



CONNECTIONS

Linking EEO, Diversity and Science

Volume 1, Issue 18

EEO/Diversity Newsletter for NOAA Research

September 2012

September 15 to October 15 is Hispanic Heritage Month 2012 Theme: Diversity United, Building America's Future Today

Voices of Success at Miami Senior High School

Eleven students from Miami Senior High School (MHS) traveled to Washington, D.C. in May, as part of the Close Up Program for New Americans (PNA). The PNA is open to all recently-immigrated high school students who are interested in learning more about current issues, government, or politics. The hands-on, interactive approach allows all students to get involved and have a voice in issues important to them.



Miami High School students in Washington, DC. Photos by Jose Pineda.

Alejandra Lorenzo, AOML, has been involved in this program as a mentor and role model to the students. She said that after representing NOAA/OAR at the 2011 SACNAS conference in San Jose, CA, it became clear that the best way to point minority students to the sciences was to promote education at the local high school level.

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Jose Pineda, MHS Close Up PNA coordinator, said the program gives him one of his biggest rewards as a teacher and an educator. "I can see the students transform into better and more actively involved individuals." Throughout the year, the student participants meet every Wednesday after school for video/speaker debates. The debates are intended to provide students with necessary information about their new homeland. Topics vary from the history of the United States government to current events. The second component is community activities. Students are matched up with MHS Alumni and community members who were immigrants and who have become successful in their careers. The third component is the one week study trip to Washington, D.C.

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Special Emphasis Highlights - Hispanic Heritage Month

AOML has been working with the Federal Executive Board (FEB), to bring Federal employees that have also immigrated to the US, to speak to the students about how education can benefit them.

“When they meet Yeun-Ho Daneshzadeh, from Korea, who did not speak a word of English when she started high school and went on to become a computer scientist working for AOML’s Physical Oceanography Division, their eyes open up. When they hear how Thiago Quirino, from Brazil, graduated from high school and now has a PhD in Electrical Engineering and flies into hurricanes, the questions are endless. The future of NOAA and AOML in particular is tied into the education of our children. At AOML providing speakers to our local high schools and opening avenues of success for minority students is a role that we promote internally and to our Federal partners through the FEB,” said Alejandra.

Dairy Garcia (Cuba), a student participant said, “Experiences have the potential to inspire you, motivate you, and provoke you to become something more than you previously were. Close Up is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that impacts the way you look at yourself, your community and the world.”

NOMAR Conference: Hispanic Americans: A Key Ingredient for America’s Future

The National Organization for Mexican American Rights (NOMAR) held their 15th annual training conference and business meeting in Denver, CO August 28-31, 2012. The conference focus was on Civil Rights issues of concern to Hispanics and the state of Hispanic representation in the Federal government and strategies for inclusion. Presenters included OPM Director John Berry, who talked about reaching out to Hispanic Serving Institutions to promote the Student Pathways program and David Lopez, General Counsel, EEOC, who gave an update on discrimination issues impacting Hispanics.

A conference highlight was the session, “La Mujer Hispana.” Three dynamic Hispanic women shared their stories on how they got to be where they are today in their careers. Kathy Perez, Program Manager, US Fish and Wildlife Service, grew up in Albuquerque, NM, and came from a traditional Hispanic family who wanted her to stay close to home. Kathy, however, found that it is mobility that leads to higher positions. Kathy started her career in 1981 as a GS-2 Clerk typist with the Youth Adult Conservation Corp program, and is now an aspiring SES.



La Mujer Hispana panel. Photo Credit: Dan J. Solis, NOMAR Inc.

Julissa Soto, Director of Latino Initiatives, American Diabetes Association, Denver, CO, talked about emigrating to the U.S. about 20 years ago from central Mexico, with no English speaking skills. She learned English and pursued her education in public health and now leads and manages community based outreach programs for Latinos. She also became a US citizen on September 5, 2012.

Teresa Nino, Director, Office of Public Engagement, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), was appointed by the Obama administration in 2009. At the age of 15, Teresa got cancer and was not supposed to live. She said in the pursuit of her career and life she will ask, “What is the worst thing that can happen?” Teresa started out as a TV reporter in Chicago in 1986, and was a researcher for the book, *The Americano Dream*, by Lionel Sosa. Teresa became an SES because she saw the need for Hispanics to be at the policy making level. She said that Hispanics can bring to the table the knowledge of issues that are unique to the Hispanic community.

The conference also featured discussions on recommendations by the OPM Hispanic Council on Federal employment and the status of President Obama’s Executive Order 13583 – Establishing a Coordinated Government wide Initiative to Promote Diversity and Inclusion in the Federal Workforce. Over 300 local high school students also got the opportunity to participate in workshops designed specifically for them, and visit with exhibitors.

Resources:

Hispanic Council on Federal Employment: www.opm.gov/diversity/hispaniccouncil/

Alaska Native Students Learn about Climate and Weather



A couple of student participants. Photo Credit: Bob Rabin.

OAR employees Matthew Martinsen, ESRL/Global Monitoring Division (GMD) and Bob Rabin, NSSL, participated in the “Science in Cultural Context: Climate Change – Understanding Our Changing Environment” STEM camps on the campus of Ilisagvik Tribal College in Barrow, AK. There were two camps, one for grades 10 and up, and one for grades 7-9. All the student participants were North Slope Alaska Native students.

At many conferences, such as the Society of American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE) and the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES), students have inquired about the Barrow Observatory and NOAA’s work with American Indian/Alaska Native communities on climate change impacts. As part of the OAR EEO Office outreach to Tribal Colleges and Universities, and President Obama’s Executive Order to improve American Indian and Alaska Native Educational Opportunities, the summer camp was an opportunity to educate Alaska Native students on NOAA’s role in monitoring the environment and assessing climate conditions.

Ann Thorne, ESRL/GMD and Bob Rabin, both EEO Advisory members, set up meetings with Ilisagvik staff to discuss how to increase awareness of the mission of NOAA, career opportunities, and the work being conducted at Barrow. As a result, Bob and Matthew were invited to participate in the STEM camp which is funded by the Arctic Slope Community Foundation.

This was Matthew’s second year participating in the camp. Last year he gave tours of the Barrow Observatory, but this year he also provided hands on activities for the students.

The students learned about GMD and how the observatory measures: 1) quantities of greenhouse gases, ozone depletion, and other important atmospheric trace gases; 2) direct sunlight, diffuse sunlight, global sunlight, and albedo sunlight; and, 3) pollution and dust.

Bob’s activities were designed to give the students an opportunity to learn about remote observations, such as satellites, and how they are used in research and weather forecasting. Bob said, “For many of the students, this was their first exposure to the physical sciences and the material was a bit demanding for some. However, the students could grasp the basic principles and had a positive experience.” A positive outcome was that one of the students placed third in a competition with his climate and weather presentation. The student may have the opportunity to present at the 18th Inuit Studies Conference in Washington, D.C. in October.



Observing solar radiation with Matthew Martinsen. Photo Credit: Bob Rabin.

Linda Nicholas-Figueroa, STEM Camp coordinator and Ilisagvik instructor, was very glad that NOAA was able to participate. She said that the students loved the activities and it was a very good exposure to NOAA. “There is a lot happening in the Arctic that the students need to know, and I myself learned alot” she said. She hopes to continue this partnership with NOAA, and is looking into the possibility of having Bob teach an on-line trial course on weather and climate next fall at Ilisagvik.

Resources:

Ilisagvik Tribal College: www.ilisagvik.edu

Tribal Colleges and Universities: www.aihec.org

EEO/Diversity Across OAR

AOML

Erica Rule, Howie Friedman, and Miami Weather Forecast Office staff participated in the 1st annual South Florida Aviators Fly-In Educational Exposition on May 4-5, 2012. About 2500 people, including 2000 students from Miami-



Erica Rule with students at the NOAA booth.

Dade Schools, attended the event at the Opa-Locka Airport. The program included a fly-in with about 300 aircraft and pilots. Erica and Howie talked to numerous students and pilots about AOML's research, science programs, and hurricanes. They handed out educational materials to the younger students and had really good interaction with the older students. The event was well attended and networking with many other agencies was well worth participating.

ARL

Dr. LaToya Myles, ATDD, spoke at the 2012 project GRAD Knoxville Summer Institute Career Day at Pellissippi State Community College on June 25, 2012. The institute hosts 200 high school students and exposes them to different academic and career opportunities. Dr. Myles presented an overview of NOAA research and showed pictures of past field campaigns. She explained the different measurement techniques that ARL uses to measure atmospheric gases and particles. "Sharing NOAA's science with students is always energizing for me. The Project GRAD participants asked thoughtful questions during my presentation, which led to discussions about the breath of science disciplines in NOAA." said LaToya.

Walt Schalk, SORD Director, conducted a weather demonstration at Scherkenbach Elementary School on May

31, 2012. He gave basic meteorology facts and principles with plenty of cloud, tornado, hurricane, and weather map pictures. The 4th graders also participated in an "elementary" upper-air balloon launch. The students paired up with a balloon and watched as they went up and moved in a similar direction yet each moving a bit differently. The students realized that the wind that is felt on the ground is different from the wind above the ground. Walt said that showing students early in their academic careers that science can be fun, interesting and exciting is a benefit to NOAA.

ESRL/GMD

John Barnes, Hilo, HI, was a mentor to three Hollings Scholars. The students were David Wyrick (Washington State University), Clark Esty (Georgetown University) and Trevor Romich (Cornell). David worked with John's camera lidar which measures particles in the air, Clark worked on improving the Polar Nephelometer for measuring particles in the air, and Trevor worked on atmospheric tide data from the Mauna Loa Observatory. The students presented their research at a meeting with all the scholarship winners at the University of Hawaii, Manoa. John enjoyed working with the students and said they were all very enthusiastic and personable.

ESRL/GSD

Shan Sun, Research Associate, was selected as the June Team Member of the Month. Shan has had a central role in the development of ESRL's Flow-following Finite-volume Icosahedral Model (FIM), a global model now producing 30km and 15km real-time experimental forecasts (<http://fim.noaa.gov>). The data includes air temperature and wind at many levels in the atmosphere, including precipitation and is being used in real-time operation.

Besides her excellent scientific work, Shan is known to be willing to help with other scientists in the GSD/Assimilation and Modeling Branch (AMB) and ESRL.

ESRL/PSD

The Western Water Assessment (WWA), which is housed and supported by PSD researchers Andrea Ray, Joe Barsugli, Klaus Wolter and Robin Webb have updated the Native Communities and Climate Change database. The database contains documents pertaining to climate

change impacts, adaptation strategies and planning for tribes throughout the U.S. WWA helped the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe in Colorado with a river restoration grant, and is collaborating with a University of Arizona team on a review of the Navajo Drought Contingency plan and updating Climate Change Adaptation and Energy Action reports for the Navajo Nation. Information from these meetings will be compiled into a report for the Navajo Water Management Branch. <http://www.tribesandclimatechange.org/database.php>

PMEL

Lauren Kollermeirer and Dan Somin, attended the 1st Annual Science Festival at the Seattle Science Center. Over 3,000 people stopped by to learn about NOAA. Lauren and

Dan had a model research vessel where they discussed what life is like on a research ship. With this paperless event, no educational materials were handed out and both Lauren and Dan thought the event was a great way to showcase NOAA.

Andra Bobbitt, Newport Office, provided GIS (Geographic Information Systems) training to the Toledo High School STEM group from May to June 2012. The students learned to use GIS to create presentations and posters with the data they collected on tagged fish and hydrology conditions. Andra said the program was very well done, and the posters and presentations included the NOAA logo, which benefits NOAA for its support to local community outreach activities.

Learning the Science for Research on Climate Related Displacement of Indigenous Peoples

Leslie Hartten and Cecile Penland, ESRL/PSD, served as Co-Research Mentors to Ma'Ko'Quah Jones, a Significant Opportunities in Atmospheric Research and Science (SOARS) program protégé. She is a student at Dartmouth College majoring in Government and Native American Studies. Allen White also served as the Writing Mentor. This is Leslie Hartten's 12th year as a Research Mentor for SOARS.

Ma'Ko'Quah is a member of the Prairie Band of Potawatomi Tribe. She grew up in Shawnee, OK. In 2009, she received an internship at Haskell Indian Nations University to research climate change impacts in Tribal Communities. Her research focused on the legal perspective of climate change, the rights of indigenous people post relocation. Is it climate change that is causing indigenous people to leave their communities? "We need to accurately classify and advocate the cultural issues behind the relocation," said Ma'Ko'Quah.



Ma'Ko'Quah presenting her poster at the SOARS Poster Sessions in August.

Ma'Ko'Quah came to NOAA to learn the science behind her research. At PSD, she looked at three oscillations in North America and their weather patterns. She monitored oscillations to see the coordination among them. She said the issue of climate change has become oversimplified and she now has a better appreciation for the science behind the numbers.

Her internship at NOAA also broadened her knowledge about a career with the Federal government, "Being a Native American, there are not a lot of opportunities to voice our perspectives. Working for a Federal agency would be great because you do have access to people who run the government." At Dartmouth, she is working to build a curriculum for Native American students interested in science. "There are a lot of students interested in science, but academia can be very rigid and students don't always fit into one standard box, so they move into other areas." She would like to see Native American researchers return to their communities to do their research.

Ma'Ko'Quah said that even though she is not a science major, her experience at NOAA taught her that you can understand the science. "It helped me to ask the science questions and gave me the confidence to relay that knowledge not only in my research but to my community and peers."

SPECIAL EMPHASIS - Federally Employed Women (FEW)

NOAA Employees Selected to Lead FEW

On July 20, 2012, I had the awesome privilege to provide inspirational remarks at the Installation Ceremony for the newly elected President of the FEW. This was another historic moment for NOAA, as well as the Department of Commerce, because the newly elected President is Michelle Crockett, EEO/Diversity Program Manager for the National Ocean Service (NOS).

FEW is an organization designed to improve the working conditions of women in the Federal Government. In addition to serving on the National Board of FEW, Michelle was one of the founding members of our local chapter of FEW, the Seas and Skies Chapter.

In addition to Michelle being elected as President of the National organization, I was elected President of the NOAA Seas and Skies Chapter of FEW. I was installed on September 5, 2012. I enthusiastically look forward to working with Michelle to continue to highlight and bring awareness to the issues that impact women in the Federal Government.

Nicole Mason, OAR EEO Manager



Michelle Crockett. Photo Credit: FEW



Nicole Mason. Photo Credit: FEW

FEW National Training Program: Wheels of Change Keep on Moving!



Katie Rodriguez Banister. Photo Credit: FEW

FEW's National Training Program, "Wheels of Change Keep on Moving!" was held on July 16 -19, in Detroit, MI. The opening session keynote speaker was Katie Rodriguez Banister, "Ms. Wheelchair Missouri 2010."

She gave an inspirational talk about how she overcame the barriers she faced after an auto accident at age 25, that left her a quadriplegic. She spoke about how her disability did not change who she was but inspired her to educate others about the culture of disabilities.

She and her husband co-founded Access-4-All, Inc, which provides services, products and resources for the disabled. Katie has authored "Aunt Katie's Visit," an educational book for children, 2003, and "The Personal Care Attendant Guide" published in 2007. For more information on Katie, please visit her website at: www.access-4-All.com.

EEO Special Emphasis Program Events, National Outreach/Recruitment Conferences and EEO/Diversity Related Training Opportunities.

Date	Event/Conference	Location	For More Information:
Oct. 10-13, 2012	MAES Latinos in Science and Engineering Symposium and Career Fair	Las Vegas, NV	www.maes-natl.org
Oct. 11-14, 2012	SACNAS – Devoted to Advancing Hispanics, Chicanos & Native Americans in Science National Conference	Seattle, WA	www.sacnas.org
Oct. 18-21, 2012	National Indian Education Association (NIEA) Annual Convention	Oklahoma City, OK	www.niea.org
October 20-22, 2012	Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities (HACU) Annual Conference	Washington, DC	www.hacu.net
Oct. 21-26, 2012	National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Annual Convention	Sacramento, CA	www.ncai.org
Oct. 26-30, 2012	The Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCF) Leadership Training Institute Recruitment Conference & Career Fair	New York, NY	www.thurgoodmarshallfund.org
Nov. 1-3, 2012	American Indian Science & Engineering Society (AISES) National Conference	Anchorage, AK	www.aises.org
Nov. 14-18, 2012	Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers Conference (SHPE)	Fort Worth, TX	www.shpe.org
Dec. 5-7, 2012	Perspectives on Employment of Persons with Disabilities	Bethesda, MD	www.silverstarconsulting/perspectives

NO FEAR ACT TRAINING FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

All NOAA Federal employees should have received a Broadcast Email on 9/12/12, from the Dept. of Commerce regarding the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act) mandatory training for 2012. All **DOC employees have until November 2, 2012** to complete the updated 2012 No FEAR Act briefing that is located in the Commerce Learning Center (CLC) - <https://doc.learn.com>.

EEO Office Library

The EEO Office has videos, books and magazines available for checkout for your special emphasis months. For Hispanic Heritage Month, we have quarterly magazines from both the MAES and SACNAS organizations, and books by Hispanic Authors, Julia Alvarez, *How the Garcia Girls Lost their Accents*, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, and Junot Diaz, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*. Please contact Becky Rios to check out materials at 303-497-6439.

NOAA Research EEO/Diversity Program Office

CONNECTIONS NEWSLETTER

Connections is published quarterly by the OAR EEO Office. The purpose is to share accomplishments and to link Diversity, EEO and Science within all of OAR laboratories and programs.

If you have any newsletter ideas, suggestions and stories, please email to Georgia Madrid
georgia.madrid@noaa.gov.

ABOUT US

VISION OF EEO OFFICE: To assist the Agency in creating a diverse workforce that is inclusive and free of discriminatory and retaliatory actions.

EEO MISSION: To bring awareness to employees, applicants for employment and management about EEO through the following:

Empowerment: Consultation services to employees, managers and applicants for employment.

Exposure: Recruitment and outreach activities for short and long-term recruitment.

Education: Federal EEO Mandated training, Special Emphasis programs and *Connections* newsletter.

Evaluation: Monitor employment statistics to prepare reports for NOAA, DOC, EEOC and OPM.

Website:

www.eeo.oar.noaa.gov

Staff



Nicole Mason
EEO/Diversity Program
Manager
301-734-1279



Georgia Madrid
EEO Specialist
303-497-6732



Becky Rios
Admin Mgmt Assistant
303-497-6439

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

EEO COUNSELING:

Federal law prohibits discrimination because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age (40 years and over), physical or mental disability, genetic information, and retaliation for participating in activities protected by the civil rights statutes. In addition, NOAA prohibits discrimination because of sexual orientation.

Employees, NOAA Corps Officers, or applicants for employment with NOAA who believe that they have been discriminated or retaliated against may contact an EEO Counselor. The Counselor will attempt to resolve the matter and furnish information about filing a complaint of discrimination. To preserve your rights under the law, you must contact an EEO Counselor within 45 CALENDAR DAYS of the date of alleged discrimination.

To initiate EEO Counseling or for more information, contact:

Civil Rights Office, NOAA

VOICE (301) 713-0500

TDD (301) 713-0982

1-800-452-6728

Website: www.eeo.noaa.gov

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION:

NOAA Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Office provides mediation and other services and seeks early resolution.

Voice: 206-526-6171

Fax: 206-527-6928.

Website: www.adr.noaa.gov