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Sea Turtle Dispersal

Photo by Kate Mansfield



Katrina with one of the green turtles in her study captured in Sargassum habitat in the Gulf of Mexico.

I am using genetics and ocean simulation models to investigate where oceanic juveniles in the Gulf of Mexico originate, and satellite telemetry to better understand their movements and recruitment to coastal areas.

I began sampling and tagging turtles in 2015 from a launch site south of New Orleans, Louisiana. Our vessel travels the Mississippi River down to the Gulf of Mexico and continues 20–60 miles offshore in search of *Sargassum* habitat. In the summer of 2017, I was able to track five additional oceanic juvenile green turtles thanks to the Christiane Howey Rising Scholar Award. The Solar 9.5g PTTs transmitted for about 35 days; turtles shed their scutes as they grow so also shed the tags. In that timespan, some turtles moved farther over the continental shelf while some moved farther offshore. I will use these tracks to test for what influences these patterns, considering potential factors such as oceanographic currents, genetics, and environmental conditions.

My hope is that a better understanding of juvenile sea turtle dispersal pathways will inform management plans for these species and highlight priority areas for conservation. **Great work, Katrina!**

CHRISTIANE HOWEY RISING SCHOLAR AWARD

CALL FOR ENTRIES

In addition to granting many educational awards for transmitters over the years, Christiane Howey quietly found ways to help young researchers and start-up programs. To honor Chris, and to carry on in her spirit of generosity, we are proud to offer an annual award in her name: the Christiane Howey Rising Scholar Award.

This award is intended to provide researchers who are starting out their careers with the means to get their projects off the ground. It will provide the recipient with five transmitters of his/her choice. Proposals should include an outline of the project indicating the scope and expected outcome.

Applicants are encouraged to include an educational component in their research, but this is not required.

Please include a timeline and let us know what model of transmitter you are interested in using. We are looking for a maximum of five pages. The recipient will be responsible for any Argos (or GSM) data distribution costs and any duties/taxes.

Proposals for the 2019 Christiane Howey Rising Scholar Award will be accepted through **October 31, 2018** and reviewed prior to the publication of the Winter 2018 issue of *Tracker News*. The award recipient will be notified in late December to schedule a production slot. Proposals will be judged by an internal committee. For more information, please email support@microwavetelemetry.com or visit our website.



MTI Employee Spotlight

Our team is how we do what we do. This issue we want to introduce you to someone who plays an important role in organizing and energizing our team...



Sally Derrico – Office Coordinator

Q: Tell us how you started with the MTI family.

A: Seven years ago, I saw the job advertisement and came in for an interview. It was the mission statement that really stood out to me in the beginning — I liked that this company had such a positive impact on the environment. After I'd started working here, some of my coworkers and I realized that we went to the same church where I sing in the choir.

Q: You certainly have the best voice among us when we sing "Happy Birthday." How long have you been singing?

A: I started singing 24 years ago. Before that, I would only pretend to sing opera, but when I tried out for my church choir, I was told that I had a "soloist's voice." I couldn't read music at the time, so I started taking lessons and even a course at the local community college to get

better. Singing brings me so much joy, and I regularly sing solos with the choir now.

Q: You do quite a variety of tasks here — could you name some of the most important ones?

A: The main one would probably be maintaining our database of production form/transmitter information. That includes transmitter IDs, shipping dates, refurbishments, et cetera. I also manage a lot of the order and shipping paperwork, such as the purchase orders and customs documentations. Lots of transmitters means lots of paperwork, so I do my best to keep it all organized and up-to-date. And that's only the half of it!