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[Hakala '98 Earns Mike Mansfield Fellowship](#)

One of just 10 fellows selected this year, Siri Hakala '98 will study Japanese approaches to marine science and government policy.

MORRIS, Minnesota (September 22, 2016)—Siri Hakala '98 is one of just 10 fellows selected this year for The Mike Mansfield Fellowship Program, in which she will study Japanese approaches to marine science and government policy. This fellowship affirms Hakala's longstanding commitment to and passion for marine biology, which she credits Morris with fostering, despite its being 2,000 miles from an ocean.

Hakala has long demonstrated her passion for marine biology. After her graduation in 1999, she pursued her interests in animal behavior, ecology, and literature and credits numerous faculty members, including Van Gooch, Tracey Anderson, Nancy Carpenter, Chris Cole, Margaret Kuchenreuther, Ernie Kemble, and Dwight Purdy, for her educational growth.

"I'd say my career aspirations were nurtured and strengthened by my years at Morris," Hakala says. "I was greatly supported and challenged by my professors. They passed along their love of their specialty to their students and made learning fun."

During the summers after her freshman and sophomore years Hakala worked at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science through a National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduates. Inspired by these internships, she pursued graduate study in marine biology and earned a masters in psychology, with an emphasis on marine mammal behavior and biology, at the University of Hawaii, Manoa.

"I'm a ridiculously proud Minnesotan. And I think of the prairie as a land ocean. It might be that my years at Morris contributed to my comfort on ships in the middle of the Pacific."

Hakala acts as the deputy director of the Protected Species Division at the Pacific Island Fisheries Science Center (NMFS/NOAA) in Honolulu. Her work at this institution is instrumental for research and assessment of populations of protected marine mammals, including whales, dolphins, sea turtles, and Hawaiian monk seals.

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