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Eureka native, teacher sets sail on Hawaiian science

Friday, March 21, 2014
Lovely County Citizen

Dr. Suzanne Acord, a native of Eureka Springs and social studies teacher at Mid-Pacific Institute in Honolulu, Hawaii, set sail on Monday to assist scientists on a 12-day survey of the ecosystem of the Kona coast of Hawaii.

Acord is participating in the cruise as part of NOAA's Teacher at Sea program, which bridges science and education through real-world research experiences.



Dr. Suzanne Acord, a teacher in Hawaii and a native of Eureka Springs, prepares last week for her embarkation Monday as part of the NOAA's Teacher At Sea program. She is assisting scientists for 12 days during a study of the Kona coast ecosystem.

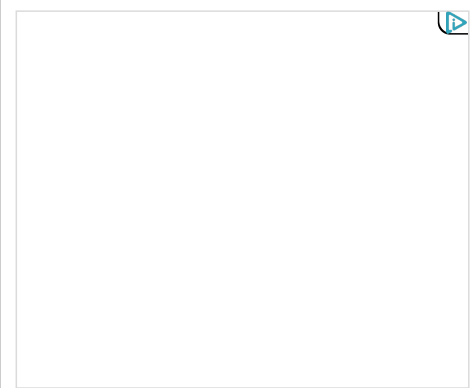
"As a social studies teacher, I seek to help my students explore human impact on the environment and our relationship with the environment," she said. "Through my experience with NOAA, my students will not only be able to learn first-hand about exciting research projects at sea, they will be witnesses 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."

Acord boarded NOAA Ship Oscar Elton Sette on March 17 in Honolulu, Hawaii, and on her journey, she will assist scientists daily as they conduct a study of the Kona coast ecosystem. The Kona region was chosen as a pilot project Integrated Ecosystem Assessment, which aims to synthesize both ecological and socio-economic information to improve resource management.

Acord will be blogging about her experience, accessible by clicking [here](#). Acord, who was named Teacher of the Year in 2013 at the Mid-Pacific Institute, is the daughter of Jane and Woodie Acord of Eureka Springs.

"NOAA's Teacher at Sea Program gives teachers the professional opportunity of a lifetime with a chance to participate in cutting edge science, on the ocean, working side-by-side with world-renowned scientists," says Jennifer Hammond, the program's director. "Teachers describe this authentic research experience as transformative and

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one that allows them to bring new knowledge and excitement back to their classrooms."

Now in its 24th year, the program has provided nearly 700 teachers the opportunity to gain first-hand experience participating in science at sea. This year, NOAA received applications from nearly 200 teachers, and chose 25 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 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.

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