

The Coral Fellowship Newsletter is published by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) to relay information about the fellowship program and provide a forum for information exchange among fellows, mentors, program coordinators and other stakeholders

Coral Fellowship Newsletter



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Special points of interest:

- U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Meeting, Kona, Hawaii: August 25-29, 2008
- Fellowship Workshop/Retreat: September 2-4 (tentative)
- Coral Fellows [Webpage](#)

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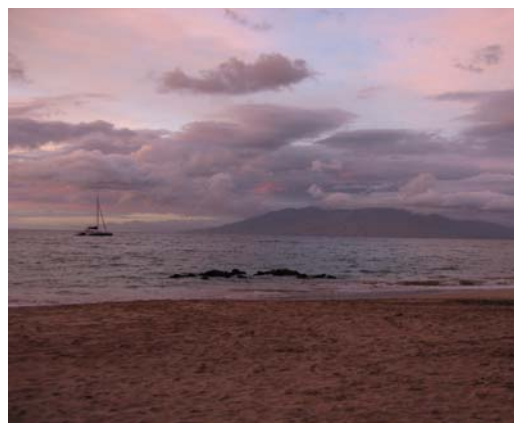
Coral Reef Management Fellowship Evaluation Report

The Coral Reef Management Fellowship Program underwent an evaluation in response to a request made by the All Islands Committee (AIC) at the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force meeting in American Samoa in August of 2007.

The first phase of the evaluation resulted in several changes to the programs 2008-2010 Policies and Procedures and the changes were implemented in January 2008 with the introduction of four new fellows. A summary of this phase of the evaluation and the resulting program changes was presented to the AIC in February, 2008.

The final phase of the evaluation was conducted with the help of an independent contractor, Kevin Doyle of Green Economies, who has compiled a report on his findings. The report is the last component of the evaluation process aimed at improving the NOAA Coral Reef Management Fellowship Program's ability to meet its stated goals.

Kevin gathered information through email surveys and personal conversations with past and current Coral Fellows, their supervisors, jurisdiction POCs, and involved NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program staff and leadership to develop conclusions and recommendations.



Sunset in Hawaii Photo courtesy: Marci Wulff

The final component of the program evaluation is designed to offer evaluative conclusions about the program which can assist NOAA managers and program stakeholders in developing recommendations for improving the fellowship program.

The evaluation report will be used as a guiding document in the design and implementation of the Coral Reef Management Fellowship Program in 2010 and beyond.

For more information contact Marci.Wulff@noaa.gov

Annual Coral Fellows Retreat: Kona, Hawaii

The annual Coral Reef Management Fellowship Retreat will be held the week after the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Meeting in Kona, Hawaii, September 2-4.

Fellows will receive professional development training that will supplement their technical and professional skills. A survey was sent to fellows and their supervisors asking them to identify technical training topics and the list generated was distributed and voted on by the fellows. Some of the most popular topics identified were social marketing, web design and development of

We would love to be able to provide comprehensive training on all of these topics, but due to budget and time constraints we will be focusing on social marketing (most popular topic) and will also spend some time learning to use online media outlets as part of a social marketing strategy.

Fellows will also visit a local watershed management site as well as have an opportunity to learn about each of their peers' projects. We look forward to getting the cohort of fellows together for this event.

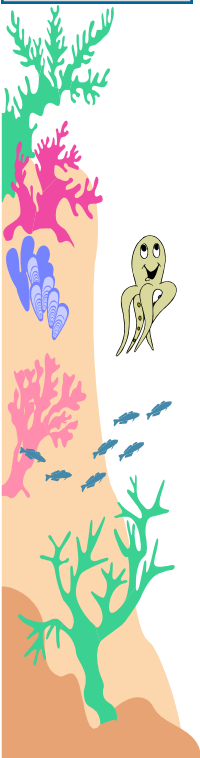




2008-2010 Coral Reef Management Fellows: Petra MacGowan, Alyssa Edwards, Elaina Todd, Kathleen Herrmann, Karlyn Langjahr & Raimundo Espinoza

Check Out the Coral Fellowship Website for a complete profile on each of the Coral Fellows

<http://www.coralreef.noaa.gov/meetcurrent.html#news>



Guam: Elaina Todd 2008-2010



Elaina works in Guam's Department of Agriculture, Division of Aquatics & Wildlife Resources to promote awareness for marine preserves and develop positive relationships with local communities through outreach efforts.

CNMI: Kathleen Herrmann 2008-2010



Kathleen Herrmann is undertaking watershed planning in partnership with local agencies as well as working on several education and outreach projects in CNMI's Division of Environmental Quality.

Hawaii: Petra MacGowan 2007-2010



Petra manages several projects in Hawaii's Division of Aquatic Resources. She is coordinating the Local Action Strategies, the Coral Reef Outreach Network and supports the community based Makai Watch program.

American Samoa: Alyssa Edwards 08-10



Alyssa works in the Resource Management Division of the Department of Commerce where she assists in the coordination of the Local Action Strategy: Reducing Population Pressure.

Puerto Rico: Raimundo Espinoza 2008-2010



Raimundo works for the Department of Natural and Environmental Resources in Puerto Rico. He concentrates his efforts on land-based sources of pollution and outreach programs.

U.S. Virgin Islands: Karlyn Langjahr 2007-2010



Karlyn is serving as the Education & Outreach Coordinator for the St. Croix East End Marine Park. She also coordinates the Virgin Island Network of Educators.

Spotlight on Alyssa Edwards, American Samoa Coral Fellow

When asked to sum up the fellowship experience in one sentence Alyssa Edwards who is the fellow in American Samoa says, "The fellowship is challenging, it's interesting and it's fun too. It's nice to have a job that your heart can get involved in. The highs are high and the lows are lows, but it is a very rich experience."



Alyssa Edwards, Coral Fellow

Alyssa Edwards was born in Duarte, California and spent most of her childhood in Long Beach. Her interest in marine science started when she was very young. As a kid her dad would take her and her brother out to see all the sights in California. "Once I went to Sea World I was hooked!" she reminisces, "After that first visit, I went every year on my birthday!" When she was in high school she went on a sailing trip with her mom in the Caribbean where she went diving for the first time. "I fell in love with this other world. It was fantastic, absolutely magical!"

Alyssa went to UC Santa Cruz and studied Marine Biology. UC Santa Cruz wasn't her first choice, but she ended up having a great experience there. She had a chance to study abroad in Barbados for a year where she learned about environmental issues on a small island.

While there she met, Dr. Leonard Nurse who worked for the Coastal Zone Management program in Barbados. "He was an amazing person, an amazing teacher. He was dedicated to conserving island resources while ensuring that development took place for the people there. I was inspired by him." He had a passion and dedication for the work that he was doing. It was more than just his work; it was ensuring a high quality of life for the people of Barbados. "I have always strived to have that passion and commitment for the work that I do."

Once Alyssa finished college, she went straight into the Peace Core. "When I was an undergrad I realized that I wanted to travel more." She was looking for a way to be able to see the world and apply her degree in a way that was beneficial to society and would make a lasting contribution.

Spotlight on Alyssa Edwards, American Samoa Coral Fellow (cont...)

She was assigned to a small village called Oniipa, which is in Namibia, where she taught Math and Science for two years. When asked what her reaction was to hearing that she'd be going to Namibia she says, "I expected to go to the Caribbean or South America since I had a degree in Marine Biology and I end up getting this assignment in the middle of the desert!" She embraced the experience and says that it was incredible. "It's hard to sum up in words because it was just such an awesome life experience. I enjoyed being a part of that community, connecting with people who were outside of my culture. I learned a lot about myself in the process."

Alyssa was the only Peace Core volunteer in her village. During



Alyssa Edwards teaching

this time she became more involved in the social aspects of conservation. "In this village 30% of the people tested positive for HIV. Even though my primary job was teaching Science and Math I found that I was spending my time teaching HIV/AIDS prevention. Even in my Math classes I would make sure that my students walked away with a basic understanding of what HIV/AIDS is, how to prevent it and what to do if you have it." She felt that providing information that could save their lives would be more valuable than any algebra equation she could teach them. She still has a family there that she keeps in touch with and is looking forward to going back some day to see the people that she cares about.

Alyssa attended American University in Washington, D.C. for her

graduate degree. "I picked it because I could spend part of my time learning in the US and part of my time traveling to see how things worked on the ground." Alyssa spent six months in Costa Rica where she worked on sustainable development projects in forestry management, sustainable ecotourism, and land use planning through the United Nations University for Peace.

Alyssa returned to D.C. where she worked as an intern with an ocean science management group for a short while until she realized that she wanted more of a hands-on experience in her job. She accepted an internship in St. Croix doing MPA work and met Susan Curtis (former fellow) who told her about the Coral Fellowship program. "I met her the first week I was there. She raved about the fellowship program saying it's a wonderful experience: you get to live in this beautiful place, work on interesting projects and there are great professional development opportunities!" Alyssa saw it as a chance to really grow as a professional.

When she left St. Croix, she was looking more at the social and human side of conservation and environmental management. "After all, when ever we're doing environmental management we're really managing the people" she laughs. She was offered a one year position with NOAA Special Projects Office in their socioeconomic division. "I thought that would be a great opportunity to learn more about meshing the fields of environmental management with marine conservation and social science." The Coral Reef Fellowship opened up soon afterwards. "The one that caught my eye was American Samoa. It had the closest tie between social issues and the human dimension of environmental management."



Fungatele Bay, American Samoa

In American Samoa, the entire population lives in the coastal zone. All of the human activities take place along the coast. There is recognition among the government agencies that population pressure is an issues and needs to be addressed sooner rather than later. There are certainly challenges to addressing population pressure. Alyssa notes, "Back at home there are lots of reproductive health services and providers. Here there are less than 5 people servicing a population of 65,000." Alyssa and others are laying the ground work now. There will be a summit in September where island leaders will come together to find solutions. "The discussions have been great and it will be exciting to see things implemented, whether it's in immigration policy or expanding reproductive health services or doing further education and outreach to local villages and communities."

When asked where she'd like to be in the future, "I see myself going along the path of international environmental conservation and sustainable development with a heavier focus on sustainable development. For me, this fellowship exemplifies some of the issues around sustainable development. People's lives are integrated. What happens in the home effects what happens outside the home and the quality of the environment has an impact on people's lives inside the home."

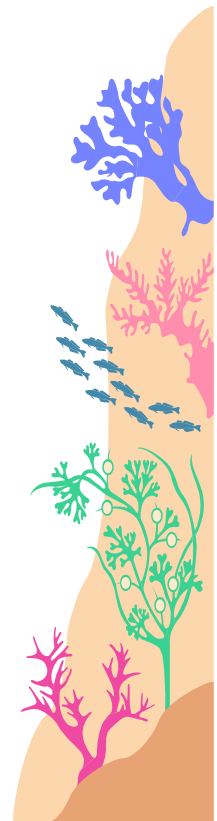
"This has been a great experience. It's exciting to learn about these issues and to help find creative ways to address them."

"I would love to look back and say, wow, I've been contributing to the kind of future that I would like to see in this world!"

-Alyssa Edwards



Elaina Todd & Alyssa Edwards in Maui



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The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coral Reef Management Fellowship was established in 2003 to respond to the need for additional coral reef management capacity and capability in the U.S. Flag Pacific and Caribbean islands. The fellowship program's mission is two-fold, it provides coral reef management support in each participating island jurisdiction by placing highly qualified individuals whose education and work experience meet each island's specific coral reef management needs, while providing individual fellows with professional training in coastal and coral reef resource management.



We're on the web!
www.coralreef.noaa.gov/fellowship.html

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Please email us your questions and suggestions for future editions

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New Coral Reef Fellowship Summary



A new one-page information sheet on the Coral Reef Management Fellowship program has been created for use at conferences, U.S. Coral Reef Task Force meetings and other outreach events.

This summary gives basic information about the fellowship program, the locations that host Coral Fellows, the type of work that Coral Fellows do as well as information about how to become a Coral Fellow.

If you would like a copy of this document for your outreach events to increase on island awareness about the program, please contact Marci.Wulff@noaa.gov.

US Coral Reef Task Force Meeting

- August 25-29th, Kona, Hawaii
- Make sure you've registered for the conference!
- Fellows will each display a poster at the meeting depicting their work on the island
- Fellows will be presenting on coral reefs and coral careers at local schools in Kona as part of an outreach endeavor on Tuesday, Aug. 26

MSG Reminders

- Time Sheets: make sure you enter your time each day and print a copy of your timesheet at the end of the pay period for your supervisor
- Monthly Reports: Make sure you are entering a report on your work each month for MSG (due the last day of each month).
- Cash advances for travel are due a month prior to your departure date – you can send it in now for Hawaii.

