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Maine teacher returns from 11-day scallop research mission at sea

Kathleen Brown, a 7th grade science teacher at Freeport Middle School in Freeport, Maine, returned home this week after 11 days assisting scientists undertaking an annual NOAA research survey about scallops in northeastern waters.

“I was thrilled to be part of this opportunity, which allowed me to participate in real-world scientific research and to experience life at sea. Through the NOAA Teacher at Sea program, my students will be able to learn first-hand about exciting research projects at sea that connect to the daily lives of families along Maine’s coast. Making their learning relevant through my own hands-on experiences is vital to getting students excited about science.”

Brown boarded the research vessel *Hugh R. Sharp*, a University of Delaware ship, on June 7 in Woods Hole, Mass. In addition to working 12-hour shifts daily with the science team, Brown kept a blog, accessible at <http://teacheratsea.noaa.gov/2011/brown/>.

“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.”

Now in its 21st year, the program has provided over 600 teachers the opportunity to gain first-hand experience participating in science at sea. This year, NOAA received applications from more than 250 teachers, and chose 33 to participate in research cruises. The educators chosen are able to enrich their curricula with the depth of understanding they gain by living and working side-by-side, day and night, with scientists studying the marine environment.

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. Find us on [Facebook](#).