

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

Volume 3 Issue 2

June 2010

Special points of interest:

- US Coral Reef Task Force Meeting September 13-17
- Coral Fellowship Retreat September 19-21
- Coral Fellows [Webpage](#)

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US Coral Reef Task Force Meeting and Fellows Retreat



Rota Island, CNMI

The U.S. Coral Reef Task Force (USCRTF) holds biannual meetings in Washington, D.C. in the spring and, on a rotational basis, in each of the USCRTF member jurisdictions in early fall. Guam and CNMI will be hosting this year's US Coral Reef Task Force Meeting.

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.

Coral fellows will be attending and participating in this meeting in order for them to gain a better understanding of the Task Force and its initiatives. Each fellow will prepare and present a poster on the work that they are conducting.

The U.S. Coral Reef Task Force (USCRTF) holds biannual meetings in Washington, D.C. in the spring and, on a rotational basis, in each of the USCRTF member jurisdictions in early fall. Guam and CNMI will be hosting this year's US Coral Reef Task Force Meeting.

Fellows will take part in a fellowship training retreat after the Task Force meeting on September 19-21st. This retreat will be an opportunity for fellows to share their success stories and challenges with one another as well as to take part in needed management training. The training topic is identified by the fellows based on their current needs and will be provided by Kevin Doyle of Green Economies.

Fellows will use their time at the Task Force meeting and the retreat gain a better understanding of how conservation management is addressed in Guam and CNMI. It is 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 Reef in Guam

NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program Management Liaisons

The Coral Reef Conservation Program is working to place Management Liaisons in each of the states and territories that have coral reefs. There are currently three Liaisons in place. These individuals are responsible for coordination between CRCP headquarters and the efforts of local coral management agencies.

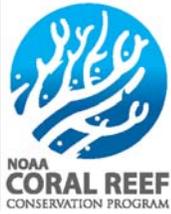
[Dana Wusinich-Mendez](#) is based in Miami and has been working with the Coral Program for almost 8 years to provide support to the state and territorial coral reef management programs in the Caribbean on coral reef and marine protected area management plans and other initiatives. Dana has been working with the Coral Fellowship program since its inception.

[Kathy Chaston](#) is based in Honolulu, Hawaii and

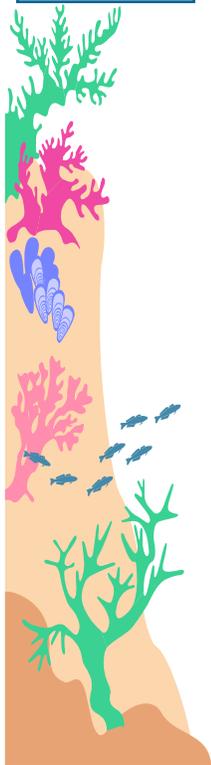
acts as the liaison for the Pacific state and territorial coral reef management programs. Kathy has been with the Coral Program for three years and her expertise is in watershed management. She was previously employed by the University of Hawaii doing similar work.

[Dana Okano](#) was recently hired as the liaison in CNMI and is based on Saipan. Dana has been a Planner focusing on Coastal Zone Management for the County of Hawaii Planning Department since 2007. She also served in the Peace Corps in Benin, West Africa and Haiti.

Management Liaisons are a valuable resource to Coral Fellows and can provide expertise and contacts to assist fellows in the completion of their work plans.



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



Guam: Tammy Jo A. Taft 2010-2012



Tammy is working as the Education and Outreach Coordinator where she will be creating materials that take scientific information about corals and make it digestible for the general public.

CNMI: Aric Bickel 2010-2012



Aric is leading the Conservation Action Planning (CAP) work being done in conjunction with The Nature Conservancy to reduce the impacts of non-point source pollutants in CNMI's watersheds.

American Samoa: Clare Shelton 2010-2012



Clare assists in the coordination and implementation of the Climate Change Local Action Strategy which addresses climate change impacts in the island.

Puerto Rico: Rina Hauptfeld 2010-2012



Rina is the Education Coordinator for the Tres Palmas Marine Reserve, where she works with partners to implement the Tres Palmas Management Plan.

U. S. Virgin Islands: Marija Micuda 2010-2012



Marija is developing sustainable tourism products and implementing marketing activities for the two marine protected areas in St. Thomas and St. Croix.

Hawaii: Lunalilo Kekoa Jr. 2010-2012



Lunalilo is the project coordinator and community liaison for the Kahekili priority coral site, a pilot site for modern watershed planning in Hawaii.

Florida: Recruiting for position 2010-2012



The Florida fellow will be coordinating the Maritime Industry Coastal Construction Impact Local Action Strategy.

Spotlight on Tammy Jo Anderson Taft, Guam Coral Fellow



Tammy Jo A Taft

Tammy Jo A. Taft was born in a small town called Arthur which is near Fargo, North Dakota. She grew up on a farm that was two miles from where her mom grew up, which was two miles from where her grandpa grew up. She spent 18 year of her life in a town of four hundred people. "The town is so without people, which to some people seems empty, but to others it seems perfect." She went to school with the same twelve kids in her class until the 8th grade.

Her graduating class had only thirty-six students. "You get to know those kids pretty well" explains Tammy Jo.

Growing up on a farm shaped her work ethic and is reflected in the types of jobs she likes to do. "What made me most angry at my parents as a kid has helped me become the kind of employee that I am today." She learned early on about the value of hard work. "I actually thrive in jobs that come with super long "to-do" lists. All of my jobs have involved way too much to do in way too little time. You need to be enough of your own motivator to get stuff done."

She studied Communications at Wartburg College, a small school in North East Iowa about eight hours from where she grew up. "I had received a big stack of brochures from different colleges. I went through them and threw out any that were located in big cities or that didn't have communications/history/education programs and then I threw out any that had pictures of people on their covers that looked "preppy" to me. That brought me down to four, Wartburg being one of them. When I visited Wartburg I found out that they had a TV and radio station that I could work at. That pretty much sealed the deal."

Wartburg is named after a castle in Germany, where Martin Luther translated the bible into German. "One of the cool things I got to do during college was go to that castle and give tours. I went there for a month when I was a sophomore and then again when I was a junior for a whole summer. I was actually trying to go to Guam to do an internship, but the dean wouldn't approve it because she wasn't sure it was safe. I went back and asked the dean again when I was a senior and she said yes, if I signed a form saying that should I die or get malaria, I wouldn't hold the school responsible. That is how I ended up doing the internship at the newspaper in Guam."

Tammy Jo's brother was in Guam at the time and had a house with an extra room so when Tammy finished college she jumped at the chance to move to Guam for the internship. "My older brother and I were always good friends because we were the only two kids around." Her parents had actually

Spotlight on Tammy Jo A. Taft, Guam Coral Fellow (cont...)

lived in Guam too. They had met in college during the Vietnam War. Her dad went into flight school and became a helicopter pilot and the newlyweds were stationed in Guam for a time.

Life in Guam was much different than life in North Dakota. According to Tammy Jo, "North Dakota is the most land-locked state in the whole universe. It's about as far away as you can get from the ocean on the American continent." Guam on the other



The Anderson Family

hand is surrounded by the ocean and it is an integral part of life. She was not an ocean person until she got to Guam. She'd been to the Atlantic Ocean a couple of times, but it always seemed cold and murky to her.

One time her family went to the beach in Florida and there were a couple of guys chumming for sharks right off the pier. Her brother figured out what was going on before she did and he turned to head back to the beach. He was already half way back by the time she figured out what was happening. "Once I saw the fins, I ran so fast that I actually beat him back to the shore!" Even pools seemed ominous to her as a child. The local swimming pool had a stuffed marlin hanging on the wall. "I thought that they had caught that fish in the pool so I was actually terrified to go into the water." She went snorkeling for the first time when she arrived in Guam and loved it. "I was in the water for four hours and it was just ridiculous! It was like a zoo but you were right there inside the zoo."

Tammy didn't set out to do marine education and conservation; her path just led her in that direction. After working at the newspaper reporting on environmental issues, among other things, she decided she didn't want to be a reporter, but she was interested in doing more environmental work. When a job opened up at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Guam she applied and was hired. She worked in public relations at the EPA for two years and in that time became more and more interested in environmental work, especially education and outreach. "There has always been a part of me that wants to be outside, on the ground, seeing and touching and feeling what we're doing."

She got a job teaching English in Korea after working for the EPA, but never actually made it out there. The job was scheduled to start later that summer so she used the extra time to go back to North Dakota and write for the local newspaper there. "My first story [at home] was about a moose that had run through the town's cemetery, knocking over headstones. It was such a change from the issues I had dealt with in Guam. My grandma thought it was the best story ever written, of course, but I was excited to get back to Guam." Tammy Jo returned to Guam to wait for her delayed Korean visa. While she was waiting the aquarium approached her and asked if she would work for them as their Education Director. "I didn't want to do it because I was set to go to Korea, but after inter-

viewing with them and hearing more about the job, I ended up taking it." She was really happy there and gained a lot of experience in marine science and conservation. "That is where I learned all of the names of the fish!"

Tammy admits that science isn't her strength, "My strength is in talking to the scientists and hearing all of the cool things they have to say and then translating that into something that a normal person can understand. That is my whole job right now and I love it."

Tammy Jo is doing education and outreach for the Guam Coastal Management program. Check out the Guam Environmental Education [website](#) for more information on some of her projects. "I love working in our office because everyone has different strengths and it really makes me a lot more effective. For example, Elaina ['08-'10 fellow] is super organized and keeps detailed lists of all the things that need to be done. We can get together and look at her lists and divide up the tasks. It makes it a lot easier."

Another part of the job that Tammy Jo really likes is the flexibility to pursue interesting projects that come up. For example, they have a project that they're starting with the local dive shop doing beach clean ups. They are partnering with a whole-sale company to reward people that participate. Participants provide documentation that they cleaned up and recycled their trash, and then the wholesale company

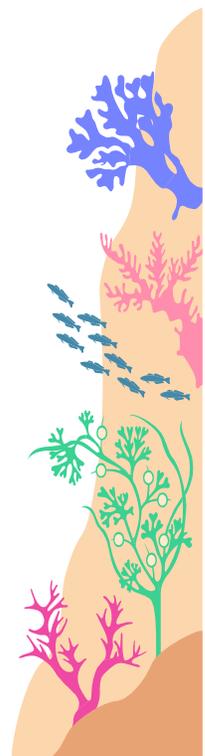


Tammy Jo Working at Under Water World as Education Director



"The fellowship program is something that I wanted to be a part of and now that I am, am very pleased with it."

*- Tammy Jo
A. Taft,*



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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.



Tammy Jo Continued...

gives them a gift certificate as a reward. "With another job I may not have had the ability to make this happen, but I can easily incorporate it into my portfolio here."

Tammy Jo heard about the fellowship from friends of hers while she was working at the aquarium. "I was really happy working there, but when I saw the description of this fellowship position, it was all of the things that I love to do: I like to talk to people, be creative, and come up with programs and make them work." She is looking forward to building her skill set and increasing her management and outreach experience. "I think that I will gain a lot more overall project management skills. I have been part of projects in the past but have never been responsible for pulling them all together. It's been really interesting to gain that experience here." This will be an important skill no matter what she goes on to do, whether it's leading projects or assisting in their completion. When asked what she would like to be doing five or ten years from now she pauses before answering with a smile, "I would like to be running a non-profit something that saves something and allows me to go on Cessna plane rides every other day!"

Tammy Jo got married recently and is planning a big reception back in North Dakota this summer. "It's going to be a big shin-dig. My dad is renting a bus to bring my whole home town to the wedding. It's going to be the most ridiculous, fun camp-wedding you've ever seen!"



Tammy Jo and her husband

US Coral Reef Task Force Meeting

- Guam: September 13-17, 2010
- Fellows Retreat/Workshop September 19-21, 2010
- Fellows are required to attend these meetings.
- Fellow's Posters will be displayed at Task Force Meeting (required)



Introducing Paulo Maurin

Paulo Maurin has been working with the CRCP for over 2 years and will (again) cover Marci Wulff's portfolio for the Program while she is on maternity leave from October-January, 2010.



Paulo obtained his PhD from the University of Hawaii in 2008. Funding from the National Science Foundation assisted him in studying various co-management initiatives on coastal marine resources, with an emphasis on local community involvement.

During his time in Hawaii, Paulo worked with Hawaii Sea Grant to produce a technical report on the work of Sea Grant and the State Division of Aquatic Resources in supporting various marine stakeholder interactions in the West Hawaii coastal area.

Paulo has been working as the CRCP's National Education Coordinator for the past year. He also assisted the Coral Reef Conservation Program in the production of the Report to Congress for 2007-2009. He can be reached at

