

The Coral Fellowship Newsletter is published by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) to relay information about the fellowship program and provide a forum for information exchange among fellows, mentors, program coordinators and other stakeholders



Coral Fellowship Newsletter

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Special points of interest:

- Coral Fellowship Applications Due July 31
- Puerto Rico USCRTF Meeting October 31 - November 5, 2009
- Coral Fellows [Webpage](#)

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Fellows Focus on Leadership Qualities at Retreat in Guam



The Coral Reef Management Fellowship program held its final training workshop for the 2008-2010 cohort of fellows on the islands of Guam and Rota from June 15-20, 2009.

Fellows focused on building leadership skills and took part in training courses that were designed to provide them with tools to manage conflict and enable positive change in the workplace.



This workshop allowed the fellows to share their challenges and success stories with one another. They gave presentations on their work plans

which include: RARE Pride environmental campaign (Elaina Todd, Guam); population policy development (Alyssa Edwards, American Samoa); watershed restoration (Kathleen Hermann, CNMI); Guanica watershed & lagoon rehabilitation (Raimundo Espinoza, Puerto Rico); and island-wide International Year of

the Reef campaign (Karlyn Langhar, USVI) to one another and were able to brainstorm ideas on methods to better transfer knowledge and experience between the U.S. states and territories that are tasked with coral reef conservation.

The fellows visited several field sites to see how coral conservation efforts are managed in Guam. They



snorkeled at the Tumon Bay Marine Protected Area, and hiked through the south-island 'badlands' where erosion is a continuous problem affecting watersheds and the near shore reefs. In addition, they visited the Talakhaya Watershed Revegetation project, which has contributed to a reduction in sediment flow through the watershed and into the adjacent coral reefs on the island of Rota, CNMI.

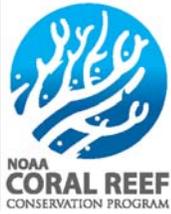
It was an incredible opportunity for the fellows to



learn about coral reef management in Guam and CNMI and to share ideas about how to creatively tackle similar issues in their own islands.

For more information visit the Coral [Fellowship Website](#).





Coral Fellow Helps Secure \$2.9 Million for Reefs



Kathleen Herrmann, the Coral Fellow in CNMI, helped to secure \$2.9 million in Recovery Act funds to protect coral reefs and address sources of sedimentation in CNMI.

The mega-grant will be used to restore Laolao Bay's reef by removing and addressing sources of upland sediment. This will include restoring 15 acres of upland habitat, road upgrades, drainage improvements, and elimination of unsustainable beach activities.

DEQ Director Frank M. Rabauliman said he is very

proud of the staff, most especially the grant writing team which was headed by Kathleen Herrmann and Fran Castro. "This is the first time that CNMI has received this type of competitive grant and I am most proud of the team and their handiwork. This is truly a cooperative accomplishment"

To learn more about the projects, visit <http://www.noaa.gov/recovery>. You can also track progress using the Restoration Atlas, a new interactive web-based map.



Check Out the Coral Fellowship Website for a complete profile on each of the current [Coral Fellows](#)

Puerto Rico Task Force Meeting

The 2009 Regional U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Meeting will be held at the Caribe Hilton in San Juan, Puerto Rico, from October 31-November 5.

These meetings provide a venue to report on the status of ongoing coral reef initiatives in local areas, an opportunity to discuss resolutions and the status of past resolutions, and allow for public participation regarding coral reefs and their conservation. Funding is available to support travel for Coral Fellows at the request of their jurisdiction Point of Contact (POC). Interested fellows should discuss their attendance with their island POC.

The U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Federal Member Coral Profiles are now available online! <http://coralreef.gov>



Final Call for Applications



Are you the next Coral Fellow? The deadline for submitting applications for the 2010-2012 Coral Fellowship cycle are due **July 31, 2009**.

The Coral Fellowship Coordination team will review applicants in August. Top candidates will be contacted for an interview by the end of September and the selected individuals will be confirmed

by November, 2009. Due to the high volume of applicants this year, candidates who are not selected for an interview will not be contacted. The new group of fellows will begin working in January of 2010. Don't miss your opportunity to be the next Coral Fellow!

Training Aimed at Improving Sediment Control and Runoff

As part of ongoing efforts to prevent soil erosion and sediment runoff, Kathleen Herrman a Coral Fellow and her colleagues at the Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ) in CNMI hosted a free training aimed at improving real-world application of erosion and sediment control practices for CNMI contractors.

Throughout the workshop, which ended with a certification exam, participants learned how to apply these practices to meet CNMI regulations. The practices included hydroseeding, erosion control blankets, inlet protection, check dams, stilt dikes, silt soxx, and



Kathleen practices making a hydroseed erosion control blanket

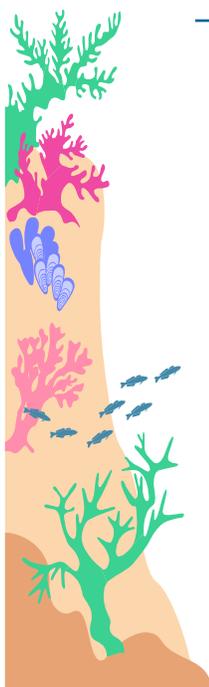
silt fences. Contractors learned about the practices, how to apply them, how to read site plans and how to maintain and close projects. The field portion was designed to improve on-the-ground success.

More than sixty people attended the free training, which was provided through grant funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

DEQ's goal is to eventually amend its regulations to require at least one certified

contractor on every active construction site.

Due to the overwhelming response to the workshop, DEQ plans to hold another workshop in the future.



Spotlight on Petra MacGowan, Hawaii Coral Fellow 2006-2009



The ocean has always been a part of Petra's life. She grew up in Seattle, Washington where her father taught marine science. He believed in hands-on education and would find ways to take his students on field trips to places like Australia or Africa each summer. Petra says, "There would be 36 high school students and then my brother and I would tag along. Those were our family vacations." Petra grew up seeing amazing locations all over the world and developed an appreciation for the environment and other cultures.

In high school Petra got involved in a YMCA youth leadership program called Earth Service Corps and had a chance to attend the Earth Summit in Brazil as a student representative. Petra traveled to two different cities with the youth leadership program. Both cities decided after the visit that they wanted to start a similar program in Brazil. They asked if there were any students interested in working in Brazil to help set up the program and Petra volunteered. They provided a host family and a small stipend for her and she lived in Brazil for one year and helped them start a youth leadership program. This was Petra's first job after high school. "In Brazil I realized that being able to think about the environment was actually a luxury."

Petra didn't take the conventional environmentalist route; she got her undergraduate degree in economics. "I was always involved in environmental work but I found that when I would talk to people with different opinions about why I cared about the forest being cut down, they would say, "Petra you don't understand the economics" and we would never get anywhere in our conversation. And so I thought, "I'm going to go and learn economics so that I can talk to people who don't see the world the way that I do."

After Petra finished her undergraduate degree, she was very content. "I enjoyed



working and never really thought about going back to grad school." She briefly worked for Conservation International in DC with their corporate partnership program, then moved to the West coast and worked for a small non-profit in Seattle that brought international students and Americorps volunteers together to work on restoration projects in the Puget Sound. She even taught marine science in Catalina island for three and a half years. She was trying to decide what she wanted to do next and came across a posting about the Coral Fellowship. One of the first fellows had written a story about his experience. "He got to live on an island in the Pacific and go diving and also do policy work. It sounded very interesting to me." Someone had told Petra to, "Look for the job you want and then figure out how to get there." And she thought, "This is the job that I want!" She



read through the requirements and it said that you needed a master's degree to apply, so she decided to go and get a master's degree. Petra studied Marine Policy at the University of Washington's School of Marine Affairs in Seattle and did her thesis work on Coastal Tourism Planning in Developing Nations for the Baloama-Bijagos Biosphere Reserve in Africa. The reserve is a UNESCO World Heritage site in Guinea-Bissau, West-Africa. "This experience shaped my interest in empowering local communities to gain the benefits of protecting the environment that they live in."

By this time she had pretty much forgotten about the Coral Fellowship program. "I went to Africa and was thinking about other things, plus [the fellowship program] was not scheduled to recruit the year I graduated and then, randomly two positions opened up. It all came together perfectly," says Petra. She applied for both the Hawaii and the U.S. Virgin Islands fellowship positions and interviewed for both of them, as did her grad school friend Karlyn Langjahr. "We would call each other after our interviews to compare notes." Petra says that she would have been happy in either place but was really more interested in the Hawaii position. Every year her father would take her to Hawaii with his marine science class over spring break. "We would go

kayaking and snorkeling and on beach walks with his students. I loved Hawaii!" It worked out perfectly in the end. Karlyn got the USVI spot and Petra got the Hawaii position.

Petra spent two and a half years working as a Coral Fellow in Hawaii. During that time she coordinated the grant funds and helped to maintain the day-to-day activities of the Hawaii Coral program. "I was given unanticipated levels of responsibility which really gave me ample opportunities to develop my skills." One project Petra is especially fond of is the Makai Watch program which engages local communities in managing coastal environments. "I have loved working with the marine community in Hawaii. There are so many great people!"

Petra recently accepted a position as a State Planner at the Hawaii Division of Aquatic Resources where she has been leading the Hawaii Coral Program's strategic planning process and the development of new priorities for the next decade. "It's a tough job, especially with the economic crisis in Hawaii. State employees are feeling the financial pinch and it's been challenging to get the work done with fewer resources."



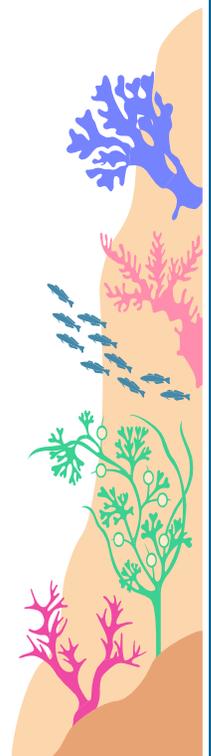
Petra enjoys a good challenge and has lofty career ambitions. "I would like to be contributing to programs that increase professional opportunities for locals. I want to help local communities prosper through the sustainably use of marine resources in a place like Africa or Central or South America."

When Petra looks back on her experience, the thing that really stands out to her is the relationships that she has built with the other fellows. "Being able to learn about what's happening in other places and try to apply it to your island has been really valuable." She also appreciated being exposed to the different parts of the program: NOAA, the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force, and State and Territory agencies. "It's been interesting to see how all those pieces work together."



This fellowship has been an unforgettable experience. I am lucky to have had the opportunity to learn from such amazing people in this amazing place!

-Petra MacGowan



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We're on the web!
www.coralreef.noaa.gov/fellowship.html

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Please [email us](#) your questions and suggestions for future editions

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The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Coral Reef Management Fellowship was established in 2003 to respond to the need for additional coral reef management capacity and capability in the U.S. Flag Pacific and Caribbean islands. The fellowship program's mission is two-fold, it provides coral reef management support in each participating island jurisdiction by placing highly qualified individuals whose education and work experience meet each island's specific coral reef management needs, while providing individual fellows with professional training in coastal and coral reef resource management.

Coral Fellow Updates

Guam: Elaina Todd 2008-2010



Elaina is working in Guam's Coastal Management Program where she is leading a Rare Pride campaign aimed at reducing sediment run-off in southern Guam. She has completed her Rare training and is preparing to launch the campaign.

CNMI: Kathleen Herrmann 2008-2010



Kathleen Herrmann is undertaking watershed planning in partnership with local agencies as well as working on several education and outreach projects in CNMI's Division of Environmental Quality.

American Samoa: Alyssa Edwards 2008-2010



Alyssa is in the Resource Management Division of the Department of Commerce where she assists in the coordination of the Local Action Strategy: Reducing Population Pressure.

Puerto Rico: Raimundo Espinoza 2008-2010



Raimundo works for the Department of Natural and Environmental Resources. He concentrates his efforts on land-based sources of pollution in the Guanica Biosphere Reserve.

U. S. Virgin Islands: Karlyn Langjahr 2007-2010



Karlyn is serving as the Education & Outreach Coordinator for the St. Croix East End Marine Park. She also coordinates the Virgin Island Network of Educators.

Hawaii, Petra MacGowan 2007-2010



Petra accepted a position as a State Planner in Hawaii's Division of Aquatic Resources. In her new position she is responsible for managing the Coral Program in Hawaii including Local Action Strategies, the Coral Reef Outreach Network and grants management. Congratulations to Petra on her promotion!

