



# CONNECTIONS

*Linking EEO, Diversity and Science*

Volume 1, Issue 10 EEO/Diversity Newsletter for NOAA Research September 2010

## In the Spotlight: OAR Hispanic Scientists

### SHIRLEY MURILLO

**What do you do at OAR?**



I am a research meteorologist for the Hurricane Research Division (HRD) which is part of the Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory (AOML) in Miami, FL. My research involves studying the surface wind field of tropical cyclones. During the hurricane season I participate in hurricane research mission and fly into the storms. I am part of a team of scientists onboard NOAA's WP-3D Orion aircraft collecting in-situ measurements.

**How did you get interested in science?**

I became interested in weather when I was young. Growing up in South Florida my first experience with a hurricane was when Hurricane Andrew made landfall in 1992. Seeing the damage caused left me awestruck and intrigued to learn about hurricanes. I also attended a magnet high school

where I got the opportunity to do an science internship at HRD.

**Did you have any role models when you were growing up?**

My parents were my role models growing up. They were dedicated and passionate about their careers. I admired these traits about them.

**Do you have scientists who were heroes to you, and were any Latino?**

Growing up I admired Sally Ride. At the time she was the only women scientist I knew of and had seen on TV. I felt empowered to pursue a career in science.

**Where did you receive your education?**

I received my Bachelor's degree (Meteorology) from Florida State University and my Master's degree (Meteorology) from the University of Hawai'i.

**What are your thoughts on encouraging minority students to think of science as a career option?**

Students should be encouraged to follow their dreams. I think that doing an internship really makes that dream a reality. It gives students an inside look as to what the career is all about.

**Are you involved in any community/**

**education outreach activities?**

Throughout my career I've been involved in numerous outreach activities. I will be attending this year's SACNAS and MAES annual conferences and giving a workshop on Careers in NOAA/OAR.

**How have these organizations helped you?**

These organizations have helped me build a network of peers in science.

### JOHN CORTINAS

**What do you do at OAR?**

I'm a meteorologist and the program director of the OAR Cooperative Institute program.

**How did you get interested in science?**

Although I was always an inquisitive child, my interest in science developed in grade school because of the exciting things that I was taught by a enthusiastic science teacher.

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**Did you have any role models when you were growing up?**

I do not recall having any role models as a child, but as an adult I have several role models that I have met throughout my career.

**Do you have scientists who**

**were heroes to you, and were any Latino?**

While I wouldn't consider any scientist a hero to me, there are many scientists from all backgrounds that I admire. My strongest admiration is for those that have strong affinity for being an outstanding scientist and are.

**Where did you receive your education?**

I attended several universities to obtain my degrees: University of Nebraska - Omaha, Metropolitan State College of Denver, and the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta, GA.

**What are your thoughts on encouraging minority students to think of science as a career option?**

Because of the increasing need for people to be scientifically and technologically literate regardless of their career choice, I feel strongly about encouraging minority students that have an interest in science to pursue a career in some scientific discipline. The shifting demographics in the US indicate that this country must make sure that students from growing ethnic and racial populations are pursuing scientific careers to ensure that the US can improve the current standard of living through advancements in science. Without a corresponding increase of scientists from increasing ethnic and racial populations, the US may find that the majority groups that have traditionally supplied scientists are now decreasing with a corresponding decrease in the number of graduates with science degrees, leaving the US behind in achieving future scientific advancements that will be needed to solve the world's problems.

**Are you involved in any community/education outreach activities?**

I have been involved with community/education outreach activities primarily within the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) and the American Meteorological Society.

**How have these organizations helped you?**

These organizations have provided me with a large network of scientists and other scientific professionals from which to draw expertise and guidance on conducting research, and successful student and scientific career development.

Calendar of Hispanic Events	
<b>September 30 to October 3, 2010</b>	The SACNAS (Advancing Hispanics/Chicanos and Native Americans in Science) National Conference & MAES (Mexican American Engineers & Scientists) Symposium will take place concurrently in Anaheim, CA. Shirley Murillo and John Cortinas will be representing OAR at these conferences. Website: <a href="http://www.sacnas.org">www.sacnas.org</a> and <a href="http://www.maes-natl.org">www.maes-natl.org</a>
<b>October 6 to 7, 2010</b>	OPM sponsored Puerto Rico Federal Hiring Event and Training Workshop Series in San Juan, PR Email: <a href="mailto:Carmen.andujar@opm.gov">Carmen.andujar@opm.gov</a>
<b>October 13, 2010</b>	NOAA-OAR Hispanic Heritage Month presentation "Los Niños y las Niñas – Engaging Hispanics in STEM" Guest Speaker: Marina LaGrave 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon Boulder, CO Email: <a href="mailto:Georgia.madrid@noaa.gov">Georgia.madrid@noaa.gov</a>
<b>October 20-21, 2010</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Annual National Image Inc Region VIII Training Seminar in Denver, CO Email: <a href="mailto:Jdavalos.natlimage@gmail.com">Jdavalos.natlimage@gmail.com</a>
<b>October 27-31, 1020</b>	SHPE (Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers) Annual Conference in Cincinnati, OH Website: <a href="http://www.shpe.org/shpe2010">www.shpe.org/shpe2010</a>
<b>November 29-30, 2010</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Annual Federal Hispanic Career Advancement Summit in Bethesda, MD Email: <a href="mailto:Clement.sara@dol.gov">Clement.sara@dol.gov</a>

### ESRL/GSD - Intern from Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) shares his experience.

My full name is **Mario Rafael Lopez de Victoria Garcia**. I was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico where I still live. I just graduated in May with my Bachelor's Degree in Computer



Science from the University of Puerto Rico in Bayamon Campus. My interest in science includes computer programming and software, networking, web development, supercomputing and project management. I've been doing a little of everything here in GSD.

My first time participating in the HACU internship

was last summer, in which I interned with the FAA in Washington, DC. There I worked with the office of Airports Planning & Programming in project management related work. I went back to Puerto Rico to finish my studies and in the summer of 2010 I decided I would come back and gain some more experience. I was picked by NOAA/GSD as a computer science intern to work with Pam Weber and her team in Boulder, Colorado. I was pretty excited because this time I was going to be a field intern. After working for the summer, I was asked if I wanted to extend my internship as a fall intern and obviously I accepted. Getting to work until December gets me even more excited because it would be my first time seeing snow. I hope it doesn't get too cold, though, since Puerto Rico is always warm and humid.

My experience working for GSD has been unforgettable and rewarding. I've learned a lot and I've been open to work with different sections within GSD. I've worked with supercomputing, networking, system administration, web development, facility, data center and system support. This gives me a broad perspective regarding my interests in computer science.

**This is the first year that GSD has used the HACU internship program and they have already signed up for next year. Pam Weber, GSD ITS Chief, said HACU was used very successfully at USDA where she formerly worked and Mario has been a real asset to GSD. Mario's mentor is Jeff Van Buskir.**

**For more information on the HACU internship program, please visit website at [http://www.hacu.net/hacu/HNIP\\_EN.asp](http://www.hacu.net/hacu/HNIP_EN.asp)**

### ARL/ATDD

Lynne Satterfield volunteered time with the Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D), in Oak Ridge, TN. The mission of RFB&D is to create opportunities for individual success by providing and promoting the effective use of accessible educational materials. Lynne reads sections of books and checks the finished file recordings of other books for correctly placed marks. Lynn has been a volunteer of this program for several years.

### GLERL

GLERL hosted nine students from the Summer Fellows program through CILER (Cooperative Institute for Limnology and Ecosystem Research), two students from the NOAA Literacy Fellow program, and two students from the Hollings Scholars program. In addition, there were eight students working with GLERL and CILER scientists at the Ann Arbor and Muskegon locations. Jo Ann Banda, a CILER student and graduate student at University of Toledo, studied and wrote an abstract on "Validation of HIF1a as a biomarker for hypoxic exposure to yellow perch." Yellow perch is an important Great Lakes fishery that is experiencing an increase in hypoxic conditions.

### GFDL

Nikolas "Nikos" Hatzianastasiou, a Fulbright Scholar from Greece spent the summer at GFDL reevaluating GFDL's climate model with actual aerosol measurement data for the Mediterranean. Read more at: [www.oar.noaa.gov/news/archive/2010/scholar\\_reevaluates\\_model.html](http://www.oar.noaa.gov/news/archive/2010/scholar_reevaluates_model.html).

### PMEL

Dr. Meghan Cronin coached a team of 5th grade girls from Bryant Elementary School twice a week for an hour in preparation for a statewide math championship in Blaine, WA on April 17, 2010. The team placed 49th out of 107.

### AOML

Kimmaree Horvath, a Hollings scholar from the University of Akron (Ohio), worked with Drs. Jim Hendee (AOML/Ocean Chemistry Division) and Derek Manzello (NRC Post-Doc) this summer. Kimmaree received 1st Place recognition out of the more than 100 Scholars in the 2009-2010 Hollings program, for her presentation, "Coral reef response to climate change and ocean acidification: Building the base-line." She helped with field studies on coral growth, bioerosion, and seawater CO<sub>2</sub> from 6 reef sites in the Florida Keys.

## Special Emphasis Activities - Conference Highlights

### Blacks In Government (BIG) 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual National Training Conference, Kansas City, MO 8/22 to 26, 2010

By Thomas "Buz" Taylor, GFDL EEO/Diversity Committee Chairperson



Dr. Randal D. Pinkett, Keynote Speaker at Opening Plenary

At the opening plenary session, the Mistress of Ceremonies was KSHB (NBC) local news anchor Cynthia Newsome, whose knowledge, charm and humor made her an excellent choice. Saxton Walker, a young man unmistakably destined for great things, 17 years old and a former BIG Oratorical Scholarship Recipient, was also featured. His speaking and motivational skills and the experiences he referred to, far surpassed what my teenager presumptions were. It was suggested that we get his autograph now, as later its value was sure to rise. The keynote speaker, Dr. Randal D. Pinkett, received an MBA & Ph.D., from MIT and a Rhoads Scholarship and MS in Electrical Engineering from Oxford. He is the co-author of the book "Black Faces in White Places: 10 Game Changing Strategies to Achieve Success" and the winner of NBC's hit show, "The Apprentice" with Donald Trump. He also attends the First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens in Somerset, NJ, the church where I was married in 1979. Six degrees ... The essence of Dr. Pinkett's message could be summed up in three words, Legacy, Legacy, Legacy. He said, "Success is what you do for yourself; greatness is what you do for others." My favorite quote, "Sorrow always looks down, worry always looks around, and faith always looks up."

The conference ended with the *Excellence in Government Service Awards & Recognition* Banquet. A letter from President Barack Obama was read, and a congratulatory video presented by White House Senior Advisor, Valerie Jarrett was shown. Marc H. Morial, CEO and President of the National Urban League, and former mayor of New Orleans, was the keynote speaker. He issued a challenge to all members to return home with a pledge of responsibility to commit time and talent to ensure that the nation is empowered to achieve the following goals by 2025:

- Every American child is ready for college, work and life
- Every American has access to jobs with a living wage and good benefits
- Every American lives in safe, decent, affordable and energy efficient housing on fair terms
- Every American has access to quality and affordable health care solutions.

### Bonnie St. John speaks at 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Federal Dispute Resolution (FDR) Conference

By Becky Rios

The FDR annual conference was held on Aug. 9 -12, 2010, in Atlanta, GA. The highlight of the conference for me was the keynote speaker Bonnie St. John. Bonnie was the first African American to win bronze and silver medals at the 1984 Paralympics Games in Austria. She was a very inspirational speaker. She talked about her obstacles in life growing up with sexual abuse, and in a single parent home, with a physical disability. But this did not hold her back. As a one-legged skier falling down the slope and getting right back up, perseverance was a key to her success. "A superhero is someone who always asks for help and being creative and reaching your dreams will lead to joy and happiness in your life." I would recommend Bonnie as a keynote speaker at your events. To learn more about her life, please visit her website at: [www.bonniestjohn.com](http://www.bonniestjohn.com).

### National Organization for Mexican American Rights (NOMAR) 13th Annual Training Conference

NOMAR was organized in 1998 as a non-profit organization to promote and defend the civil rights of Americans of Hispanic origin and their right to equal employment and educational opportunities. They held their conference in Miami, FL on August 31 to September 3, 2010. Keynote speakers included Christine Griffin, Deputy Director, OPM, who spoke about OPM initiatives in the recruitment and

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retention of Hispanics in the Federal government; and Thomas Saenz, President and General Counsel of the Mexican American Legal & Educational Fund (MALDEF) who spoke about current civil rights issues affecting the Hispanic community.

One workshop, "Federal Agency Hispanic Employment" included a panel of Senior Executives who gave information on strategies and initiatives undertaken by their agencies to increase Hispanic representation. Rafael De Leon, EPA, said that the first thing he did when he became HEPM was to eliminate the zeroes. "Nothing sticks out like a zero and the goal was to get one Hispanic in each of the major occupations at EPA." He said that while Hispanics are still underrepresented at EPA, they did eliminate the zeroes. He also spoke about a new initiative to attract Hispanics to EPA called *Beyond Translation*. Some of the goals of *Beyond Translation* is to identify environmental and public health challenges in the Hispanic community and translate them into partnering opportunities, as well as prepare students through activities promoting careers in STEM. "There is more to being a Latino than just translating documents" said De Leon, "we need to think about the health of our community and make EPA culturally relevant to the Hispanic community."

### Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) visit NOAA in Boulder

Larry Gehring and Nate Slattengren, from DVR, gave a very informative and educational presentation to members of the OAR EEO Advisory Committee on 8/27/10. DVR is Colorado's leading placement organization for people with disabilities.

Larry provided an overview of DVR. He said that they are charged with helping individuals with disabilities prepare for work, obtain employment and maintain employment. They also partner with Federal employers to recruit qualified candidates, facilitate accommodations and support current employees. Larry said that individuals with disabilities represent a significant source of productivity and encouraged NOAA to take advantage of this under-used employment source.

Nate talked about using the Schedule A hiring authority and the White House Executive Order on Increasing Federal employment of Individuals with Disabilities. He said agencies don't have to post and publicize the position and don't have to go through the certificate process. DVR will assist NOAA in using their contacts and resources to find qualified candidates.



Larry Gehring and Nate Slattengren, DVR Representatives  
Photo by Georgia Madrid

For more information on Colorado DVR, please call Nate at 303-866-2217 or email [nate.slattengren@state.co.us](mailto:nate.slattengren@state.co.us). You can visit their website at [www.dvrcolorado.com](http://www.dvrcolorado.com). You can also contact the OAR EEO office at 303-497-6732 for a copy of their presentation.

### National Vocational Rehabilitation contacts for other OAR states:

- **Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services**  
Eladio Amores, Phone: 303-941-359-7811 Website:  
[www.fljobconnections.com](http://www.fljobconnections.com)
- **Michigan Rehabilitation Services**  
Barry Reinink, Phone: 517-373-4041 Website:  
[www.michigan.gov/mrs](http://www.michigan.gov/mrs)
- **State of Washington – DSHS – DVR**  
John P. Evans, Phone 360-725-3647 Website:  
[www.dshs.wa.gov/dvr](http://www.dshs.wa.gov/dvr)
- **MD Division of Rehabilitation Services**  
Jo Anne Materkowski, Phone: 410-554-9387 Website:  
[www.dors.state.md.us](http://www.dors.state.md.us)
- **NJ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services**  
Cheryl Casciano, Program & Planning Development Specialist  
Phone: 609-292-4967 Website:  
<http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/dvrs/DVRindex.htm>
- **OK Dept. of Rehabilitation Services**  
Belen Burkhalter, Program Manager, Phone: 918-581-2083 Website:  
[www.okrehab.org](http://www.okrehab.org)

## NOAA Research EEO/Diversity Program Office

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### WEBSITE

[www.eeo.oar.noaa.gov](http://www.eeo.oar.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.

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

### 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 send to:

**Georgia Madrid**  
[georgia.madrid@noaa.gov](mailto:georgia.madrid@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](http://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](http://www.adr.noaa.gov)

