



*bringing hands-on research experience to the classroom*

## HOME

2007 Field Season

2006 Field Season

2005 Field Season

Past Field Seasons

Our Alumni

How to Apply

About the Program

NOAA Ships

Teacher in the Air

Contact Us

## About the Program

[Overview](#)

[Details](#)

[Benefits for All](#)

[NOAA's Office of Marine and Aviation Operations](#)

### Overview

Since its inception in 1990, NOAA's Teacher at Sea program has enabled more than 460 teachers to gain first-hand experience of science and life at sea. By participating in this program, it becomes possible for teachers to enrich their classroom curricula with a depth of understanding made possible by living and working side-by-side, day and night, with those who contribute to the world's body of oceanic and atmospheric scientific knowledge.

[\(top\)](#)

### Details

#### Who May Apply

NOAA's Teacher at Sea program accepts applications from currently employed K-12 teachers, college/university teachers, and museum or aquaria educators, both American and international.

#### Types of Cruises

Teachers may select a cruise aboard one of [NOAA's 18 ships](#). NOAA has three main types of vessels. *Fisheries research vessels* perform biological and physical science studies in support of fisheries research.

## Site Index

### *Of Special Note*

The best promotion of the Teacher at Sea program comes from the teachers themselves. [Look here](#) to read some of the fantastic things they've had to say about it.



NOAA Teacher at Sea, [Kimberly Pratt](#), tries on a survival suit, better known as a "Gumby Suit," while aboard the [McARTHUR II](#). (Photo courtesy of [CSCAPE](#).)

*Oceanographic and coastal research vessels* perform physical science studies in support of physical oceanography, atmospheric studies, and bathymetric mapping. *Hydrographic survey vessels* scan the coastal sea floor with side-scan sonar and sophisticated bottom sounding systems to locate submerged obstructions and navigational hazards for the creation or update of the nation's nautical charts.

### Time Commitment

Teachers can expect to be at sea anywhere from a week to a month. Most teachers take advantage of cruises offered during the summer, but cruises take place throughout the year.



Because of Homeland Security reasons, specific NOAA ship schedules are no longer made available to the public. Therefore, we ask applicants to list all the dates they will be available

Orcas, better known as killer whales, are just one of many marine creatures you may see during your mission as a Teacher at Sea.

to sail so that we can then match participants' requests to a ship's schedule. The public may view NOAA's fleet allocation plan by going to <http://www.oma.noaa.gov/shipallocation.html>

### Flexibility

Those who apply to the Teacher at Sea program should keep in mind the necessity for flexibility regarding ship departures and arrivals, ship working shifts, and the level of work intensity on some ships. As the unforeseen sometimes occurs, ship departure and arrival dates are never guaranteed. In addition, work shifts on some ships may be 4 hours on/4 hours off or 6 hours on/6 hours off. You may also be required to work a night shift. Finally, some cruises, especially fisheries cruises, require high-intensity work that demands physical adeptness and endurance. Please keep these points in mind when applying to the program.

### Costs

All necessary travel costs are paid for by NOAA's Teacher at Sea Program. While airfare is paid for up front by the government, all other costs are reimbursed.

[\(top\)](#)

### Benefits for All

The benefits of NOAA's Teacher at Sea program are substantial for several

stakeholders. To begin with, scientists, NOAA Corps officers, and crew gain motivated volunteers to help carry out their projects, and all onboard enjoy hosting someone who is enthusiastic and eager to learn about each aspect of the cruise.

Another crucial benefit offered by the Teacher at Sea program to NOAA and the nation is students' increased exposure to knowledge of marine careers. By talking about their experiences and sharing photos or video taken during a cruise, teachers can encourage their students to consider potential marine careers with NOAA or other science-based organizations.

And perhaps most importantly, the program serves NOAA's mission by promoting among teachers and their students a greater awareness of the need to understand and protect the world's oceans and their resources.

The feedback from teachers who have participated in the program is overwhelmingly positive. Teachers underscore the fact that not only do they themselves benefit from what they learn on their cruises, but so do their students, communities, and the environment in general.

[\(top\)](#)

Indeed, these benefits may best be described by Melissa Fye, an elementary school teacher from Virginia: *" I'm taking back to my classroom a wealth of resources like maps, charts, a binder of lessons, and many photographs and digital movies to weave into science lessons. But more importantly than those things, I will be bringing back to the classroom real-life enthusiasm for the application of science in the real world. I have experienced first-hand, biological ecosystems, weather instruments and measurements, and map making, in a real-life context. I want my students to know that life is not a collection of things, but a collection of experiences. I hope this trip encourages them to explore opportunities as they arise in their own lives. As a teacher, my underlying goal is to teach my students that learning should be a life long adventure! And isn't that what this trip is really all about?"*

### **NOAA's Office of Marine and Aviation Operations**

The Teacher at Sea program is coordinated and administered by [NOAA's Office of Marine and Aviation Operations](#) (OMAO). OMAO operates, manages and maintains the NOAA fleet of ships and aircraft in support of NOAA's mission to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment and conserve and manage coastal and marine resources to meet our nation's economic, social, and environmental needs. OMAO is composed of civilians, wage mariners, and the officers of the [NOAA Commissioned Corps](#), one of the nation's seven uniformed services.

[\(top\)](#)

Revised by Teacher at Sea Webmaster: [tascomments@noaa.gov](mailto:tascomments@noaa.gov)

[NOAA Marine Aviation and Operation](#) | [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) | [U.S. Department of Commerce](#)

<http://teacheratsea.noaa.gov/about.html>