor at Central Michigan University, I work with talented undergraduate and graduate students. The award has influenced my mentorship style. I am grateful for the support I received from the award as a graduate student, and I actively seek opportunities to recognize the talents of the students in my lab and classes as a result. After receiving the scholarship, I volunteered to serve on—and then chair—the scholarship committee for several years, which had many rewards in itself. I connected with professionals in the EOS and throughout AFS while learning about the fascinating research conducted by the applicants. I still pay extra attention to the work done by the award winners.

Amy Schrank (2002)
Adjunct Assistant Professor at Michigan Technological University, Lecturer at the University of Michigan Biological Station



Both the J Frances Allen scholarship and the AFS had strong impacts on my early career in aquatic ecology. I was involved with the AFS while a doctoral student, as the treasurer and then president of the University of Wyoming student subunit of the Colorado–Wyoming Chapter of the AFS. I was awarded the J Frances Allen scholarship in 2002 and it helped me to complete my dissertation research on movement patterns of Inland Cutthroat Trout. Attending, giving talks, and meeting colleagues at Colorado–Wyoming and Western Division AFS meetings was formative for me and was where I learned valuable lessons about fisheries biology, public speaking, and professionalism. I am currently an adjunct assistant professor at Michigan Technological University in Houghton and a lecturer at the University of Michigan Biological Station in Pellston. I am focused on drawing undergraduate students into research in aquatic science.

Maureen Walsh (2003)
Research Fishery Biologist, U.S. Geological Survey Lake Ontario Biological Station



The J Frances Allen Scholarship increases visibility and awareness of the achievements of female students within the AFS, and I was so honored to receive this award in 2003 to support my dissertation work at Oklahoma State University. Since 2005 I have been a research fishery biologist with the U.S. Geological Survey Great

Lakes Science Center's Lake Ontario Biological Station in central New York. My research focuses on forage fish population dynamics and invasive species in Great Lakes ecosystems, and I still get out in the field often on our 65-ft. research vessel. Although I had been active in the AFS as a student, receiving the J Frances Allen Scholarship really piqued my interest in pursuing leadership opportunities at the society level, and so I volunteered on the program committee for the 2006 AFS meeting in Lake Placid and became more active in sections (including the EOS) and other AFS committees. I chaired the Membership Concerns Committee (2008–2011) and currently chair the Meetings Oversight Committee. I have really gotten a lot out of these service roles in the AFS. The demographics within fisheries have changed a lot—even in the course of my career—and I am encouraged to see more and more female students at meetings each year. As a new mom, working to balance my career and my family, I am thankful to J Frances Allen—and to so many of the other women in the past who helped pave the way to change attitudes about women in this profession. I hope that someday my daughter will find a career that she loves as much as I do mine.

Virginia Shervette (2006)
Department of Biology and Geology, University of South Carolina Aiken



The J Frances Allen Scholarship meant the world to me. I received the award in my final year as a doctoral student, when I was wrapping up my fieldwork in coastal Mississippi and Alabama. I had just given birth to my son Rali and my family was picking up the pieces from Hurricane Katrina. A chunk of my research specimens perished in freezers that lost power for over a week, and field equipment stored at our Mississippi field site was carried away in the flood waters. J Frances Allen funds enabled me to purchase new equipment and finish up my research, pushing me over that last hump so I could write up the final chapter in my dissertation, defend it, and graduate. The scholarship also made it so I could focus in the end and get through the writing worry-free concerning what I had lost. I published every single research chapter in my dissertation (five peer-reviewed papers). Now I am in a tenure-track position at the University of South Carolina Aiken as director of the Fish/Fisheries Conservation Lab. I have research in the United States, Costa Rica, and Ecuador encompassing freshwater, estuarine, and marine fisheries species. I am also a member of the South Carolina AFS chapter, where my students and I regularly participate in the meetings. We are looking forward to the Southern Division Spring meeting in 2014 in Charleston, South Carolina. For me, the J Frances Allen Scholarship accomplished the goals it was set up to do: it encouraged and enabled me to become an active fisheries professional.

Anne M. Cooper (2007)
Professional Officer for
Advisory Services, In-
ternational Council for
the Exploration of the
Sea, Copenhagen



I was awarded the J Frances Allen scholarship in 2007 while I was finishing my Ph.D. in conservation biology at the University of Minnesota. Trained in fisheries ecology, population genetics, and risk assessment, my diverse scientific background and interests in federal policy led me to Washington, D.C., where I worked with the U.S. Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee on international fisheries and protected species policy, the Science Committee in the U.S. House of Representatives to develop oceans and climate policy, and the undersecretary's office at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Today I work with the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea in Copenhagen, Denmark, where I guide the development and implementation of methods to assess data limited fish stocks in the North Atlantic as well as to identify potential marine protected areas in the Baltic Sea. As a student, I often felt caught between the two worlds of conservation and fisheries science. Receiving the J Frances Allen Scholarship revealed to me that my work is accepted by an accomplished and diverse community of fisheries professionals who have made their own valuable and unique contributions in the field of fisheries science. This award was an honor for me as a student, but now that I am a professional this award is a responsibility that I take seriously. My career goal is to be a leader in shaping sustainable fishery policies and practices in the international arena. My motivation is a deep commitment to improving people's lives and the health of aquatic ecosystems. As a J Frances Allen awardee, I work to support sustainable commercial fisheries, healthy oceans, and vibrant coastal communities the world over.

Melissa Wuellner (2008)
Assistant Professor and
Distance Education Co-
ordinator, Department of
Natural Resource Man-
agement, South Dakota
State University



Reviewing the list of previous and more recent winners and honorable mentions of the J Frances Allen Scholarship humbles me. The women who have received this award are awe-inspiring, and I am beyond thrilled to be included in that list. I believe that one of the factors that helped in the decision to give me the award was the mention of my service to the AFS on my application. The Student Subsection and the Dakota Chapter provided excellent leadership opportunities, and I had no shortage of great ideas and driven colleagues to help put initiatives in place. The award encouraged me to

continue pursuing service opportunities at all levels of the AFS, and I have been privileged to have been given new chances to serve the society that has already given so much to me. Though the scholarship did not directly affect my graduate education, it has influenced my education and development as a young professional. I have mentored several graduate students as they applied for (and sometimes won) the J Frances Allen Scholarship, the Skinner Memorial Award, and the Janice Fenske Memorial Award (among others), which allows me to develop my skills as an advisor and educator of undergraduate and graduate students. I hope to continue honoring the memory of a pioneer as inspiring as J Frances Allen throughout my career, through my work as an educator, and as a member of the AFS.

Karen Murchie (2009)
Assistant Professor, School of
Chemistry, Environmental &
Life Sciences, College of the
Bahamas



I was a runner-up for the J Frances Allen Scholarship in 2008 and the winner of the scholarship in 2009. Receiving the award in Nashville at the annual AFS conference in front of so many esteemed fisheries scientists strengthened my commitment to the AFS. I have since continued to serve on the executive committee for the Canadian Aquatic Resources Section of the AFS and have been a judge for the J Frances Allen Scholarship (2010–2012). The money from the scholarship is extremely helpful, but the biggest impact comes from seeing in your peers' eyes that you have potential as a fisheries scientist and that you are committed to striving for excellence. That boost of confidence is overwhelmingly important—especially for young scientists. It propelled me to a joint postdoc position with the Great Lakes Fishery Commission and Carleton University (June 2010–July 2011) and then to an assistant professor position at the College of The Bahamas (August 2011–current). I am very grateful for the legacy that J Frances Allen has left behind and hope that I can follow in her footsteps to foster the love of fisheries science with all those with whom I interact.

Neala W. Kendall (2011)
National Research
Council Postdoctoral
Research Associate,
National Oceanic and
Atmospheric Admin-
istration's Northwest
Fisheries Science Center



I received the scholarship in 2011, the year I defended my Ph.D. I used the money to buy a laptop computer. It was essential for me to have access to a powerful computer as I transitioned from my doctorate to my postdoc and completed the

writing and publication of my dissertation. Because of the new computer, I was able to submit for publication the third and fourth chapters of my dissertation at the end of my doctorate, which helped me to secure a great postdoc that has set me on my way in the professional world. Along with receiving the J Frances Allen Scholarship, I served as student activities chairperson at the AFS annual meeting in Seattle in 2011. Being honored with this position and this award helped me to understand the importance and benefits of AFS. Through AFS I have met a number of great colleagues and friends, have had the opportunity to network for career information and research ideas, and have been able to further my education and professional development through scholarships, mentorship, and advice. I will continue to be involved in the AFS and hope to be able to give back to younger scientists as I progress in my career.

For those who would like information on how to contribute to the J Frances Allen Scholarship Fund, please contact AFS coordinator Eva Przygodzki at eprzygod@fisheries.org or call (301) 897-8616 ext. 203. The findings and conclusions in this article are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 

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