



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

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News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Coast students receive MDMR Excellence in Marine Sciences awards

BILOXI, Miss. – The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) presented five local students with the MDMR Excellence in Marine Sciences Award at the Mississippi Region VI Science and Engineering Fair held Feb. 25, 2014, at the Mississippi Coast Convention Center. The MDMR has sponsored the award for 18 years.

The MDMR's Excellence in Marine Sciences Award was established to encourage local students to develop research projects involving Mississippi's coastal resources. With this award, the MDMR hopes to encourage students to identify and find solutions to the Coast's environmental problems. Each winner received a certificate and monetary award.

"The winners of the younger classes each receive \$100. The older winners each get \$200, because they will most likely be advancing to the state competition. The extra money will enable them to enhance their exhibits, so they will have a better chance of winning at that next level of competition," said Jennifer Buchanan, Education Coordinator for the MDMR/Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Class I entries represent students in grades kindergarten through three; Class II, grades four through six; Class III, grades seven and eight; Class IV, grades nine and 10; Class V, grades 11 and 12.

Winners of this year's Excellence in Marine Sciences Award, in order of class:

- **Emma Grace Scruggs**, St. Alphonsus Catholic School, for "How Groundcovers Impact Stormwater," Class I entry, \$100.
- **Ella Nolan**, East Hancock Elementary School, for "Can Nanotechnology Help Oil Spills in Oceans and Seas?" Class II entry, \$100.
- **Adam Lalejini**, Hancock Middle School, for "Are Solar Panels Worth It?," Class III entry, \$200.
- **Adara Rutherford**, Hancock High School, for "Water Quality" Class IV entry (tie), \$200.
- **Isabella Rubenstein**, Ocean Springs High School, for "Crabby Crabs: The Effect of the Color of the Crab Trap on the Amount of Crabs Caught," Class IV entry (tie), \$200.

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The award is presented by the MDMR to outstanding Region VI science fair entries that address a marine- or coastal-related issue. In consideration for the award, all project titles are reviewed and each student with a marine- or coastal-related project is interviewed and questioned about his or her project. Finally, MDMR judges rate the eligible projects and the ratings are compiled to determine the overall winners.

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is dedicated to enhancing, protecting and conserving marine interests of the state by managing all marine life, public trust wetlands, adjacent uplands and waterfront areas to provide for the optimal commercial, recreational, educational and economic uses of these resources consistent with environmental concerns and social changes. Visit the MDMR online at www.dmr.ms.gov.

PHOTO CREDIT: Photo courtesy of the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources



Photo Caption: Winners of the MDMR 2014 Excellence in Marine Sciences Awards take center stage at the Mississippi Region VI Science & Engineering Fair held Feb. 25 at the Mississippi Coast Convention Center. From left, Adam Lalejini, Hancock Middle School; Emma Grace Scruggs, St. Alphonsus Catholic School; Ella Nolan, East Hancock Elementary School; Adara Rutherford, Hancock High School; and Isabella Rubenstein, Ocean Springs High School.

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