



Community Updates

Introducing The Research and Education Coalition for Ocean Sciences (RECOS)

The Research and Education Coalition for Ocean Sciences (RECOS), a newly formed alliance comprising over a dozen institutions across the country, is dedicated to advancing support for robust ocean science research and education. RECOS advocates for increased awareness of the critical role ocean science plays in addressing nonpartisan priorities, including national security, global competitiveness, workforce development, and the sustainable management of our changing planet's resources.

The coalition recognizes the significance oceanographic infrastructure plays for the US ocean enterprise and the vital need for fundamental research and sustained measurements for a healthy ocean economy. As such, RECOS actively engages with policymakers, NGOs, industry partners, and national leaders, including federal agencies. The recent AGU meeting in Washington, D.C., provided a valuable platform for the coalition to connect with congressional staff to effectively communicate these crucial messages and begin to build a forum for community engagement in a dedicated Town Hall.

Institutions interested in more information or to join RECOS and contribute to this vital effort are encouraged to contact RECOS Chair, Paula Bontempi (paulabontempi@uri.edu) or outgoing UNOLS Chair, Deborah Bronk (dbronk@bigelow.org).

Longtime NDSF ROV Jason Manager Matt Heintz Retires After A Storied Career



Matt Heintz, the longtime manager of the National Deep Submergence Facility's (NDSF) remotely operated vehicle ROV Jason, has retired after a distinguished career at NDSF. Prior to WHOI, Matt worked in the US Navy on the submarine repair ship stationed in Guam and then a Navy yard in Philadelphia. While in Philadelphia, he attended night school and then transferred to University of New Hampshire. He was hired at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) right after completing his degree in mechanical engineering in 1993.

His NDSF career started with six and a half years in the HOV Alvin group, where he piloted the submersible on approximately 180 dives. In 1999, he transitioned to the ROV Jason team to design and build Jason II. A highlight of this period was meeting his wife, Julie, during the vehicle's first science cruise in 2002.

Over his tenure managing ROV Jason, Matt oversaw an impressive 1,684 dives, contributing significantly to countless scientific discoveries. A personal highlight of his career was achieving a lifelong goal in 2009, when he reached the Marianas Trench with the HROV Nereus. In retirement, Matt looks forward to focusing on home and boat projects, dedicating time to his family, and pursuing his passions for travel, diving, sailing, and skiing.

Many thanks to Matt for his years of commitment to the NDSF and the ARF community. Best of luck in your next adventures.

USCG Healy discovers undersea volcano

The US Coast Guard Cutter Healy's 2024 Arctic deployment yielded the discovery of a significant, volcano-like feature on the seabed in the Chukchi Sea. Rising 500 meters, the feature is located in a proposed Arctic shipping corridor and showed signs of a potential gas plume. This Healy expedition also hosted a group of early-career polar scientists for a NSF-funded program, giving them invaluable at-sea research experience and training them for future leadership roles in Arctic science. Read more about this exciting exhibition [here](#).

Welcome to Bruce Appelgate, and thank you Deb Bronk!

Scripps' Dr. Bruce Appelgate recently assumed the UNOLS Chair position after Bigelow Laboratory's Dr. Deborah Bronk completed her 2-year term. Bruce is the Associate Director, Ship Operations and Marine Technicians (SOMTS) at Scripps Institution of Oceanography. He is also a Marine Geologist. Bruce brings a wealth of knowledge to the UNOLS Chair role as a seagoing scientist in addition to his 17+ years in his leadership role with SOMTS. We are excited to work with Bruce who has consistently participated in many different UNOLS events and activities bringing valuable knowledge, experience, passion, and creative thinking and problem solving to our community.

We are very thankful for the Deb Bronk's exceptional leadership during her tenure. Debbie's enthusiasm, organization, problem solving, strategic thinking, and advocacy for our community have been critical as the UNOLS community addresses complex strategic issues. Her focus has helped ensure that we are well poised to address future challenges and that UNOLS will remain positioned as a critical element of the U.S. oceanographic enterprise.

Committee News

Departing Members

Thank you so much to the following individuals for their contributions to the UNOLS community:

- Dr. Dennis Hansell / University of Miami / UNOLS Chair
- RDML Anita Lopez NOAA/Ret. / University of Hawaii / UNOLS Council
- Dr. Julia Hummon / University of Hawaii / RVTEC
- Robert Steinhaus / MSROC
- Dr. Maria Beatrice Magnani / SMU / MSROC
- Dr. Helen Janiszewski / UH / MSROC

New Committee Members

All of our committees are staffed by volunteers and we are grateful for their contributions of time and experience. We would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest committee members:

- Dr. Elisabeth Sikes/ Rutgers University / UNOLS Chair Elect
- Dr. Daniel Ohnemus / UGA / UNOLS Council
- Dr. Maureen Walton / NRL / MSROC
- Dr. Donna Shillington / NAU / MSROC
- Dr. Josh Russell / Syracuse University / MSROC
- Sarah Fuller / WHOI / RVTEC Chair Elect

Fleet Highlights

Congratulations to Hunter Adams for Completing the 2024 UNOLS-MATE Marine Technical Long-term Internship!



Photos courtesy of Hunter Adams

Hunter first joined the program when he completed a very successful short-term internship in 2023 hosted by the Hawaii Ocean Time-series (HOT) Team on board the R/V Kilo Moana. In 2024, he was offered the long-term internship and participated in several cruises hosted by three institutions: the University of Delaware Marine Operations on board the R/V Hugh R. Sharp, followed by the Bermuda Institute for Ocean Sciences Marine Technical Team on board the R/V Atlantic Explorer; and once again, the University of Hawai'i at Manoa's HOT and Marine Technical Teams on board the R/V Kilo Moana.

Hunter performed deck operations, maintained and operated oceanographic instruments, and gained valuable hands-on experience that has helped him become a successful marine technician. At the end of his journey, he shared: "The past several months have been nothing short of an amazing adventure. Sailing aboard [three research vessels], I've had the incredible opportunity to grow as a technician and interact with a community of hardworking, passionate, and like-minded people. These internships provided more than just technical training; they offered lessons in adaptability, teamwork, and problem-solving. Working with exceptional technicians who encouraged initiative and provided constructive feedback, I learned to safely tackle challenges with attention to detail. Each leg of this journey was a unique learning experience that not only grew my technical skills but also developed and affirmed my passion for this field and the opportunities it holds." You can read more about the final leg of his internship and other adventures on the MATE Internship Blog:

- [Journey's End, Career's Beginning](#)
- [Swells and Station 13](#)
- [Richard Simmons' baby goes to Tahiti](#)
- [Boats, Beasts, and Space Ice](#)
- [HOT Times in Honolulu](#)

Hunter's hard work, dedication to excellence, and positive demeanor did not go unnoticed. At the end of his long-term internship, he was offered a new full-time position as a SUBSEA Project Ocean Technician with the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. Congratulations Hunter!!!

Crewing Corner

Crewing within the U.S. Academic Research Fleet (ARF) continues to run relatively smoothly compared to 2020-2022. The existence of the ARF is now widely known in the maritime industry and we are seeing a large uptick in the number of credentialed mariners joining the weekly "UNOLS Open Crew Positions" email listserv. As of now, we are adding 10-15 mariners per week which is leading to a robust and effective tool to promote open positions within the Fleet.

"Kudos to the Crew" is a new section of the UNOLS Newsletter which highlights 5-star reviews of the crew from the Post Crew Assessments Reports (PCARs). We know that the crew are the heartbeat of the ARF operations, so we would like to show appreciation for their hard work and dedication to the science missions. We could not operate without them.

Kudos to the Crew!

R/V Sikuliaq – PCAR remarks from Dr. Hannah Mark, Chief Scientist, 23/3799 JQZ-Phoenix-MCS

"The officers and crew were exceptional, and their support was crucial for the scientific program. This cruise involved a lot of quick changes and uncertainty: we had more than 10 changes to our survey waypoints, multiple towing configurations, and some very unexpected gear recovery operations, all of which the bridge and deck crew took in stride. The ship even lent us a float after the SIO seismic team ran out of spares, which enabled us to collect an especially critical piece of data during our last survey day."

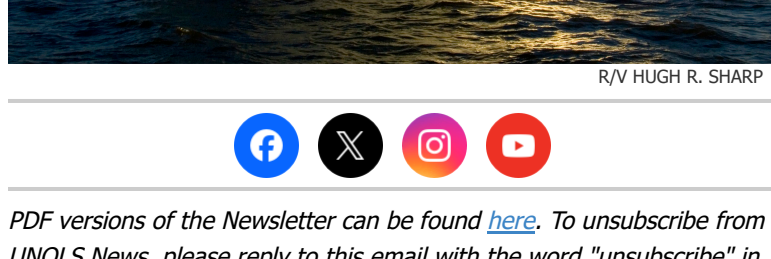
Featured Ship



R/V HUGH R. SHARP photo by Bill Byam

R/V HUGH R. SHARP

Name: R/V Hugh R. Sharp
Year Built: 2006
Place Built: Dakota Creek Industries (Anacortes, WA)
Science Berthing: 14
Owner: University of Delaware
Operator: University of Delaware
Class of Vessel: Regional Class



R/V HUGH R. SHARP

Featured Photo



UNOLS Council Chair rotation happened in Savannah, Georgia during the UNOLS Annual meeting in November this year.. Welcome Bruce Appelgate, and a big thank you for all your hard work and dedication Deborah Bronk.

Upcoming Events

[AMRCC Community Meeting - Alaska Marine Science Symposium](#)
31 January 2025
Anchorage, AK

[2025 DeSSC New User Program](#)
10-13 February 2025
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, MA

[2025 DeSSC Community Meeting](#)
12 February 2025
Virtually and in-person at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, MA

[2025 DeSSC Business Meeting](#)
12-14 February 2025
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, MA

[2026 Ship Scheduling Kick-Off Meeting](#)
18-20 February 2025
University of Miami, FL

[2025 SCOAR Meeting](#)
26-28 February 2025
NASA Ames - Mountain View, CA

[AMRCC Community Meeting - Arctic Science Summit Week](#)
21 March 2025
University of Colorado in Boulder, CO

Did you know...

The US Academic Research Fleet has more than just ships! There are many equipment, instrumentation and data facilities available for seagoing scientists. See a full list of those facilities and the facility contacts on our website [here](#).



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