

2013

Category: Informal Educator Award

Name, position, institution:

Andrew Wilson, Director & Instructor
“Under the Sea”
Sterling, Virginia

Profile

MAMEA was pleased to honor Andrew Wilson of “Under the Sea” with the 2013 Informal Educator Award at the annual conference in Gloucester Point, Virginia on November 2, 2013.

After a childhood spent on the water, Wilson attended the U.S. Naval Academy. During his time with the U.S. Navy, Wilson became SCUBA certified and later worked as a SCUBA instructor. He has over 300 dives to his name in far off locations such as Victoria, Canada; Bonaire, Netherland; Antilles; as well as many local areas. After the Navy, Wilson received a degree in Biology from Old Dominion University. As Wilson worked on his degree, he also worked with the Virginia Marine Science Museum’s stranding team. This led to a job with the museum after school. In 1995, Wilson founded “Under the Sea” to promote marine education resources in the DC Metropolitan area.



“Under the Sea” is known for its high quality programming. Programs include pre- and post-visit activities, live animal presentations, and even guest scientists. All of the programs are modified to meet state and national science standards. More importantly, these programs always include a lesson on conservation. Several of the animals “Under the Sea” focuses on in their programs are facing difficult times due to habitat loss or over-fishing. The highly trained educators stress the importance of conservation and suggest actions that students can take to reverse the impact of humans on the marine environment.

Not only does Wilson work hard to run a highly respected science program, but he also works with other educators to help them improve their teaching skills. Andrew has reached out to many non-formal and formal science educators in the northern Virginia area to create a network which is extremely beneficial promoting marine science education. Wilson takes the time to share his knowledge at many regional and national conferences as well.

Wilson has been heavily involved with the MAMEA. Over the years he has held many positions including Virginia Representative, President, and Treasurer for the 2003 NMEA Conference which was hosted by MAMEA.

Photo:

Andrew Wilson, Director of “Under the Sea,” received MAMEA’s 2013 Informal Educator Award. Out-going MAMEA President, Kathy Fuller (left) presented the award at the Annual Conference in November. Credit: Carol Hopper Brill.