



FELLOW NEWS

News for and about the NOAA Fellows

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October 2006 Issue 31



FOCUS ON FELLOWS:

Lindsay Leiterman



As an infant, Coastal Fellow Lindsay Leiterman has been told, she cried for hours when her mother first touched her tiny feet to the grass. Despite this inauspicious beginning, Lindsay showed a keen interest in nature while growing up in DePere, Wisconsin, just outside of Green Bay.

“My older brother became my exploring companion, and we could not get enough of the outdoors,” says Lindsay, who spent summers camping, fishing, and canoeing with the family in northern Wisconsin.

Lindsay credits an eighth-grade science teacher with nudging her toward a career in environmental issues. “She is a very strong woman and was the first teacher to give me the opportunity to experience things hands-on,” says Lindsay. “She taught me to always ask questions until I found answers.”

While Lindsay double-majored at Marquette University in biology and urban and environmental affairs, she explored the outdoor classroom as well. Volunteering at Milwaukee’s Urban Ecology Center, Lindsay helped young people from the inner city learn about animals, plants, and the environment. “As an environmental educator in a highly built environment, I constantly searched for ways to ‘green’ the cement paradise,” says Lindsay. She also interned at the Green Bay Botanical Garden, which provided an intense education on plant life.

A summer session at Duke University’s Marine Laboratory educated Lindsay on sea turtle biology and conservation science and policy. “After the first week at the marine lab, I never wanted to leave,” says Lindsay, who gained real-world experience interacting with the local fishermen and learning about the impact of development on the delicate ecosystem.

As an undergraduate planning for the future, Lindsay sometimes wondered, “Do I want to study science or policy? And how can you

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NOAA Coastal Services Center
LINKING PEOPLE, INFORMATION, AND TECHNOLOGY

FOCUS ON FELLOWS (CONTINUED)

accomplish anything in either field without the other?" Fortunately, the Master of Environmental Management program at Duke University enabled Lindsay to combine both interests, focusing on coastal environmental management and conservation science and policy.

During her master's program, the outdoor classroom came calling once again. For her thesis, Lindsay traveled to Puerto Rico, where she learned how local cultures protect nesting sea turtles. In addition, during a two-year stint as wildlife projects manager for Research Triangle Park in Raleigh, North Carolina, Lindsay showed companies how to protect wildlife habitat and incorporate nature into the workplace.

Lindsay discovered the Coastal Management Fellowship while wading through job postings at Duke's career services center. The fellowship, with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Coastal Zone Management Division, really stood out as a great opportunity for her.

One of her fellowship duties includes working with the Coastal Communities Initiative, a grant program helping communities enhance or protect coastal areas. Lindsay's main project, however, is developing a Web-based information portal by the name of Targeted Outreach and On-Line Support (TOOLS). The TOOLS program, an aid to encourage natural resource planning, casts a wide net by featuring information that can benefit county and city resource managers, planners, elected officials, watershed organizations, land trusts, homeowners, business

owners, and educators. This portal makes information on the state level available to local users.

"At the local level, we are seeing questions dealing with everything from shoreline erosion to obtaining 'green' building credentials. TOOLS will answer those questions and everything in between," says Lindsay.

Web organizers hope that the site will eventually include resources beyond the Watershed Services Unit, encompassing information and services available throughout Maryland's Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

After the fellowship ends, Lindsay hopes that she can continue to work on coastal issues while remaining in Washington, D.C., or the greater Maryland area.

"Because my project encompasses the Watershed Services Unit, I have been fortunate to learn about every issue facing Maryland's watersheds—shoreline erosion, sea level rise, watershed restoration, green infrastructure, clean marinas, wetland restoration, and environmental design," says Lindsay. "I also had the opportunity to do field research with the wetlands and the submerged aquatic vegetation divisions of DNR, both of which I enjoyed immensely."

As an added benefit, Lindsay was able to attend many conferences and meetings. "Maryland generously sent me to geographic information system (GIS) training at the NOAA [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration] Coastal Services Center in Charleston, which was a great experience. I plan to utilize my new skills as I organize the GIS resources within TOOLS," she notes. 

FOCUS ON FELLOWS: Sharon Gulick



Sharon Gulick, the coral reef management fellow in the Territory of American Samoa, has packed a great deal of travel into just a few years. However, her wanderlust could not have been predicted from her childhood in the Washington, D.C., suburb of Adelphi, Maryland. Sharon spent her summers at the local pool, and her family traveled little, except for yearly trips to the Delaware shore.

One vivid memory—a trip to Bermuda with her swimming team—exposed Sharon to the beautiful pink sand beaches of the island.

Sharon studied the history of the 19th-century American South at the University of Virginia during her undergraduate years, while also taking many elective science courses. After graduation, Sharon taught English in Japan for two years. In 2003, Sharon began attending graduate school at Yale University's School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, where she concentrated on water resource management studies.

It was her brother, an avid backpacker, who piqued her interest in environmental issues. “I started small, with day trips in the Appalachians, and then I started going on much longer trips in New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming,” says Sharon. “I gained a great appreciation for the desert during my trips to Utah.” This desert experience motivated Sharon to work on a restoration project in California’s Joshua Tree National Park, which is located in the Mojave Desert. Later, she worked in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park in Alaska.

Sharon became aware of coral reef–related issues while working at the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok. “I ended up taking an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) trip for youth around coastal Thailand with a couple of marine biologists and tropical ecologists. Talking with them was like taking a crash course in coral reef ecology and Thai coastal issues. The trip inspired me to study water resource management, with a focus on tropical ecosystems,” she says.

Sharon first learned about the Coral Reef Management Fellowship through her graduate school career office. She now works in American Samoa with the Coral Reef Advisory Group (CRAG), a group of territorial and federal agencies that coordinates all of American Samoa’s coral reef management activities.

The most exciting fellowship project, says Sharon, has been assisting with American Samoa’s Rare Pride Campaign, a program focused on protecting sea turtles and their coral reef habitats.



SHARON IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE’S CORAL CAR, WHICH SHE USES TO TRAVEL TO WORK EVENTS IN AMERICAN SAMOA.

As part of this campaign, she is developing two children’s books and coordinating the assistance of local student interns.

Sharon leads the Population Pressure Local Action Strategy working group. “Population pressure is one of the four major threats to American Samoa’s coral reefs. The other three are overfishing, land-based pollution, and climate change,” she says. Sharon is also coordinating the Samoan translation and republishing of the *Natural History Guide to American Samoa* and the revised edition of the *Population Action Plan*. In addition, Sharon is assisting in the development of a territorial ocean research framework.

Sharon’s plans might include working again in Southeast Asia or staying involved in Pacific coral reef issues on a regional scale. She does appreciate all the networking and educational opportunities that the fellowship has provided.

“One of the best things about the fellowship is that it facilitates

networking with managers and scientists internationally and in all of the U.S. coral jurisdictions. I have especially enjoyed meeting and talking with the coral fellows placed in other jurisdictions, such as Guam, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands,” says Sharon.

The fellowship stipend to attend conferences and workshops has been helpful as well. “American Samoa is currently in the process of developing a framework for ocean research. Since I am involved in coordinating that effort, participating in last April’s Ocean Research Priorities Plan Workshop in Denver was a really valuable experience. I am also planning on attending the upcoming International Tropical Marine Ecosystem Management Symposium in Cozumel, Mexico. I look forward to networking with, and learning from, coral reef managers from all over the world,” concludes Sharon. 

FOCUS ON THE CORAL FELLOWSHIP:

Coral Updates



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)

Lihla Noori, the coral fellow on the island of Rota in the CNMI, is spending a large amount of time coordinating one of the jurisdiction's local action strategies. The Talakhaya Revegetation Project aims to reduce the erosion of sediment and nonpoint-source pollutants into the adjacent coral reef environment.

Recent accomplishments include mapping the planting area, constructing access trails, and propagating seedlings. Through the enthusiasm and hard work of the eight local partner agencies, 2,000 native trees were recently planted, half with the assistance of local high school students. Lihla also coordinated a week-long environmental day camp attended by forty 12-to 16-year-olds. Many camp activities were coral-related, including planting the Talakhaya seedlings, exploring an underwater discovery trail, and enjoying a coral scavenger hunt. Camp video footage aired on local television, and a professional video is in the works to market Rota as an ecotourism destination. Working through a local nonprofit organization,

the Luta Marine Education Center, Lihla also secured a capacity-building and outreach grant with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Pacific Islands coastal small grants program. She will coordinate and facilitate the Rota environmental action and leadership group. This group enables high school students studying marine biology to engage in outreach projects that improve the management of marine protected areas and increase community understanding of coral reef ecosystems. The students will also monitor reef flats for the CNMI marine monitoring team.

Guam

Romina King, coral fellow in Guam's coastal management program, is working on a Microsoft Access database and developing an application for the Coral Reef Initiative (CRI) monitoring and management grants. The reporting requirements for the CRI grants have become labor intensive and time consuming. This database and user-friendly interface are intended to provide individuals involved in the grants process with updated information on budgets, grant names and expiration dates, grant recipient requirements, principal investigator contact information, local action strategy information, and other important details. The availability of the information will make producing reports easier. Additionally, the database may serve as backbone to a Web-based application, allowing the controlled viewing of CRI-funded project information to principal

investigators, resource managers, and the public.

Hawaii

Interviews are currently being conducted for this position.

Puerto Rico

Maria del Mar Lopez-Rivera, coral reef management fellow within the Department of Natural and Environmental Resources of Puerto Rico, has continued working on the development of Mona Island's management plan. In the process, she has learned about local and federal legislation, and also about mechanisms for designating and managing marine protected areas (MPA) in Puerto Rico. She is participating in several MPA projects. One memorable experience involved her invitation last August to speak at a meeting of the Caribbean Fisheries Management Council in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands. Maria del Mar, who gave a presentation on the status of MPAs in Puerto Rico, felt that this event—her first nonlocal forum as coral reef management fellow—was a huge learning experience. Maria del Mar plans to participate in the upcoming International Tropical Marine Ecosystems Management Symposium in Cozumel, Mexico, as well as the related workshop on Crime Scene Investigations for Coral Reefs.

U.S. Virgin Islands

Interviews are currently being conducted for this position.

FOCUS ON THE COASTAL FELLOWSHIP:

Call for State Proposals

All states and Caribbean jurisdictions with federally approved coastal zone management programs, as well as states developing such programs for approval, are eligible to submit one project proposal to compete for selection as a fellowship host state. Multiple state agencies or organizations with partnered implementation of the state's coastal management program are also eligible. States that currently host a first-year fellow are not eligible to apply for a second fellow. This year, six project proposals will be selected.

A six- to eight-page proposal in 12-point font must include:

- Background/introduction
- Goals and Objectives
- Milestones and Outcomes
- Project Description
- Fellow Mentoring
- Project Partners
- Cost Share Description
- Thematic Area*

*Please note that the Thematic Area requirement is a new requirement in 2007. Please visit the Web site at www.csc.noaa.gov/cms/fellows/stateproject.html for specific guidance.

Proposals are due to the Coastal Services Center by close of business on Friday, October 13, 2006. One signed proposal and four copies must be received by mail. Proposals transmitted via e-mail or fax will not be accepted. Send your proposal to:

Coastal Management Fellowship Program
NOAA Coastal Services Center
2234 South Hobson Avenue
Charleston, SC 29405

To view examples of previously selected state proposals, visit the fellowship Web site at www.csc.noaa.gov/cms/fellows/stateproject.html. Please note that these examples from 2006 do not contain information regarding the new Thematic Area application requirement.

FOCUS ON THE CENTER

Several new products and services developed by the NOAA Coastal Services Center can aid NOAA fellows in their work.

Visualization software guide. Individuals who wish to use visualization as a tool but lack the resources or expertise now have an alternative. The Center has created a guide for an easy-to-use software that is available free of charge. A PowerPoint demonstration and a collection of additional coastal objects that can be used with the software are included on the Web page at www.csc.noaa.gov/visualizations/.

Place-based training for Pacific Island region. The Pacific Services Center has developed an advanced, four-day training course on geographic information system analysis that helps coastal zone managers and emergency managers apply "real-world" scenarios to Pacific Island environments. Trainings are taking place in Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. For more information, contact Darcee.Killpack@noaa.gov.

Boundary-making handbook. *Marine Managed Areas: Best Practices for Boundary Making* provides a useful "best practices" guide for writing boundary descriptions within a geographic information system framework. The handbook was developed by federal and state boundary experts under the auspices of the Federal Geographic Data Committee's Marine Boundary Working Group. Numerous NOAA offices contributed to this effort. To receive a copy of the publication, contact Meredith.Westington@noaa.gov or Cindy.Fowler@noaa.gov.

Survey guide for natural resource managers. Social science tools, such as surveys, can help identify the relationship between the community and natural resources. To strengthen awareness and understanding of survey types and techniques, the Center has published a guide that will soon be available on the Human Dimensions Web page at www.csc.noaa.gov/cms/human_dimensions/. For more information, contact Chris.Ellis@noaa.gov.

CREDITS AND INFORMATION

Fellow News is published by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coastal Services Center to relay information about the fellowship program and provide a forum for information exchange among fellows, mentors, Sea Grant, and the Center.

Please send your questions and suggestions for future editions to csc.fellowships@noaa.gov

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UPCOMING CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

OCTOBER

1-5: **National States Geographic Information Council 2006 Annual Conference**
Little Rock, Arkansas
www.nsgic.org/events/future.cfm

6: **Deadline to submit abstracts for Coastal GeoTools 07 and Coastal Zone 07**
www.csc.noaa.gov/geotools/
www.csc.noaa.gov/cz/

12-15: **Rally 2006, Land Trust Alliance National Land Conservation Conference**
Nashville, Tennessee
www.lta.org/training/rally.htm

15-20: **25th Annual International Submerged Lands Management Conference**
Red Bank, New Jersey
www.nj.gov/dep/cmp/czm_news.html

19-21: **Place Matters 06: A Creative Planning Collaborative for Sustainable Communities**
Denver, Colorado
<http://placematters.org/>

NOVEMBER

6-9: **American Water Resources Association 2006 Annual Conference**
Baltimore, Maryland
www.awra.org/meetings/Baltimore2006/

8-9: **Second Annual Coral Reef Conservation and Management Conference**
Miami, Florida
www.informalearning.com/CoralReefs/

DECEMBER

6-8: **Northeast Aquaculture Conference and Exposition**
Mystic, Connecticut
www.northeastaquaculture.org/index.htm

9-13: **Restore America's Estuaries Third National Conference on Coastal and Estuarine Habitat Restoration**
New Orleans, Louisiana
www.estuaries.org/conference/

For more information on upcoming events, please visit www.csc.noaa.gov/cms/conferences.html.

NOAA COASTAL SERVICES CENTER TRAINING

Project Design and Evaluation

October 24-26
New York City Department of Environmental Protection

December 12-14
Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program

GIS Analysis for Coastal Management

October 24-27
NOAA Pacific Services Center

Public Issues and Conflict Management

October 30-31
Minnesota Sea Grant

Coastal Community Planning and Development Pilot Training

November 7-8
Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium and Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve

**Training classes are limited to project partners and NOAA line offices.*

Introduction to ArcGIS

December 4-5
NOAA Coastal Services Center

Coastal Applications of ArcGIS

December 6-8
NOAA Coastal Services Center

For more information on these courses and other training offered by the Center, please visit www.csc.noaa.gov/training/.

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