



E-SLATE

American Academy of Underwater Sciences (AAUS)

EDITORIAL NOTE –July 2016

Welcome to the July E-Slate. In this edition we announce the 2016 Conrad Limbaugh Memorial Award recipient, continue registration for the 2016 AAUS Diving for Science symposium, and get an update from the 2016 Lee H. Somers Scientific Diving intern. We welcome news, announcements, job postings, program highlights and images of underwater work at aaus@disl.org. Current and past issues of the E-Slate are available at www.aaus.org.

NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Conrad Limbaugh Memorial Award for Scientific Diving Leadership 2016

The 2016 American Academy of Underwater Sciences (AAUS) recipient of the Conrad Limbaugh Memorial Award for Scientific Diving Leadership is Rob Robbins.



Rob Robbins is a world class diver—and he's also in a class by himself. He has worked for the U.S. Antarctic Program (USAP) for 36 years, one of the longest tenures on record, and has spent 20 of them as a science diver, exploring the frigid waters surrounding the seventh continent at the behest of the research community. In this capacity, Robbins has completed nearly 2000 dives

under Antarctic ice in support of hundreds of researchers funded by the U.S. National Science Foundation.

Rob manages all aspects of dive operations at McMurdo Station, Palmer Station and aboard USAP vessels, including the *RVIB Nathaniel B. Palmer* and *RV Laurence M. Gould*. Given his experience and institutional memory, Robbins is a capable consultant, advising research teams where to collect specific animals and/or samples, which allows scientists visiting the icy continent to maximize productivity during their short dive seasons.

Rob Robbins is an alumnus of Florida Institute of Technology's Underwater Technology program. Prior to beginning his career in scientific diving, he worked as a commercial diver in the Gulf of Mexico, the inland sector and in Antarctica, as well. He is a NAUI instructor, and is certified in NACD full cave diving and on Inspiration and Poseidon Mk VI rebreathers.

A life member of AAUS for nearly two decades, Rob presented papers at the International Polar Diving workshop in Svalbard, Norway in 2007, and at the Advanced Scientific Diving workshop in Washington, DC in 2006. His photography has been published in a variety of scientific journals and in magazines such as *Outside*, *Sky & Telescope* and *Popular Science*, among others. Robbins' video work has been featured on PBS's *Nova*, the CBS Evening News, BBC One's *Frozen Planet*, PBS Nature's *Under Antarctic Ice*, the TV reality show *Ice Road Truckers*, and on Werner Herzog's feature film *Encounters at the End of the World*, an academy award nominee.

The Conrad Limbaugh Memorial Award is presented annually to an individual who has made a significant contribution in diving safety and diving leadership on behalf of the scientific diving community. Conrad Limbaugh was an underwater naturalist and Chief Diving Officer for of Scripps Institution of Oceanography, where he directed the diving program. He was killed in a scuba diving accident in the Mediterranean on March 20, 1960. Limbaugh graduated from Whittier College in 1948 and did graduate work at the University of California at Los Angeles before going to Scripps Institution in 1950. He was largely responsible for developing the diver-training program at Scripps, as well as many research techniques used by marine scientists.

2016 Lee H. Somers Scientific Diving Intern Blog

Week 1

My internship began with a road trip from Aurora, Colorado to Athens, Georgia. The trip was long, but I am excited to be here now. The first week of my internship was dedicated to getting all of the necessary paperwork and dives completed in order to process my Letter of Reciprocity (LOR) as an AAUS Scientific Diver with the University of Georgia (UGA). I have been working with Dr. Scott Noakes, the Diving Safety Officer (DSO) for the University System of Georgia. Scott took me on a tour of the UGA campus on Monday. The UGA Marine Science building has an indoor pool, which is where I did my confined water check-out dive with Scott on Tuesday. Then, on Wednesday we traveled to

Lake Jocassee, which was about two hours away in South Carolina. We met one of Scott's students from his recent semester-long scientific diving course at the lake and we did three dock dives. The lake was very cold, probably the coldest water I have experienced to date. We were able to hit 105ft maximum depth in the lake, which was pretty awesome and very cold.

My next big adventure was on Friday when Scott and I drove to Atlanta, GA to visit the Georgia Aquarium which is also an AAUS institution. The aquarium is very impressive and



has the second largest exhibit in the world. The Ocean Voyager exhibit holds 6.3 million gallons of water, four whale sharks, manta rays, and many more incredible marine organisms. Scott and I were able to dive in this exhibit during the daily diveshows that the dive program staff and volunteers put on for the aquarium guests. The dive locker for the Ocean Voyager exhibit at the Georgia Aquarium was massive. They set us up with their dive gear and we hopped in. Diving in Ocean Voyager was

incredible. It is not particularly realistic because of the diversity and the quantity of fish in the exhibit, but it was truly a VIP diving experience and I thoroughly enjoyed my time visiting the Georgia Aquarium. We also watched the aquarists feed the whale sharks in Ocean Voyager and then toured behind the scenes of the Tropical Diver exhibit and peeked in the massive filter room for Ocean Voyager. The Georgia Aquarium is truly a great facility which works to spread conservation messages, teach people about the threats to the world's oceans and they also conduct various field research projects.

Next, I will be traveling to Skidaway Institute of Oceanography in Savannah, Georgia where I will spend the remaining time of my internship working there and diving offshore of Georgia.

Allie Safrit
Lee H. Somers Intern 2016

STUDENT OPPORTUNITES

REEF Summer Fish Field Methodology Course

REEF will hold a hands-on field course, August 07-13 in Key Largo, FL. The course is designed for college undergraduates and recent graduates focusing on marine biology or related fields. Classroom and field experiences will expose students

to Tropical Western Atlantic reef fish identification, size estimations underwater, surveying reef fishes using transect, roving and stationery visual techniques, benthic assessments using photo quadrats and rugosity, and management of survey data. For more information and to apply: Visit <http://www.REEF.org/fieldcourse> or contact Amy Lee at (305) 588-5869 or trips@REEF.org .

UPCOMING EVENTS

2016 AAUS Diving for Science Symposium

Registration is now open for the 2016 AAUS Scientific Diving Symposium, hosted by The University of Rhode Island, Narragansett Bay campus from September 20-24th. We welcome diving scientists, students, diving safety officers and anyone with an interest in diving science to participate in this event.

Tuesday, September 20

Seabass Workshop
Reefball Workshop
DAN Pro IQC (continues on Wed)
Oceanic/Hollis/AUP Repair Clinic
DAN ITW (continues on Wed)
Drysuit Repair Clinic
Visual Inspection Procedure Basic Course
VCI Update (PSI)

Wednesday, September 21

VIP Instructor (must attend basic course on Tues)
AAUS New DSO Orientation
Rebreather Demo
DUI Drysuit and Sidemount Demo

Thursday, September 22

AAUS Business Meeting
National Diving Safety Officers Meeting
DUI Drysuit Course
2016 AAUS Foundation Bubblebreaker and Poster Session

Friday and Saturday, September 23-24

All day science symposium

Saturday, September 24

Matunuck Oyster Farm Tour
2016 Annual Awards Banquet

There will also be shark, wreck and shore diving available Monday through Thursday. For complete workshop details, pricing, lodging, local information, and to register, visit <https://www.regonline.com/2016aausdivingforscience>

JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS

Full information and application instructions for the following jobs can be found at www.aaus.org/job_board

Florida State University
Diving Safety Officer

The mission of the American Academy of Underwater Sciences is to facilitate the development of safe and productive scientific divers through education, research, advocacy, and the advancement of standards for scientific diving practices, certifications, & operations.

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