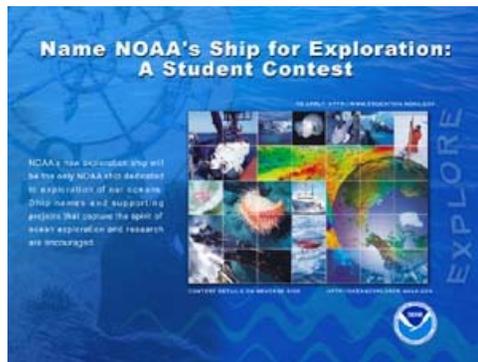


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**NOAA's NEWEST OCEAN EXPLORATION VESSEL TO BE NAMED  
OKEANOS EXPLORER  
Illinois High School Wins Nationwide Ship-Naming Contest**



May 27, 2005 ♦ [NOAA](#) selected Okeanos Explorer as the name for its newest deep ocean exploration vessel. Okeanos is the ancient Greek term for ocean. The winning name was submitted by a team of students from Woodstock High School in Woodstock, Ill., and was one of nearly 400 entries received in a [nationwide contest](#). **(Click NOAA image for larger view of NOAA ship naming contest poster. [Click here](#) for high resolution version, which is a large file. Please credit "NOAA.")**

The vessel, formerly the USNS Capable, was transferred from the U.S. Navy to NOAA last September. It will be equipped for ocean mapping, deployment of unmanned submersibles, scientific work in onboard laboratories and real-time transmission of images and data collected during ocean expeditions.

"We have great expectations for the Okeanos Explorer," said retired Navy Vice Adm. [Conrad C. Lautenbacher](#), Ph.D., undersecretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. "After modifications in the shipyard the Okeanos Explorer will sail on missions of discovery to unknown or little known ocean areas. Using satellite and high-capacity Internet technology, scientists at command centers ashore will participate directly in at-sea operations."

On May 31, Lautenbacher and the Director of [NOAA Marine and Aviation Operations](#), Rear Admiral Samuel P. De Bow, Jr., will visit Woodstock High School to congratulate the winning team and meet with earth science students.

Marianne Jahnke, a Woodstock science teacher, supervised the team of five students that proposed the winning name and developed an associated education project. "We believe Okeanos Explorer represents NOAA's spirit toward exploration," said Jahnke. The opportunity to name a ship in NOAA's fleet is a great honor for our team and our school. It's a challenge in the Midwest, but I'm always fighting to put oceanography in the curriculum, especially because we are far from the ocean."

The student team presented its education project to a fourth grade class at Westwood Elementary School in Woodstock. "We prepared a mural of a continental margin and the ocean," said Woodstock senior Eric Hunt, who led the team. We used it to explain how NOAA conducts research and gathers data about the oceans and the atmosphere."

Woodstock freshman Ashley Pauls introduced the activity to the fourth graders, including individual coloring pages of sea life. "The children colored in the drawings of sea life organisms, cut them out and placed them on the mural where they thought they would live," said Pauls. The Woodstock winning team also included junior Stephen Shepley, sophomore Elizabeth Gazdziak and freshman John Dew.

The Woodstock team will visit with a renowned ocean explorer and tour a NOAA facility. News releases will be issued locally and nationally and a nationwide radio spot will be aired to recognize the team and school. Woodstock High School will also receive a recognition plaque, and the Okeanos Explorer will carry a plaque with information about the winning team and school.

Okeanos Explorer will be operated by the NOAA Marine and Aviation Operations commissioned officers of the [NOAA Corps](#) and civilians in support of the [NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration](#). The Corps is composed of officers—all scientists and engineers—who provide operational, management and technical skills supporting NOAA's environmental programs.

Though far from Okeanos Explorer, scientists ashore will be full members of the science team, operating in science command centers, exchanging data and analyzing real-time, deep-ocean images taken by remotely operated vehicles on the ocean floor. High-speed satellite to Internet pathways will also offer exciting educational opportunities to raise ocean literacy.

In partnership with Coastal America and the National Environmental Education and Training

Foundation, NOAA announced the nationwide contest in October 2004 for teams of students in grades 6-12.

NOAA, an agency of the [U.S. Department of Commerce](#), is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of the nation's coastal and marine resources.

**Relevant Web Sites**

[NOAA Ocean Exploration](#)

[NOAA Marine and Aviation Operations](#)

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