

Mid-Atlantic Marine Education Association Award Winners



2012

Category: Classroom Teacher Award

Name, position, institution:

Sherry Rollins, Science Teacher

Peasley Middle School

Gloucester County, VA

Profile

Sherry Rollins of Peasley Middle School has been honored with MAMEA's 2012 Classroom Teacher Award. Her award was announced at the annual conference on October 13, 2012 in Cambridge, Maryland. Since Rollins was unable to attend, MAMEA colleagues Lisa Lawrence and Sarah McGuire arranged a special award presentation in Rollin's classroom.



A teacher for 26 years, Sherry Rollins received her undergraduate degree in biology from the College of William and Mary in 1992, and she holds a Master's degree in Integrating Technology in the Classroom from Walden University (2006). Rollins exemplifies the concept of lifelong learning and has completed many professional development courses in addition to her degrees.



For the past 19 years of her career, Rollins has been a middle school science teacher in Gloucester County, Virginia. Two years ago a tornado demolished Page Middle School and along with it her classroom filled with Chesapeake Bay resources and aquaria. Undaunted, Sherry picked up where she left off at Peasley Middle School. She's enriched her sciences classes with unique experiences including: growing oysters; creating video and photography projects; and exploring the Bay on marine science field trips. She has invested her personal time after school and on weekends to take students on boat and canoe trips. And, she models environmental responsibility by mentoring the

Green Team at her school. Sherry Rollins' students have a passion not only for marine science, but science in general, thanks to her use of hands-on science activities in and out of the classroom.

In addition to her role as a 7th grade life science teacher, Rollins collaborates with the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) on education projects. She has served as a Mentor Teacher for the VIMS GK-12 P.E.R.F.E.C.T. Partnership since 2009. The goal of GK-12 is to enhance the communication skills of graduate students and enrich classroom STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education. Ms. Rollins and two of her colleagues at Peasley Middle School host VIMS graduate students as "scientists in residence," guiding them in the development of lesson plans and activities that enrich the seventh grade Life Science curriculum with authentic research topics and methods.

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Sherry Rollins has also partnered with educators from the Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in Virginia (CBNERR-VA) on the VIMS Campus. This field-based program addresses 7th grade Life Science Standards of Learning and introduces the students to their local estuarine environments. Students learn about marine biology, Chesapeake Bay issues and efforts to restore the health of the Bay. Thanks to Meaningful Watershed Educational Experiences, students are immersed in hands-on science activities and they gain a deeper awareness of the Chesapeake Bay and its inhabitants.

Sherry Rollins has been active in the Oyster Reef Keepers of Virginia for twelve years. This oyster restoration project is part of a statewide effort to restore the native Chesapeake Bay oyster reefs. Using her training as a Master Oyster Gardener, Rollins brings oyster biology, aquaculture, experimentation, data collection and analysis to the classroom. Late in the school year, she guides her students as they plant the oysters on a sanctuary reef during a class field trip. One of the goals of this project is to model environmental responsibility.

Photos:

Top: Sherry Rollins of Peasley Middle School received the Mid-Atlantic Marine Education Association 2012 Classroom Educator Award during a surprise presentation in her classroom. Ms. Rollins (center) was honored by Association President-Elect Sarah McGuire (left) and Past President Lisa Lawrence (right). Credit: Carol Hopper Brill.

Bottom: Sherry Rollins uses hands-on classroom and field science experiences to inspire students in her 7th grade life science classes. Here, she examines an oyster with one of her students. Credit: CBNERR-VA.