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Teacher Selected to Sail Aboard NOAA Ship *Oscar Dyson*

NOAA selected Michele Brustolon, an eighth grade science teacher at Woodbury Middle School in Salem, Mass. to join scientists aboard the NOAA Ship *Oscar Dyson* as part of its Teacher at Sea program to bridge science and education.

“NOAA’s Teacher at Sea program immerses teachers in hands-on research experiences that give them clearer insight into our ocean planet, a greater understanding of maritime work and studies, and increased knowledge of environmental literacy”, said Jennifer Hammond, the program’s director. “Participating in real-world research allows teachers to gain experience actually doing science, which makes a significant impact when they bring back their knowledge to their classrooms, teaching students how the oceans affect their lives.”

Brustolon boarded the research vessel in Dutch Harbor, Alaska on June 20, and will spend 20 days assisting scientists is studying pollock, a commercially valuable fish commonly used in fish sticks and patties. She is writing logs that include information about important research of the day, life at sea, interviews with scientists, and photos. The logs are posted on NOAA’s Teacher at Sea website at <http://teacheratsea.noaa.gov>.

“I am thrilled to have this opportunity to participate in real-world scientific research and to experience life at sea,” Brustolon said. “Through the NOAA Teacher at Sea program, my students at Woodbury Middle School will not only be able to learn first-hand about exciting research projects at sea, they will be witnesses to them, and on some level, participants in them. Making their learning relevant through my own hands-on experiences is vital to getting students excited about science.”

Now in its 20th year, the program has provided nearly 600 teachers the opportunity to gain first-hand experience participating in science at sea. This year NOAA received more than 250 applications. They selected 35 individuals to participate. According to Hammond, educators can enrich their curricula with a depth of understanding made possible by living and working side-by-side, day and night, with those who contribute to the world’s body of scientific knowledge.

NOAA’s mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth’s environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources. Visit us at <http://www.noaa.gov> or on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/usnoaagov>.