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## **Emma Taccardi (Pittsford, N.Y.)**

A senior at Pittsford Sutherland High School in Pittsford, N.Y., Emma Taccardi is interested in learning anything related to science. This summer she got her wish, volunteering as a high school intern at the Woods Hole Science Aquarium, the nation's oldest public research display aquarium and part of NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Science Center in Woods Hole, Mass.

"I haven't had the opportunity to learn much about marine biology in school, although I took courses in environmental science and biology and tried to learn more about the marine environment during family trips to the ocean in different parts of the world," Taccardi said of her experience as one of nine high school interns from Montana to Massachusetts. "This was my first internship, and I really liked the hands-on activities and learning about and working with the harbor seals."

Taccardi participated in the Aquarium's Careers in Marine Science Seminar July 27 to August 7. The career seminar students get training in marine animal husbandry and basic aquarist chores, hear presentations from scientists working in a variety of marine fields, go on collecting trips, visit other Woods Hole science institutions, and go on field trips to the New Bedford waterfront, Whaling Museum and Buttonwood Park Zoo and Nantucket's Maria Mitchell Association Aquarium. The seminar is designed to give students an idea of what people working in Woods Hole do, and how different areas of science contribute to the larger effort to understand the marine world and to manage marine resources wisely.

Along with the other summer interns, Taccardi performed the daily chores of running an aquarium, like cleaning tanks and feeding the fish. While it wasn't her favorite activity, she understands that it is all part of the operation. She particularly enjoyed learning about and working with the Aquarium's two harbor seals, LuSeal and Bumper, during the two daily public education programs.

Taccardi also liked the visit to the Buttonwood Park Zoo in nearby New Bedford, one of many field trips the interns make as part of their exposure to

various aspects of running an aquarium and caring for animals. She also learned about public education and outreach by participating in collecting trips for the public to local harbors and through the Aquarium's touch tank and harbor seal education efforts.

She plays the oboe as a member of the Rochester Philharmonic Youth Orchestra, where she says she learned the importance of collaboration and flexibility. She also plays guitar and is active in school music programs. Taccardi is a member of the high school varsity field hockey and track teams, and volunteers at vacation bible school and for One World Goods, a not-for-profit gift shop that sells fair trade handicrafts produced in developing countries.

"I am used to working with a variety of different people on a daily basis and embrace diversity and learning from the perspectives of other people," she said. "I learned a lot this summer about careers in marine science and got to work with other students and professional staff from around the country who share the same interests as me."

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Related links:

Woods Hole Science Aquarium: <http://aquarium.nefsc.noaa.gov/>

Aquarium Blog: <http://whaquarium.wordpress.com/>