



CONNECTIONS

Linking EEO, Diversity and Science

Issue #47

EEO/Diversity Newsletter for NOAA Research

MARCH 2021

MARCH IS NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH



Choose to Challenge

Greetings NOAA Colleagues!

More women are [contributing to NOAA's mission](#) than ever before. Women make up 35% of NOAA's workforce in total, and 31% of NOAA's senior leadership — [an increase of about 4% in the last decade](#). In short, we help oversee an agency with a workforce more than 22,000 strong, more than a dozen vessels, 20 weather satellites, and a budget of more than \$5 billion.

But challenges remain. The U.S. civilian workforce is 48% women, and though NOAA's percentage is slowly increasing, it is still well below that number. The percentages of women in the nation's entire federal workforce (43%) and in STEM fields (28%) also remain lower than those in the general workforce.

The NOAA Women's Employee Resource Group was established in late 2019, with the primary mission to discover areas to grow diversity and inclusion and provide recommendations to NOAA Leadership with the goal of attracting, retaining, and supporting the professional advancement of underrepresented employees in NOAA.

One of our first challenges is ensuring you know we exist, and finding inclusive ways to hear from the Women and allies in NOAA. To that end, we're proud to share:

- Our new Google Site, for information about who we are, and how you can get involved: <https://sites.google.com/noaa.gov/oicr-erg-women/home?authuser=0>
- Our new Facebook site, [NOAA Women in Science](#), to share information and further hear from one another,
- Our [mailing list](#), to get information about upcoming Women ERG events, and
- Our monthly Meet and Greets, which for this month is March 18 to chat about ["If I Knew Then What I Know Now ..."](#) with more to come in April and beyond!

This year, the theme of International Women's Day (March 8) was *Choose to Challenge*. The NOAA Women's Employee Resource Group invites you to join us in becoming more aware of the implicit and explicit barriers that can hinder women's contributions and advancement. We can choose to challenge the barriers that impede women's full participation and equality, both at NOAA and in society. We can also choose to celebrate women's achievements. We can choose to make a free, fair, just, and sustainable world for everyone. If you would like to learn more about our group, join our mailing list or get involved, complete this [Form](#).

Jessica Snowden
Deputy Director, Global Ocean Monitoring and Observing Program
Office of Atmospheric Research
Co-Chair, NOAA Women's Employee Resource Group

EEO Advisory Committee (EEOAC)

MEET YOUR EEOAC PRIMARY MEMBERS

The **EEOAC** represents the OAR labs and program offices. They meet on a monthly basis and serve as the communication and point of contact on EEO related matters. Rich Lataitis, EEOAC Chair, highlighted the following completed action items:

- Expanded EEOAC to include 10 laboratories and 8 programs/offices.
- Identified and briefed an SES EEOAC Champion, who will work with the EEOAC to help identify and elevate concerns to and communicate feedback from OAR senior leadership.
- Created and are working to circulate an EEOAC poster to socialize the committee across OAR as an advisory resource.
- Ensured the inclusion of an EEO/Diversity statement in the NOAA Science Report, OAR Strategic Plan and contracts/grants notices.
- Worked to elevate the visibility of EEO by including an EEO action item on each quarterly SRC agenda.
- Participated in outreach to NOAA CSCs, Tribal Colleges and minority scientific conferences.



PSL
Rich Lataitis
Chair



CPO
Regina Cain
Vice Chair



NSSL
Bob Rabin
Secretary



AOML
Dr. John Cortinas
EEOAC Champion



CFO
Artina Foster



GOMO
Jessica Snowden



IA
Alicia Cheripka



OAP
John Tomczuk



OER
Genene Fisher



TPO
Tiffany House



WPO
Mark Vincent



AOML
Ruth Almonte



ARL
Michelle Howard



CSL
Angela Nyul



GFDL
Matthew Harrison



GML
Samantha Middel



GSL
DaNa Carlis



GLERL
Sandra Salyers



PMEL
Ogie Olanday

NSSL

American Indian Science & Engineering Society (AISES) Region 4 Student Conference

Bob Rabin participated in the AISES Region 4 virtual conference on March 6, 2021. AISES Region 4 includes colleges and universities in Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma and Texas. This year's conference was planned and hosted by students from the University of Arkansas' AISES chapter. The agenda included scholarship and graduate school/career panels, and Cherokee storytelling by guest speaker Gayle Ross, Cherokee citizen and direct descendant of John Ross, Principal Chief of the Cherokee during the infamous "Trail of Tears".

Dr. Henrietta Mann, Southern Cheyenne, distinguished educator and founding member, AISES Council of Elders Emeritus, gave the opening blessing and shared words of wisdom. She encouraged students to consider a career in meteorology, hydrology, atmospheric, climate and environmental sciences in order to address climate change issues. She cited the possibility of significant job growth in these fields over the next decade.

Bob shared information on the NOAA Hollings Scholarship program and offered assistance for students interested in applying. He said, "Attending the region 4 conference was an enriching experience, and an opportunity to learn about culture and share expertise." He encourages other labs to participate because of the opportunity to connect and share NOAA activities with an intimate group of AISES students in school chapters near OAR labs.

Learn more about upcoming [AISES regional conferences](#) in your area.



Photo: AISES Student Leaders. Credit: AISES

Technology Partnership Office (TPO)

Knauss Fellow Joins TPO



Suzi Webster joins TPO as their new Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach Specialist. Suzi is currently a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science. She researches how partnerships between scientists and other stakeholders can contribute to the Chesapeake Bay

research and management. Before joining TPO, Suzi worked on a team of science communication professionals at the Integration & Application Network in Annapolis, MD. In her free time, she enjoys hiking, gardening, and trying new foods.

Tiffany House featured in Society of Women Engineers (SWE) Diverse Podcast and 20% Podcast:



The SWE Conference took place virtually from November 2-13, 2020. Tiffany House was the primary contact for SWE. She was responsible for procuring the contract for a magazine advertisement, banner, and podcast. Tiffany and the SWE FY21 President, Heather Doty, discussed funding opportunities NOAA offers to small businesses.

The episode titled "Intro to NOAA's Funding Program for Small Businesses" can be found on the [SWE DIVERSE Podcast](#) webpage. Members of SWE and interested parties can find the digital magazine advertisement for the NOAA Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program on page 79.

In addition to the SWE Podcast, Tiffany was also featured in the January [20% Podcast](#). The podcast was launched in 2020 by NOAA's Diversity and Professional Advancement Working Group (DPAWG). Tiffany shared her career journey, challenges she has faced and tips on how to improve NOAA's diversity efforts.

EEO/DIVERSITY ACROSS OAR

Climate Program Office

Sharing NOAA Student Internship Opportunities with Underrepresented Groups

Todd Christenson, Program Analyst for CPO and the OAR Program Coordinator for the William Lapenta NOAA Student Internship Program, reached out to many underrepresented groups to promote the program and share all of NOAA's student opportunities. This year, ten OAR laboratories and programs will host interns through the Lapenta Internship program.

Todd gave presentations at Jackson State University, University of Massachusetts Boston, Augsburg University, Humboldt State University, North Carolina State University and University of Minnesota. He also met with the Environment Program Director from the National Society of Black Engineers, and Directors of the Indian Natural Resources Science and Engineering Program (INRSEP).

He continues to provide ongoing mentoring in training, networking, CV preparation and other aspects of career development to students from the NOAA Cooperative Science Centers, Significant Opportunities in Atmospheric Research and Science (SOARS), Partnership Education Program (PEP), Hollings scholarship program, and the Lapenta Internship program. He met with nine students during the first quarter 21. He successfully facilitated a 10-week internship in the office of the OAR Chief Economist for Jasmine Fuller, a first year PhD student in Economics from the NOAA Center for Atmospheric Science and

Meteorology (NCASM) at Howard University during the fall, 2020. This led to an internship for Howard PhD student David Dongo for spring 2021.

In addition, he participated in a series of webinars and discussions sponsored by the Ecological Forecasting Initiative Diversity Equity and Inclusion Working Group. The topic for the session was, *What do diverse students need to thrive in a data and computer heavy setting?* The session led to several subsequent discussions about NOAA opportunities with participating faculty.

Prior to coming to NOAA in 2012, Todd served as Program Manager for the NOAA Living Marine Resources Cooperative Science Center at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, where he developed a passion for education and a commitment to diversity. Since coming to NOAA, he has worked in PPI, the Office of Coast Survey, and the Office of Education before joining CPO in 2018. After working on a team to develop a small internship within OAR based on the NCEP NWS Internship model, Todd was thrilled to serve as coordinator for OAR when the NCEP internship was expanded and named in honor of Bill Lapenta in 2020. The Lapenta team is committed to training diverse and talented undergraduate and graduate students for careers in OAR, NWS and NESDIS.

International Affairs (IA)



Tammy Bleier, from the New York Sea Grant program, was selected as the IA's 2021 Knauss fellow. Tammy is currently completing her graduate degree at SUNY Brockport where her thesis research focuses on microplastic pollution in Lake Ontario. The research she has been conducting highlighted the

extensive issue of microplastics in the Great Lakes and inspired her to engage her community in citizen science and start an organization to raise awareness of plastic pollution in the Great Lakes. During the fellowship, Tammy will be involved in the bilateral science cooperations with Japan, facilitate NOAA engagement with the United Nations

Decade on Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and help support the efforts of OAR's International Activities office. Tammy hopes that this fellowship will provide the opportunity to learn about marine policy at the international level and be a part of bilateral and multinational policy-building. She is especially interested in understanding how climate change, conservation, and plastic pollution are being addressed in the international arena.

PMEL

In September 2020, PMEL launched a Show 'N Tell Series for all employees. The goal is for employees to get to know each other better. It is held on the first Friday of each month. The share can be on any topic such as a recent adventure, a hobby, or simply an introduction to the lab.

The series has been well received and featured topics have included sea glass collecting, climate science in haiku and watercolor, fence of doors, cruising in the time of COVID-19, working in the Solomon Islands and a recent trip to the Raja Ampat Islands.

ARL



Dr. LaToya Myles was promoted to the Director of the Atmospheric Turbulence and Diffusion Division (ATDD) of NOAA's Air Resources Laboratory. LaToya is a 2001 EPP/MSI Graduate Sciences Alumna. Read her story [here](#).

AOML



Evan Forde Oceanographer, was featured in the [Spotlight on Commerce](#) for Black History Month.

CSL

Matt Coggan helped develop videos for NOAA Boulder's 8th Grade Science Days to support student on-line learning. In *The Particles We Breathe* video, he worked with CSL employees, Patrick Verse and Carrie Womack, fish tank experiment (with smog produced from just a lemon), and made science demos describing what creates air pollution, or smog, and explained what it means for air quality in Denver. Matt said the program may be a small "silver

lining" that has arisen due to COVID-19 because the videos can reach many more students.

GFDL

During the 2020 SACNAS Virtual National Diversity STEM conference, Sonya Legg met with Geo-Futures mentee and NOAA EPP/MSI scholar Jezella Peralta. Sonya and Jezella met daily to discuss meetings goals and plans. Jezella is majoring in Marine Science with a minor in statistics at Cal State University, Monterey Bay. She previously interned with the Office of



Photo: Sonya (bottom) virtual meeting with Geo-Futures mentee, Jezella Peralta.

National Marine Sanctuaries and the Northeast Fisheries Science Center studying spatial distributions around *Modiolus modiolus* beds in the NE Atlantic continental shelf.

Set within the annual SACNAS conference, Geo-Futures is a conference-based program funded by the National Science Foundation that engages with and provides educational resources for students interested in pursuing a career in the geosciences (Atmospheric, Earth, Ocean, and Polar Science). For more information, please visit: <https://csumb.edu/cme/undergraduate-students>

PSL



Carolien Mossel, City College of New York, completed her three month NERTO internship with PSL and the Hydrometeorology Modeling and Applications Team. She was mentored by PSL Research Meteorologist, Kelly Mahoney. Carolien's efforts focused on analyzing the representation of hydrologic and atmospheric forcing uncertainty in the post-processed and downscaled Global Ensemble Forecast System (GEFS)-driven National Water Model hydrologic ensemble. Her internship opportunity was part of the NOAA Educational Partnership Program with Minority Serving Institutions (EPP/MSI). She carried out research to analyze both the ensemble atmospheric forcing datasets and the resulting National Water Model ensemble output to improve understanding of the linkages between atmospheric and hydrologic uncertainties in a prototype hydro meteorological forecast system.

GSL

DaNa Carlis, GSL Deputy Director, gave a talk to the Metro Atlanta Chapter of the American Meteorological Society and National Weather Association. DaNa's talk was titled "An Unscripted Journey: Science, Policy, and Leadership." YouTube Link to the recording of the presentation. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqd_Fqk35V8

Becoming the JEDI

By Catalina Martinez

This article was featured in the University of Rhode Island/Graduate School of Oceanography Fall 2020 Issue



Photo: Catalina Martinez, Regional Program Manager for NOAA's Office of Ocean Exploration. Currently on detail with the Office of Inclusion and Civil Rights.

How do we diversify our teams, our applicant pools, our programs or our workforce? For the entirety of my 20 year tenure as a proponent of JEDI (justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion) in the ocean science realm, I have heard these questions posed by all manner of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) professionals. Like many, I am frustrated about how little progress we've made in the past 40 years, [1] despite the U.S. population becoming more and more ethnically and racially diverse. [2] My own answer to the questions of how to address lack of diversity has evolved over time, but there is one thing I can say for sure: there is no silver bullet that can move the needle. No diversity intervention team that can swoop in to kick doors down to opportunity, or force an equitable, inclusive STEM culture that is conducive to the success of all.

My suggestion at this point is to go into this work with a very different mindset, and be prepared to take a challenging journey that should begin by having honest conversations. In my experience, diversity efforts often begin and end with targeted recruitment. Although that is a critical component, efforts will continue to fall short unless we simultaneously address the less than welcoming STEM culture that can be present, posing significant barriers

to entry, persistence and success for underrepresented students and scholars in our STEM programs and workforce. In other words, this work is not simply a matter of "increasing diversity," but of creating inclusive environments infused with equity. This is hard work, and it will take sustained commitment from strong leadership, and a great deal of deliberate thought, intentional actions, and a series of conscious decisions to do things very differently going forward.

This year's more honest national reckoning around systemic injustices and disparities in the U.S. could lead to some real progress. I recently heard the term 'productive apocalypse'[3] to describe how this elevated national consciousness may be the catalyst needed to truly reimagine a more compassionate and equitable world moving forward. Whether this results in a sustained wave of change remains to be seen, but I am cautiously optimistic given what I've witnessed over the past few months. I have hope, and I truly believe that through collective will and a critical mass of champions, we can ensure that the next generation of STEM professionals fully represent the increasingly diverse demographics of the U.S. at large. Embracing a JEDI mindset is the first step. Are you with me?

1. Bernard, R.E., Cooperdock, E.H.G. No progress on diversity in 40 years. *Nature Geosci* 11, 292–295 (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41561-018-0116-6>
2. Vespa, Jonathan, Lauren Medina, and David M. Armstrong, "Demographic Turning Points for the United States: Population Projections for 2020 to 2060," *Current Population Reports*, P25-1144, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, 2020.
3. Garfield, Robert, host. "Trump's War on Critical Race Theory." *On The Media*, WNYC Studios, 08 Oct. 2020. <https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/otm/episodes/trump-admins-war-critical-race-theory>.

NOAA Research EEO/Diversity Program Office



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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.

CONNECTIONS NEWSLETTER

Connections is published quarterly by the OAR EEO/Diversity Program Office. The purpose is to share accomplishments and to link Diversity, EEO and Science within all of the OAR laboratories and program offices. If you have any newsletter ideas, suggestions and stories to contribute, please email Georgia Madrid - georgia.madrid@noaa.gov.



Website: eoo.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:

NOAA Office of Inclusion and Civil Rights
Phone: (301) 713-0500 or 1-800-452-6728
Fax: 301-713-0983

Website: <https://www.noaa.gov/organization/inclusion-and-civil-rights>

ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION:

NOAA's Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Program provides mediation and other services and seeks early resolution. [Brochure](#)

NOAA CAREERS

<https://www.noaa.gov/work-with-us>

STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES:

<https://www.noaa.gov/education/opportunities/student-opportunities>