



CONNECTIONS

Linking EEO, Diversity and Science

Volume 1, Issue 21

EEO/Diversity Newsletter for NOAA Research

June 2013

I Want the Wide American Earth: An Asian Pacific American Story

May is designated as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. The 2013 theme, "I Want the Wide American Earth" recognizes the history, concerns, contributions and achievements of Asian Pacific Americans and their role in the American story. In this newsletter, we capture the achievements of our OAR employees.

Sandi Ashert, Chief Budget and Administrative Officer, ESRL office of the Director



Sandi Ashert in front of DSRC building.

world." Sandi said moving place to place allowed her to be flexible and learn to transition into new environments and situations. "I was always the new kid on the block and was shy, but I made friends and met people from diverse backgrounds. I grew up with diversity and learned a lot about the different cultures, customs and subcultures of the different States."

Sandi received her Secretarial Certificate from Leeward Community College in Hawaii in 1973. She started her federal career as a Clerk Typist at Hickam Air Force Base, Honolulu and then as a Secretary at Letterman Army Institute of Research, Presidio CA. She was encouraged by her fellow workers to return to college and began taking continuing education classes as a part-time student at San Francisco State University.

She moved to Boulder in 1977 and started working at NOAA as an Administrative Assistant, and has held positions as an Administrative Officer, Budget Analyst and Management Analyst. She also continued her education as a part-time student at CU Boulder and applied for NOAA's Long Term Training program, which allowed her to become a full-time student for one year. She obtained a B.S. degree in Business from the University of Colorado at Boulder, Leeds School of Business.

(Continued on page 2)

Every day, Sandi Ashert will make her 2 ½ mile round trip hike up the trail behind the David Skaggs Research Center in Boulder. She will not miss a day because it is a great de-stressor but also it is right in NOAA's back yard and she likes the outdoors and seeing the wildlife. For Sandi, Boulder has been the place she has lived the longest.

Her father was in the Air Force and he met her mom in Fukuoka, Japan. She said her parents got married right after WWII and she was born in West Point Academy, New York. "I have probably lived in 25 different homes, twice in Japan, but I would not change that experience for the

Inside this Issue:

Page 2	<i>Asian Pacific American Heritage Month profiles</i>
Page 3-4	<i>EEO Outreach Activities/ Announcements</i>
Page 5-6	<i>Diversity Across OAR</i>
Page 7	<i>Know Your Rights</i>

Special Emphasis Month

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month (con't)

Sandi said she enjoys the variety of work involved in her job at ESRL and has been lucky to have supportive supervisors throughout her career. "Going back to school was the best encouragement and support that I could have received from my supervisors, and I highly recommend going back to school." Sandi said she was an older student in her 30's but said it was worthwhile and she learned a lot from the younger students. Today, she is a strong advocate for student programs as a way to introduce students to science and careers in the Federal Government. "Students can be a breath of fresh air, they are innovative, enthusiastic and pro-active. It is a win-win situation for NOAA to use student programs, such as the SCEP program which is now Student Pathways."

Sandi's hobbies include hiking, reading and dancing. She also likes to travel and one of her goals is to take her son to visit the birthplace of her mom, the Island of Kyushu, Japan.

Jian-Wen Bao, Research Meteorologist, PSD

Jian-Wen is a Research Meteorologist working for ESRL's Physical Science Division (PSD) in the Weather and Climate Physics Branch. He was born in Wulumuqi, Xinjiang in China. He received his education at Lanzhou University in the Gansu Province, and obtained his M.A and PhD from Penn State University. When asked what interested him in Meteorology, Jian-Wen said it wasn't that he had an interest in science, but rather a state plan that he followed to go to college in meteorology. He said it is similar to the Chinese proverb, "marry first and fall in love later."

While at Penn State, he had the opportunity to participate in a program in Washington, DC on how forecasting was done at the National Weather Service. He also spent one year as a Post Doc at NCAR. Jian-Wen said he always knew that NOAA would be a place to work as a Meteorologist, and it "has been the place for me ever since." Jian-Wen has been at NOAA since 1994, first as a contractor and then a Federal employee with ETL which is now PSD.

Jian-Wen's research focuses on how to use available observations to improve and optimize physics

representations in NOAA's operational weather prediction models. He said his research contributes directly to NOAA's mission of meeting the need of the nation for accurate forecast of high-impact weather events from tornadoes to torrential rainfall to land-falling hurricanes. "For example, rapid intensification remains the number one problem in hurricane forecasting. I have been tackling this problem together with my colleagues in NOAA as part of the 10-year Hurricane Forecast improvement Project (HFIP), managed by OAR and the National Weather Service. Our objective is to reduce forecasting errors in rapid hurricane intensification events by a significant amount when the project is finished."

When asked what he enjoys most about his job, he said it is the opportunity to meet and work with colleagues in almost all of the labs and centers in NOAA. Outside of his work at ESRL, Jian-Wen enjoys traveling both domestically and internationally. He especially likes Western Europe. He said he was a session co-chair at a meeting of the European Geosciences Union which led him to travel to Europe which he now enjoys visiting.

Dr. Xuejin Zhang, AOML/CIMAS



Dr. Xuejin Zhang was selected as NOAA's Team Member of the Month for May 2013. Dr. Zhang, a CIMAS researcher working at AOML, was recognized for his contributions to the development of NOAA's high-resolution operational

Hurricane Weather Research and Forecasting (HWRF) model. The 2013 version of the operational HWRF includes a number of his innovative numerical upgrades and shows a 25-30 percent improvement in intensity predictions.

OAR Welcomes Student Interns



The OAR EEO office participated in the Office of Education Hollings Scholars and EPP student orientation on May 29, 2013. OAR Deputy Assistant Administrator Craig Mclean and Dr. John Cortinas, Dr. LaToya Myles, and Dr. Libby Jewett shared information on their career paths and current roles. Dr. Dwight Gledhill and Rochelle Plutchak participated in the career fair. This year, there will be 18 Hollings Scholars students working at OAR labs and program offices.

Each year brings a new group of students from across the country that are eager to learn about NOAA science, and each year I am excited to share my research with them and discuss opportunities for internships. I can clearly see how NOAA's education programs are mutually beneficial for the students and for the agency.

Dr. LaToya Myles

In Boulder, a reception was held for all NOAA student interns. Ann Thorne, Student Coordinator, said there will be 39 students from various programs including Hollings Scholars/EPP programs. Ann also mentioned that there will be two STAR Fellows. STAR is a summer research opportunity for aspiring science and math teachers. The program is run by a team of scientists and educators at CalPoly San Luis Obispo. The program is designed to improve K-12 STEM education in an effort to enhance the scientific and technological literacy of our society. NOAA Captain Michelle Bullock, NGDC, was the guest speaker and gave a talk on her career with the NOAA Corps.



Top Photo: 2013 Office of Education Interns. Bottom photo: Dwight Gledhill, Nicole Mason and Rochelle Plutchak at the career fair.



Students at Boulder reception. Photos by Will Von Dauster.

EEO Outreach Activities



American Indian Youth Leaders.

American Indian Youth Leadership Institute

The Boulder Valley School District/ American Indian Youth Leadership Institute (AIYLI) was held on April 17, 2013. It was the 10th Anniversary conference of AIYLI and over 100 8th to

12th grade students, teachers, and community members attended the full day event. OAR was recognized for its partnership throughout the years, and brochures and climate bookmarks were placed in the student packets. In addition, AIYLI student participants interested in STEM will be attending the American Indian Science & Engineering Society (AISES) conference in Denver, CO, October 31 to November 1, 2013.

Wyoming Women In Science (WIS)



The Wyoming WIS conference was held on May 14, 2013. The conference allows young women in grades 7 to 12 to learn first-hand about careers in science, mathematics, and technology from accomplished professional women. This year Hilary Peddicord, NOAA Boulder Outreach Coordinating Council, provided a presentation titled

Climate Change and Weather. The OAR EEO office also provided support to the conference. According to Michell Turner, Wyoming Space Grant Consortium, the conference was a huge success with 500 girls participating from around the state of Wyoming.

Announcements

OAR EEO and Sexual Harassment Policy Statements

The 2013 OAR EEO and Sexual Harassment Policy Statements were emailed to all employees on June 7, 2013. If you have any questions, please contact our office. The policy statements are also posted on the EEO website at : www.eeo.oar.noaa.gov.

Working Together in Indian Country

Former Acting Secretary of Commerce, Dr. Rebecca Blank, signed the "Tribal Consultation and Coordination Policy." Read blog by Dee Alexander, Commerce's Senior Adviser on Native American Affairs, at: http://www.commerce.gov/blog/2013/06/04/working-together-indian-country?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=CWG_0607

Boulder Labs Diversity Council (BLDC) Seeks New Members

The mission of the BLDC seeks to create a unified work environment where all Boulder Lab employees are respected



U.S. Rep Jared Polis at BLDC sponsored event. Photo by Will Von Dauster

and valued for their contributions. Members represent the different labs of NOAA, NIST and NTIA, under the Department of Commerce in Boulder, CO. The BLDC hosts various events throughout the year. Most recently, on May 2, 2013, U.S. Rep. Jared Polis (D-CO) gave a talk on inclusion and diversity and took time to answer questions from the audience. You can learn more about the BLDC and read about their past events at: <http://www.boulder.doc.gov/diversity/pastevents.html>. The BLDC Chair is Debe Dailey-Fisher, ESRL/CSD.

AOML - Employees in the Community

Shirley Murillo presented a talk titled, *Flying in the Face of Danger*, at the Buckeye Association of



Shirley Murillo

School Administrators (BASA) 8th Annual Celebrating Women in Leadership Conference in Columbus, OH. The theme was *Remarkable Women, Remarkable Leaders*. Attendees included school principals, superintendents, and aspiring women leaders. Shirley was invited to speak through her work with The JASON Project, an arm of the National Geographic's educational office. Shirley worked with the JASON

project a few years ago in building a hurricane science curriculum for kids, and also participated as a mentor. The JASON Project is a 501(c) (c3) non-profit organization that connects students with scientists and researchers in real- and near-real time, virtually and physically, to provide mentored, authentic and enriching science learning experiences. Learn more about the JASON Project at www.jasonproject.org.

Stan Goldenberg represented AOML at the NOAA booth during the 2013 Miami-Dade County Youth Fair. He distributed NOAA brochures and answered questions during selected shifts on several days between March 14th & 31st.



Stan Goldenberg (wearing Hurricane Hunter Flight suit) helping a 6-year old future meteorologist "touch" a tornado in the Tornado Simulator

Evan B. Forde was the Official photographer for the South FL Special Olympics on March 3, 2013. He also assisted with promoting and organizing the event that hosted nearly 400 special athlete participants.



Evan B. Forde (lower right corner) photographing a high jumping special olympic athlete at the Special Olympics Games.

ESRL/GMD - Science behind UCATS presentation

Jim Elkins and Eric Hintska explained their climate instrument, UCATS, on the NASA-NOAA Global Hawk to middle school students of Palmdale Aerospace Academy. Jim Elkins and Fred Moore also gave a presentation on the science behind the UCATS climate instrument to 92 high school students from the Bay Area: Independence High School in San Jose and El Camino High School from South San Francisco. This was held at the NASA Dryden Flight Research Center. Sixty-seven percent of the students at El Camino High School and 88% of the students at Independence High School are Asian and Hispanic.

ESRL/GSD - Employees Lead Rocky Mountain FEW

Penny Granville is the Vice President of the Rocky Mountain Chapter #014, and Bernadette Johnson is the Newsletter Editor. At the Federal Employed Women's (FEW) Rocky Mountain Regional Training program in March, the chapter received the Overall Outstanding Chapter Award. The members, which include other Boulder NOAA employees, were very instrumental in taking on the

(Continued on page 6)

EEO/Diversity Across OAR



Penny Granville accepting the FEW Overall Outstanding Chapter Award – Rocky Mountain Chapter from Matthew Fogg.

Thoughts and Attitudes; Financial Planning for Women; and Understanding the Federal Legislative Process and the Role of FEW.

GLERL - Winning Team at Ann Arbor Public Schools Science Olympiad co-coached by Jia Wang

Jia Wang was a co-coach of the Slauson Middle School Meteorology Team that won first place at the Ann Arbor



Jia Wang with the two teams from Slauson Middle School who won second and third place at the regional meet on March 16.

Public Schools Science Olympiad on March 16, 2013. Jia is a Research Ice Climatologist/Physical Oceanographer at GLERL. He met with the students once a week from October 2012 to the end of May.

Jia got involved with the Science Olympiad because his son attends the middle school. He decided to co-coach

lead for the Regional Training Program. Penny accepted the award from Matthew Fogg, FEW National Vice President for Congressional Relations and retired U.S. Marshall from the Dept. of Justice.

Cherie Adams and Tanja Braunagel also attended the training. Topics at the program included: *The Women's Century of Progress; The Power of your Thinking,*

the meteorology team since there were no parents with training in meteorology, and he wanted to share his expertise. He worked each week with the kids, gave lectures, and gave quizzes, and helped explain some phenomena. "Last year, the Slauson Meteorology team did not do well. With our effort, we made this team advance as front runners. In addition, I also gave a lecture to the kids on the topic of Dynamic Planet." The team won the regional 3rd place, and came in 9th at the State competition



The whole Slauson Middle School Team won first place, qualifying for the state competition.

on April 27, 2013, at Michigan State University. Jia said his participation increased awareness of GLERL and NOAA. The whole team, coaches, students, and parents all know he is a Climatologist from NOAA working on climate change. He said the outreach goal was met. The head coach asked Jia to come back next year to coach in the same topic. For more information on the Science Olympiad, visit the website at: <http://scienceolympiad.msu.edu/>

NSSL- American Indian Alaska Native Climate Change Workshop in Norman

Bob Rabin attended the American Indian Alaska Native Climate Change Working Group meeting held at the National Weather Center in Norman, OK on March 28-29, 2013. Bob met students and professors involved with environmental research at tribal colleges including Haskell Indian Nations University, Salish Kootenai College, and the Osage Nation. A student from Salish Kootenai, conducting research in hydrology, was introduced to the hydrology program at NSSL by local scientists. Plans were discussed with Dan Wildcat, Director of the Haskell Environmental Research Studies Center, to give a presentation at Haskell College in the fall of 2013 and to explore opportunities for collaboration with students and faculty.

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.

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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's Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Program provides mediation and other services and seeks early resolution.

Website: www.wfm.noaa.gov/adr/