

Money is policy, or how new research initiatives are born

Speaker: Katy Christiansen, Ph.D.



Have you ever asked, “Why did the Federal government fund this research?” Do you wonder what happens to scientists who leave traditional research careers? Is life in Washington, DC as glamorous as it seems? Science policy has the answers to these questions and more! Katy will talk about her transition from the bench to the Department of Energy and how scientists in “alternative” careers can contribute to the U.S. research enterprise. She will also provide insights into what happens once Congress appropriates funds to agencies and how policy is implemented at the ground level. Finally, Katy will discuss how she is using this experience to help scientists build programs at Lawrence Berkeley National Lab, and how others can do the same.

Date: Saturday, March 14, 2014

Time: 7-9 PM

Place: Building 180, Room 114, CalPoly San Luis Obispo

Cost: Free.

A complimentary assortment of pies will be served in observance of pi day.

Katy Christiansen is the strategic analyst for the Biosciences Area at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. She received her Ph.D. in Plant Sciences from Indiana University, where she studied the signaling networks that control plant responses to pathogen attack and cell death. Following her Ph.D., she performed post-doctoral research at the Joint BioEnergy Institute, working on projects to elucidate the mechanisms that control plant cell wall formation for development of specialty feedstocks for biofuel production. Realizing that she was interested in understanding how federal funding supports institutions like JBEI, she spent two years as a AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellow at the Department of Energy in the Bioenergy Technologies Office. During her time at DOE, she developed funding opportunities for new research initiatives, wrote and edited strategic planning documents, and participated in working groups across federal agencies for clean energy manufacturing and synthetic biology. Katy joined LBNL in September 2014 to engage more directly with scientists and to apply her understanding of federal funding to advance projects at the Lab. She currently works on strategic planning and implementation for the Biosciences Area, which consists of three and a half scientific divisions and over 800 staff.

