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UNCW takes seniors on Odyssey

Program makes use of school research vessel

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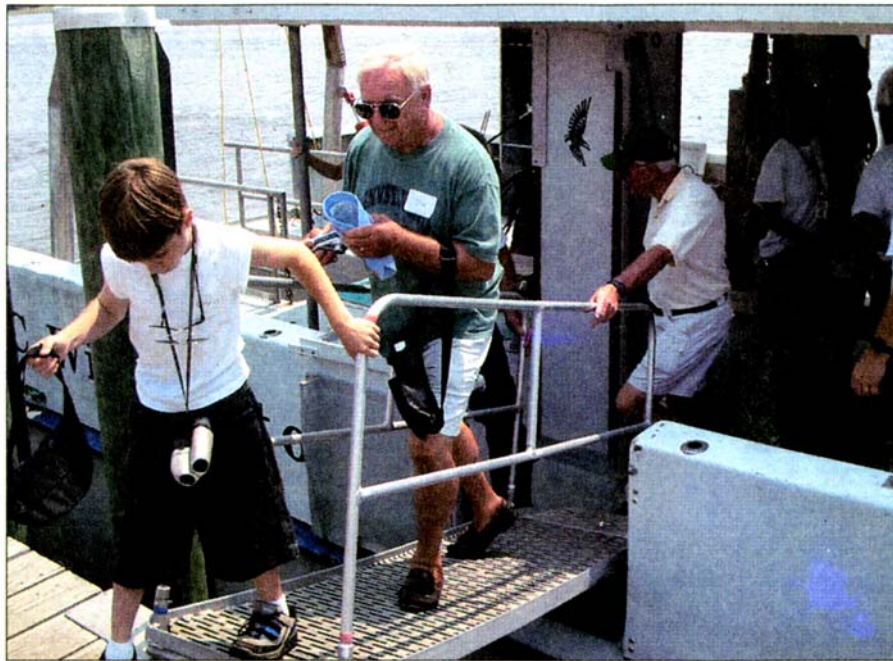
Wading in tide pools and discovering sea life is part of many people's summer experience. But if you want to go beyond that simple pastime and discover the true nature of the ocean and its creatures, UNCW offers an educational experience for adults and children alike.

With more than 20 years of marine science education under its belt, the MarineQuest program offers ocean enthusiasts the rare opportunity to not only experience the sea first hand, but also to develop new friendships over the common love of the water. This year the program continues to innovate and expand, adding Odyssey ventures for older residents.

Dianne Talley, director of the program, is excited about MarineQuest's technological advances that should enrich program attendee's experiences.

"Our slogan has long been 'Ocean education, environmental enrichment, hands on, feet wet,'" Ms. Talley said. "This year it's the same but we've added high tech to the end. We're starting to incorporate the use of all kinds of high tech gadgets in the experience."

Odyssey participants can touch the environment, smell it and hear it - then they can preserve the information by transferring it to their home computers and others via the Internet.



Odyssey members return from a trip down on the 'Cape Fear' research vessel. The next journey will be June 21, when the group goes ocean trolling.

Thanks to the university granting MarineQuest permission to use the school's marine research vessel, *Cape Fear*, the adult students are getting a whole new venue for exploration.

"The boat becomes a classroom on the water instead of a classroom near the water," Ms. Talley said. "We're unique in that we have a world-class laboratory and research center. Now we have a scientific research vessel, so we feel we're really got a great thing going."

Another advance made by the MarineQuest program is credit-

ed to education coordinator Kristin Andrews, who has further advanced the programs for youth.

"She's upgraded all our educational content so that it matches the North Carolina School System's standard course of study," Ms. Talley said. "So when a student learns something from us, it will follow what they learn back in their schools, which gives them a bit of a head start."

While the program has only been able to offer a few scholarships in the past, this year the

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number has increased greatly. "We've had some generous donations from the Friends of UNCW and community donors as well that have allowed us to give numerous scholarships, some of which are set aside for minority children," Ms. Talley said.

This summer, two Hispanic students will benefit from such a scholarship and one of Ms. Talley's longtime students, Kaitlin Baden, will serve as their interpreter. Kaitlin, a rising junior at Hoggard, began attending MarineQuest programs in the sixth grade and has risen through the ranks to become a senior counselor this year.

"I think one of the interesting things is that kids come back every year and remember what we've taught them," Kaitlin said. "We have a review at the beginning of camp and they know all the answers to the questions we ask them."

Kaitlin, whose mother is of Cuban descent, spent her early years growing up in Miami where she attended a bi-lingual school that required its students to speak Spanish half of the day and English the other half. She's looking forward to augmenting the educational experience her Spanish speaking charges.

"They are two boys that have received scholarships to come to Marine quest for a week," Kaitlin said. "I'll be working with them, interpreting, and helping them understand the content in their own language."

The greatest aspect of MarineQuest, Kaitlin said, is that it brings together learning and fun in such an exciting way.

"You meet new people and you learn things about the marine environment that you normally wouldn't be exposed to," she said.

For more information on MarineQuest programs, call Ms. Talley at 962-2386 or go to www.uncw.edu/dpsc/marinequest/

UPCOMING ODYSSEY PROGRAMS

All Hands On Deck: Research Vessel trolling, 9 a.m.-noon or noon-3 p.m. June 21; \$45 by Monday.

Diligence in Haiti: Lunch followed by presentation about the Coast Guard's role in Haiti and in fighting terrorism; June 22. \$13 for whole event; presentation only is \$6.

Information: MarineQuest, 962-2386; www.uncw.edu/dpsc/marinequest/