NOAA Science Camp is a self-motivated, cumulative learning experience that is at the core of real-world science learning. Camp activities integrate NOAA science into high-quality educational materials through a curriculum that meets state education standards, as well as all Ocean Literacy Essential Principles. Complex concepts are presented in innovative and interesting ways that engage campers and demonstrate that science can be fun. Science activities are blended with other enriching camp experiences — playing field games, gaining confidence through team-building and fostering new friendships with fellow campers.

Assisting Underserved Youth
NOAA Science Camp partners with the University of Washington's JISAO to provide support for campers from underrepresented and underserved communities to attend camp. We work with programs such as Rainier Scholars, Solid Ground, MESA, and the Aleut Community of St. Paul Island Tribal Government to help with outreach to and recruitment of prospective campers who need support to attend camp. NOAA Science Camp offers full and partial scholarships to applicants who are eligible for free and reduced lunch programs. In 2018, JISAO's support made possible the attendance of 19 middle school students from Showalter Middle School in Tukwila, Washington. Additional scholarships were awarded with funds provided by WSG and NOAA.

Supporting NOAA Scientists
Students are not the only individuals to benefit from NOAA Science Camp sessions. When surveyed about their roles in the camp, the majority of NOAA scientists felt they gained
- improved ability to develop educational activities;
- greater connection with NOAA staff;
- deeper knowledge about NOAA;
- enhanced presentation skills; and
- increased motivation to inspire and engage campers in science.
Campers have opportunities to:
• assess fish populations and create food webs;
• identify marine mammals by calls and markings, and examine bones from fish they consumed;
• analyze water samples and observe how buoys sample the ocean to help predict large-scale climate events;
• develop charting skills by practicing with marine navigation charts;
• learn about hazardous substances and respond to a hypothetical spill; and
• try on dive gear, and simulate a dive in a hyperbaric chamber.

In 2018, NOAA Science Camp partnered with Atlantis STEAM for a third year to design and build mini-ROVs. During this program, campers also had the opportunity to meet with NOAA’s Office of Exploration and talked to ROV pilots aboard the NOAA ship Okeanos Explorer via live video feed. Next, campers built mini-ROVs under the guidance of Atlantis STEAM educators, then connected their experience with real-world research as they learned about underwater stereocamera design and deployment on-site at a NOAA Fisheries lab. At the end of the session, ROV campers tested their mini-ROVs by competing to complete tasks underwater.

NOAA Fisheries’ Headquarters office provided 2018 funding in addition to the support provided by University of Washington’s JISAO and Washington Sea Grant. This enabled NOAA Science Camp to maintain its full program of two middle school camp sessions, two weeks of the JLP and a three-day ROV mini-session.

A SNAPSHOT OF THE WEEK

Day 1-3
Campers travel in small groups to a variety of NOAA offices and participate in activities highlighting NOAA scientists, building skills that will serve them later in the week.

The “Mystery Environmental Scenario” is introduced to campers. Small groups meet to create hypotheses about the causes of the scenario.

Day 4
A “Mystery Environmental Scenario” continues. Individuals from each group are sent off to gather specialized NOAA science information that will help campers explain the causes and effects of the scenario events. They return to their original groups and report their findings.

Day 5
Groups use scientific methods to solve the scenario and communicate their findings in an oral and visual presentation to campers, scientists, camp educators and families.

VALUABLE PARTNERSHIPS
NOAA*
Washington Sea Grant*
Joint Institute for the Study of the Atmosphere and Ocean*
NANOOS
Atlantis STEAM
MESA
Ocean Inquiry Project
Rainier Scholars
Salish Seas Expeditions
Showalter Middle School
University of Washington

NOAA OFFICES INVOLVED
NOAA Fisheries
• Headquarters**
• Alaska Fisheries Science Center
• Northwest Fisheries Science Center
• Office of Law Enforcement
• Restoration Center
• West Coast Regional Office

Office of Marine and Aviation Operations
• NOAA Diving Center

Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research
• Office of Exploration and Research
• Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory

National Ocean Service
• Office of Coast Survey, Pacific Hydrographic Branch
• Office of Response and Restoration, Emergency Response Division and Assessment & Restoration Division

National Weather Service
• Seattle Forecast Office

* Funding and activity partners
** Funding partners

NOAA SCIENCE CAMP
BY THE NUMBERS

Sessions 2017 2018

Camper Total 151* 143 **

Girls (total) 60 68

Boys (total) 91 75

Cities Served 31 28

Schools Served 75 65

States Served 7 6

Countries Served 3 1

Participating NOAA Scientists 85 85

*Includes 21 Junior Leaders

**Includes 19 Junior Leaders

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