



CONNECTIONS

Linking EEO, Diversity and Science

Volume 1, Issue 16

EEO/Diversity Newsletter for NOAA Research

March 2012

Black History Month: Black Women in American Culture and History



Carla Elam-Floyd, Human Resources Director, Denver Water.
Photo credit: Will Von Dauster

NOAA in Boulder and Headquarters celebrated Black History Month in February. The 2012 theme was “Black Women in American Culture and History.”

In Boulder, the guest speaker was Carla Elam-Floyd, Human Resources Director, Denver Water. In her talk, she highlighted the accomplishments of prominent women figures from the past and present in the fields of business, law, politics, science, education, arts, journalism and civil rights. She discussed their lives and the impact they have on American culture. For example, she highlighted Willa Beatrice Brown Chappell, who in 1937 earned her pilot’s license, making her the first woman to be licensed in the United States. Ms. Chappell was also instrumental in training more than 200 students who went on to become Tuskegee pilots. She also mentioned Shirley Ann Jackson, Physicist, who was the first African American woman to earn a doctorate from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1973. Ms. Floyd said that African American women have long been denied the recognition they desired and deserved. She celebrated the debt owed to these women because they broke the mold and

defied the stigma attached to them. The presentation was followed by a networking reception provided by the Boulder County Blacks In Government (BIG) chapter.

The program at Headquarters was also very inspiring. The invited guest speaker, Vikki Kennedy Johnson, Senior Manager at Black Entertainment Television (BET), used the lives of distinguished and accomplished legends such as Madam C. J. Walker, Oprah Winfrey and First Lady Michelle Obama to inspire the employees to create their own legacies by making history on a daily basis.

In addition to Ms. Johnson’s inspiring keynote address, several NOAA Executives joined the celebration with remarks about NOAA’s many efforts to continue to diversify the workforce. The Executives included Dr. Kathy Sullivan, Assistant Secretary of Commerce and NOAA Chief Scientist; Dr. Holly Bamford, DAA for NOS; and our very own, then-Acting DAA, Dr. Steve Fine. Finally, the program culminated with the Blacks in Government (BIG) Distinguished Service Awards. These awards are presented to selected NOAA employees who have worked for NOAA for twenty (20) or more years and have made a substantial difference in the workplace.

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Special Emphasis

American Indian & Latino Youth Leadership Institutes

The Boulder Valley School District held their 9th Annual American Indian and 22nd Annual Latino Youth Leadership Institutes at the University of Colorado at Boulder. The OAR EEO office provided in-kind and sponsorship support.

The American Indian Youth conference, **Embrace Your Native Ways**, was held on January 26, 2012. It featured guest speaker Winona La Duke (Anishinaabe), an internationally acclaimed author, orator and activist. She provided several small group workshops for students and discussed ways to get involved in protecting the lands and life ways of Native communities. The one day leadership training also featured breakout sessions on Native Creative Art,



AIYLI Student Leaders with Winona LaDuke. Photo credit: Cita Gover.



Latino students create a visual poster. Photo credit: Dona Laurita.

Native Jeopardy, and a cultural presentation by the Ram Nation Drum Group. The day ended with a reflections and dialogue session where students spoke out about what they learned during the day and how they planned to implement what they learned at their schools. There were over 50 students representing 31 different tribes and nations in attendance. Students clearly enjoyed the day, as one student commented, "It helped me recognize my Native heritage and to stand up for our rights."

The Latino Youth conference, **Creative Leadership – Leading from the Heart**, was held on March 12, 2012. Students began the day listening and telling their personal stories of their challenges in life. After lunch, the students were entertained with the Ballet Folkloric dancers whose spirit made the students feel proud of their heritage. The students then worked with community artists and broke out into Visual, Dance and Spoken Word groups. The student groups produced a visual poster, a dance routine combining hip-hop, breakdancing and tango, and spoken words of poetry. In closing, the students discussed ideas that they can take back to their schools and formed a circle where each student used one word to describe what the conference meant to them. Bill de la Cruz, the conference organizer said, "It was basically connecting the head with the heart; the students were able to connect and find that they have a lot of shared stories." There were over 150 students that attended.

Both conferences were featured in the local newspaper, The Boulder Daily Camera.

Colorado Federal Executive Board (CFEB) Martin Luther King Unity Training

On January 19, 2012, Jennifer Calderon, author, educator and producer, was the keynote speaker at the Martin Luther King Jr. Unity Training, held in Denver, CO. Jennifer introduced the AHA: Acknowledge, Heal, Act for Peace and Justice Methodology. The methodology is about acknowledging how the pain of racism has affected our lives and how to heal and move forward towards peace and justice. She had the attendees break into small groups to discuss the effects of racism in their lives. A panel of six members also talked about key issues in education, ethics, homelessness, and divisiveness affecting the local community.

In addition to Jennifer, Sam Adams, a local stand up comedian, was the luncheon speaker and Gay Page, CFEB Director, announced local award recipients for volunteer

work in the community. In closing, attendees vowed to begin to understand and respect one another, practice “active listening”, volunteer, mentor, serve, collaborate and listen with an open heart, to begin creating a more just and sustainable world personally and professionally. There were over 75 attendees at this annual event.

The OAR EEO office has a copy of the book that was handed out at the conference and written by Jennifer Calderon. Book Description: *“That White Girl” is a fresh and hard-edged novel chronicling a young woman’s quest for self-discovery while straddling two worlds, that of her middle-class Irish Catholic upbringing and her new family – Crips, America’s notorious street gang.* Please email Becky Rios at becky.rios@noaa.gov to check out the book.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

Date	Event/Conference	Location	For More Information
Apr. 11-13, 2012	6th Annual HR & EEO in the Federal Workplace Conference	Washington, DC	www.fedHRconferences.com
April 26, 2012	Bring Your Teenager to Work Day - Equal Pay, How the Next Generation will Make it a Reality. Sponsored by the EEOC.	Denver, CO	Patricia McMahon, EEOC 303-866-1344 or Patricia.mcmahon@eeoc.gov
Apr. 23-25, 2012	NOAA in collaboration with Northwest Indian College (NWIC) Career Fair & Symposium	Bellingham, WA	natalie.huff@noaa.gov
Apr. 30 – May 4, 2012	Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC) Annual Leadership Training Conference	Atlanta, GA	www.fapac.org
May 17, 2012	Colorado Federal Executive Board 22 nd Annual Professional Development Seminar	Denver, CO	www.colorado.feb.gov
June 3-9, 2012	Society of American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE) National Training Program	Denver, CO	www.saige.org
June 25-30, 2012	League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) National Convention & Exposition	Orlando, FL	www.lulac.org
July 7-10, 2012	National Council of La Raza (NCLR) Annual conference	Las Vegas, NV	www.nclr.org
July 15-20, 2012	Federally Employed Women (FEW) National Training Program	Detroit, MI	www.few.org

EEO/Diversity Across OAR

AOML

Howie Friedman, deputy director of AOML's Hurricane Research Division and EEO Advisory Committee member, was honored by the South Florida Federal Executive Board (FEB). During the FEB's monthly Board of Directors meeting on November 17, 2011, he was presented with an award in recognition of his dedication and service as the Treasurer of the organization during fiscal year 2011.

Sim Aberson and Howie Friedman were special category judges at the Broward County Science Fair on February 10, 2012. According to Howie, there were two fairly good Middle School projects on ocean acidification, the first time they have seen anything on that topic. Information was passed on to Rik Wanninkhof for possible interest in meeting with the students. The NOAA Award (a certificate from NOAA) was presented to middle and high school students whose exhibits represented NOAA disciplines. In addition, the local AMS Chapter (Miami Meteorological Society) presented the Gordon E. Dunn Award to students.

The winners of the special awards:

American Meteorological Society Award: "Factors that Lead to Increased Levels of Atmospheric Haze" -- Kristina Thoren, American Heritage High School

NOAA Award High School: "Novel Optimized Runga-Kutta Methods" -- Pratheek Nagaraj, Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School

NOAA Award Middle School: "Acid Oceans: Weak Mussels?" -- Camila Vara-Sanchez, Mary Help of Christians Catholic School

Gordon E. Dunn Award (presented by the Miami Chapter, AMS):

"Swimming in Acid: Ocean Acidification" -- Sonnet Prieto, St. Bonaventure Middle School

"The Tsunami Project" -- Jonathan Mirchandani, American Heritage Middle School

"Is It Getting Hot in Here?" -- Sameera Vedantam, Pembroke Pines Charter Middle School

"Go With the Flow" -- Jimmy Martinez, Millennium Middle School

ARL/ATDD

Randy White, a Meteorological Engineer, met with a sixth grade science class at Vine Middle School in Knoxville, TN, on November 8, 2011. Randy was invited by Carl Wheeler with Vols4STEM (Volunteers for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) to talk about weather, air flow, temperature, equipment and measurements. Vols4stem connects educators with science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) professionals, and shares expertise with K-12 STEM students. The students were encouraged to participate in science projects as well as the upcoming Southern Appalachian Science and Engineering Fair (SASEF) on March 26-29, 2012. Randy said, "This was a great opportunity to get the youth interested in science and engineering." For further information on Vols4STEM, go to www.vols4stem.org.

Dr. LaToya Myles was a featured speaker at Beyond Alcorn: An Educational Forum at Alcorn State University in Mississippi on November 17, 2011. The forum featured six speakers representing various STEM careers. Her slide presentation highlighted current air quality research at NOAA/ARL/ATDD as well as her professional journey from the NOAA Graduate Sciences fellow to her current position at ATDD. Students were particularly interested in learning how air quality is determined and what instruments are used to make different air chemistry measurements. Several students were familiar with NOAA's weather forecasting and hurricane work, but were unaware that NOAA was also involved in air chemistry research.

ESRL/GSD

GSD's Forecast Applications Branch hired Min Richardson as a Secretary through the Schedule A hiring authority on November 21, 2011. She comes from a previous credit administration position with Vectra Bank. Min has her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Industrial Design from San Francisco State University, and was in the U.S. Navy for four years. Ms. Richards is the second Schedule A hired in GSD.

WHAT IS SCHEDULE A? Schedule A is an Excepted Service appointing authority which may be used to hire individuals with disabilities. OPM Training Videos on Using Schedule A: <http://golearn.gov/HiringReform/index.htm>

ESRL/PSD

On December 12, 2011, Andrea Ray, Physical Scientist, and a University of Chicago alumna, organized a visit for 20 undergraduate and graduate students from the University

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of Chicago. They visited NOAA in Boulder for a tour and lunch with several NOAA scientists who are University of Chicago alumni. The tour was part of a two-day "Science and Tech trek" to meet with alumni employees in the area who can share industry information, career paths, and workplace cultures. Students were from departments including physics, math, geophysical sciences, chemistry, and biology.

GFDL

John Krasting, Physical Scientist, attended a career fair on Dec. 1, 2011, at Gateway Regional High School in Woodbury Heights, NJ. John, who is an alumnus, spoke to middle school students about being a meteorologist, the skill needed to become a scientist, why he loves his job, and what students should focus on if they are interested in a science career. John said, "The students were engaged in my presentation and I had a lot of fun answering questions about meteorology and climate change." This was the first time that Gateway organized a career fair and John thought it was run very well.

NSSL

Heather Reeves, Research Associate, is the co-advisor for Kristen Cassidy, a physically disabled student at the University of Oklahoma (OU). Heather is Kristen's primary go-to person and advises her on a daily basis. To complete her masters of science, Kristen is working on a project that deals with numerical weather prediction of severe winter weather. Heather is a winter weather specialist and was recommended by Dave Parson, the OU School of Meteorology director of graduate studies, to co-advise Kristen.

Bob Rabin mentors two students at the NESDIS Cooperative Remote Sensing Science and Technology Center (CREST) Institute at the City College of New York. He started the development of an on-line "weather portal" for educating engineering and environmental science students and faculty on applications of satellite and radar data at CREST and Temple University. Temple University is ranked in the top 10 for the number of African-American bachelor's degrees awarded in the nation during 2009-2010. Bob is also a committee member of the Space Science and Engineering Center weather museum at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and on the board of directors of the Indigenous Cultural Preservation Project.

CONGRATULATIONS!



Shirley Murillo, a Meteorologist with the AOML Hurricane Research Division, received the Dr. Charles E. Anderson award in January while attending the American Meteorological Society (AMS) 92nd meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana. The Anderson Award is presented annually in recognition of outstanding contributions to the promotion of diversity in the atmospheric and related sciences and broader communities through education and community service. Shirley received the Anderson Award for her "outstanding support of minorities and women to promote a more diverse workforce through mentoring, education, and community service."

In addition to Shirley's outreach and advocacy efforts, she has also served on the AMS Board of Women and Minorities, National Scholarship Selection Committee, and Education Symposium Program Committee.

A 14-year veteran with the Hurricane Research Division, Shirley specializes in producing hurricane surface wind analyses. These analyses depict the extent of a hurricane's wind field and the location of the strongest winds. She holds a Masters Degree in Meteorology from the University of Hawaii.

Shirley has also assisted the OAR EEO Office in its outreach efforts to minority communities. She has provided presentations at both the SACNAS (Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science) and the MAES (Society of Mexican American Engineers and Scientists) conferences.

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

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, Special Emphasis programs and *Connections* newsletter.

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

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www.eeo.oar.noaa.gov

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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