

R/V Lake Guardian Shipboard Science Workshop: Dynamic Educator-Researcher Learning Opportunity

Extending science and research learning opportunities to educators, youth and adult citizens improves knowledge of coastal habitat issues, increases coastal and ocean literacy, and prompts environmental stewardship. In 2018, New York Sea Grant (NYSG) coordinated the Center for Great Lakes Literacy's Shipboard Science Workshops on Lake Ontario as a unique and exemplary educational learning experience that allows teachers to work alongside researchers aboard a research vessel (R/V), the U.S. EPA R/V *Lake Guardian*.

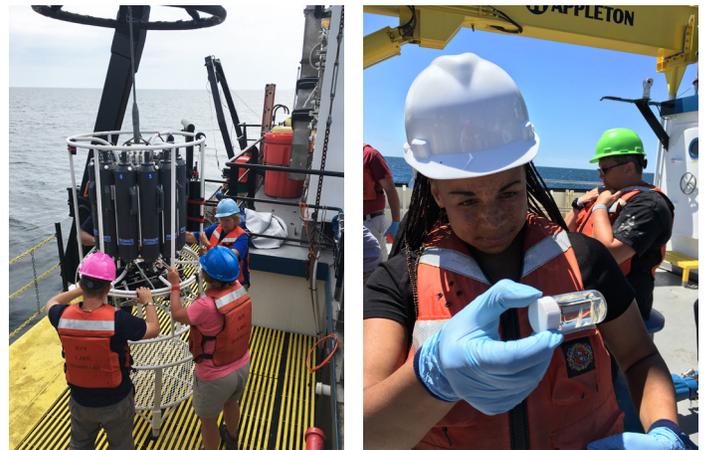
The 2018 program engaged 15 educators from across the Great Lakes basin in gathering and processing samples used for lake monitoring in an effort to answer current research questions.

The goal of this workshop was to have educators and researchers work side-by-side, facilitating the transfer of science into classrooms and informal learning settings. These interactions build beneficial relationships between educators and the research community. The teachers' shipboard efforts contribute to the U.S. EPA's Great Lakes scientific database, making their contributions relevant and meaningful.

"Being on the Lake Guardian provides educators with the opportunity to be learners and to become more knowledgeable about researching science to fuel our passion for science," stated one educator.

Another teacher described how the experience will translate into his classroom: *"The experience is coming full circle as we have been examining how to connect our new knowledge with ideas for instruction. I know all of us already have countless ideas for how to take these lessons back to our students."*

Since the July 2018 workshop, NYSG staff and scientists involved in the workshop have interacted with participating teachers on a number of follow-up stewardship activities, building on the learning and excitement from the interaction aboard the R/V.



*Teachers aboard the U.S. EPA Research Vessel (R/V) Lake Guardian participate in Great Lakes research on Lake Ontario in 2018.
Photos: NYSG/Helen Domske*

Several of the *Lake Guardian* teachers have become Mentor Teachers, an initiative of the Center for Great Lakes Literacy, with the goal of sharing their newfound knowledge and experiences with colleagues to help infuse Great Lakes education into more classrooms.

Partners:

- Center for Great Lakes Literacy
- Great Lakes Sea Grant Network
- *Lake Guardian* Research Vessel
- SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry
- U.S. EPA Great Lakes National Program Office
- University at Buffalo

The Sea Grant Focus Area for this project is Healthy New York Coastal Ecosystems

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