

## **Long Island Sound Mentor Teacher Program**

In 2012, New York Sea Grant (NYSG) continued a successful Long Island Sound educational initiative for K-12 teachers in the New York's share of the watershed that includes the Bronx, Queens, and Westchester County.

According to a Public Perception Survey conducted by the Long Island Sound Study (LISS), watershed residents were lacking knowledge about Long Island Sound, and its watershed or drainage basin, tidal wetlands, and water quality. To increase the knowledge of watershed residents, LISS provided funding to educate teachers about successful strategies for implementing Long Island Sound (LIS) concepts into existing curricula.

The Long Island Sound Mentor Teacher Program workshops, which align with the content standards of the New York Science Frameworks and/or National Science Education Standards, include a field training component within the Long Island Sound watershed. Participants receive supplies and resources needed to conduct the activities with their students.

In the spring of 2012, two LIS Mentor Teacher Program workshops were held in New York. The first workshop, Teach at the Beach, was targeted for elementary school teachers and held in Wading



*Educators conduct hands-on activities they can use with students during field trips to the beach. Photo: Larissa Graham, NYSG*

River, NY. The second workshop, Marsh Madness, was targeted for high school level teachers and focused on collecting water quality and fish and macroinvertebrate population data. This workshop was held at Sunken Meadow State Park in Kings Park, NY.

In total, 29 educators participated in these two workshops. Evaluations conducted a few months after the workshops indicated the teachers were using the resources provided with more than 2,000 students and sharing the resources with their fellow teachers.

Funding was secured to continue this program with two workshops in 2014.

To date, this mentor teacher initiative has conducted 33 workshops in Connecticut and New York with more than 300 formal and informal K-12 educators and has reached through those educators, more than 20,000 students.

*LIS Mentor Teacher Program field learning in Wading River, NY. Photo: Larissa Graham, NYSG*



***This project meets the performance goals of Sea Grant's Healthy New York Coastal Ecosystems Focus Area.***

New York Sea Grant is a joint program of Cornell University, the State University of New York, and NOAA. New York Sea Grant Extension administration is located at 112 Rice Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853.

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