

Mid-Atlantic Marine Education Association Award Winners



2014

Category: **Informal Educator Award**

Name, position, institution:

Lisa Ayers Lawrence

Marine Education Program Leader
Virginia Institute of Marine Science
Marine Advisory Services &
Virginia Sea Grant



Profile

MAMEA honored Lisa Ayers Lawrence of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science with the 2014 Informal Educator Award in a presentation announced at the National Marine Educators Association Conference on July 24, 2014.

While Lisa grew up in Ohio, her interest in marine science was evident even at a young age. She attended summer camp at Wallops Island Marine Science Consortium on the Eastern Shore of Virginia as a secondary school student, and chose to attend the University of Miami to pursue marine science for her undergraduate degree. Following that, Lisa attended the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS), where she studied mummichogs (an estuarine fish) and worked with the National Estuarine Research Reserve program. She received her M.S. in Marine Science in 1996. Lisa has been staff at VIMS since 1998, first as a Marine Education Specialist, and since December 2012, as the Marine Education Program Leader for VIMS Marine Advisory Services.



As VIMS extension staff, affiliated with Virginia Sea Grant, Lawrence has been vital to the management of The Bridge, a nationally recognized, award-winning online ocean science education resource center. Providing teacher-reviewed resources in marine science, the site reached nearly a quarter-million users from 195 countries in 2013 alone. Lisa also manages the highly valued Scuttlebutt educator listserv which has 2,800 subscribers and 1,600

postings per year. Additionally, she supports the National Working Waterfront Network's web-based tool and portal, organizes the Accessing Coastal Virginia online resource center, participates in the Center for Ocean Sciences Education Excellence Network, and more. She provides conference website and proposal submission assistance for many organizations such as MAMEA, the National Marine Education Association (NMEA), and the Working Waterways & Waterfronts group.

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Lisa practices her educational skills in person, too. She has a long history of providing teacher professional development workshops in Virginia, including the annual week-long VIMS Virginia Coastal Ecosystem Teacher Field Course. Nationwide, she has served as a guest instructor the American Meteorological Society's DataStreme program.



Ms. Lawrence's work has earned her other recognition and awards. Her prior recognitions include the Mid-Atlantic Sea Grant Marine Extension Network Outstanding Achievement Award, in 2003, for her achievements in marine education. In 2004, she received the NMEA President's Award for her work on The Bridge. Lawrence received recognition for her work with Accessing the Virginia Coast, receiving the BoatU.S. Recreational Boating Access Award in 2010. For her work with the Blue Crab Bowl and National Ocean Sciences Bowl, she was awarded the position of Head Rules Judge for over 10 years.

Lawrence has been actively involved with the Mid-Atlantic Marine Education Association since 1998. Currently, Lisa serves as the chair of two committees, she is Membership Committee Chair and the MAMEA Webkeeper. These committees keep her very active in the running of the organization, and she participates regularly in conference calls and emails to keep the Association running smoothly. Through her role as Webkeeper, Lisa is active in assisting with the organization of state mini-conferences and registration for Chapter annual conference. She has mentored new MAMEA Presidents as well, following her three-year service in the MAMEA President track (President-Elect, President, and Past-President) from 2010-2012.



Photos:

Top: Lisa Ayers Lawrence of the Virginia Institute, Education Program Leader for Marine Science's Marine Advisory Services and Virginia Sea Grant (left), received the MAMEA 2014 Informal Educator Award from MAMEA President Sarah Nuss (right) during the National Marine Educators Association Conference in Annapolis, MD, July 23, 2014. Photo: Carol Hopper Brill.

Center, left: Teachers learn first-hand about submerged aquatic vegetation in a workshop Lisa (far right) coordinated as a broader impacts component for a VIMS researcher. Photo: Margaret Pizer.

Center, right: As co-instructor for the week-long Coastal Ecosystems course conducted at VIMS Eastern Shore Laboratory, Lisa assists teachers as they collect water quality data in a salt marsh. Photo: Carol Hopper Brill.

Bottom: Lisa has been an extremely active MAMEA member since 1998, serving on the Board as VA Rep, Webkeeper, President and much more. Here, she enthusiastically receives her President-Elect's notebook at the 2010 annual meeting. Photo: Carol Hopper Brill.