



CONNECTIONS

Linking EEO, Diversity and Science

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EEO/Diversity Newsletter for NOAA Research

June 2011

NOAA Boulder Recruiting Young Women in Science

by Annie Reiser

Every May, just as the University of Wyoming students clear out, young women from every corner of the State bring life again to the quiet campus quad in Laramie. This year some 375 girls in grades 7-12 (and a few boys) bustled between science-related workshops in classrooms and presentations held at the Wyoming Union throughout the day. NOAA Boulder was there too at the annual Women in Science (WIS) conference, recruiting the girls to consider a science career, piquing their interest with colorful data-based posters, a “shocking” van de Graaff, and a chance to get a different perspective on science from presentations by ESRL staff.



“is not like what you learn in science classes in school. It’s not about spewing out memorized facts and formulas, but rather about critical thinking and adding knowledge to what we already know.”

Betsy presented her latest research topic on observing seals in the Arctic and how she is using data collected from unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) to get a bigger pool of

results. “By using UAS, we put fewer lives at risk, because it’s dangerous to fly over the arctic in those locations where seals live,” Weatherhead said.

She led an exercise using photos of seals on ice (taken from a plane) giving the kids a taste of what it’s like to observe and record as a scientist would from the field. The group was enthused and partially surprised at this real-life

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WIS is sponsored by the Wyoming Space Grant Consortium, and designed to allow young women to learn first-hand about careers in science, mathematics, and technology. What better way to promote student achievements and aspirations than to create personal connections with professional women like Dr. Betsy Weatherhead, ESRL Environmental Scientist, and Hilary Peddicord, ESRL Science Educator/Tour Coordinator.

Betsy introduced her workshop groups to what it’s like to be a research scientist and emphasized that you don’t have to have superhuman intelligence to be one; just passion, persistence, and curiosity. “Research science,” she said,

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Special Emphasis

Women in Science (continued from page 1)

example of the demonstrated research and development that goes into such a project.

Hilary stressed the need to remain flexible about one's path to a career and inspired the girls with her own story of how she was able to realize her desire to work at NOAA. The girls were glued to her every word and bonded immediately to Hilary as a mentor and teacher when she explained that she, too, had grown up in Wyoming and attended the University of Wyoming.



Then Hilary presented her topic, "Pondering the Past" and talked about the different ways scientists can seek clues about future climate development by looking into the past with ice cores, coral, pollen, and tree rings. To get a closer look at the last proxy, Hilary led the class outside where they



huddled around a grove of conifers and took tree core samples with an increment borer, giving them another experience with field science.

Meanwhile, ESRL outreach coordinators, Debe Dailey-Fisher and Annie Reiser, teamed up in the student union to hand out NOAA posters and talk to the girls about NOAA science. Hundreds of posters were passed out, and the girls

buzzed around the tables and the whirring van de Graaff wondering how they could best shock each other, and why the aluminum pie pans flew off its top.

It was a successful day and the participants went away with many good reasons to pursue a career in math, science, or technology, and NOAA Boulder helped to spark that interest and create the crucial personal connection.



A VISIT WITH MADAME CURIE

by Joe Magee

On June 1, 2011, Susan Marie Frontczak presented a program, "A Visit with Madame Curie" to Boulder Labs

employees and affiliates. This program was planned to honor the 100th anniversary of the National Women's History observance (began 8 March 1911), the 100th anniversary of Madame Curie's 1911 Nobel Prize in Chemistry, and the year-long observance of the International Year of Chemistry 2011. The program was very well received as judged

by thunderous applause both after the presentation and after the speaker's question and answer sessions. Following the program, she answered questions while in her role as Madame Curie, and then answered questions as herself. The audience remained engaged in her presentation throughout, as judged from the many good questions that were posed. Approximately 80 people were present. It was gratifying that a large number of summer research students attended this event.



MENTORING AMERICAN INDIAN YOUTH AT SAIGE

Service, Honor, and Respect: Strengthening Our Cultures and Communities was the theme of the 2011 Society of American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE) conference in Tulsa, OK, June 13-17, 2011. There were over 400 Federal employees from different agencies in attendance. As part of its annual conferences, SAIGE offers a limited number of scholarships to Native American students interested in attending the conference. The students learn about careers within the Federal Government, participate in professional and personal development workshops, and network with Native American professionals. This year, 42 students from both mainstream and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCU) were selected.

The OAR EEO Office supported the Youth Track and NSSL employees, Dr. Suzanne Van Cooten, Hydro-meteorologist



Dr. Bob Rabin and Dr. Suzanne Van Cooten. Suzanne is speaking to Cherie DeVore, SAIGE Scholarship recipient.

and a member of the Chickasaw Tribe, and Dr. Bob Rabin, gave presentations to the participants. They spoke about NOAA science and careers and what they do at NSSL. Suzanne was also part of a panel titled, "Building Relationships with Native Communities to Increase Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) Exposure." She stressed the need for more Native Americans in science because of the many issues impacting Tribal lands. Suzanne's and Bob's presentations had an obvious impact on the students because many of them stopped by the NOAA exhibit booth with further questions. Cherie DeVore, a Navajo student, from the University of New

Mexico and winner of the first SAIGE Carol Jorgensen scholarship, met with Suzanne because she had an interest in water and hydrology. She was able to receive advice from Suzanne on staying the course in pursuing her degree and how her degree could be applied at NOAA.

Don Chapman, Dept of Commerce Senior Adviser on American Indian Affairs, and member of the Mohegan Tribe, was also present at SAIGE. He took the time to meet with NOAA employees during the conference and gave a workshop titled, "Following Your Passion in Your Profession," and participated in the panel discussion, "Agencies Response to the President's Directive on Tribal Consultation."

Other highlights included a two day Federal Indian Law Immersion course that was presented by Indian law experts, Walter Echohawk (Pawnee) and Stephen Pevar. In their session, they covered topics such as the Fundamentals of the Federal-Tribal Relationship; International Context of Federal Indian law; and Tribal Sovereignty and the Federal-Tribal Trust Relationship.

Keynote speakers included Larry Echohawk, Assistant Secretary, Indian Affairs, Dept. of Interior, and John Berry, OPM Director. Mr. Echohawk received a standing ovation for his very personal and from the heart talk on his family history and how he came to accept the position as Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs. He said he hesitated at first because of the painful history of not only his Pawnee Tribe but the dark chapter of the mistreatment of American Indians by the Federal Government. However, he said he accepted the position because he believes in America and the spirit that regardless of who you are there is opportunity for all people.

John Berry spoke about inclusion and increasing diversity in the Federal Government and asked SAIGE to work closely with OPM to expand the pipeline for American Indians and Alaskan Natives into SES (Senior Executive Service). You can read his full comments at: www.opm.gov/About_OPM/director/remarks/6-14-11-SAIGECongressRemarks.asp and his blog at: www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2011/06/15/saige-2011-conference-brings-together-current-and-future-group-public-servants.

Next year, the SAIGE conference will be in Broomfield, CO, June 3-8, 2012. For more information on SAIGE, visit their website at www.saige.org.

OAR HQs – Bring Your Child to Work Day

More than 750 kids of all ages registered for the Bring Your Child to Work Day event which took place at NOAA's offices in Silver Spring, MD, on April 28, 2011. A variety of programs and hands-on activities were held for the different age groups. Some included topics such as Live Turtles, Coral Reef Conservation and Adventures with NOAA Corps. All NOAA line offices provided funding support towards this event.



Participants at Bring Your Child to Work Day. Photo by Anthony Robinson.



Jasmin John and Marian Westley at Young Women's Conference

GFDL - Young Women's Conference

GFDL participated in the Young Women's Conference sponsored by the U.S. Dept of Energy's Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory, in Princeton, NJ, on March 11, 2011. The purpose of the conference is to inspire young women to pursue careers in science, technology and math. Jasmin John, Marian Westley, and Maria Setzer, participated as speakers and exhibitors in the Poster Presentation,

"Projecting the Future with Earth System Modeling." The young women in grades 7 through 10, circulated between speakers and the exhibit hall where they learned about the science of meteorology, scientific career paths, and NOAA's role in public safety and service. GFDL's participation in the conference is a way to expose and advertise NOAA careers, reach out to young women and inspire them to pursue NOAA related sciences. As Marian Westley said, "Personally, the conference always gives me a big lift, and I go back to my job as a NOAA Oceanographer with renewed enthusiasm."

GFDL – Information Technology (IT) Internship Program

GFDL hired three students through the IT internship program. They completed their six month tours on March 26, 2011. Under the guidance of senior operators, the students, Nicholas Jenkins, Christopher Todd, and Austin Blakeslee developed the skills necessary to become day-to-day operators that support the lab 24/7. As the students became proficient operators, they were simultaneously assigned to various senior staff in different technology disciplines. The staff served as mentors on several projects during their stay at the laboratory. GFDL's internship program puts the laboratory in a unique position by allowing them to sample and learn from these interns, and at the same time provides the interns with the opportunity to work in a first-rate research facility on modern computing equipment. In the spirit of education, GFDL hopes to learn as much from the students as they do from GFDL.

PMEL – Expanding Your Horizons (EYH) Conference

PMEL participated in the EYH Conference for middle school girls at Bellevue College on March 26, 2011. The conference provides hands-on experience with STEM related activities led by current women active in their field. PMEL scientists, Adrienne Sutton, a National Academies post doc, Laurie Juranek, Research Scientist, and Cynthia Peacock, Chemist, led the workshop, "Carbonated Oceans; Will the Clams Still be Happy?" They provided short presentations describing ocean acidification, conducted several lab activities, and spoke about their jobs and how they got there. The PMEL Carbon group participated in the program, because they want to effectively communicate their science in a way that educates the public and equips decision-makers with the knowledge they need to address ocean and climate policy. The women scientists said that by interacting with K-12 students, they hope that it

will help inspire the next generation of environmental stewards. They said that as women who were once middle school girls, they understand how important it is to have women mentors that can prove that careers in science can be exciting and rewarding. You can learn more about EYH and find out about programs in your state at: www.expandingyourhorizons.org/about/locate.php

PMEL – Northwest Indian College (NWIC) Career Fair

OAR was a co-sponsor of the NWIC Career Fair and Training Symposium on May 2-4, 2011. PMEL's Outreach Coordinator, Lauren Koellermeier, attended the conference as an exhibitor and spoke to students about careers at NOAA. The students participated in workshops and panel discussions on writing, the overall job search process,



Don Chapman, Dept. of Commerce Senior Adviser on Native American Affairs

interviewing, networking skills and opportunities in natural resources. Keynote speakers included Don Chapman, Dept. of Commerce Senior Adviser on Native American Affairs and Dr. Holly Bamford, Deputy Assistant Administrator, National Ocean Service.

ESRL/GSD – Hires Schedule A Candidate

Tanja Braunagel was hired as Secretary for GSD's Technology Outreach Branch (TOB). GSD used the Schedule A hiring authority because they saw the benefits of the program as a way to diversify their workplace. They also wanted to meet the requirements put forth by President Obama's Executive Order 13548 – Increasing Federal Employment of Individuals with Disabilities. Penny Granville, GSD EEO Advisory committee member, worked with the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) in identifying and recruiting candidates for the position. Please visit the OAR EEO website special

emphasis program page for more information on hiring People with Disabilities.

ESRL/GMD – Hawaii County Science & Engineering Fair

John Barnes served as a judge at the Hawaii County Science and Engineering Fair on February 19, 2011. John judged divisions in physics, chemistry, engineering and environmental projects for students ranging in age from 13 to 17 years old. John said the benefits in judging was the exposure and awarding two \$80 prizes, one to a high school project, and the other to a middle school project. He also met other local scientists and teachers, and said the fair was very enjoyable. He indicated that many of the students were very enthusiastic and really liked talking to real scientists.

HOLLINGS SCHOLARS STUDENT ORIENTATION

Each year, the Office of Education hosts a student orientation for incoming Hollings Scholars. During the orientation, each Line Office is given the opportunity to share what they do with the students. This information helps the students choose which Line Office they want to seek an internship with the following summer. This year, Drs. Michael Uhart and LaToya Myles represented OAR. They both shared their career journey and what they currently do in the organization. Each presentation was filled with lots of information and encouragement for the students. In addition to OAR's presentation, Drs. Nikola Garber, Chelsea Lowes and Frank Parker participated in the question and answer period with the students. They also participated in this year's career fair.

This year, OAR will host 29 students. There will be 3 students at AOML; 5 at GFDL; 9 at ESRL; 7 at NSSL; 1 at PMEL; 1 at Headquarters; 2 at GLERL; and 1 at ARL in Oak Ridge, TN. We look forward to highlighting some of the students and the projects they worked on in a later issue of *Connections*.

EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (EPP) STUDENT STARTS WORK AT ESRL/GMD

Ann Thorne, ESRL Student Coordinator, said Micheal Smith, a NOAA EPP scholar, started work at GMD and is being mentored by Michael O'Neill and Brad Hall. He is from El Paso, TX and attends Texas Southern University in Houston, TX where he is studying radiation physics and radiation health. Micheal is interested in pursuing a career in the government as an inspector although he remains open-minded about his future career goals.

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.

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

ABOUT US

The EEO Office provides services to OAR employees, managers and applicants for employment.

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.

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

WEBSITE:

www.eeo.oar.noaa.gov

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP:

If you believe you have been subject to discrimination on the basis of your race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age (over 40), disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, or retaliation for participating in activities protected by the civil rights statutes, you must contact an EEO Counselor within 45 calendar days of the alleged discrimination to preserve your rights under the law.

Please contact the NOAA Civil Rights Office to initiate EEO counseling:

Voice: 301-713-0500
Toll Free: 1-800-452-6728
TDD: 301-713-0982
FAX: 301-713-0983
Website: www.eeo.noaa.gov

Mediation

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

