

Letise T. LaFeir, PhD

CAREER SUMMARY

With 15 years of professional experience, Letise successfully integrates her scientific training with her policy and outreach expertise to address a breadth of ocean and coastal issues. She effectively applies her strategic thinking and strong communication skills to advance priorities, develop valuable partnerships, and inspire ocean stewardship. During her career, Letise has been honored with several awards, she has had countless public speaking engagements, and she has provided many hours of community service, including as a member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. She is a published poet, a certified scuba diver, and a world traveler, including to all seven continents and the seafloor.

EDUCATION

University of Delaware
Graduate College of Marine Studies
PhD, Marine Biology and Biochemistry

Brown University
BS, Aquatic Biology
BA, English (Honors in Creative Writing)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Director of Federal Policy, *September 2020 - present*

Program Officer, *February 2017 - September 2020*

Resources Legacy Fund

- Directs and coordinates federal engagement across marine and land-based portfolios.
- Develops, implements, and supports strategies to achieve long-term policy and public funding goals at the local, state, and federal levels.
- Manages philanthropic portfolios collectively valued at more than \$3 million of incoming and outgoing grants to advance ocean and coastal priorities, including related to watershed health, offshore oil and gas drilling, sustainable fisheries, and changing ocean conditions (e.g., ocean acidification).
- Builds and engages diverse constituencies in support of ocean, coastal, and watershed conservation.
- Helps manage multiple junior and administrative support staff.

Founder/Co-Owner, *May 2014 - present*

Upwelling Consulting, LLC

- Along with co-owner, provides consulting services and products related to marine science, policy, and law, including contract services for individual and organizational clients.
- Co-manages operations and serves as principal agent in Virginia, state of incorporation.

California Ocean Policy Manager, *November 2014 - January 2017*

Monterey Bay Aquarium, Conservation and Science Division

- Advanced MBA's ocean and coastal priorities in California and beyond, including related to ocean plastic pollution, climate change, sustainable fisheries, marine protected areas, and other issues.
- Explored new and effective ways to engage public officials, reach broad constituencies, and develop strong partnerships.
- Led or supported multiple interdepartmental conservation teams to help achieve issue-based objectives in a coordinated and collaborative manner.
- Provided strategic guidance and expertise on a range of activities for the Conservation Policy Team, the Conservation and Science Division, and MBA.
- Managed key projects and events that help maintain the Aquarium's credibility and advance its mission to inspire conservation of the ocean, such as Ocean Day California.

National Outreach Coordinator (Independent Contract), May - November 2014

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Education and Outreach Division

- Managed a team of 2.5 other contractors and additional temporary hires working on outreach products and services for ONMS.
- Coordinated, researched, developed and edited content and layout for multiple publications, other print products, and online and video products on time and on budget with no more than 1 percent error rate.
- Improved efficiency of national process to request, review and produce outreach materials to ensure timeliness and strategic impact of the final product.

Community Liaison Office Co-Coordinator, June 2012 - June 2013

Department of State, U.S. Embassy-Athens, Greece

- Developed and administered a program plan that was client-driven and responsive to specific needs across eight key areas: employment, crisis management and security, education, information and resource management, guidance and referral, welcoming and orientation, community engagement, and events planning.
- Worked collaboratively with other CLO Co-Coordinator to improve and reinvigorate office operations and services to the embassy community.
- Developed and executed fundraisers and managed budgets for CLO-sponsored programs.
- Effectively managed office assistant, temporary hires, and program volunteers.
- Received Top Secret security clearance with an obligation of confidentiality.

Independent Consultant, February - May 2012

Santa Monica Bay Restoration Foundation (Remotely)

- Researched and compiled information regarding the contributions of different coastal wetland habitats to the productivity of fishery and avian resources, as a means to help guide mitigation banking processes.
- Conducted a literature review, prepared report drafts and related materials, and presented findings.
- Engaged SMBRF staff and Marine Research Advisory Committee as needed to complete the project.

Policy Analyst, April 2010 - August 2011

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Conservation Policy and Planning Division

- Effectively supported organizational mission and goals in the review of national legislation and relevant policy issues, including at high levels in strategic policy discussions and legislative drafting regarding NOAA's response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.
- Helped develop, advance and complete regulations, management plan reviews, and associated documents at site and national levels.
- Drafted Administration testimony, technical drafting assistance, letters, briefing papers, talking points and memos on relevant legislation.
- Provided support, strategic advice and expertise as needed for select projects and activities in other ONMS branches/divisions/cross-cuts related to office management, science and research, education and outreach, socioeconomics, and maritime heritage.

Director of Government Relations and Education Programs Coordinator, February 2007 - January 2010

National Marine Sanctuary Foundation

- Fostered increased support from Congress for NOAA and its programs, particularly the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries.
- Served as NMSF's liaison to the scientific community.
- Served as Acting President and CEO when needed.
- Supported the NMSF development team on outreach and fundraising efforts, especially related to high-profile projects and educational activities.
- Helped develop new partnerships between NMSF and other organizations and improve effectiveness of existing partnerships.
- Worked closely with Board of Trustees, which included world renowned ocean champions.

John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellow, January 2006 - January 2007

Office of Congressman Sam Farr (D-CA)

- Performed all duties of a full-time Legislative Assistant with a portfolio that included appropriations, oceans/fisheries, science/technology, animal rights/welfare, and Native American affairs.
- Worked closely and effectively with Rep. Farr, constituents in his district and in D.C., other congressional offices, and other officials, individuals and groups as appropriate.
- Ensured functionality of House Oceans Caucus, coordinated related activities, and enhanced Rep. Farr's role as founding co-chair.
- Redrafted the Ocean Conservation, Education, and National Strategy for the 21st Century Act (HR 21), which was introduced in 110th Congress.
- Directly involved in negotiations for the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006 (passed as HR 5946 in 109th Congress).
- Directly supported passage of two California state bills—California Global Warming Solutions Act and California Sea Otter Protection Act.

RECENT HIGHLIGHTS

- **Report Co-Author**, The State of Sea Grant 2020 Biennial Report to Congress, *pending December 2020*
- **Panelist**, Black in Marine Science - Sink or Swim Panel, *November 2020 (pre-recorded for December 2020)*
- **Webinar Moderator**, 2020 Election Analysis and Implications for California's Public Lands, *November 2020*
- **Livestream Moderator**, UPSTREAM, [Racial Justice & Environmentalism - Together & Inseparable](#), *September 2020*
- **Guest Lecturer**, Vermont Law School, Ocean and Coastal Law Course - Plastic Pollution, *August 2020*
- **Guest Lecturer**, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, 2020 Master of Advanced Studies in Marine Biodiversity and Conservation Summer Lecture Series - Federal Policy & the Ocean, *August 2020*
- **Panelist**, NOAA's Dr. Nancy Foster Scholar Virtual Discussion, *August 2020*
- **Podcast Guest**, UPSTREAM's The Indisposable Podcast - [Step Inside with Letise LaFeir](#), *June 2020*
- **Report Co-Author**, [Roadmap: Recovery of the Southern Sea Otter](#), *May 2020*
- **Spark Speaker**, Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, Marine Conservation Initiative Retreat Session - Building Leaders, Constituencies, and Movements that Connect Local Frontline Communities to National Policy Work, *November 2019*
- **Webinar Speaker**, EarthEcho International - [StemExplore Virtual Career Connection](#), *November 2019*
- **Spotlight Speaker**, Biodiversity Funders Group Annual Meeting - [The Ocean Connection: Engaging People, Protecting Places, and Saving our Planet](#), *June 2019*
- **Panel Moderator**, Environmental Grantmakers Association Federal Policy Briefing - U.S. Energy Dominance: Implications of 2018 Election on Federal Oil and Gas Policies, *February 2019*
- **Panelist**, University of California Irvine, Sustainability Series, Strengthening the Great Blue Wall: The West Coast Response to Offshore Drilling - [Campaign Strategies & Coalition Building](#), *October 2018*
- **Seminar Speaker**, California State University Channel Islands, Environmental Science and Resource Management Speaker Series - [Making the Connection: People & Places](#), *March 2018*
- **Lead Member**, Global Climate Action Summit - Ocean-Climate Working Group, *September 2018*
- **Panel Moderator**, UC Berkeley School of Law, [California's Coastal Act: The Next 40 Years](#) - Critical Perspectives on Coastal Act Implementation, *November 2016*
- **Seminar Speaker**, California State University Monterey Bay: Ecotourism Management and Hospitality - Sustainable Ocean Management: California's Leadership, *October 2016*

PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY BOARDS

- **UPSTREAM Board of Directors**, *September 2019 - present*
- **National Sea Grant Advisory Board**, *September 2018 - present*
- **EarthEcho International Board of Directors**, *June 2018 - present*
- **National Ocean Protection Coalition Leadership Team**, *January 2018 - present*
- **Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council**, *May 2015 - December 2016*
- **Association for the Sciences of Limnology and Oceanography Executive Board**, *July 2003 - June 2006*

OTHER SELECTED EXPERIENCE

Program Co-Coordinator; Steering Committee, April 2009 - May 2011

[Ocean for Life](#)

- Participated in planning, core decision-making, fundraising, outreach, and execution for an immersive education program designed to enhance cultural understanding through ocean science.

Topside Support; Congressional Coordinator, September 2007

National Marine Sanctuary Mission: If Reefs Could Talk

Aquarius Undersea Research Lab (Key Largo, FL)

- Assisted with scientific and educational mission that broadcasted underwater research to classrooms and the general public on the internet; managed congressional participation.

Research Staff, January - February 2007

Antarctic Marine Living Resources Program Research Cruise

Research Vessel Yuzhmorgeologiya (Shetland Islands, Antarctica)

- Worked with an international group of scientists and ship crew to collect and process marine plankton samples.

U.S./Brazil Consortium in Marine Policy, June - July 2004

Integrated Coastal Management Course (Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil)

- Tackled issues related to local and international marine policy and learned ways to mold those policies to the culture of the people involved.

Shipboard Education Coordinator, November - December 2003

Extreme 2003—To the Depths of Discovery

Research Vessel Atlantis/Deep Submergence Vehicle Alvin (East Pacific Rise)

- Transmitted details of research conducted onboard to school students and the general public via the internet, making the information accessible, understandable and engaging by a wide audience

SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS

- Basta, D.J., L. LaFeir, S. Gittings, et al. 2015. Technology use in NOAA's National Marine Sanctuary System. *Marine Technology Society Journal* 49:178-192.
- Reiter, S.M., L.M. Wedding, E. Hartge, L. LaFeir, and M.R. Caldwell. 2015. Climate adaptation planning in the Monterey Bay region: An iterative spatial framework for engagement at the local level. *Natural Resources* 6:375-379.
- Houser, L.T. and C.E. Epifanio. 2009. Impacts of biochemical cues on horizontal swimming behavior of larval crabs. *Marine and Freshwater Behavior and Physiology* 42: 249-264.
- Tilburg, C.E, L.T. Houser, C.N. Steppe, R.W. Garvine, C.E. Epifanio. 2006. Effects of coastal transport on larval patches: Models and observations. *Estuarine, Coastal, and Shelf Science* 67: 145-160.
- Houser, L.T. 2005. The Importance of horizontal swimming behavior in maintaining patches of larval crabs. PhD Dissertation. *University of Delaware*.
- Van Alstyne, K.L. and L.T. Houser. 2003. Dimethylsulfide as an activated feeding deterrent in marine algae. *Marine Ecology Progress Series* 250: 175-181.
- Pennings, S.C., E. Selig, L.T. Houser, and M.D. Bertness. 2003. Geographic variation in positive and negative interactions among salt marsh plants. *Ecology* 84: 1527-153