

## Environmental Citizen of the Year

Photo by D. Gervase

In fall of 2002, NYSG coastal education specialist **Helen Domske** was presented with the **2002 Paul MacClennan Environmental Citizen of the Year Award** by The Center for Great Lakes Environmental Education, the Erie County Environmental Education Institute, and the Great Lakes Center at Buffalo State College. The honor is named for Paul MacClennan, an award winning environmental reporter for the *Buffalo News* who was known for his uncompromising efforts to protect the environment and inform citizens.

Helen has more than 20 years experience as an aquatic science educator and has worked with tens of thousands of students, teachers, scout and youth group leaders, and her peers with such agencies as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Helen is also Associate Director of the Great Lakes Program at the University of Buffalo, editor of the *Great Lakes Research Review*, and author of numerous teaching materials and a book on Western New York's freshwater ecology.



**Environmental Citizen of the year Helen Domske with NYSG Director Jack Mattice the day of the award presentation.**

In recognition of this prestigious award, Domske also received a Citation from the NYS Assembly, which states in part: "Whereas, it is the practice of the Assembled Body to recognize individuals who strive to benefit the communities of the State of NY." In conjunction with her award, Domske was the recipient of an Executive Chamber proclamation from Erie County Executive **Joel Giambra**, and a resolution from the Legislature of Erie County.

## Receiving Teachers Award

Photo by Matthew Graff



**NYSG's Kimberly Zimmer receives her plaque from NYSMEA Director Bob Abrams.**

New York Sea Grant co-sponsored the New York State Marine Education Association (NYSMEA) conference at Southampton College on May 30- June 1, 2003. Over 130 participants viewed the exhibits, attended numerous workshops, visited the local aquarium, and enjoyed boat tours and field trips exploring the habitats of the area. Additional co-sponsors included the American Museum of Natural History, the Wildlife

Conservation Society, the New York Aquarium, and Atlantis Marine World. Dr. Melanie L.J. Stiassny, Curator for the Department of Ichthyology at the American Museum of Natural History presented the ideas behind the science of the New Hall of Ocean Life. And the Central Park Zoo/Wildlife Theater Players entertained educators with "The Mystery of the Great Blue Heron Marsh."

At a ceremony during the three-day event, **Kimberly Zimmer**, NYSG Extension Support Specialist received the **Kinghan Service Award** named for NYSMEA's first president, Gene Kinghan, a dedicated east end science teacher. As the retiring NYSMEA Treasurer, Zimmer has developed unique pecuniary procedures that have maintained the financial stability of the Association. This recognition reflects the deep appreciation of the organization's Executive Board and the membership for a job well done.

Photo by Berry Shore



EPA's Christie Whitman with the New York/New Jersey Harbor Estuary director and staff.

## Recognizing HEP

Together in front of South Street Seaport Museum's schooner *Lettie G. Howard* for a late-April Earth Day celebration recognizing the NY-NJ Harbor Estuary Program (HEP) were (l-r): EPA's **Robert Nyman**, HEP Director; EPA Administrator **Christie Whitman**; NYSG's HEP Outreach Coordinator **Laura Bartovics**; and NJSG's HEP Technical Specialist **Cathy Yuhas**. The event honored the Seaport Museum and 10 other groups receiving monies through HEP's mini-grants program, which has encouraged citizen participation in the protection and restoration of the estuary since 1991.

### *Launching a "Disease Detective"*

// ~~New York Sea Grant has a real understanding of a multi-disciplinary, collaborative approach to issues facing New York's aquatic-based industries.~~

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~~—Dawn Norton Former graduate student on NYSG research~~

~~"In a nutshell, I'm a 'disease detective,'" says Dawn Norton of her position as an Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer, Foodborne and Diarrheal Diseases Branch at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta. Norton is on 24-hour call for public health emergencies and responds to inquiries from the community, media, government officials and public health professionals. Her job at the CDC is to identify and investigate foodborne disease outbreaks and assist with control measures to help prevent future outbreaks.~~

~~Norton's success at her present job stems from her productivity as a graduate student. While pursuing her doctorate, Norton worked on a NYSG-funded project in the area of food safety with Cornell Food Laboratory's Drs. Martin Wiedmann and Kathryn Boor and NYSG seafood specialist, Ken Gall. (See the Fall 1998 issue of *Coastlines* available online for a synopsis of the project and its collaborators in the smoked fish industry.)~~

~~"That project really modeled the power of applied science and collaboration! We applied cutting edge scientific technology to investigate an important food safety issue. Our research with NYSG and the smoked fish industry contributed to a better understanding of an important foodborne pathogen, *Listeria*~~

~~*monocytogenes*, and the continued development of science-based policy while providing a basis for future studies." Norton completed her doctorate and has co-authored four publications on the pathogen.~~

~~Says Norton, "The project helped to move forward the overall goal of reducing foodborne illness in the U.S. We worked with our industry collaborators to develop targeted strategies for control of this important pathogen in the food processing environment, which will reduce the risk of finished product contamination. These strategies will facilitate continued compliance with FDA's zero tolerance policy for *Listeria monocytogenes*. It's great that I was able to support NY's seafood industry."~~

~~In Norton's experience, each of Sea Grant's components—research, outreach and education—was critical to a project that contributed much to science-based policies and a better understanding of an important foodborne pathogen. She brings this Sea Grant perspective to her job of designing and conducting epidemiologic studies that will lead to practical strategies for control and prevention of foodborne and diarrheal diseases in the US—and the world.~~

~~—Barbara A. Branca~~

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