



MEDIA ALERT

Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary Announces the Selections for the 2010 Ocean Film Festival

Savannah, July 12 2010- A seven member panel has completed judging the submissions for the 2010 Gray's Reef Ocean Film Festival scheduled to take place Sept. 17-19 at the Savannah College of Art and Design's Trustees Theater. More than 90 films were submitted for consideration; 33 were selected for the festival in addition to ten student films. Students from the Savannah College of Art and Design are competing for the Dr. Robert O. Levitt Prize for local emerging film makers.

Several selections focus on the Gulf Coast region, an area of special interest in light of the Deep Water Horizon oil disaster. Filmmaker Jon Bowermester will bring his latest documentary, "SoLa, Louisiana Water Stories" to the festival Saturday evening September 18. Bowermester re-cut parts of this look at ocean, culture, economics and survival along the Gulf Coast to provide an up-to-the minute look at Deep Water Horizon disaster. Two local filmmakers and recent SCAD graduates, Landon Lott and Tim Arnold, bring their personal views of the disaster with their film "Skimming the Surface."

Other film highlights include two new ocean issue films from National Geographic and several winners from the 2010 International Wildlife Film Festival. The 2010 Gray's Reef Ocean Film Festival Judges' Best Pick film, "Students Saving the Ocean," will be shown twice during the festival. In the film, young students show us all how to "live like we love the ocean." Sunday evening is devoted to student environmental documentaries.

The festival includes a Saturday morning segment devoted to the students of Thunderbolt Elementary Marine Science Academy for their accomplishments in studying marine life. All students are welcome.

Festival film winners include: "Students Saving the Ocean," Judges' Best Pick and winner of the Call to Action Category; "Witness to Hiroshima," winner of the Short Film Category; "Cold as Ice" and "What's Down There," joint winners of the Ocean Exploration & Discovery Category and "Wooden Bones" and "Lost on a Reef," joint winners of the Maritime Heritage Category.

Judges included Reed Bohne, Superintendent of the *Northeast, Mid-Atlantic and Great Lakes Region of the National Marine Sanctuary Program* and former superintendent of Gray's Reef; John Duren who serves on the boards of the Skidaway Marine Science Foundation and the *Coastal Conservation Association of Georgia*; Fitz Haile of *The Creative Coast Initiative*; Karen Graine, president of *Clean Coast*; Stephen Hooten of *Morgan Stanley Smith Barney*; Mary Landers, environmental reporter for the *Savannah Morning News*; and Michael Sullivan, External Affairs Manager, *Skidaway Institute of Oceanography*. Staff of the National Geographic Society's Film and Television unit judges the student film submitted for the Levitt Award.

The Gray's Reef Ocean Film Festival remains a free festival with the mission to *"To educate, inspire and enlighten coastal Georgia residents about the world's oceans and the issues facing them. We use films to explore the beauty of the sea, the complexity of the marine ecosystem, the creatures that inhabit it, our maritime heritage and humankind's relationship with the oceans and the environment in a positive, healthy, family-oriented format."*

For more information and a complete list of the films, see the Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary website at <http://graysreef.noaa.gov>