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GRANTS AWARDED FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE PROJECTS

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Sea Grant programs in Connecticut, New Jersey and New York have awarded funds totaling \$1.4 million to support 10 social science research projects to improve community understanding and response to coastal storm hazard information as part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Sea Grant's Coastal Storm Awareness Program.

The grants were announced by NOAA Thursday. Connecticut Sea Grant is based at the University of Connecticut's Avery Point campus in Groton.

Despite the accuracy of the forecast for Superstorm Sandy, too many coastal residents either failed to fully understand the severity of the storm and the dangerous conditions it would produce, or chose not to evacuate in spite of the serious risks of staying in their homes, NOAA said in a news release. The awarded projects will study community response to disasters by examining coastal storm warning systems, the information conveyed on what to expect, when to expect it, and what do, and the factors affecting whether recipients act on the information. The results will improve the communication of coastal hazards to the public and community leaders.

The Coastal Storm Awareness Program is a part of the Disaster Relief Appropriations of 2013, commonly referred to as the Sandy Supplemental.

It provided supplemental appropriations to NOAA to improve and streamline disaster assistance associated with Sandy.

In addition to recovering and rebuilding infrastructure from Sandy, NOAA will conduct activities to improve the information and services it provides to decision makers, communities and the public about storm preparation, response and recovery.

In Connecticut, a project led by three Yale University researchers will survey at least 1,000 state residents to assess their perceptions of coastal storm risk, experiences and behaviors. Titled, "An Audience Segmentation Analysis of Connecticut Coastal Residents to Support Storm Preparedness," the project is intended to gain a better understanding of how much residents understand, the sources they use, why they behave as they do and to give emergency planners and responders a better understanding of those they serve. Analysis of the results will factor in various demographic and social-cultural characteristics to support the design and development of storm-related information for specific groups. Results will be provided to Connecticut's emergency managers and responders.

For information on all 10 projects, visit: <http://web2.uconn.edu/seagrant/publications/CSAP/csap-projects.pdf>. Information on the program can also be found at:

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STATE REP. GIULIANO TO HOST COMMUNITY FORUMS ON COMMON CORE

State Rep. Marilyn Giuliano, R-23, will host two community forums for people to gather information about the new Common Core Standards, ask questions and voice concerns.

The first forum will meet from 4 to 6 p.m. Jan. 29 at the Phoebe Griffin Noyes Library Community Room, 2 Library Lane in Old Lyme. The second event is 4 to 6 p.m. Feb. 6 in the Multimedia Room at Westbrook Town Hall, at 866 Boston Post Road.

Currently, 45 states including Connecticut have adopted the Common Core standards. But at least 12 legislatures are now considering delaying implementation of the program out of concern the standards are not properly crafted to adequately benefit students, according to Giuliano's new release.

"I think it's clear that we all share a goal of improving education in our country and preparing students for future endeavors," she said. "But sometimes a well-intentioned plan can hinder that goal if it's not properly designed for real-world application. I think the Common Core standards need to be revisited now or, I fear, we will be studying why it didn't work a few years down the road and the students will be the ones who suffer."

Giuliano, who serves on the legislature's Education Committee, has introduced a bill to the committee that would delay Common Core implementation in Connecticut pending public hearings.

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