



### Executive Summary

*Ocean for Life — a program that aims to increase cultural understanding through ocean science — provided high quality, immersive ocean field studies and education programs to 28 high school students of diverse cultures and backgrounds in 2011. These students represented six countries in the Greater Middle East and an array of locations in North America including American Samoa and Canada. Following the two-week field study held at NOAA's Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary in California, students were challenged to promote cross-cultural understanding through a greater appreciation of the ocean and how it connects us all. The program was made possible through a partnership of U.S. government agencies and private entities.*

*Focusing on this demographic is likely the most effective way to engage the public and advance ocean conservation, according to The Ocean Project's update. The report states that teenagers not only have the highest level of concern about problems facing the world's ocean, but they are the most open to new information. They are increasingly asked for advice on environmental issues by the adults in their families, and have the most confidence in their ability to make a difference.*

*Ocean for Life enhances participants' cultural understanding, encourages ocean advocacy and promotes conservation and stewardship.*



## Ocean for Life 2011 Evaluation Summary

### Unifying Cultures Connected by Our Global Ocean

-  All students completed the pre- and post-field study evaluation.
-  Following the Ocean for Life field study, 100% of student participants feel responsible for protecting the ocean.
-  Ocean for Life field study participants reported that the program allowed them to gain a better understanding of different countries and cultures.



### Increasing Cultural Understanding

Following the Ocean for Life field study, 79% of student participants said they believe their perceptions about other cultures were changed as a result of the program, and 100% agreed that Ocean for Life helped them build relationships with peers they would not have met otherwise.



New friends: Ellie from Michigan, Amira from Egypt and Noaf from Bahrain. Photo: Bryanna Flame, American Samoa



Students engage in hands-on marine science activities. Photo: Alhassan Omar, Egypt

### Cultivating Ocean Advocates

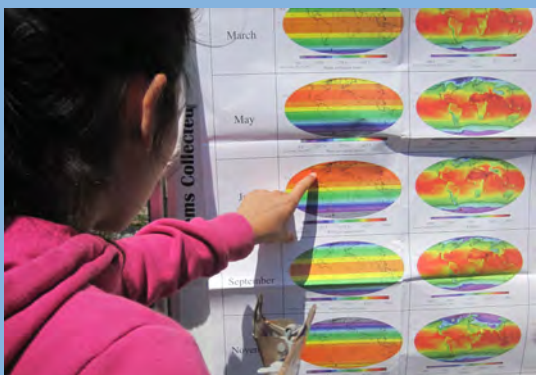
Through their participation in the Ocean for Life field study, 100% of students gained knowledge of ocean conservation and stewardship, and 96% developed a better understanding of how their local actions impact the ocean, no matter where they live. Additionally, 88% of participants agreed that the program made them feel they are advocates for ocean conservation and stewardship.

### Youth Views on Climate Change

Prior to and following the Ocean for Life field study, 100% of student participants agreed that climate change is real and happening, and that human activities are contributing to and accelerating climate change. Also, 100% said they believed that climate change has consequences for the ocean (including national marine sanctuaries), people and the planet. All of the participants are worried about climate change and how it may impact their lives, as well as how it may impact future generations, and the ocean.



Ocean acidification was discussed through a day full of lectures and hands-on modules. Photo: Ellie Burck, Michigan



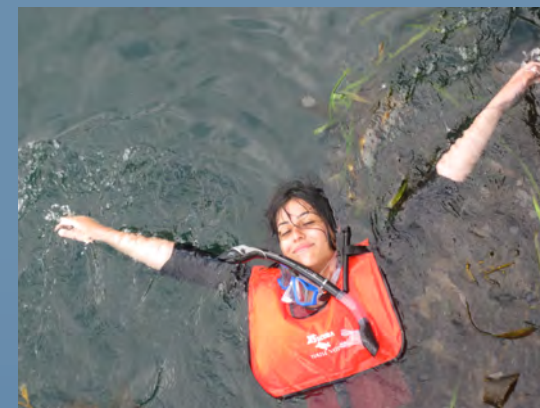
Hands-on learning engages students in better understanding the world's ocean. Photo: Gina McGuire, Hawaii

### Understanding the Interconnectedness of the Global Ocean

Student participants' views regarding the global ocean and their connection to it changed as a result of the Ocean for Life program. Following the field study, 100% said they believe the health of the ocean and the actions of humans are interconnected, 96% agreed that choices made by their household can help improve the health of the ocean, and 100% now realize that we are connected to the ocean in many important ways.

### Enhancing Ocean Literacy

In total, 96% of student participants agreed that watersheds are the major ways through which pollution enters the ocean. This demonstrated a 36% increase in students strongly agreeing with this statement following the Ocean for Life field study. Also, prior to the field study, 75% of students said they have the knowledge to teach their friends, family and community about issues facing the ocean, whereas following the field study, 96% of students agreed with this statement.



Natasha of Pakistan immerses herself in the ocean. Photo: Emiliano Valle, Florida



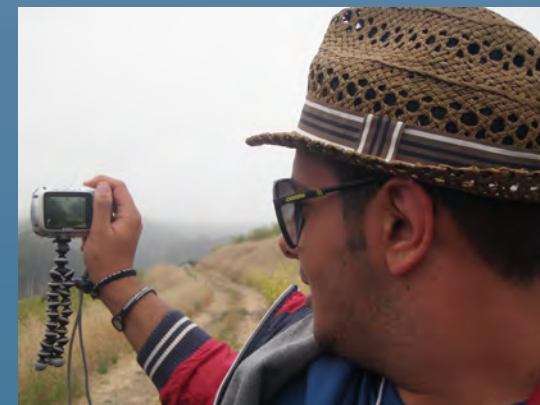
Science-based and conservation careers were highlighted. Photo: Ellie Burck, Michigan

### Pursuing Studies and Careers in Conservation

Following the Ocean for Life field study, 100% of participants said they would like to be involved in activities that focus on marine conservation, protection or restoration, while 71% have plans to pursue studies or a career related to marine conservation.

### Promoting Conservation through the Lens of a Camera

Following the Ocean for Life field study, 93% of student participants reported they felt comfortable creating media projects (photo, video and narrative) to educate people in their communities about marine issues upon their return home.



Bader of Kuwait captures a photograph for his youth media project. Photo: Claire Fackler, NOAA



Stewardship activities like this beach clean-up engage the students to make a change. Photo: Claire Fackler, NOAA

### Changing Behavior for a Better Future

Following the Ocean for Life field study, 96% of participants said they will try to learn what they can do to help solve environmental problems, which is an increase from 86% prior to the field study. There was an 11% increase in students stating they would talk to others about environmental issues, and 79% of students agreed that they would try to convince friends to act responsibly toward the environment. As a result of the program, there was a 25% increase in the number of students who pledged to participate in coastal or ocean stewardship activities such as beach clean-ups.

## A Selection of Ocean for Life 2011 Alumni Achievements

- Erica Knox of Illinois hosted a presentation about ocean acidification followed by hands-on activities for students at the Shedd Aquarium to emphasize this important issue facing the global ocean. She also published an article in her school's newspaper about reviving recycling.

- Brijonnay Madrigal of Washington State planned a Culture Week at her high school, where each day represented a different culture with food, music, presentations and dance. She said she feels that the event promoted appreciation of different cultures at her school, and that she has started a tradition that will continue long after she has graduated.



Students connect in a meaningful way during the Ocean for Life program. Photo: Bryanna Flame, American Samoa

- Noaf Al-Murbati of Bahrain worked with hundreds of students during the annual "Green Walk" event in her country, and led a station called "The Impossible Goal" based off an activity during the 2011 Ocean for Life field study that gets students thinking about how to reach their long-term goals.

- Molly Struble of Arizona has given presentations to the Grand Canyon School Board and Grand Canyon Rotary Club regarding her Ocean for Life experience.

- Natasha Khan of Pakistan held a garbage clean-up in her school and wrote an article about Ocean for Life that was published in her school newspaper.



Multicultural youth experience a sense of adventure together while exploring islands by boat. Photo: Erica Knox, Illinois

- Ellie Burck of Michigan joined an environmental club, had a front page story about her Ocean for Life experience published in her local newspaper, and plans to submit an article to a leading environmental magazine.

- Hala Zahr of Lebanon continues to work with her school principal to encourage the use of reusable water canteens to help eliminate single-use disposable plastics on her school campus.

- Devan Gann of Tennessee created a video to encourage her classmates and school to recycle to ensure their plastic doesn't impact the ocean and wildlife.

- Brooke Liston of Florida conducted a presentation to 200 middle school students highlighting cultural understanding and ocean conservation and stewardship with the help of Bader Naser Al-Habib of Kuwait via Skype.

- Emiliano Valle of Florida hosted two cultural sharing evenings in his community, and shared the new scientific knowledge he gained through the Ocean for Life program with his oceanography team.



Students work together to reach for their goals. Photo: Jenna Driscoll



Photo: Natasha Khan, Pakistan

### Basmah Al-Mesad • Kuwait

*"The Ocean for Life experience has taught me that no matter where we are from, we have a common language: the ocean. This experience taught me so much about the ocean and how our actions can affect the ocean. It also allowed me to connect with people my age from around the world."*

### Amira Ahmed • Egypt

*"The Ocean for Life experience was a lifetime one, it changed my perspective about the ocean."*



Photo: Claire Fackler, NOAA

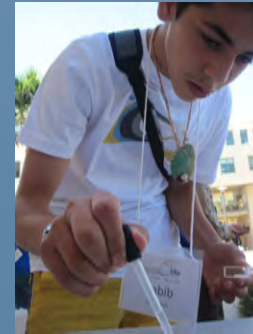


Photo: Erica Knox, Illinois

### Habib Samer Zaidan Nasser • Lebanon

*"The Ocean for Life experience was an experience that I will never forget, an experience that opened my eyes about ocean issues and what we can do to protect the ocean."*

### Noaf Al-Murbati • Bahrain

*"I can now see the ocean from a different perspective. I know the issues that its facing and I know what I can do to protect it."*



Photo: Ellie Burck, Michigan



Photo: Lina Tran, Alabama

### Lina Tran • Alabama, United States

*"Ocean for Life was totally unique from anything I've ever experienced before in that it successfully incorporated so many of my interests — marine science, conservation, photography, different cultures."*

**Change the life of a teenager by giving to the Ocean for Life program, where students have amazing experiences that challenge them to think about ocean conservation and their world in a global way.**

**DONATE  
NOW**

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