

The C-MORE Experience

By Chris Olivas

Aboard the R/V Kilo Moana I was fortunate enough to participate in an amazing scientific and educational experience. I was so excited to learn I was going to be able to board such an important research vessel. From the moment I boarded to the moment I left I was in awe of the scientific facilities and all the crew and scientists aboard. I have experience on research vessels, but none like this. It was such an honor to be able to work day in and day out with such a variety of scientists performing all different kinds of data collection and sampling. I really felt like I was part of the crew by the end and had hoped I could return on every cruise they were going to do in the future.

The C-MORE education coordinator Kate Achilles had such a plethora of activities for me and the other teachers the whole time. I enjoyed collecting water samples from the CTD instrument and plotting that data. Collecting and categorizing all the plankton was also a really fun experience. I really felt like I learned tremendously about how the state of the ocean can be viewed. I was very pleased to be performing simple data collection that could easily be modified to do in my classroom. I only wish I had done this program earlier in the year so I could implement some project ideas I have sooner.

I've already had the opportunity to take some of the things I've learned and implement them in my classroom. Thanks to Kate, I was able to dissect an albatross with one of my classes. The students really loved it and learned a lot. They were so inspired by seeing the real impact of marine debris they have begun collecting petitions to urge our city council to ban plastic bags in retail and grocery stores!

I have already planned a project and curriculum for next school year with our other science teachers at my school inspired by the HOT series. We are going to do a cross grade project focused on collecting biological and physical data in the local waters close to our school. We would like to make a time series so that the future years students could compare data and really see any possible trends in our local beaches. We are very excited to use some of the techniques in collecting samples the same way we did in the C-MORE program. Hopefully we will gain some support from local organizations around our community. I hope to be able to keep in contact with the C-MORE program and I will be updating them on my projects to come.

