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February 2008
Volume 1, Issue 16

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"Diversity On The Move"

The NOAA Fisheries
EEO/Diversity Communiqué



Workers with Disabilities: Talent for a Winning Team

On October 30—31, 2007, NOAA sponsored its 2nd Annual Disability Employment Awareness Month Conference, in Silver Spring, Maryland. Kicking off the conference was our NOAA Administrator, Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr. Speaking to the attendees, VADM Lautenbacher, reminded all of the importance of doing away with artificial barriers that hinder individuals with disabilities from joining the workforce. He closed



Angela Kuhn, an IT Specialist with NEDIS served as the Mistress of Ceremony

by reminding all NOAA Line offices of his expectation that we will continue to provide a workplace environment that ensures access to technology, training and employment.

Following the VADM's comments, participants were provided an array of speakers who shared critical information about the various programs and services currently available to federal employees with disabilities. Federal managers, supervisors, noted authors and business owners, stepped forward, providing insight into the challenges and successes encountered as individuals living and working with a disability.

Nader Elguindi, the author of "*My Decision to Live*" and Greg Smith, the author of "*On a Roll*" provided outstanding presentations during the lunch hours.

Mr. Elguindi was



Nader Elguindi, author of "*My Decision to Live*", shows his indelible spirit, while cycling in North Carolina.

at the top of his career, as a submarine engineer in the U.S. Navy, when an accident almost took his life. In spite of his years of pain and the lost of a leg Nader rebounded and became the first naval officer to qualify in submarines with an artificial leg. His inspirational message left all that were in attendance ready to move forward, no matter what the obstacles.

On day two, the luncheon speaker was the unstoppable Mr. Greg Smith. Mr. Smith, also known as the "*Strength Coach*" and author of "*On a Roll*," was born with muscular dystrophy. His many examples of human potential are both inspiring and amazing. Raised by his father, a high school football coach, Greg learned the importance of discipline and inner strength. As time went on, Greg's body would become frail and weak. However, refusing to give up, he accepted his challenges and decided to help others by sharing his inspirational message about the importance of building inner strength for peak performance. According to Greg, this can be done by "working out" with the weights of life's challenges.



Greg Smith shares his story with conference attendees.

While Greg has had many accomplishments in his life, he shared with the crowd that his greatest joys were achieved as a result of the birth of his three "very active children." The conference ended with a special session entitled, "Management Issues in the Workplace."

As we returned to our workplaces, Gloria Myers, a NMFS employee in our Northwest Regional Office, shared her thoughts. "*It was one of the best organized NOAA functions I've ever attended (in my 30+ years), and definitely the most inspiring.*"

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN NOAA FISHERIES

NOAA Fisheries Biologist "Fish 4 A Cure"

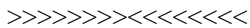
Back in 2003, four Fisheries Biologist within the Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFSC), organized and chartered a bike tour to aid in the fight against Multiple Sclerosis (MS) for the sole purpose of supporting two colleagues: one with MS, an-



Bikers make their way in La Connor, Washington.

other with a family member with MS. Today the group, also known as *Team Fish 4 a Cure*, is over 50 persons strong and has raised close to \$30,000. The team, led by Phil Levin of the FRAM Division within the NWFSC, consists of riders from NOAA, the University of Washington, the Seattle Aquarium, the Woodland Park Zoo, and Washington Fish and Wildlife. These riders, determined to make a difference, encourage everyone to learn more about "Bike MS" by visiting <http://www:bikems.org>.

You can make a difference!!!



NOAA FISHERIES SPONSORS FIRST TRIBAL INTERNSHIP PILOT PROGRAM

Portions of this article submitted by: Janet Sears

Recently the Northwest Region completed its first summer internship program with the Northwest Indian College (NWIC) located on the Lummi Nation in Washington State. The program, funded by the NOAA Fisheries Program Office for EEO and Diversity, was designed to assist secondary



Roxanne Venske. She is making her presentation to her peers, Makah staff, and NWIC staff.

and post-secondary students interested in enhancing their educational development and professional-level experiences. Seven students were selected for this first time project: two high school students, four high school graduates and one undergraduate. These students were members of three Northwest Indian Tribes: Makah (4), Lummi (2), and Muckleshoot (1). The students were selected based on their previous academic performance and their interest in learning more about science-based academic and professional career paths. This program helped them identify scientific disciplines that matched their interest, provide the means to enroll in (and take) the appropriate classes, and benefit from professional experiences in the associated disciplines.

During the summer the Makah and Muckleshoot students participated with tribal natural



From l to r. Interns Jade Williams, Derek Ward, and Tiesha Johnston. Also pictured is James Woods, the Sustainable Resources Coordinator and the Makah Tribal Staff Leader.

resources/ fisheries departments and took classes via distance learning satellites. The students from the Lummi Nation worked with NWIC

research programs on natural resources projects.

The NWIC, known for its mission to promote indigenous self-determination and knowledge through education, has long been a partner with NOAA Fisheries. As a result, it was fairly easy to ensure that each of the students shared in a meaningful learning opportunity/ work experience.

"Gary Sims, the Tribal Liaison for the Northwest Region, must be excited," said Natalie Huff, the National Program Manager for EEO and Diversity in NOAA Fisheries. "He has worked for years to develop a program that would benefit Native American students. His heart and soul are in every step he takes, making the end results quite rewarding."

What makes this program even more exciting is the enthusiasm noted among the members of the Northwest Indian College and participating tribes. According to Gary, the NWIC, along with participating Tribes are not only enthusiastic about this initiative, but they are looking forward to it continuing.

To find out more, please contact Gary S. Sims, Ph.D., Tribal Liaison at the Northwest Region.

UMES and the Northeast Region "Team Up" to Teach Fisheries Science and Policy Class to Local Under Grads

During the fall of 2007, scientists and policy analysts in the Northeast Region joined forces to teach a unique graduate seminar on the ecosystems approach to fisheries management.

The 11-week seminar, designed to introduce beginning graduate students in marine science to both fisheries science and policy, was developed jointly by lead professor, Dr. Eric May of the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) and Dr. Kevin Chu of NOAA Fisheries Northeast Regional Office. (NOTE: UMES is the host institution for a NOAA-funded consortium of Minority Serving Institutions known as the *Living Marine Resources Cooperative Science Center*. The mission of the Center is to conduct research congruent with the interests of NOAA Fisheries and to prepare students for careers in research, management, and public policy that support the sustainable harvest and conservation of our nation's living marine resources.)

To help with the course, volunteers from both the Science Center and the Regional Office stepped forward to assist as presenters for what they viewed as a unique training opportunity. The level of expertise that NOAA brought to the table provided an unusually high quality learning experience for the students. Several students reported that the course increased their personal interest in fisheries science; others said that they were now considering a career in fisheries policy. According to Dr. Chu, "it was a pleasure to be able to take an issue and look at it from all sides with some bright and inquiring persons who did not have an agenda other than understanding the program."

Special Notation:

NEFSC speakers for this project were: Drs. Vincent Guida, Michael Fogarty, William Overholz, Jason Link and Ambrose Jearld.

NERO speakers: Mark Minton, Hannah Goodale and Rory Saunders.

Other speakers included NOAA's Ecosystem Goal Team Lead, Dr. Steve Murawski and the former Deputy Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, Dr. Andrew Rosenberg.

UPCOMING EVENTS

NOAA Heritage Week 2008

NOAA invites you to get that sinking feeling at the “*Treasures of NOAA’s Ark Shipwreck*” exhibition.

Join us as we take a look at the fascinating world of shipwrecks and discovery in a way that you will find intriguing.

Where: NOAA Science Center
Date: February 2-10, 2008
Time: 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Free Admission!
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**NOAA’s Black History Month Celebration Activities**

The NOAA Chapter of Blacks In Government (BIG), will present several activities in honor of Black History Month. Note the schedule below and mark your calendar:

**February 7, 2008**  
 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon  
 NOAA Auditorium (Silver Spring, MD)

**Michael H. Cottman**, a prize-winning journalist and avid scuba diver who participated in an underwater expedition to survey the sunken wreck of a slave ship off the coast of Florida, the *Henrietta Marie*, will join us to discuss his adventures.

**February 14, 2008**  
 11:00 a.m.— 12:00 noon  
 NOAA Auditorium (Silver Spring, MD)

NOAA BIG will hold its first **Distinguished Service Awards Ceremony**. Featured at this event will be the *Lady Wildcat Steppers*, an all female step team, between the ages of 6-14.

**February 21, 2008**  
 10:00 a.m.—12:00 noon  
 NOAA Auditorium (Silver Spring, MD)

The “**Black History Month Trivia Game**”. This is an annual favorite here in headquarters.

**February 28, 2008**  
 10:00 a.m.—12:00 noon  
 NOAA Auditorium (Silver Spring, MD)

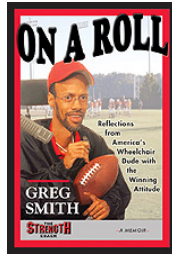
**Dr. Michael Eric Dyson**, noted author and speaker will address NOAA. Dr. Dyson, most recently seen on *BET’s Top 25 Events that Misshaped Black America*, is one you don’t want to miss.

For more information on NOAA’s BHM activities, visit:

<http://www.noaa.gov/blackhistory>

**Need a Good Book to Read?**

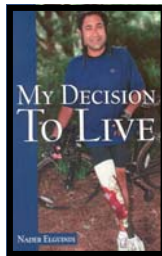
“*On A Roll*”  
 Author: **Greg Smith**



An uplifting and inspiring story of one man’s struggle for independence, love and success as he struggles with muscular dystrophy.



“*My Decision to Live*”  
 Author: **Nader Elguindi**



Experience the challenges of Nader Elguindi, a former submarine officer of the U.S. Navy, as he recalls the new direction his life took after suffering a horrific accident that severed both legs and caused him to permanently lose his right foot.

**NOTE:** Both of these gentlemen were speakers for NOAA’s 2nd Annual Disability Employment Awareness Month Conference.



*Schedule A Appointments* continue to be an unfamiliar term for many of us in the workplace, but it doesn’t have to be. Simply put, it is an appointment in the excepted service used for filling special jobs and situations for which it is impractical to use standard qualification requirements and to rate applicants using traditional competitive procedures. *This type of appointment is also used for appointing persons with disabilities.* When used correctly, many of the stumbling blocks managers run into when trying to fill a position are avoided which could result in significantly reducing time necessary to hire a well-qualified candidate.

**So how does the process work?**

1 — According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) once you have identified the position to be filled, the next step will be for the hiring manager to approach their Selective Placement Coordinator (SPC), or their Disability Program Manager (DPM). If an agency does not have such an individual, then management should contact their Workforce Management Advisor (WFM). At this point he/she can explain what competencies an ideal candidate should possess.

2— A skilled SPC, DPM or WFM advisor, after consulting with the vocational rehabilitation services, local colleges and universities, should be able to come back to the manager with a list of potential Schedule A applicants who have already been determined to meet the qualifications of the positions. (Remember, even Schedule A appointees must be qualified).

3—The Hiring official reviews the résumés and references of the applicants, conducts the interview, etc., and then makes a selection.

4 — The selection decision, once made, should be relayed to the appropriate persons within HR who extends offers of employment on behalf of the agency.

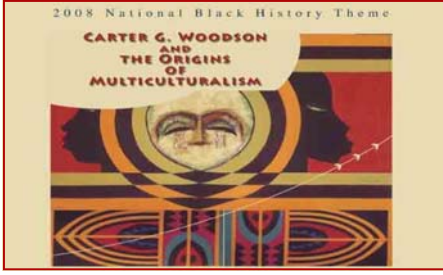
5 — Once the offer has been accepted, a start date may be established to bring the candidate on board.

For more information about Special Appointment authorities, contact your Workforce management office or visit

<http://www.wfm.noaa.gov/pdfs/appts.pdf>

# EEO PAGE

## Black History Month



Americans have recognized black history annually since 1926, first as "Negro History Week" and later as "Black History Month."

While blacks have been in America at least as far back as colonial times, it was not until the 20th century that they gained a respectable presence in the history books. It was the late Dr. Carter G. Woodson, disturbed that history books ignored African Americans, set out on a quest to change history. He established the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History in 1915, and a year later founded the widely respected Journal of Negro History. In 1926, he launched Negro History Week as an initiative to bring national attention to the contributions of black people throughout American history. Black History Month started in 1976.

### Historical Dates in Black History

**1964**—President Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act, the most sweeping civil rights legislation since Reconstruction. It prohibits discrimination of all kinds based on race, color, religion, or national origin (July 2).

**1978**—The Supreme Court case, *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* upheld the constitutionality of affirmative action, but imposed limitations on it to ensure that providing greater opportunities for minorities did not come at the expense of the rights of the majority (June 28).

**2003**—In *Grutter v. Bollinger*, the most important affirmative action decision since the 1978 Bakke case, the Supreme Court (5-4) upholds the University of Michigan Law School's policy, ruling that race can be one of many factors considered by colleges when selecting their students because it furthers "a compelling interest in obtaining the educational benefits that flow from a diverse student body." (June 23)

## Julie Peddy of the NWFSC Appointed to the Governor's Committee on Disability Issues



Julie Peddy, a Program Manager and Administrative Officer for the Northwest Fisheries Science Center, has been appointed by Gov. Chris Gregoire, to serve a two-year term on the Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment.

A strong advocate of persons with Disabilities, Julie has long served the community helping to increase the representation of persons with Disabilities. She serves as the NOAA Fisheries Entry Point Coordinator, hosting students with disabilities as summer interns. Entry Point is a program of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, offering outstanding internship opportunities for students with disabilities in science, engineering, mathematics, computer science, and some fields of business.

In 2006, she received the University of Washington's "DO IT" (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking and Technology) Trailblazer Award for increasing the participation of individuals with disabilities in internships at the Northwest Fisheries Science Center and NOAA and improving their potential to succeed in challenging careers.

**CONGRATULATIONS JULIE!!!**

### Copies still available ...



#### Teacher at Sea

By: Diane Stanitski, Ph.D

Share the experiences of Ms. Linda Armword, a teacher at the George Wythe High School in Richmond, Virginia, as she sails aboard the NOAA ship *Fairweather*.

If you are interested, please contact:  
[Evelyn.Channer@noaa.gov](mailto:Evelyn.Channer@noaa.gov)

## Student Internship Opportunities

Are they really a good idea?

You bet they are and with spring right around the corner, now is as good a time as any to get you thinking about them. Not just because you could be a mentor of a potential intern in your workplace, but because some of you are parents of a potential intern. Remember, while agencies often look to managers to serve as mentors to new interns, the reality of life reminds us that of our managers have children who are also in need of an internship.

For many, internships are viewed as a key opportunity, that could lead to a full-time employment offer. However, securing an internship can be a difficult task, especially when you have so many students around the country competing for the same one. Therefore, the students ability to appropriately market him or herself is most important.

The first and most important marketing tool.....the résumé. It is what every hiring official is looking for. Therefore the résumé must be well thought out and prepared.

Below are a few things to remember:

**State the Goal:** Create a headline or objective that communicates the internship goal.

**Write a Compelling Opening Summary:** Don't focus on how the internship will benefit the individual, instead focus on how the individual would contribute to the team.

**Showcase Education:** Indicate to others that your degree is in progress. Remember to highlight expected graduation date. Be sure to include a list of classes and special projects relevant to the internship goal.

**Highlight Volunteerism and other Work Experiences:** Even if it's unrelated to the internship there may still be some transferable skills valued by the prospective employer. Always highlight demonstrated dedication, enthusiasm, dependability, creativity, outstanding service, etc.

### WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!!

Do you have an interesting story to share? If so, please send it to [Erika.Parker@noaa.gov](mailto:Erika.Parker@noaa.gov).

**NOTE:** All articles and pictures must be reviewed and approved by the NMFS EEO Program Manager before inclusion in the EEO Communiqué. Questions may be directed to [Natalie.Huff@noaa.gov](mailto:Natalie.Huff@noaa.gov).