

NINA SASSANO

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An energetic and goal-driven individual with proven leadership and communication skills dedicated to improving the environmental, social, and economic health of the coast through education and research.

[Please click here to visit my web portfolio for a broader view of my work.](#)

EDUCATION & LICENSURES

SEA SCHOOL

Savannah, Georgia

December 2022

United States Coast Guard OUPV 6 Pack Captain License

United States Coast Guard 25 Gross Register Tons Inland Water Master Captain License

EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

Greenville, North Carolina

September 2013-2015

Master of Science in Biology

Research focus: Land use effects on the stinging sea nettle- Are shoreline hardening structures providing habitat for a nuisance species?

STOCKTON UNIVERSITY

Pomona, New Jersey

September 2006-May 2010

Bachelor of Science in Marine Biology

EXPERIENCE

EDUCATOR AND STUDENT COORDINATOR

University of Georgia

Marine Extension &

Georgia Sea Grant

June 2019-present

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

- Implemented programming for pre-k to adult students in laboratories, aboard vessels, and in the field relaying current marine science information to help promote sustainability and environmental literacy
- Engaged marginalized and traditionally underrepresented community members of all ages in applied, hands-on experiential learning activities
- Coordinated statewide festivals and annual events including [Skidaway Marine Science Day](#), the [Youth Ocean Conservation Summit](#), and [State of the Georgia Coast](#)
- Initiated and annually coordinated a [professional development workshops series](#) offered at both the state and national level for students engaged in Sea Grant programming
- Developed innovative and cross-theme-cutting modules, curriculum and learning activities for k-12 classrooms in line with Standards of Excellence, including a [virtual reality field trip](#) curriculum
- Organized and led summer camp experiences engaging students in marine science research and literacy
- Established relationships with formal teachers to expand marine science programming in the classroom, including coordinating the annual [Georgia Association of Marine Education](#) conference

PROJECT & TEAM MANAGEMENT

- Principle Investigator of approximately \$300,000 in grant funded projects, including a statewide oyster shell recycling initiative. Managed teams, budgets, timelines, reporting, evaluations, and post-project communication through outreach and education
- Worked closely with the UGA Shellfish Research Lab team to coordinate volunteer and fundraising events with a focus on shoreline stabilization and oyster reef restoration in coastal Georgia
- Recruited, trained, organized, supervised and mentored interns and fellows to assist in the successful implementation of projects and programs within the unit
- Coordinated and supervised the Marine Education Fellowship program for recently graduated individuals who join the team for eleven months to get experience in environmental education, outreach, husbandry, and research

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

- Facilitated and led educational programming during summer camp and school programs
- Planned, coordinated, marketed, and implemented special events, workshops, and programs for audiences ranging from youth to adult
- Developed, organized, scheduled and implemented teaching modules for school and summer programs as well as community events, professional education programs, and adult education
- Regularly communicated with public to recruit visitors, volunteers, and to respond to various inquiries that pertained to MarineQuest programming
- Produced and distributed promotional marketing materials including flyers, emails, and social media content to publicize the most current opportunities and information available at MarineQuest
- Authored major federal grant proposals to expand outreach and broaden community involvement and provide opportunities for interns and volunteers to expand their experience in the field
- Implemented research and citizen science initiatives through the acquisition of grants and development of a large community volunteer base

PROJECT & TEAM MANAGEMENT

- Acquired federal funds to support an AmeriCorps position focused on engaging the community in long term monitoring of shoreline change. Supervised the AmeriCorps members who implemented this project
- Discovered, interviewed, and hired talented and qualified instructors and volunteers to assist in the successful implementation of MarineQuest educational programs, events, and research
- Assisted in budget development and program evaluation to ensure that MarineQuest's resources were used to their fullest potential
- Cared for equipment, maintained an inventory of supplies, and budgeted for materials needed for programming and research initiatives

RESEARCH AND VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

UNCW MarineQuest

Wilmington, North

Carolina

February 2017-May 2019

ADDITIONAL RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

FIELD TECHNICIAN BARNEGAT BAY PARTNERSHIP

Toms River, New Jersey
June 2011-August 2013

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

- Integrated field work with public outreach and communication
- Used mixed media to promote outreach materials for the public
- Promoted research efforts in public venues including festivals, meetings, professional workshops, conferences, and partnerships with other local agencies.

PROJECT & TEAM MANAGEMENT

- Coordinated schedules for volunteers and fellow field technicians
- Co-authored reports detailing the results of various projects
- Collaborated on the implementation and execution of research projects and reports
- Authored a research publication accepted to the Journal of Ocean & Coastal Management

ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR OCEAN COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Lacey, New Jersey
October 2011-August 2013

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

- Provided educators with the tools and training necessary to teach about stewardship and the surrounding environment
- Modeled the Soil District's website www.soildistrict.org using WordPress

PROJECT & TEAM MANAGEMENT

- Assisted in the design and implementation of rain garden plantings and accompanying curriculum for multiple schools throughout the county
- Gained administrative skills while assisting with general office procedures
- Assisted in the development and organization of events including the Annual Soil Conference and the Environmental Educators Roundtable

TEACHER NATURALIST FOREST RESOURCE EDUCATION CENTER

Jackson, New Jersey
May 2011-September 2012

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

- Educated diverse groups about forestry, forest products, stewardship and the watershed
- Designed educational programs and activities for visiting students and groups, including master naturalists in training
- Hosted and led professional development workshops
- Created and led interpretive programs that promote environmental appreciation and awareness

WATERSHED AMBASSADOR NJ AMERICORPS WATERSHED AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Tuckerton, New Jersey
September 2010- July 2011

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

- Connected citizens and students with their watershed by organizing outreach, education, and training and workshops
- Promoted environmental stewardship and knowledge in k-12 schools, community events, professional development courses and various other venues
- Partnered with agency directors to develop projects designed to promote community awareness of their watershed and ultimately become stewards of their land
- Used, developed and created new curricula to bring environmental education to audiences of all ages

RESEARCH

- Conducted biological and visual stream assessments to supplement a long term data set collected by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, and organized volunteer monitoring trainings so they could do the same

FORMAL & INFORMAL TEACHING EXPERIENCE

ADJUNCT ONLINE INSTRUCTOR, NUTRITION BRUNSWICK COMMUNITY COLLEGE, SUPPLY, NC
LAB INSTRUCTOR, BIOLOGY UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA WILMINGTON, WILMINGTON, NC
TEACHING ASSISTANT DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY, EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY, GREENVILLE, NC
LEARNING ASSISTANT DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY, BROOKDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE, LINCROFT, NJ
OUTDOOR INSTRUCTOR NATURE CONNECT CAMP, WILMINGTON, NC
MARINE BIOLOGY SUMMER CAMP INSTRUCTOR NEW LOGIC EDUCATORS, LAVALLETTE, NJ

November 2016-Present
August 2016-February 2017
September 2013- August 2015
September 2010- July 2011
September 2016-December 2016
May 2012 – September 2012

Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Report

University of Georgia Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant.

Assessing the effects of a barrier net on jellyfish and other local fauna at estuarine bathing beaches

Ocean & Coastal Management Volume 163, 1 September 2018, Pages 364-371

Jellyfish are in Bloom: Are Humans Contributing to Local Populations?

North Carolina Sea Grant Coastwatch, Holiday 2015

Exploring from within: A Living Shoreline Exhibit at the UGA Marine Education Center and Aquarium

Ga Department of Natural Resources, Amount: \$ 75,940

Building Georgia's oyster (*Crassostrea virginica*) management capacity through shell recycling and novel mound reef restoration

Ga Department of Natural Resources, Amount: \$175,000

National Sea Grant Community Engaged Internship Program Community Engaged Intern

Sea Grant, Amount: \$11,000

Increasing Opportunities for Underserved and Underrpresented Interns with the UGA Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant

Parent Leadership Council Funding Opportunity, Amount: \$9,980

Virtual Reality Curriculum Development

Georgia Association for Marine Educators Mini Grant, Amount: \$500

Enhancing Marine Science Curriculum for K-12 Formal and Informal Educators Virtual Field Trip of Georgia's Coastal Wetlands

Bobby Meeler Sahm Award, Amount: \$3,000

Virtual Exploration of Georgia's Coastal Wetlands

Southeast Coastal Observation Regional Association, Amount: \$8,000

Putting the ME in STEM: Community Based Marine Education for Georgia's Youth

American Honda Foundation, Amount: \$3,000