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PRESIDENT BUSH HONORS TWO NOAA SCIENTISTS

Two NOAA scientists, a hurricane researcher and a fisheries statistician, were honored today at a White House ceremony where they received the 2003 Presidential Early Career Awards in Science and Engineering (PECASE). The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Sim Aberson of NOAA's Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory in Miami, Fla. and Kyle Shertzer of NOAA's Southeast Fisheries Science Center, Beaufort Laboratory, Beaufort, N.C., were among 57 individuals who were awarded the nation's highest award for young scientists.

"Both scientists conduct research vital to our nation's economic security, " said retired Navy Vice Adm. Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Ph.D., under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. "We are proud that their work has been recognized with this prestigious honor."

Aberson was nominated for his "research leading to significant improvements in hurricane track forecasts and development of programs bringing science to young students, and young students to science." Shertzer was cited for his "research in evolutionary aspects of fish harvesting. This research increases our ability to manage fish species sustainability with maximum economic benefits."

Aberson, who is with AOML's Hurricane Research Division, is one of the NOAA scientists who fly into and above hurricanes aboard NOAA's research aircraft to collect important data from dropwindsondes for research and for the National Hurricane Center to use when issuing watches and warnings.

"I am greatly pleased to be receiving this award for doing work that I love," Aberson said. "I could not have accomplished this without the help of the those in NOAA who fly and maintain the Hurricane Hunter aircraft, who keep the operational computers running, and who develop the models and make the forecasts."

Aberson has been a research meteorologist at NOAA's Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory in Miami, Fla. since 1985. AOML is one of the 12 laboratories under NOAA's Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research.

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Aberson is a member of the group that received the U.S. Department of Commerce Gold Medal for the Hurricane Research Division's performance during Hurricane Andrew. He is also the recipient of the NOAA / Environmental Research Laboratories 1999 Outstanding Scientific Paper Award for “The Impact of Omega Dropwindsondes on Operational Hurricane Track Forecast Models,” Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society, 77 (5), 925-933 (1996), and the 2003 NOAA Research Employee of the Year award.

Aberson holds a B.S. (1985) and M.S. (1987) in Meteorology from Pennsylvania State University and a Ph.D. in Atmospheric Sciences from the University of Maryland (2002).

Among the papers he has authored or co-authored is “Targeted observations to improve tropical cyclone track forecasts” in the Monthly Weather Review.

Shertzer began his career with NOAA Fisheries in 2001. Initially a National Research Council Postdoctoral Associate, he assumed his current position in 2002 as a mathematical statistician. His work in fish stock assessment and ecological fishery research helps fortify NOAA’s strategic objective to rebuild and maintain sustainable fisheries.

“I am simply delighted to receive this award. It is a true honor to represent the many outstanding scientists dedicated to sustaining our nation’s fisheries,” Sherzer said.

Shertzer earned a B.S. in Mathematics from Xavier University of Cincinnati (1993), a Master’s in Biomathematics from North Carolina State University (1997), and a Ph.D. in Biomathematics from North Carolina State University (2001).

He has authored or co-authored a number of papers, including “Targets and limits for management for fisheries: a simple probability-based approach” with Michael Prager et al. in the North American Journal of Fisheries Management.

NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through research to better understand atmospheric and climate variability and to manage wisely our nation's coastal and marine resources.

- 30 -

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