



# Sloan Career Cornerstone Center

## Profiles of Biologists



**Judith S. Weis**

**Professor of Biology  
Rutgers University  
Newark, NJ**

<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ BA, Zoology, Cornell University</li><li>▶ MS, Biology, New York University</li><li>▶ PhD, Biology, New York University</li></ul>
<b>JOB DESCRIPTION</b>	Judith teaches undergraduate and graduate students, and is also involved with research and service.
<b>ADVICE TO STUDENTS</b>	"Study hard, get research experience to be sure this is really what interests you, and women should make sure to find a significant other who will do an equal share of work at home."

### ▶ INTERVIEW

- ▶ **What fields of biology do you work in?**
- ▶ **Weis: Marine Biology/Ecotoxicology.**

- ▶ **Q: When did you know you wanted to become a Biologist?**
- ▶ **Weis: When I was in college.**

- ▶ **Q: What was your college experience like?**
- ▶ **Weis: Some good courses, some good research experience, but too many grade-grubbing pre-meds in the classes.**

- ▶ **Q: Did you incorporate work experiences while you were an undergrad?**
- ▶ **Weis: Yes, I spent the summer between my junior and senior year doing research at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in Massachusetts.**

- ▶ **Q: How did you get your first job?**
- ▶ **Weis: I saw the job advertised and applied for it.**

- ▶ **Q: What's the most rewarding thing about being a Biologist?**
- ▶ **Weis: Learning new things about how estuarine organisms function and deal with pollutants. Spending time having fun and calling it "work."**

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▶ **Q:** Is there an example you can provide that shows how something you've worked on has positively impacted the world?

▶ **Weis:** Our research contributed to the ban on use of TBT (tributyltin) in antifouling paints for boats and restrictions on using pressure-treated wood in coastal and marsh environments.

▶ **Q:** Do you spend a fair amount of time traveling?

▶ **Weis:** Yes – I am on a number of advisory committees to the federal government (EPA and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) and have frequent trips to Washington and other places for meetings. I also attend a number of scientific conferences.

▶ **Q:** Do you have a mentor? Or did you in your college years?

▶ **Weis:** Not really.

▶ **Q:** Do you find yourself working more in a team situation, or more alone?

▶ **Weis:** More in a team situation with my graduate students and colleagues.

▶ **Q:** Do you find you are able to balance work with social/family life while working in your current job?

▶ **Weis:** It's easy now that the kids are all grown up. It was manageable when they were younger because my husband did his share of child care and work at home.

▶ **Q:** If you had to do it all over again, would you still become a Biologist?

▶ **Weis:** Absolutely!

▶ **Q:** Did you think that school prepared you for the way the work gets done in the real world?

▶ **Weis:** The real world has changed quite a bit since I was in school, so there was no way it could have prepared me well for future things.

▶ **Q:** Where do you see jobs for Biologists in the future? What should students be doing to prepare themselves to take on those roles?

▶ **Weis:** The future is in interdisciplinarity – be prepared to broaden out your expertise and collaborate with people in different fields

▶ **Q:** What other advice do you have for precollege students?

▶ **Weis:** Study hard, get research experience to be sure this is really what interests you, and women should make sure to find a significant other who will do an equal share of work at home.

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