

## **Eddy Advocates for Research Funding**

Dec. 4, 2014 | Sarah Eddy was one of 20 students in the country chosen to take part in a program in Washington, D.C., to advocate for basic science research.

The program, called the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Hill Day, was held Sept. 9 in which participants attended a Policy 101 training session before breaking into small groups for a day of meetings with congressmen.

Eddy and other participants met the day before to prepare for the meetings. “They did a really good job of providing us with material to prepare us for talking with members of Congress,” Eddy said.

Participants were divided into teams of four. Eddy and her team advocated for three main issues: providing a predictable and sustainable funding environment for biomedical research, including increasing the budget of the National Institutes of Health for the 2015 fiscal year; enacting policies that strengthen the American scientific workforce through comprehensive immigration reform to attract and retain scientists training in the U.S. ; and protecting American innovators by promoting an environment supportive of discovery by supporting small business and renewing the research and development tax credit.

The others on Eddy’s team were from Missouri, Kansas and Indiana, so they met with representatives from each of the four states. “Most everyone was really nice,” Eddy said. “They were very understanding and seemed genuinely interested in what we had to say.”

“I hope that I left the congressional representatives with a better idea of how their votes affect people doing basic science research,” she said. “I realize without their support we will continue lagging behind in scientific advances, and that’s not something anyone wants to see happen.”

Eddy is a fourth-year Graduate School student in the Interdisciplinary Biomedical Sciences program.

“This program gave me the opportunity to learn more about advocacy and science policy,” she said. “I had no previous experience with politics but am interested in attending law school after I graduate with my PhD. My mentor (Robert Eoff, Ph.D.) has been extremely supportive of this goal, and I hope to start in the fall of 2016.”

The program took care of all expenses and set up all the meetings that the group had.

“It was a lot of fun. I hope that someone else will do it, especially since there will be new faces in offices,” she said. “Advocacy also can occur at the local level. You don’t have to travel to D.C. to make your voice heard. The more scientists who get involved, the better.”

