

## VIMS contributes to Youth Fishing Adventure

### Musick assists Charter Boat Association during annual event

(October 10, 2011) Researchers at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science have worked for decades to help ensure that there are fish for anglers to catch. Susanna Musick is now helping to ensure that there are anglers to catch the fish.

Musick, a marine recreation specialist in the Sea Grant Marine Advisory Services program at VIMS, joined a large group of volunteers during the Virginia Charter Boat Association's fourth annual Youth Fishing Adventure on September 24th. The event provided a day of fishing on Chesapeake Bay to 187 children and chaperones from local Boy & Girl Scout chapters and the Peninsula Boys and Girls Club.

Charter boat Captain Kathleen Tylman says the goal of the event is to "introduce sport fishing and boating to Virginia's youth." "These young people are Virginia's future anglers and are learning to become stewards of the Bay," says Tylman. "The captains feel that by allowing the children the opportunity to fish with charter captains and their crew, a more impressive mark can be made."



*Fishing!: VIMS marine recreation specialist Susanna Musick helps a local youngster unhook a fish during the Virginia Charter Boat Association's annual Youth Fishing Adventure. Photo by Mark Pearson.*

### Catch-and-Release Fishing

During the event, Musick helped the youthful anglers tag their catch, while educating them about the importance of catch-and-release fishing and the information that scientists and managers can derive from the recapture of tagged fish. Musick heads up the Virginia Game Fish Tagging Program at VIMS. As a member of the Planning Committee for the Youth Day event, Musick organized the meetings, donated fishing rods & reels, and provided formal pre- and post-event evaluation.

"The Youth Fishing Day was a great way for VIMS to partner with the charter industry in educating local children about marine stewardship and preserving the future recreational fishery," says Musick. "Tagging gave the kids a tangible understanding of the concept and techniques behind catch-and-release fishing."

Musick says the fishing was great, with many double catches of spot. "Considering the weather, we tagged a pretty good variety of fish," says Musick. Their catch also included black sea bass, speckled trout, and flounder. Tylman reports that the only disappointment came from a Boy Scout who was overheard saying that the Girl Scouts had out-fished him and his buddies.

**Find this story and more at:**  
**[www.vims.edu/topstories](http://www.vims.edu/topstories)**

Virginia Institute of Marine Science  
School of Marine Science  
College of William and Mary  
Gloucester Point, VA 23062  
(804) 684-7000

## City of Hampton and Charter Boat Captains

In addition to VIMS, the City of Hampton Recreation Department and Hampton Public Piers also partnered with the Charter Boat Association for the 2011 event. Musick says “The City of Hampton really made the event happen. They provided the venue—including free boat slips—food, T-shirts, hats, and logistical support. And of course the charter boat captains donated their boats, fuel, time, and expertise.”

The daylong affair is funded largely through a grant from the Virginia Marine Resource Commission’s Virginia Saltwater Recreational Fishing Development Fund. VIMS, Wilcox Bait and Tackle, Bass Pro Shop, and the Sinker Man of Yorktown supplied fishing equipment.

## Saving the Bay through Fun

Ms. Sonya Davis of the VMRC presented awards to the two top winners of the annual essay contest: *How an Army of One Can Help Save the Bay*. In her winning entry, Keshawn Everett of Troop 29 wrote “As an army of one I would like to create a web site that is for children. This way we could influence children to save the Bay through fun. By including children, we will be increasing the population of helpers. This will turn an army of one to a lot of armies of one.”

US Congressman Rob Wittman attended the awards ceremony, delivering an appeal to “pay it forward” and “take care of one of Virginia’s finest treasures, the Chesapeake Bay.”

Charter Boat Captain Kevin Miller stresses that the daylong event isn’t a “free ride” for the participants. In addition to the 200-word essay, he notes that each Scout will complete the Scout merit badge requirements for fishing. “They learn about marine environmental protection, safety on the water, fishing regulations, chart plotting, basic first aid, and how to call for help on a VHF radio, just to name a few life-time tools,” says Miller.

## Additional Sponsors

Additional sponsors of the event included West Marine-Hampton, Chesapeake Marine Training Institute, Greensprings Vacation Resorts, Kingsmill Sports Club, Virginia Company Bank, and Blue Water Marina-Hampton. Don Lancaster provided a live remote broadcast from the event from the Downtown Hampton Public Piers on his Fishing Tidewater Radio Show.

Charter boat services were provided by

- Ocean Eagle Charters (Hampton)
- Harrison Fishing Charters (Norfolk)
- Four Winds Charters (Little Creek)
- Fintango Charters (Mathews)
- Bob-a-long Charters (Middle Peninsula)
- Charter Boat Services (Little Creek)
- Puppy Love Charters (Va Beach)
- Key Dreams Charters (Little Creek)
- Sea Spray Charters (Sarah’s Creek)
- York River Charters (Yorktown)
- Fish with Pride Charters (Poquoson)