



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Ocean Explorium Connects with SMAST and UMass Dartmouth**

NEW BEDFORD, MA (March 25, 2013) —

When Erin Adams and Heather Marshall open up live sea scallops and let their students peer inside, they are, at first, a little surprised. After all, what they see does not look anything like the scallops they might enjoy for dinner. Surrounding the edible muscle are all the other parts that keep the scallop alive, and it isn't pretty!

Ms. Adams, a graduate student in Fisheries Oceanography at the School for Marine Science and Technology (SMAST) of the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, also assists with the Girls Interested in Real Life Science (GIRLS) After School program at the Ocean Explorium. Ms. Adams started working in fisheries science in 2006, when she joined the Marine Fisheries Field Research Group under Dr. Kevin Stokesbury at SMAST. Since then, fisheries research has taken her from New Bedford to Alaska and back, with over 300 days spent at sea. Ms. Adams spoke with the students about her research aboard New Bedford and Alaska scallop vessels, photographing scallop beds, collecting samples and tagging live scallops.

Ms. Marshall is currently pursuing her Ph.D. at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth in the physiology and ecology of sandbar and dusky sharks. Her fascination with sharks began during an internship with Dr. Greg Skomal of the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries. After a subsequent internship with the juvenile shark tagging and tracking project at Mote Marine Laboratory in Sarasota, she returned to Massachusetts and dedicated her graduate work to shark research. Ms. Marshall spoke with the students about shark biology, using the Bamboo sharks in the Ocean Explorium touch tank as an example. She also described the difficulties scientists have in gathering information about sharks, and showed images of the Great White sharks tagged by the Oearch research team. These sharks can be tracked online, providing data about their seasonal distribution in our ocean.

At this week's Girls Interested in Real Life Science (GIRLS) After School program, Ms. Adams and Ms. Marshall introduced the group of Roosevelt Middle School students to the sea scallop fishery, an important contributor to New Bedford's economy. The scientists then helped the students dissect and examine the scallops before cooking and eating them!

The Girls Interested in Real Life Science (GIRLS) After School program is funded in part through New Bedford Public School's 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant, awarded by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. In addition to the assistance of Erin Adams and Heather Marshall, the Girls Interested in Real Life Science (GIRLS) speaker series has featured University of Massachusetts faculty members Brenda Berube and Nancy O'Connor, while Lee Blake, John Farrington, James Griffith, Bradley Harris, Edward Hoagland, David Martins, Chad McGuire, Frank Muller-Karger, Ken Oliveira, Guillermo Paz-y-Mino, Laurie Robertson-Lorant and Kevin Stokesbury have presented at the Ocean Voice, Cosmic Voice and Global Voice series.

The Ocean Explorium exhibits the only Science on a Sphere® accessible to the public in all of New England thanks to a special partnership with the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. SMAST research data and images of Oearch shark tracking can be displayed on Science on a Sphere®.

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The Ocean Explorium is located at 174 Union Street in downtown New Bedford and is handicap accessible via the rear entrance. Hours are Thursday through Sunday, 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is \$8.50 for adults, \$7.00 for seniors and students with I.D., and \$6.50 for children between 3 and 17 years of age. Children under 3 and members are free.

The Science on a Sphere® exhibit is generously provided by our principal partner, the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. To learn more, go to [www.oceanexplorium.org](http://www.oceanexplorium.org) or call 508.994.5400.

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Attached photo: Erin Adams, Fisheries Oceanography Graduate Student at the UMass Dartmouth School for Marine Science and Technology, opens a sea scallop for 2012 Girls Interested in real Life Science (GIRLS) program participants.