



# CONNECTIONS

*Linking EEO, Diversity and Science*

Issue #36

EEO/Diversity Newsletter for NOAA Research

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## Hearts of GOLD: A Golden Opportunity

By Deborah H. Lee, Director, NOAA Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory

I had the wonderful opportunity to attend the Hearts of GOLD (Geosciences Opportunities for Leadership in Diversity) training this past July in Colorado Springs, CO. Hearts of GOLD is a National Science Foundation sponsored project led by a group of six investigators including NOAA's LaToya Myles of the OAR, Air Resources Laboratory. The project goal is to help leaders in the geosciences become champions for diversity by teaching new tools, skills, and attitudes that include learning how to work with colleagues "different" from ourselves.

The driving question posed at the training was, "Why should we value diversity?" In answering this question and others, we learned that social science research reveals that a diverse workforce can advance core elements for organizational success. These elements, among others, are enhanced innovation through creativity, increased diligence and a committed work ethic, more balanced decision making, robust problem-solving, as well as boosting a company's bottom line. In looking beyond our organizational boundaries, diversity essentially produces a healthier society by including all of its members.

Our instructors, Drs. Dena R. Samuels and Stephany Rose of University of Colorado – Colorado Springs, led us through two days of often emotional and soul-searching discussion as we examined inclusivity, diversity, and social justice. We learned about implicit bias—a term



Photo: GLERL Director Deborah Lee at a Rouge River Restoration event in Wayne, MI in August to celebrate the removal of the Wayne Road Dam and the successful restoration of riverine habitat in the area. Photo Credit: Lauren White

that describes when we have attitudes towards people or associate stereotypes with them without our conscious knowledge. This bias often prevents us from achieving diversity by choosing to work with people most like ourselves or associated with positive stereotypes. To get a better sense of what is meant by this, you can assess your implicit biases at <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>.

We also learned that even if we can overcome implicit bias to achieve a diverse organization, it may not be enough to drive innovation without a culture of genuine inclusivity. Inclusivity is an intention or policy of including people who are considered "different," thus preventing them from being excluded or marginalized. We were encouraged to seek out new experiences that challenge our bias, slow down and

be present in the moment to catch the bias, and then act differently and practice "priming"—observing positive images of people from stereotyped groups or simply calling to mind counter-stereotypical information. We were reminded that "If you aren't actively including, you are probably accidentally excluding."

One topic that struck a personal chord with me was the subject of "microaggression"—an act I had experienced many times over in my career, even recently, as a woman in a non-traditional field. Microaggressions are subtle words, cues, and/or behaviors that insult, invalidate, or exclude individuals. They are often based on

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# October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month

## Hearts of Gold - continued from page 1

a disadvantaged social identity and often cue stereotypes, labeling one as an outsider. The recipient often feels disempowered to address the giver of these microaggressions, due to an imbalance of power, causing the recipient to be impacted cumulatively via a “death by a thousand cuts.” The intent of the giver is to perpetuate systems of power—to keep those in power, in power, and those oppressed, in oppression.

Through my experience at Hearts of GOLD, I became keenly aware that diversity and inclusion are not only important for creativity and innovation, but they are also fundamental for social justice to come to fruition. The principle of social justice requires that everyone deserves equal economic, political, and social rights and opportunities.

As leaders in the geosciences, we left the class with a stronger awareness and understanding of the challenges we face both within ourselves and externally within our organizations, the skills and tools we could bring to bear, and how to remove the barriers to social justice to create the next generation of geoscientists.

## NOAA hosts National Disability Awareness Program 2017 Theme: Inclusion Drives Innovation

The United States Congress declared October National Disability Employment Awareness Month in 1988 to raise awareness of the employment needs and the many contributions of employees with disabilities in the workforce. The 2017 theme is, “Inclusion Drives Innovation.”

NOAA hosted its annual Disability Employment Awareness program on Tuesday, October 17. The keynote speaker was Stephen M. King, Director, Office of Accessibility & Accommodations, Bureau of Human Resources, U.S. Department of State. Although there are many people with disabilities working, approximately “40 percent of people with severe disabilities are out of work,” according to Mr. King. Mr. King drove home the point that, “all employees have a role to play in making the workplace more inclusive.” He also indicated that employees must be mindful of the language used when speaking about people with disabilities. Calling someone disabled is akin to talking about a car that doesn’t work and is on the side of the road.

He also provided recommendations on how to engage people with disabilities. For example, do not stand over someone in a wheelchair to speak with them. Instead, pull up a chair and sit down to speak with them, looking at them eye to eye. All in all, Mr. King provided the audience with practical information to make our workplace more inclusive of employees with disabilities.



Photo: Guest Speaker Stephen M. King and Mark Seiler, NOAA Chief Financial Officer at the NOAA sponsored Disability Employment Awareness Month Program on October 17, 2017

## People with Disabilities Resources

- NOAA’s Reasonable Accommodation Program
- Dept. of Commerce - Employment Initiatives for People with Disabilities
- Dept. of Labor - Office of Disability Employment Policy
- OPM Disability Employment
- EEOC - The ABCs of Schedule A
- JAN (Job Accommodation Network)
- CAP (Computer/Electronics Accommodation Program)



## Sept. 15 to Oct. 15 is National Hispanic Heritage Month

### SACNAS - SHAPING THE BRIGHT FUTURE OF AMERICA

The [National Council of Hispanic Employment Program Managers](#) (NCHEPM) selected the 2017 National Hispanic Heritage Month theme, “Shaping the Bright Future of America.” The theme invites us to reflect on Hispanic American’s vitality and meaningful legacy in our Nation’s cultural framework.

SACNAS, a national organization whose mission is Advancing Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science, is shaping the bright future of America. Every year, SACNAS hosts a diversity in STEM conference. According to the SACNAS website, 49% of the 2016 attendees were Latino (Mexican/Chicano, Puerto Rican, Other Latino), 19% White, 7% American Indian, 9% Asian, 9% Black and 2% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

This year, OAR spearheaded the efforts to have a one NOAA presence at the SACNAS conference in Salt Lake City, UT. Alejandra Lorenzo and Shirley Murillo, AOML, led the staffing of the NOAA exhibit booth at the career fair which included demonstrations of the SOS Explorer lite. Other line offices including NOS, NMFS, Office of Education, Sea Grant, and the NOAA Corps were represented at the conference.

Shirley was a part of the panel titled, Interdisciplinary Approaches in the Ocean Sciences: Bridging the Gap between Basic and Applied Science where she talked about the scientific research being conducted at AOML. Along with panel member, Carlos Garza, NOS, they fielded questions on the science research as well as questions on their career paths. Catalina Martinez, OER, hosted a workshop titled, Converting Barriers into Detours: Increasing the Potential for Minority Success in Majority Settings. She had participants do an exercise that helped in the understanding of educational barriers. A panel hosted by Noelle Bowlin, NMFS, titled Career Pathways/Making an Impact in Ocean Science: Academia to Agencies, Industry to Non-Profits included NOAA scientists, Lonnie Gonsalves, NOS, and Xaymara

Serrano, AOML-CIMAS. Both spoke about their unique career paths.

The conference also provided the opportunity for attendees to serve as judges and mentors. Alejandra, Xaymara, and Bob Rabin, NSSL, accepted that role and served as science judges. Alejandra said, “My brain almost exploded. The quality and caliber of the undergraduate posters were impressive. Their knowledge base and willingness to tackle difficult

tasks during a short summer internship bodes well for NOAA and science in general.” Bob and Xaymara also spoke to students that came to the NOAA booth on careers and educational opportunities.

The SACNAS conference had over 4,000 attendees. From students to professionals, all were engaged and motivated to experience this one-of-a-kind conference that bridges STEM, minorities, and culture in one place.



Photo: NOAA Employees at SACNAS. Left to Right: Bob Rabin, OAR/NSSL, Catalina Martinez, OAR/OER, Shirley Murillo, OAR/AOML, Alejandra Lorenzo, OAR/AOML, Jaron Halonen, NOAA Corps, Carolina Quijada, Office of Education, Lonnie Gonslaves, NOS and Jessica Cooper, Office of Education.



Photo: Jessica Cooper demonstrates the SOS Explorer Lite to a SACNAS student.

## Tribal Colleges & Universities (TCU) Science Day and AISES

### Sharing Native Knowledge and NOAA Science

NOAA Boulder hosted a TCU Science Day on September 20, 2017 in conjunction with the AISES National Conference in Denver, CO September 21-23, 2017. The Science Day was an opportunity to share NOAA science, learn from TCUs about their STEM programs and open a dialogue on ways to expand opportunities for TCU students.

Read TCU Article by Annie Reiser: <http://www.boulder.noaa.gov/news-100517>



Photo: TCU students, faculty, speakers and planning committee at the Next Steps closing session. Photo Credit: Albert Romero

OUR employees carried on the conversation with TCUs at AISES. A steady group of AISES attendees stopped by the NOAA/CIRES exhibit booth to learn about career opportunities and try out the very popular SOSx. OAR also hosted four workshops. Debe Fisher, CSD, Jackson Osborn, CSD, Julie Singewald, GMD and Susan Sullivan, CIRES, led an interactive workshop, *Making the Most of your Summer Undergraduate Research Experience*. For the session, Jackson prepared a pocket handout, *How to Get the Most Out of an Internship/Research Experience Using SKILLS*. SKILLS = Stay Organized, Keep Interested, Get Involved, Learn from those around you, Love networking, Share what you learned.

As a bonus tip, Jackson reminded participants to have fun, as “Employers like people that are passionate about what they do.” Jackson was also honored by AISES with a lifetime membership as a Sequoyah Fellow.

Catalina Martinez, OER, Bob Rabin, NSSL, and Alisa Young, NESDIS, were part of the panel, *Exploring Careers in Oceanic and Atmospheric Sciences*, where they each shared their journey becoming scientists. Georgia Madrid moderated a panel *Climate Change: The Power of (Indigenous) Knowledge* that included Roger Pulwarty, PSD, Bill Thomas, NOS, and Dan Wildcat, Haskell Indian Nations University.

For more information on expanding opportunities for TCUs and AISES students, please contact Georgia Madrid, [Georgia.madrid@noaa.gov](mailto:Georgia.madrid@noaa.gov).



Photo: Jenn Kinkade, Annie Reiser, Bryan Thomas, Robin Webb and Bob Rabin get ready to meet AISES students. Photo Credit: Georgia Madrid



Photo: AISES students try out the SOSx. Photo Credit: Georgia Madrid

### OAR HQ: DaNa Carlis Featured in Parkland Magnet School Science Career Day Video

Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education is vital to our nations continued development as an innovative world leader in science and technology. On October 4th, Dr. DaNa Carlis, OAR Weather Portfolio Advisor, visited Parkland Magnet Middle School in Rockville, MD to participate in their Science and Engineering Career Day. During his visit, Dr. Carlis had the opportunity to present to over 100 students about careers at NOAA and his path to becoming a meteorologist.

NOAA's Diversity and Professional Advancement Working Group (DPA WG) is a NOAA employee resource group that has adopted Parkland this year and has established a partnership that will provide multiple opportunities for NOAA employees to engage in science education and outreach. The visit by Dr. Carlis was the first such engagement with the school and he states, "I'm extremely excited about the opportunity to engage students, especially students that are underrepresented with a passion for STEM, this year through our partnership with Parkland. I got the chance to tell the students my story about how my meager roots never swayed my desire and passion to make a difference in the world and through mentors and a passion for education, I was able to reach my potential."

Dr. Carlis started his career in NOAA through the Office of Education's graduate research program and has spent much of his career at the NWS prior to joining OAR in 2016.

**Video:** <https://youtu.be/1VvwwxyUpl4>

### ESRL/CSD: Host Students from Denver Public Schools CareerConnect program

CSD hosted eight Denver Public Schools (DPS) CareerConnect students from East High School this summer, largely due to the extraordinary efforts of Debe Dailey-Fisher in placing student interns with CSD and other ESRL Divisions. Overall, Debe was instrumental in placing 14 summer interns at ESRL and two at the University of Colorado. Frank Erdesz from CSD/CIRES serves on the EngineeringConnect Leadership Committee. Jackson Osborn and Debe also attended CareerConnect's second annual CareerLaunch Internship celebration at Sports Authority Field at Mile High Stadium on July 21. The celebration recognized the nearly 300 students who participated in the six-week CareerLaunch internship program. They also represented NOAA in accepting NOAA Boulder's "Government Partner of the Year" award.



Photo: CSD student interns from Denver Public Schools East High School. Photo Credit: David Fahey

Over the last few years, NOAA Boulder has provided internships to DPS students, introducing them to the important atmospheric research that NOAA does. This has built interest in STEM for students that are not traditionally well-represented."

READ MORE at: [https://www.esrl.noaa.gov/csd/news/2017/209\\_0428.html](https://www.esrl.noaa.gov/csd/news/2017/209_0428.html)

### GLERL Intern – Why Diversity and Inclusion is the Way to Go

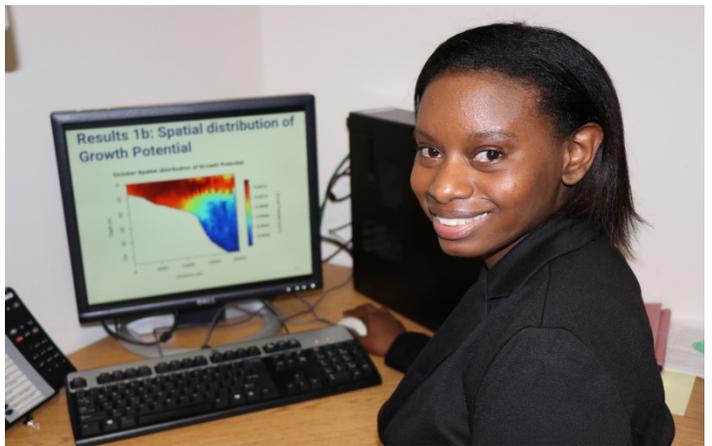


Photo: GLERL intern Char'Mane Robinson.

GLERL intern and NOAA EPP student Char'Mane Robinson, California State Monterey, did a blog post on why diversity and inclusion is the way to go: <https://noaaglerl.blog/2017/07/31/a-summer-interns-perspective-on-why-diversity-and-inclusiveness-is-the-way-to-go/>

## EEO/Diversity Across OAR

### PMEL: Engaging Students in Oceanography and Marine Sciences

This year celebrated the 15<sup>th</sup> year of NOAA Science Camp held at the Western Regional Center. Campers walked away with a lot of fun science activities to talk about, consider, and lots of great summer experiences under their belts!

Twenty-three PMEL volunteers, including a Hollings Scholar, helped engaged students in oceanography and marine sciences. They led hands on activities at two stations with the middle school students. At one station, they learned about ocean sampling techniques and tools such as plankton nets and sediment grabs. At the other station, students learned more about the upcoming eclipse, ocean circulation and sampling out at sea using a CTD rosette and glass syringes. Aiden Simons, a boy scout earned his Oceanography Merit Badge after attending the science camp where he “learned a lot about ocean life, how tides work, and how to chart the ocean floor.” Aiden said that “In all, I thought that the NOAA Science Camp was a very enjoyable camp, and a great learning experience and I learned a lot.”

PMEL also led high school students through a tour of PMEL’s engineering spaces and tasked them with developing an observation platform that could withstand the harshness of the Arctic. Three PMEL researchers also participated in a career speed networking event that introduced high school participants



Photo: Student participants at NOAA Science Camp.

in the Junior Leadership Program to NOAA and the research done at PMEL.

NOAA Science Camp offers two five-day camp sessions, each attended by approximately 50 middle school campers, a two week long Junior Leadership Program for high school students and a three day mini ROV session for middle school students. NOAA’s Cooperative Institute at the University of Washington, JISAO, provided financial support for 20 students from Showalter Middle School in Tukwila, WA. This school has a diverse student body with Asians, Hispanics and African Americans making up the majority of the student body.

### AOML - Shirley Murillo, First Woman to be named Hurricane Research Division Deputy Director

Shirley Murillo was selected to become the new and first woman Deputy Director of HRD. Howard Friedman previously served in the role for more than 35 years. Shirley is a 19-year veteran of HRD whose research interests include the wind field structure of tropical cyclones, radar observations, hurricane field program planning, and the transition of scientific research into the hurricane forecasting operational environment. As the Deputy Director, she will manage the day-to-day activities of the division and oversee its research. Shirley holds a master’s degree in meteorology from the University of Hawaii.



Photo: Shirley Murillo

### NSSL - Bob Rabin receives award from CREST

Bob Rabin, NSSL, was the recipient of a 2017 NOAA Center Champions Working Group Recognition Award. The award is in recognition of sustained support of student mentorship and capacity building activities at the Educational Partnership Program Center for Remote Sensing Sciences and Technologies (CREST).



Photo: Bob Rabin, NSSL

### OAR HQ/CPO - Networking with Women Science Organizations

Sandy Lucas was invited to give a talk (a panel with other agency program managers) and be a mentor at the MPOWIR (Mentoring Physical Oceanography Women to Increase Retention) conference that was held in early October 1-4. The goals of the conference were:

- \* To bring junior women and senior scientists together to share experiences, advice and concerns.
- \* To build community networks with peers and senior scientists.
- \* To get feedback on your current research.
- \* To raise awareness of issues confronting junior women among the senior scientist community.

Nancy Beller-Simms was a mentor at the Women's Aquatic Network (WAN), speed networking event held on October 18th. The Women's Aquatic Network (WAN) is a private, volunteer-run organization that brings together professional women and men with interests in marine, coastal and aquatic affairs, and promotes the role of women in these fields.

## FIRST ALL-FEMALE NOAA CREW DEPLOYS TO ANTARCTICA

By Christine Schultz

For the past 46 years, NOAA has always had a presence at the Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station. Scientists and technicians rotate in and out of the station on an annual basis to run, maintain, and fix over 30 instruments that acquire atmospheric data for the Earth System Research Laboratory's Global Monitoring Division (GMD). They endure 9 months of isolation, six months of darkness, and temperatures that dip below -100°F. While the training and deployment is no different this year, the 2017-2018 NOAA winter crew is unique: for the first time the crew is 100% female.

NOAA Corps Officer LT Cherisa Friedlander will serve as the Atmospheric Research Observatory's station chief. LT Friedlander was previously the operations officer at the Fisheries Ecology Division of the NOAA Southwest Fisheries Science Center in Santa Cruz. She is a recent graduate of the Applied Marine and Watershed Science Masters program at University of California Monterey Bay.

The 2017-2018 South Pole instrument technician will be Sabrina Shemet. Sabrina earned her degree in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and was most recently working on GPS fleet tracking for the trucking industry at Samsara Inc. in California. The diverse backgrounds of both women make them a strong team. Ms. Shemet and LT Friedlander completed theoretical scientific and instrument training at GMD in Boulder over the summer, and spent two weeks gaining hands-on experience at the Barrow Atmospheric Baseline Observatory in Utqiagvik, Alaska. In late October they completed firefighting, emergency medicine, and teambuilding training with the rest of the 2017-2018 winter South Pole crew before deploying to Antarctica.



Photo: LT Cherisa Friedlander (left) and Sabrina Shemet (right). Photo credit: Patrick Cullis, ESRL/GMD

The two scientists are excited to start their journey and year-long adventure running NOAA's atmospheric research facility. LT Cherisa Friedlander reflects, "When the opportunity presented itself to do an assignment at the South Pole, I knew it was a once in a lifetime opportunity I could not pass up. I am thrilled to be supporting NOAA in such a unique and challenging position, and to be the first all-woman team at the Observatory is just an added bonus."

In mid-November LT Friedlander and Ms. Shemet will relieve the current NOAA South Pole winter crew, who have been in Antarctica since November 2016, and begin their year on "the Ice."

## 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 to contribute, please email Georgia Madrid [georgia.madrid@noaa.gov](mailto:georgia.madrid@noaa.gov).



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



Georgia Madrid  
EEO Specialist  
303-497-6732

### 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](http://www.eeo.oar.noaa.gov)

### KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

#### EEO COUNSELING:

Federal law prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex (including sexual harassment and pregnancy discrimination), age (40 years and over), physical or mental disability, including the provision of reasonable accommodations for qualified applicants and employees with disabilities or genetic information (GINA), gender identity, and retaliation for participating in activities protected by the civil rights statutes. In addition, NOAA prohibits discrimination based on 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

Phone: (301) 713-0500 or 1-800-452-6728

Fax: 301-713-0983

Website: [www.eeo.noaa.gov](http://www.eeo.noaa.gov)

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Website: [www.wfm.noaa.gov/adr/](http://www.wfm.noaa.gov/adr/)