



The College of Ocean and Fishery Sciences NEWS

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

AUTUMN 2003

A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



The College of Ocean and Fishery Sciences is incredibly proud of its students and the ongoing connections it maintains with so many of them. It's always inspiring to learn about the paths our graduates take and the different directions their degrees lead.

For many alumni, their degree was a passport to destinations and opportunities they never dreamed existed. In this issue, you'll meet three accomplished alumni and take journeys to the Texas border, Mexico and Vietnam to learn how each individual is using their education and unique talents and skills.

These stories are evidence that the lessons taught in our classrooms and the research con-

ducted in our labs truly has a global impact. As the profiles of Robin Froisland, Todd Shaw and Lourdes Flores-Skydancer demonstrate, our graduates are changing lives, solving problems and creating opportunities around the world every day.

The accomplishments and innovations of the College of Ocean and Fishery Sciences' high-caliber students, faculty and graduates are the dividends we pay to the many donors who invest in our work. The enclosed list of contributors recognizes and honors their support. We gratefully acknowledge the generosity of each and every individual who made a gift to the College last year. If you are a member of our family of donors – thank you.

Sincerely,

LESSONS FOR SUCCESS

Entrepreneur Turns Classroom Basics into a Successful Business

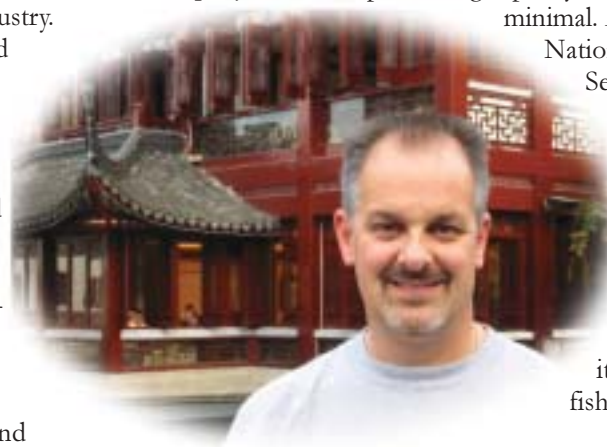
A thousand tons of Vietnamese catfish are swimming beneath Todd Shaw's boat. The fish dart and dive in their Mekong River pen as Shaw "gets back to basics" counseling a Vietnamese colleague about protein levels in food. Though it's been more than 20 years since he attended the University of Washington's School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences, Shaw's using the lessons he learned there to help advance Vietnam's extensive and rapidly growing aquaculture industry.

The co-founder and President of *The Talon Group* which finances seafood products and facilitates product sales in the United States and Asia, Shaw's work in Southeast Asia is the latest stop on a fascinating career journey that has kept him on the forefront of emerging aquaculture industries and

seafood markets around the world.

The adventure began in 1980 at Seattle's Trident Seafood Company. "I showed up for work, and they told me to learn all I could about cod and Pollock," remembers Shaw. "Saying that to someone now would be completely crazy considering all the development in the North Pacific," he says, but at the time the domestic processing capacity in Alaska for whitefish was

minimal. After applying to National Marine Fisheries Service for and receiving a \$1.2 million grant for a Model Whitefish Project, Shaw was involved in developing the first processing plant on the coast of Alaska and helped Trident begin to realize its vision of large whitefish markets and profits.



Todd Shaw at the Yu Yuan market in Shanghai.

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WORKING TOGETHER FOR CONSERVATION

Marine Biologist Turned Community Organizer Makes an Impact

From the Editor...

This edition of the College of Ocean and Fishery Sciences newsletter tells the stories of three alumni and the paths they've travelled after leaving the University of Washington.

We'd love to hear from more of our alumni. If you have an update or a story to share, use the form on the back of this newsletter or send an email to: cofsnews@u.washington.edu.



Lourdes Flores-Skydancer and son, Miguel, in Baja, California.

As far as the Puerto Adolfo López Mateos whale-watching guides in Baja, California were concerned, there was nothing left to talk about. They wanted the government to issue more permits so they could put more tourists on the water and employ more men from the village. The Mexican government, charged with ensuring the safety of the whales, refused the villager's demands. Both sides had dug their heels in, but Lourdes Flores-Skydancer, a marine biologist charged with the task of finding a solution to the problem, knew there had to be an answer. If she could just get the guides in one room, she'd have a chance.

Born and raised in Mexico City, Flores-Skydancer received a degree in biology from Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México in 1990 and took a job teaching marine mammal biology and conservation for the American School for Field Studies in La Paz on the coast of Baja, California. After three years she shifted gears to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to become a community organizer and advocate for conservation. She earned a Masters in Marine Affairs from the University of Washington which offered her the interdisciplinary education she wanted. "I was able to practice working with different stakeholders," says Flores "I learned about communities, fisheries and

economics - subjects that biologists don't normally study."

Since receiving her masters in 1995, Flores-Skydancer has devoted her professional life to integrating local Baja California coastal communities with marine conservation programs. As a consultant for the Intercultural Center for the Study of Deserts and Oceans (CEDO), Flores-Skydancer recently worked with a team to stop shark fishermen from using mesh nets and trapping the endangered Gulf of California Porpoise (Vaquita). She met with the fishermen to find out what economic incentives would motivate them to change their way of fishing and taught them about the endangered mammals. The results were impressive. "One community developed its tourist industry and is now catering to sports fisherman," she reports. "By organizing

workshops to tell the community why it's bad that the porpoise were getting caught, we were able to get people to think about economic options and make changes."

Today Flores-Skydancer makes her home in Olympia, WA, but travels to Baja California regularly to assist Terra Penninsular, A.C. with coastal scrub conservation. She's hopeful that the communities she and her colleagues are working with now embrace conservation. Considering her track-record, she has reason to be optimistic. Even the Puerto Adolfo López Mateos guides finally agreed to meet. When they did, they learned why the whales (and their businesses) were at risk and discussed new ways to serve tourists. "We trained them about bird-watching, beach-combing and leading nature tours," recalls Flores-Skydancer.

In the end, there were numerous ways to solve the problem and everyone benefited. "The government regulations were better understood, and the government managers' relationship with the locals improved," she says, noting that the guides are pleased with how things are going and requested more meetings and information. It looks like she'll be busy flying down to Baja California and doing the work she loves well into the future.

We are pleased to recognize the generous donors whose support for the College of Ocean and Fishery Sciences helps to shape a better future for all of us. Individuals and organizations contributing to the College during the fiscal year July 1, 2002- June 30, 2003 are listed below. Our heartfelt thanks for each and every contribution.

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TEACHING TOUGH LESSONS IN TEXAS

UW Grad Shares her Passion for Learning as a Teach for America Volunteer Corps Member

The honeymoon is over for Robin Froisland. A room full of students are waiting for her to make her next move. As a Teach for America volunteer corps member, Froisland has the daunting challenge of teaching physics to 11th grade high school students in south Texas' Rio Grande Valley. According to Froisland, the students staring up at her have never been pushed to learn. She's ready to give them a much-needed shove, and, just over a month into the school year, her students seem determined to push her to the limit.

"People in my lab thought I was crazy to want to teach," Froisland says laughing. "They were amazed that I moved and went through with it," she continues. "If I wasn't crazy before, I will be by the time the year is through!"

It's likely Froisland's School of Oceanography colleagues were not the first to be amazed by her passion for learning and teaching – a passion that has led her far from home. As a high school student in Snohomish, Washington, Froisland fell in love with oceanography. She was encouraged by her teacher, Ardi Kveven, and entered the first Washington State Ocean Sciences Bowl held in 1998. After studying oceanography in community college, Froisland transferred to the UW in 2000 and began working in the Dr. John Baross Laboratory. Ambitious and adventurous, Froisland became a Marine Science Student Mobility (MSSM) scholar in 2001 and spent two quarters studying marine sciences in Spanish at the Gran Canaria University of Las Palmas in the Canary Islands, Spain. In 2002 she was awarded a Mary Gates Scholarship to research

microbial diversity on contrasting sub seafloor environments in the northeast Pacific Ocean under the tutelage of graduate student Julie Huber.

Froisland credits her experience abroad as a MSSM scholar (along with the overwhelming support of family and friends) with giving her the confidence she needed to move to Texas. And though she's not a trained educator, she feels the excellent education she received at the UW has helped prepare her for the challenges of teaching. By using her own life and educational experiences as an example and teaching lessons in life skills along with basic science, Froisland hopes to ultimately help her students "think for themselves, understand the benefits of taking charge of their education and experience life outside the Valley".

Surveying her classroom, Froisland sees a group of high school students who have never been assigned homework, have rarely been held accountable for their schoolwork or their actions and who generally view anyplace outside the Valley as a foreign country. She also sees a room full of talented, energetic, intelligent people and is determined to make a difference in their lives.



Robin Froisland as a volunteer at the 2003 Ocean Sciences Bowl.

LESSONS FOR SUCCESS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Today surimi, cod, Pollack and Pollack roe are the company's most profitable items.

Five years later, as an employee of Marine Resources, Shaw continued to chart new territory. Creating the first U.S./Soviet joint venture, Marine Resources contracted for U.S. fisherman to deliver under-utilized fish to Soviet processing vessels in exchange for king crab and other seafood products. Shaw captured 60% of the U.S. market for king crab with Soviet-origin product. He went on to help the Soviets re-equip their aging fishing fleet and move from an offshore processing environment to an on-shore coastal one. Thanks in part to Shaw; Russia now controls 70% of the world whitefish block market.

In 1996, Shaw branched out on his own to co-found The Talon Group. Headquartered in Seattle, the company has offices in China and

Vietnam. In Asia, like in Alaska and Russia, Shaw's dealing with areas that are just beginning to develop their resources and market channels. "Aquaculture has grown tremendously outside the States, and there's a growing need to develop the industry with new and continually evolving techniques" he states. "When I was in college, aquaculture was seen as a small contributor to the world's food supply-now it's huge."

Despite the demand for more sophisticated tools and techniques, Shaw is continually reminded that basic lessons he learned about feeding and recovery rates still apply. The success of his business is directly linked to many of the down-to-earth-issues and subjects he studied at the UW. "Most of the aquaculture techniques I studied in school are the ones I use today," says Shaw. "That's where the tire meets the road."

Editor
Angie Thomson-Bulldis
Layout
Wake Robin Designs

University of Washington
College of Ocean and
Fishery Sciences

200 Ocean Sciences
Building
Box 355350
Seattle, WA 98195-5350
Phone: 206-543-6605
Fax: 206-543-6393
www.cofs.washington
.edu

UPCOMING EVENTS

Oceans to Stars Lecture Series

January 21, 2004—Dr. Debbie Kelley
Associate Professor
School of Oceanography

February 11, 2004—Dr. Charles Eriksen
Professor
School of Oceanography

March 9, 2004—Dr. David Evans
Under Secretary for Science
Smithsonian Institution

Washington State Ocean Sciences Bowl

February 7, 2004—South Campus Center

Send submissions to cofsnews@u.washington.edu



College of Ocean and Fishery Sciences
Box 355350
Seattle WA 98195-5350

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