

## Senate Confirms Lautenbacher

—By Dane Konop

On Nov. 30, the U.S. Senate confirmed President Bush's nomination of retired Navy Vice Adm. Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr., to be the next NOAA Administrator.

The vote was by unanimous consent.

In a post-confirmation interview, Lautenbacher said he expected to be sworn in and on the job by mid-December.

Lautenbacher learned the news watching CSPAN-2 during the Friday Senate wrap up session. "After more than four months of waiting and

anticipation, it was definitely energizing to witness success in this most crucial step of the process. It is a great feeling to be in this position at last and I look forward to joining my NOAA teammates very shortly," he said.

At his Senate Commerce Committee confirmation hearing Nov. 8, Lautenbacher was asked his views on a number of issues, most notably the fisheries concerns of Sen. Ron Wyden of Oregon.

While stating he was supportive of efforts to aid beleaguered U.S. fishers and of the fisheries decision making process in general, he deferred answering in detail until, he said, he has had an opportunity to review NOAA issues as administrator.

As president of the Consortium for Oceanographic Research and Education, Lautenbacher has already weighed in on a number of ocean-related issues, having testified in July before the House of Representatives on ocean exploration and on development and implementation of a coastal and ocean observing system.

In an interview prior to his confirmation, Lautenbacher did express his opinion on a number of NOAA-related issues, again mostly related to the ocean sciences.

He said he's on record supporting large-scale observing systems.

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## Monster Hurricane Michelle Tests Forecasters' Skills

—By Frank Lepore & Lori Sumner

The seventh Atlantic hurricane of the season, a tempestuous tropical cyclone named "Michelle," was a late bloomer, forming in the Caribbean Sea on Oct. 29.

The storm soon showed it did not play by traditional rules and quickly gained the attention and a measure of respect from NOAA forecasters.

While still a tropical depression hovering near the border of Honduras and Nicaragua, Michelle produced more than 15 inches of rain. The resulting flooding killed three people.

Jack Parrish, meteorologist with NOAA's Aircraft Operations Center, who flew research and reconnaissance missions into the storm, noted, "As it started strengthening and taking on tropical characteristics, its center moved ashore into the mountains of Nicaragua. Usually such a move destroys a growing tropical cyclone by cutting off its fuel supply—warm humid air from the Caribbean. In this case enough of the storm remained over water to retain its identity."

As Michelle meandered over the warm tropical waters of the western Caribbean, it matured quickly into a tropical storm with 40 mph winds.

In the span of five days, Michelle would grow, gaining monstrous proportions—some 290 miles in  
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*Dane Konop/NOAA*

*Legislative Affairs director MaryBeth Nethercutt and Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr., leave the Senate Russell Office Building on Capitol Hill following his confirmation hearing Nov. 8.*

## Michelle

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diameter and weighing in as a category 4 hurricane on the 1 to 5 Saffir-Simpson hurricane scale.

Michelle had become a behemoth, whipping up 135 mph sustained winds.

Over the next nine days, the questions of where Michelle was likely to go and what the storm was likely to do when it got there fully engaged elements of NOAA, the Department of Defense, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the coastal populations of Honduras, Nicaragua, Cuba, south Florida and the Bahamas.

Computer models run by the National Weather Service's Environmental Modeling Center suggested Michelle's track as north-northeast. On that trajectory, this major hurricane would roll-over west-central Cuba—a worst case scenario for Cuba's low-lying southern coast and interior locales rich in agriculture. In this forecast scenario, after tearing-up southern

and central Cuba, Michelle should turn to the northeast, narrowly missing major populations centers of south Florida.

But would Michelle turn as anticipated?

Only 90 miles beyond Havana lay the Florida Keys.

Was Michelle intent on being the first hurricane in two years to make a landfall in the United States?

Monitoring Michelle's every wobble were forecasters at NOAA's National Hurricane Center in Miami, Fla. Anticipating the wobbles could not have been done without the support of many others.

"NOAA and its many federal, state and local partners were as primed as a well-oiled machine—gathering the data, crunching computer analyses, artfully assembling the information into a forecast and spreading the warning needed to protect lives and property," said Max Mayfield, Hurricane Center director.

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## Commerce Honors NOAA Employees

—By Dane Konop

Over 200 NOAA employees and offices received Department of Commerce gold, silver and bronze medals in November.

On Nov. 7, 47 employees and offices received Commerce Department gold and silver medals in a ceremony in the department auditorium in Washington, D.C.

The following are the gold medal winners, listed by the winners' line offices.

**National Marine Fisheries Service**  
Allan Coker, Scott Doyle, Thomas Flagg, Deborah Frost, Mark Helvey, William McAuley and Michael Wastel.

**National Ocean Service**  
David Chapman, William Conner, John Cubit, Lisa Dipinto, Carol Manen, Norman Meade and Donald Scavia.

**National Weather Service**  
Paul Jendrowski.

**NESDIS**

Office of Satellite Operations.

**Oceanic and Atmospheric Research**  
Robert Embley and the Radar Meteorology and Oceanography Division of the Environmental Technology Laboratory.

**Under Secretary**

Cynthia Fenyk, Katherine Pease and Mark Pickett.

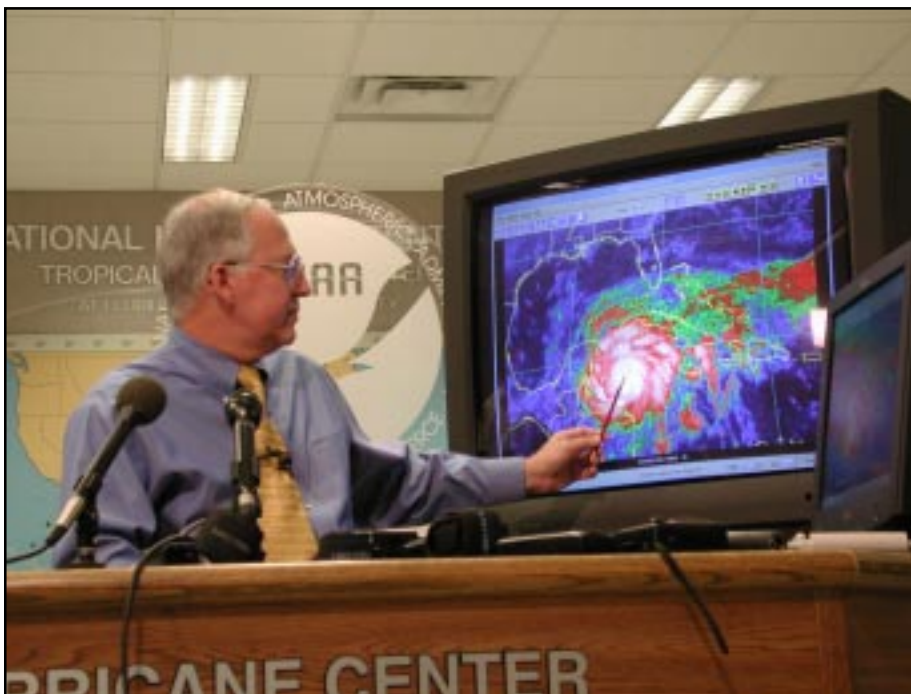
The following are the silver medal winners.

**National Marine Fisheries Service**  
Tracy Dunn, John Foret, Richard Hartman, Patricia Mulligan, Michael Sissenwine, Rachel Sweeney, Dennis Thaute, Patrick Williams and Erik Zobrist.

**National Ocean Service**  
James Farr.

**National Weather Service**  
Birmingham, Ala., Weather Forecast Office, John Coyne, Lawrence Krudwig, Missoula, Mont.,

*continued on page 7*



*Andy Newman/Monroe County, Fla.*

National Hurricane Center director Max Mayfield briefs the news media Nov. 1 as Hurricane Michelle begins its threatening approach to Cuba and southern Florida.



Curtis Carey.

Dane Konop/NOAA

## Curtis Carey Is the NOAA Employee of the Month

—By Robert Chartuk

In 2001, there has been a 100 percent increase in National Weather Service news releases and press conferences, with the agency garnering national and local headlines in media outlets across the country. At the heart of these media successes is Weather Service public affairs chief Curtis Carey, the December Employee of the Month.

“Mr. Carey’s innovative public service approach not only promotes the NOAA and National Weather Service mission and its dedicated personnel, but also helps save lives by effectively educating the public on the hazards of severe weather,” said Weather Service director Jack Kelly.

An ambitious Weather Service lightning safety program, for example, was embraced by professional golfers Vijay Singh and Rocco Mediate, who star in vivid lightning safety posters distributed

nationwide. Mediate also appears in a 30-second television public service announcement produced by Carey and unveiled during the Buick Classic Golf Tournament to a room full of reporters and the sport’s elite.

After the Weather Service lightning safety message was beamed to television stations across America via satellite, media requests for follow-up interviews poured in for weeks, including one from the CBS Early Show, which featured lightning safety in a live broadcast with a meteorologist from the Gray, Maine, Weather Forecast Office.

The Nielson Tracking Service confirmed that the lightning safety video was shown in over four million homes.

A Weather Service press release accompanied by detailed lightning safety information was distributed to more than 500 daily newspapers and other media outlets nationwide.

The agency’s very first lightning safety awareness week also took center stage on NOAA’s website, attracting hundreds of thousands of viewers—all thanks to the leadership of Curtis Carey.

Among his office’s 31 other news conferences and 159 press releases thus far this year was the hugely successful media kickoff of the 2001 hurricane season, staged at Reagan National Airport in Washington, D.C., which attracted media from around the world. The event, which featured NOAA and the Weather Service’s top leaders as well as the nation’s hurricane hunter capabilities, dramatically focused public attention on the dangers of tropical weather.

The Weather Service announcement of its winter weather outlook, coupled with Carey’s media savvy, put Weather Service director Jack Kelly live on NBC’s Today Show.

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Julie Nakamoto.

Susan Kamei/NOAA

## Julie Nakamoto Is the Team Member of the Month

—By Crystal Straughn

When there’s a major project to be done, Julie Nakamoto doesn’t let the picturesque islands of Hawaii distract her.

Nakamoto, an administrative specialist who works with NOAA Fisheries staff at the Honolulu Laboratory of the Southwest Fisheries Science Center, is the NOAA Team Member of the Month for December.

According to her supervisors, Nakamoto plays a key role in recruiting individuals to help NOAA employees meet their project goals. She works with NOAA Fisheries and the Joint Institute for Marine and Atmospheric Research to help smooth out the administrative differences between the state and federal systems.

The joint institute, called JIMAR for short, was created in 1977 by an agreement between the

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# Focus On...

## The Naval Career of Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr.

—By Dane Konop

Growing up in Philadelphia, Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr., set his sights on the Navy at an early age.

His seventh grade science teacher had a son at the Naval Academy, and she would read his letters home to her class. Lautenbacher recalled, “He talked about some of the things that went on during plebe year. He talked about some of the cruises he was on for the summer. It captivated my imagination. It sounded really neat.”

“I was able to get a nomination from Sen. Hugh Scott,” he said. “I had no political connections. It was all done through competitive exams.”

After graduating fifth in his class with a B.S. in mathematics and physics and receiving his commission as an ensign, he reported to the *U.S.S. Wasp*, an aircraft carrier homeported in Boston. Following a short stint on *Wasp*, Lautenbacher was off to graduate school at Harvard for three and a half years, earning an M.S. and a Ph.D. in

applied mathematics. His dissertation examined the effects of geometry on tsunami landfalls.

With postgraduate degrees in hand, Lautenbacher was next posted as an engineering officer aboard what he called the “multi-purpose destroyer” *U.S.S. Henry B. Wilson* for a short period in 1968 before again going off to the Navy’s guided missile and antisubmarine warfare schools.

He returned to *Wilson* as its weapons department head.

Lautenbacher made three cruises to Vietnam from 1968-1971 aboard *Wilson* in the South China Sea, including a tour as weapons officer.

“The ship was all over the place,” operating in nearshore waters off South Vietnam “as close as you could get in,” Lautenbacher said.

He was assigned to the destroyer *Benjamin Stoddert* as its executive officer in March 1975, just as the U.S. made its final withdrawal from Vietnam to end the war.

Lautenbacher was on the dock in Subic Bay in the Philippines when the ship returned from Vietnam at the end of Operation Eagle Pull, the dramatic evacuation of Americans and pro-American Vietnamese from the U.S. embassy in Saigon in the face of advancing North Vietnamese troops.

Lautenbacher recalled, “I watched the ship come in filled with 350 Vietnamese refugees. I walked onboard and helped with  
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*Lautenbacher family photo*

Cdr. Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr., skipper of the destroyer *Hewitt*.



*Lautenbacher family photo*

Lautenbacher receives his shots and is mustered into the Navy.

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the refugee problem.” He found the experience heart wrenching. “It was incredible to see these folks. U.S. Navy ships just filled to the top line with Vietnamese refugees—people carrying all that they could carry with them in a sack, many just with the clothes on their backs,” he said.

“That really was a low point to see that happening, and quite a logistical operation as well to take care of these people,” Lautenbacher recalled.

In May 1980, at the age of 37, Lautenbacher reached a career pinnacle—being named commanding officer of the destroyer *Hewitt*. The ship had a crew of about 330 officers and enlisted men, many of them just out of high school.

“Being a commanding officer is an incredible tour of duty. That’s what every naval officer aims for. That’s the career objective. That’s the prize. There’s just no other job on Earth like commanding officer of a U.S. Navy vessel,” he said.

Following his *Hewitt* command, Lautenbacher returned to shore duty in 1982 as a federal executive fellow for a year of independent study at the Brookings Institution, a think tank in Washington, D.C.

After Brookings, Lautenbacher had a number of important staff positions ashore, including inspector general and as deputy chief of staff for management for the Pacific Fleet, which put him in charge of personnel and financial resources, making him “basically the resource manager for the Pacific Fleet,” he said.

From 1986-1988, Lautenbacher was commanding officer of the Norfolk, Va., Naval Station, the largest in the country. He was responsible for the care and housing of 100,000 sailors, with 2,000 sailors who maintained the base—from fire fighters to maintenance workers—reporting directly to him.

In the fall of 1990, Iraq invaded Saudi Arabia, prompting a response by the U.S. and its allies.

During operation Desert Shield, Lautenbacher was the deputy naval component commander, reporting daily in the war room to the force commander, Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf.

“General Schwarzkopf was the right man at the right time. I think he did a fine job. It was a real learning experience and a privilege to work for him,” Lautenbacher said.

Lautenbacher remained in Saudi Arabia through the completion of Desert Storm in 1991, when Iraqi forces were routed and forced to retreat or surrender.

Lautenbacher reached another career pinnacle when he made vice admiral in August 1994.

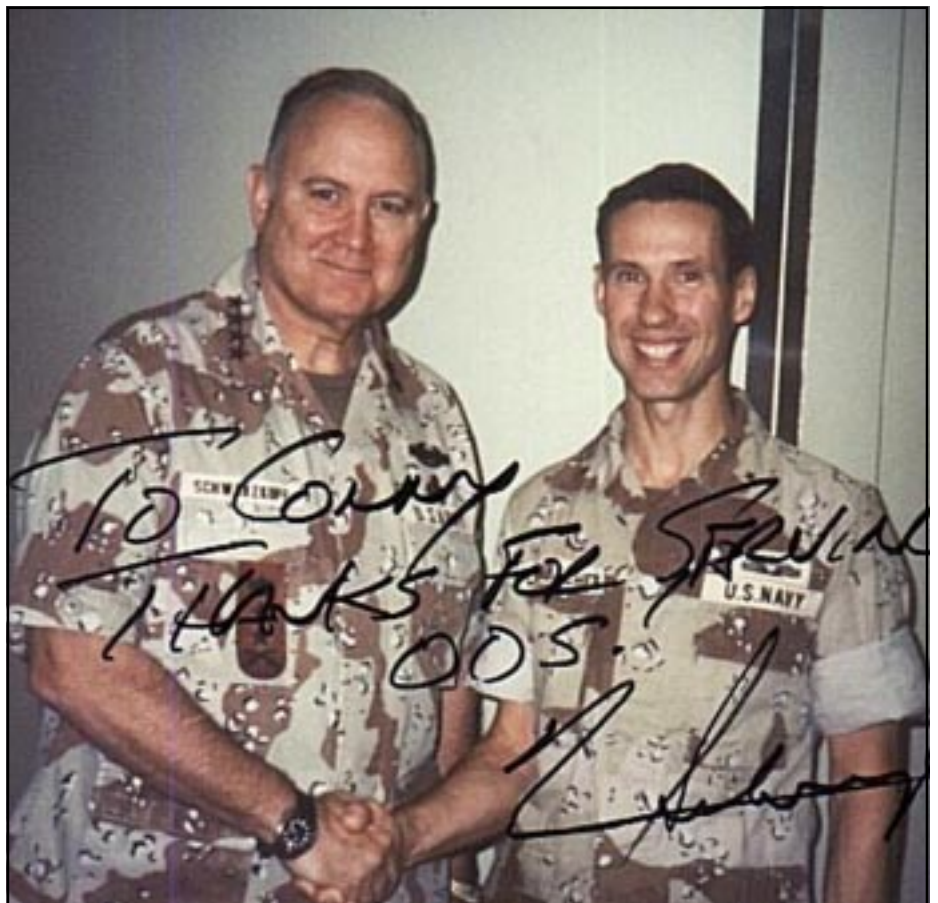
His last posting was in Washington, D.C., that year as Deputy



*Lautenbacher family photo*  
Vice Adm. Lautenbacher.

Chief of Naval Operations.

Lautenbacher retired from active duty on Oct. 1, 2000. ☺



*Lautenbacher family photo*  
Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf and Lautenbacher pose following the Gulf War.

## Michelle

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Much like a movie whose outcome you think you know in advance, Michelle's moves were anticipated, but not absolutely certain.

Monitoring Michelle depended on many elements and many agencies, Mayfield said.

Geostationary satellites run by NOAA's National Environmental Satellite, Data and Information Service provided a qualitative picture and vital measures of Michelle's development beyond the range of aircraft reconnaissance.

As Michelle crawled back offshore near the Honduras-Nicaragua border, forecasters knew it was time to bring in the flight resources of NOAA's Aircraft Operations Center: the Gulfstream IV high altitude jet, affectionately known as "Gonzo," and its WP-3D Orion partner, nicknamed "Kermit."

They were joined by the workhorses of the U.S. Air Reserve 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron, the venerable WC-130 "Hercules."

On Oct. 31, as Michelle strengthened to a tropical storm, Gonzo was tasked for the first of four flights. The mission: profile the atmospheric conditions surrounding Hurricane Michelle.

Gonzo's data showed conditions that might allow the storm to creep northward.

On Nov. 2, Hurricane Center forecasters tasked NOAA's Kermit to fly, as Michelle approached the Cuban air defense intercept zone, precluding flights by the Air Force.

Kermit, which Cuba permits in its air space for hurricane flights, began the first of four successive missions Nov. 3, while Michelle was still inside Cuban airspace.

As soon as Kermit returned from the first reconnaissance flight, a fresh crew was waiting to board.

Continuous coverage was essential.

Through Nov. 3, NOAA crews continued flying an average of eight hours each day, dropping a total of 102 global positioning system dropwindsondes, which are designed to measure wind speed, temperature and moisture through the depth of the atmosphere.

As NOAA's high altitude jet worked, hurricane hunters of the Air Force reconnaissance squadron added their low altitude input.

The workings of an often erratic Michelle were becoming better defined.

"The data the P-3s and G-IV gather are paramount to the forecasting efforts," said James D. McFadden, chief of programs at the Aircraft Operations Center.

"Data from all aircraft were vital to helping the numerical models characterize Michelle's future track," Mayfield said.

"Even additional balloon launches by National Weather Service's southern region and data from the Hurricane Research Division in Miami were added to the data mix. Coverage was continuous. Coverage was flawless," he said.

Meteorology was translated into emergency management by the hurricane liaison teams from FEMA and the Florida Department of Emergency Management that were camped at the Hurricane Center.

"When one considers that an additional wobble or turn could have pointed Michelle to the most populated part of south Florida, rather than brushing the coast with tropical storm force winds, we were lucky," Mayfield said.

As Michelle obligingly turned away from the U.S. mainland just as predicted, a *Miami Herald* headline succinctly said of the forecasters, "They nailed every move." ☺

## Carey

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"Big ticket media items win the most attention inside the [Washington, D.C., Capital] Beltway and beyond," Kelly said, "but it is also the day-to-day activities that help make NOAA and the National Weather Service two of the most popular federal agencies. From media training for forecast office personnel to interviews with the nation's top media down to the smallest weekly newspapers, from crisis communications during tornadoes, floods and other major weather events to promoting the billions in cost savings accurate forecasts bring to commerce and industry, Curtis Carey is the inspiration behind our agency's highly successful public affairs operation."

Carey began his career in the broadcast industry as a television assignment editor.

He then worked as a disk jockey and sportscaster for two radio stations before joining the U.S. Navy. He was a broadcaster for the Armed Forces Far East Network in Iwakuni, Japan.

Carey entered civil service as a newspaper reporter at U.S. Navy Fleet Activities in Yokosuka, Japan, in 1991. He was promoted to deputy public affairs officer the following year and in 1993 was selected as the public affairs officer for the largest overseas Navy complex in the world.

Carey returned to the states in 1995 as public affairs officer for the Defense Finance and Accounting Service in Denver, Colo.

He began his National Weather Service career as southern region public affairs officer in August 1998 and was promoted to his current position in January 2000.

He and his wife, Ritsuko, and four-year-old son, Matthew, live in Germantown, Md. ☺

## Lautenbacher

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“That’s our next step in our understanding and predictions of climate—not just global climate, but regional and local climate,” he said. “I would say we need to have a large-scale, interdisciplinary set of teams that works on these issues. One piece is not going to make the whole puzzle come together,” he said.

As to small-scale systems that would collect more detailed information but over a smaller portion of the ocean, he said, “In my time in the Navy, I can attest to the importance of small submersibles, remotely operated vehicles and robotics. I still believe in the individual principal investigator and the individual project, the entrepreneurial spirit of American science.”

Lautenbacher is equally enthusiastic about near-shore research.

“I’m very impressed with the work that’s been done in the coastal ocean,” Lautenbacher said. “We have a number of groups that are out there now, working on ways to collect data and also provide useful products. All of the trade and economic pieces of the coastal puzzle—providing the data to fishermen, to the maritime industry, folks who work in coastal land management—are extremely important.

“There’s a lot going on out there. It’s exciting because it’s coming from a lot of grass roots work, and it’s not all federally funded. They should be encouraged to work together to form a national network,” he said.

“If you look at the world’s population, it’s moving toward the coast. We’ll have to learn to manage our activities in that region for the greater good. There’s much work that needs to be done in that area,” Lautenbacher said. ☺

## Award Winners

*continued from page 2*

Weather Forecast Office, Phoenix, Ariz., Weather Forecast Office, Kenneth Putkovich, Radar Web Display Team, Barry Reichenbaugh, John Sokich, Tulsa, Okla., Weather Forecast Office and the Wichita, Kansas, Weather Forecast Office.

### NESDIS

Felix Kogan.

### Oceanic and Atmospheric Research

Mary Langlais and Lucia Tsaoussi.

### Under Secretary

Craig Nelson and George Wilcox.

On Nov. 29, 189 NOAA employees and offices received bronze medals in a ceremony at the Inn and Conference Center at the University of Maryland at College Park, Md.

The following are the bronze medal winners.

### National Marine Fisheries Service

John C. Bortniak, William Bradley, Kathryn Conant, Miles Croom, Linda Despres, Kevin Ford, Barbara Fosburg, John Galbraith, JoAnna Grable, David Hamm, David Hiltz, Peter Jones, William Kramer, Holly McBride, Scott McEntire, Nancy McHugh, James Morgan, National Marine Fisheries Service, Victor Nordahl, Susan Olsen, Cynthia Pierce, Ellie Roche, Franklin Schwing, Trevor Spradlin, Susan-Marie Stedman and Kenneth Weinberg.

### National Ocean Service

Leonard Arkenau, Richard Barzotto, Debra Beatty, Ila Best, Daniel Black, Hollis Church, David Enabnit, Mary Evans, Kirby Gean, II, Peter Gibson, Alexandra Heliotis, Douglas Helton, Marc Higgins, Stephen Hill, Margo Jackson, Robert Jones, Gerald Koehl, Jeffrey Lankford, Vernon Leeworthy, William Lehr, Barbara Loretz, Edwin Martin, Peter Maxey, National Ocean Service

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## Nakamoto

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NOAA Environmental Research Laboratories and the University of Hawaii.

The joint institute was established to pursue the common research interests of NOAA and the university in oceanic, atmospheric and geophysical research. Major areas of research include climate and global change, equatorial oceanography, tsunamis and fisheries oceanography.

Recently, Nakamoto worked with NOAA’s coral reef program on a large scale recruitment effort. Nakamoto helped to hire and train a group of working divers who would be participating in a 90-day cruise to remove marine debris from the waters surrounding the northwest Hawaiian Islands. They successfully deployed all three vessels fully staffed.

“Nakamoto has made amazing contributions to the coral reef investigation over the past year,” said Mary Donohue, acting chief of the coral reef program. “Julie assisted us in hiring, processing and training about 30 JIMAR personnel. Without her tremendous support, we could not have achieved the many accomplishments of this challenging field season,” she said.

Not only is Nakamoto skilled in recruiting, but her enthusiasm, “can do” attitude and accessibility result in excellent employee relations and exemplary work.

“The marine mammal research program has found Ms. Nakamoto to be a tremendous asset to all its research efforts,” said George Antonelis, chief of the protected species investigation.

“All the JIMAR staff have found Ms. Nakamoto to be a reliable source of information regarding all aspects of personnel issues,”

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## Award Winners

*continued from page 7*

(two awards), Gregory Norris, David Poltilove, Fannie Powers, Lyn Preston, Ralph Ross, Richard Schmalz, Jason Shadid, Joseph Sherman, Paul Spence, David Wesley, Joseph Whitney and Peter Wiley.

### National Weather Service

Rebecca Allen, Dan Baumgardt, Timothy Buckelew, David Caldwell, Edward Capone, Kevin Carroll, Thomas Econopouly, Mary Erickson, Eureka, Calif., Weather Forecast Office, Stephen Flood, Richard Grumm, Todd Heitkamp, Eric Holweg, Kathryn Hughes, Hydrometeorological Prediction Center, Vivian Jorge, Anton Kapela, Houston Kendrick, Frank Lepore, Salim Leyva, Mark Love, Lubbock, Tex., Weather Forecast Office, Charles Lyon, Peter Manousos, Ronald Martin, Melbourne, Fla., Weather Forecast Office, Miami, Fla., Weather Forecast Office, North Platte, Neb., Weather Forecast Office, Quantitative Precipitation Forecast Implementation Team, Quantitative Precipitation Forecast Process Assessment Team, John Quinlan, Edward Rappaport, Michael Schichtel, Robert Shedd, Mark Shirey, Mark Tomah, Linda Weaver, Bruce Webster, Michael Winchell, Peter Wolf and David Zaff.

### NESDIS

Thomas Baldwin, Alan Basist, Michael Beckman, Richard Borneman, Douglas Brauer, Michael Chalfant, David Crosby, Stephen Delgreco, David Easterling, Lawrence Flynn, Michael Ford, Mitchell Goldberg, Lynn Goss, Norman Grody, Wendy Gross, Arnold Gruber, Alan Hall, Dong Han, Edward Herbrechtsmeier, Pamela Hughes, Charles Kadin, Kristin Kniskern, Sheldon Kusselson, Charles MacFarland, Wolfgang Menzel,

Tsan Mo, Eric Ogata, John Paquette, Thomas Peterson, Marc Plantico, Anthony Reale, Richard Reynolds, Steven Rutz, Steven Schaffer, Roderick Scofield, August Shumbera, Jr., John Simko, George Sinclair, Timothy Stryker, Albert Theberge, Jr., Charles Towels, Robert VanWie, Carla Wallace, Claude Williams and Charles Wooldridge.

### Oceanic and Atmospheric Research

Richard Beeler, Bradley Hall, Jorgeann Hiebert, Jerry Janssen, Kevin Kelleher, National Undersea Research Program, Russell Richards, Julie Scanlon and MaryAnne Whitcomb.

### Under Secretary

Leila Afzal, William Becker, Linda Burlington, Central Administrative Support Center Acquisition Management Division, OFA, Central Administrative Support Center Financial Management Division, OFA, Central Administrative Support Center Human Resources Division, OFA, Karen Dacres, Marilyn DeJarnatt, Michael Fitzmaurice, Jr., Mary Foran, Martin Freeman, Anthony Furnia, Joseph Green, Jane Hannuksela, Donald Holtzer, Brett Joseph, Robert Kidwell, Monica Matthews, Thomas Murphy, NOAA Diving Program, NOAA Headquarters, NOAA Ship *Rainier*, Office of Marine and Aviation Operations, Douglas Perry, Gwen Revels, Rick Shimon, Joseph Smith, III, Jolene Sullens, Glenn Tallia, William Turnbull, Fred Walton and Janet Ward. ☺

## Nakamoto

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Antonelis said. "She has been responsive to their concerns and contributes to high morale among the program's JIMAR staff, most of whom work in remote field situations where it is easy, and often

disheartening, to feel isolated from administrative personnel."

Nakamoto says she loves her job, but admits recruiting employees in beautiful Hawaii can be challenging.

"Being based in Hawaii is both a pro and con," she said. "On one hand, Hawaii is a tropical paradise. On the other, it's a big move from the mainland and a high cost city. By incorporating online advertising—websites, list serves and online periodicals, we are seeing more diversity in our applicants.

"I love the opportunity to work in a job where I feel I make a difference," Nakamoto said.

"Although I'm not out in the field, the friendly atmosphere at the Honolulu lab really makes me feel connected to the research and activities here," she said.

Nakamoto lives in Honolulu.

Her favorite activities are going to the dog park with her miniature schnauzer puppy Mah-li and studying American Sign Language through courses at the University of Hawaii.

"I am excited and honored to have won this award," Nakamoto said. "I love the work that I do and the people I work with. This award makes me even more appreciative to be able to work with JIMAR and NOAA Fisheries." ☺

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