



## MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, Mississippi 39530

# News Release

Contact: Melissa Scallan

Phone: 228-523-4124

15-14-MMS  
March 3, 2015

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### *Five students win MDMR awards at Region VI Science Fair*

BILOXI, Miss. – The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources presented five Coast students with the MDMR Excellence in Marine Sciences Award as part of the Region VI Science and Engineering Fair.

The MDMR has been giving the award for 19 years, and it was established to encourage local students to develop research projects involving Mississippi's coastal resources.

"We give these awards each year to encourage students to identify environmental issues and find possible solutions," said Jamie Miller, executive director of the MDMR. "It's important that young people know they play a part in the conservation and protection of the Coast."

The awards are given in five classes, which are divided by grade level. Class I is kindergarten through third grade; Class II, grades four through six; Class III, grades 7 and 8; Class IV, grades 9 and 10; Class V, grades 11 and 12.

The winners of the first two classes receive \$100. The other three winners receive \$200 in order to enhance their exhibits so they will have a better chance of winning at the next level of competition.

Winners of this year's Excellence in Marine Sciences Awards are:

**MacKenzie Valentine**, Bayou View Elementary, "Is There a Dead Zone for Plankton in Brickyard Bayou?" Class I, \$100.

**Steve Rocha**, Bayou View Elementary, "Can Oysters Clean Water?" Class II, \$100.

**David Alexander**, St. Patrick Catholic High, "Solar Storm 2," Class III, \$200.

**Adara Rutherford**, Hancock High, "Seasonal Variations of Water Quality in Bay St. Louis and the Mississippi Sound," Class IV, \$200.

**Chazmyn Riley**, St. Patrick Catholic High, "Does Acidification Affect Marine Life," Class V, \$200.

Photo credit: Mississippi Department of Marine Resources



**Winners of the 2015 MDMR Excellence in Marine Sciences Awards are, from left: Adara Rutherford, Hancock High; David Alexander, St. Patrick Catholic High; Steve Rocha, Bayou View Elementary and MacKenzie Valentine, Bayou View Elementary. Chazmyn Riley from St. Patrick Catholic High also received an award.**

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 DMR online at [www.dmr.ms.gov](http://www.dmr.ms.gov).

—END—