

## Local high school wins 4th straight Blue Crab Bowl

(March 1, 2011) Bishop Sullivan Catholic High School of Virginia Beach took the top slot in the 2011 Blue Crab Bowl on February 26th. The win marks the team's fourth straight victory in the region's premier academic contest in marine science.

The Blue Crab Bowl is Virginia's regional competition of the National Ocean Sciences Bowl (NOSB©) and ranks among the inaugural marine science bowls started in 1998. Since its first year, the Blue Crab Bowl has involved 1,150 of the Commonwealth's brightest science students and 200 teachers from 51 public and private schools across Virginia.

Led by Captain Mary Chang, members of this year's winning team include Joe Brindenstine, Cameron Forren, Walker Olsen, and Nathan Taylor. Veteran coach and science teacher William Dunn prepared the first-place team for competition. Their 4-year run as champions is a first.

The 14th annual event took place at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science in Gloucester Point. Participating were 80 students, 26 science teachers, more than 30 supporters, and 81 volunteers.

The Bishop Sullivan winners emerged from a field of 16 teams representing high schools from around Virginia. The competing students spent the day in head-to-head contests, testing their knowledge of marine science and the ocean.

Using questions designed by marine scientists and educators, the contest tested the students' knowledge of oceanography, geology, biology, and maritime history. Guided by their teacher-coaches, students broadened their awareness and understanding of the oceans as they prepared for the competition. The Bowl provides a forum for students who excel in math and science to receive regional and national recognition for their diligence and talent.

The event is an annual highlight for science teachers in the Commonwealth. Patricia von Reyn, coach for Seton School's A & B teams, says that she and her team "had a great time at the Bowl again this year," and adds that her teams "are talking about continuing their training through the spring and summer so they will be even stronger next year—don't you just love their enthusiasm?"

Bishop Sullivan Catholic High will represent Virginia in the national competition, facing 24 other regional champions at the National Ocean Sciences Bowl (NOSB©) from April 29-May 1, 2011 in Galveston, Texas.



*1st Place: The winning team from Bishop Sullivan Catholic High School is (from L): Coach William Dunn, Joe Brindenstine, Cameron Forren; team captain Mary Chan, Walker Olson, and Nathan Taylor.*

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The theme for this year's finals competition is "Human Responses to Ocean Events," with a focus on societal reactions and adaptations to hurricanes, tsunamis, sea-level rise, pollution, oil spills, and harmful algal blooms.

### Cooperation & Volunteerism

The Blue Crab Bowl is a cooperative effort of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) and Old Dominion University's Department of Ocean, Earth, and Atmospheric Sciences.

Bowl coordinator Dr. Carol Hopper-Brill notes that faculty, staff, and graduate students donate many hours to ensure the success of the event. This year's volunteer crew also included colleagues from NOAA agencies and the Navy. Hopper-Brill says "At 81 strong, this year's volunteer crew was the largest ever."

von Reyn praised the event organizers and volunteers for their efforts. "[They] do an extraordinary job organizing and running the competition," she says. "I'm awed by and thankful for the way [they] encourage the students to study ocean sciences. To have so many people who are studying and working in marine science take the time to develop and run this competition is truly amazing and a real gift to the students."

Hopper-Brill notes that the Blue Crab Bowl wouldn't be possible without the generous support of national, regional, and local sponsors. Among them are Virginia Institute of Marine Science's Dean & Directors Office, The Mariners' Museum, Pizza Hut-Gloucester Point, Comfort Suites-Airport, Newport News, the VIMS Gift Shop, Mid-Atlantic Marine Education Association, and the National Marine Educators Association.



*The Seton School A Team concentrates on the task at hand.*

### Other Winners

Taking 2nd place in the 2011 competition was Chesapeake Bay Governor's School-Glenns Campus, coached by Sherry Pettyjohn. Team members are Henry Banks (Middlesex High), Rachel Corrigan (Matthews High), Emma Marie Hepworth (Gloucester High), and Rebecca Walker (Middlesex High). CBGS-Glenns has a long winning history in the Bowl, holding the previous record of 3 straight years as champions.

In 3rd place was Chesapeake Bay Governor's School-Warsaw Campus, coached by James Beam. CBGS-Warsaw placed in the top 4 for the second time in just its second year of competition. Team members are Emma Hollowell (Lancaster High), Leigh Anna Morris (Rappahannock High); Anne Self (Washington & Lee High), Paige Trivett (Colonial Beach High); and Hannah Wallace (Washington & Lee High).

Fourth place went to Broadwater Academy, Exmore, coached by Joe Spagnolo. Team members are Paige McManus, Colin Parker, Rachel Seaman, Dylan Ward, Anna White, and team supporter Natalie Tomlinson.

Other competing teams were

- Bishop Sullivan Catholic High School – B Team (Carol Stapanowich, Coach)
- Churchland High School (Cami Field, Coach)
- Fauquier High School (George Murphy, Coach)
- Fredericksburg Academy (Debra Garcia, Coach)
- Isle of Wight Academy (Cassy Peffley, Coach)

- Louisa County High School (Kimberlee Jancaitis, Coach)
- Maury High School (Heather Mericle, Coach)
- Patrick Henry High School – A Team (Carrie Bateman, Coach)
- Patrick Henry High School – B Team (Alice Scheele, Coach)
- Seton School – A Team (Patricia von Reyn, Coach)
- Seton School – B Team (Patricia von Reyn, Coach)
- St. Christopher’s School (William McGuire, Coach).

During the Awards Ceremony, all teams were recognized with awards presented by the leaders of the two host institutions: Dr. John Wells, Dean/Director of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science and Dr. Roger Harvey, Chair of ODU’s Department of Ocean, Earth and Atmospheric Science. They addressed the audience of 200, applauded the students’ accomplishments, and encouraged their continued studies in marine sciences.

Coaches were rewarded for their considerable efforts in teaching marine sciences with memberships in professional organizations as well as classroom equipment.

### **National Ocean Sciences Bowl**

The Blue Crab Bowl is one of 25 regional competitions of the National Ocean Sciences Bowl (NOSB®), supported by the Consortium for Ocean Leadership. The Consortium, representing 94 of the nation’s leading oceanographic institutions, universities, industries and aquaria is headquartered in Washington D.C. The NOSB provides an educational forum intended to generate student interest in the ocean sciences; improve awareness of our oceans, coasts and Great Lakes; and create an “ocean literate” society that can meet the ocean challenges of the future. During 2010, an expected 2,000 students from nearly 400 high schools from around the country will participate in this national program.