
Ruth Preller, PH.D.



Superintendent, Oceanography Division Naval Research Laboratory

Dr. Ruth Preller entered the Senior Executive Service in September, 2004 when she became the Superintendent of the Oceanography Division at the Naval Research Laboratory's (NRL) site, located at Stennis Space Center, Mississippi. NRL's Oceanography Division is the major center for in-house Navy research and development in oceanography and consists of approximately 125 Federal employees and contractors. The Oceanography Division is known nationally and internationally for its combination of theoretical, numerical, and experimental approaches to oceanographic problems and for its expertise in developing ocean predictive capabilities. Dr. Preller is also the NRL program manager for basic and applied research programs in the Battlespace Environments focus area including research in the fields of Meteorology, Remote Sensing, Marine Geosciences as well as Oceanography.

Dr. Preller joined the Civilian Federal Service in 1983 as a research oceanographer at Naval Ocean Research and Development Activity. In February, 1996, she was selected to head the Coastal and Semi-Enclosed Seas Section at NRL as a supervisory oceanographer. In this role she supervised approximately 20 federal employees as well as conducted her own research. In 2002-2003, Dr. Preller worked part time for the Physical Oceanography Program at the Office of Naval Research. During that period she worked with the other program officers to define the direction of research, review existing projects and fund new projects in the field of numerical ocean modeling. Dr. Preller is currently the head of the Battlespace Environments Institute, a High Performance Computing Modernization Office sponsored institute which includes Army, Air Force and University members. The institute's goal is to implement a full earth system model, under the Earth System Modeling Framework (ESMF) software structure, that can be transitioned for operational use within the Department of Defense.

Dr. Preller's research has ranged from modeling and understanding the circulation of the Mediterranean Sea to sea ice modeling and prediction. She has been responsible for the development and design of the U.S. Navy's sea ice forecasting systems since the mid 1980's, including the Polar Ice Prediction System (PIPS). More recently, her research focused on the various aspects of coastal ocean prediction. Her research led to the development of PCTides, the first Navy relocatable ocean model that provides forecasts of tidal elevation and tidally driven barotropic ocean currents anywhere around the globe. This research resulted in two patents in 2008 as well as a transition of this system into Navy operational use.

Dr. Preller received her B.S. degree in Physics and German from Dickinson College, in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. She received her M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in meteorology from Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida. She is a member of the American Geophysical Union (AGU), the American Meteorological Society (AMS), The Oceanography Society (TOS), The European Geophysical Union (EGU), the Marine Technology Society and Sigma Xi. She served as the Editor for High Latitude Physics for the Journal of Geophysical Research-Oceans from 1994-1999. In addition she served on the US-Canadian Joint Ice Working Group from 1989-1999, the AMS Committee on Polar Meteorology and Oceanography from 1990-1993, the AMS Committee on Coastal Environments from 1999 -2005, and was the Physical Oceanography Councillor to TOS from 1999-2003. She has coordinated and chaired numerous technical sessions at national and international science conferences as well as co-chaired several conferences. She is presently the EGU Secretary for Operational Oceanography, serves on the AGU publications committee and is an Editor for Surveys in Geophysics. Dr. Preller received the Editor's Citation for Excellence in Refereeing for JGR Oceans in 1989, the NRL 75th Anniversary "Award for Innovation" in 1998 and a Royalty Award for the development and transition into Navy operations of the PCTides forecast system. Dr. Preller also received the 2009 Presidential Rank Award (Meritorius).