

LAURA H. SPENCER

Attn: Lisa Milke
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Re: National Shellfisheries Association, Student Endowment Fund Travel Award

From: Laura H Spencer
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Dear NSA Student Endowment Fund Co-Chairs:

I am pleased to submit my application to the Student Endowment Fund's Travel Award for the 2017 Annual Meeting in Knoxville. I am a first year graduate student at the University of Washington's School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences, with a background in Olympia oyster restoration in the Puget Sound. While much of the research in my department focuses on finfish (salmon, cod, etc.) I research shellfish species that are important both economically and ecologically. Therefore, I am particularly interested in attending the NSA Annual Meeting as I hope to broaden my understanding of the data and knowledge gaps, and industry needs in order to most effectively focus the next several years of research. I am also keenly interested in the research being performed on east coast and gulf species, and the Annual Meeting is an ideal venue to receive a direct download of the state of the science from researchers working in other regions. Finally, I expect that the session on comparative shellfish genomics will be directly in line with my research; it would be extremely beneficial for me to attend and learn from others working in my field, an opportunity that is not likely to occur at other conferences or meetings.

I am fortunate to have received the National Science Foundation's Graduate Research Fellowship, so I have a significant amount of liberty in terms of defining my own research agenda, however this funding does not support travel expenses. Support from the NSA via the Student Travel Award would ensure my ability to attend the meeting.

Thank you for your consideration!

Regards
Laura H. Spencer