Climate Impact Group’s director recognized as White House Champion of Change

Amy Snover, director of the Climate Impacts Group at the College of the Environment, has been named a White House Champion of Change. The Champions of Change program celebrates Americans who are doing extraordinary things in their community, and for Snover it focuses on her work to enhance climate education and literacy in classrooms and communities across the country. She will travel to the White House for a ceremony on February 9th.

“I’m still giddy at being recognized in this way,” says Snover. “It’s so important that people making decisions today do so with full knowledge of the ways they can use science to build ongoing resilience to climate risks.”

Snover’s work is instrumental in helping connect science to policy-makers, especially as it relates to improving society’s resilience to climate risks around the Pacific Northwest and beyond. She and her colleagues draw on both the natural and social sciences to assess the vulnerability of ecosystems and human communities to climate variability, and also to inform the development of climate adaptation strategies. Part of her work is also to help identify priorities for future research and outreach.

Driving much of Snover’s work is finding better ways to translate and connect the nuts-and-bolts of science in a way that is relevant and useful in real-world application by decision-makers. She has taken this approach into her leadership role at the Climate Impacts Group, convening local, state and federal decision-makers, tribes, non-profit organizations, and industry to understand how climate influences decisions they make and outcomes. A recent example of this was their work with the Swinomish Tribe, helping them develop a vulnerability assessment using the methods detailed in Climate Impacts Groups’ groundbreaking adaptation planning guidebook Preparing for Climate Change: A Guidebook for Local, Regional, and State Governments. The tribe’s efforts in the Swinomish Climate Change Initiative was recognized at the 2014 National Congress of American Indians’ annual meeting in Atlanta.

“Magic happens when we connect the analytic and predictive skills of science with the practical needs and multiple objectives of real-world decision-making. We create knowledge that is useful and used, and build essential societal capacity for tackling the challenges that face us,” remarks Snover.

Other past Champion of Change recipients from the College of the Environment include associate dean Julia Parrish for her work on increasing public engagement in science and science literacy.

The event will take place at the White House’s Eisenhower Executive Office Building on Monday February 9th from 10:00 am – noon PST, and will be live streamed.