

Web Update

Day 4: 02/28/2008

Describe your role in the project?

I have been Principal Scientist for the Biogeography Programs missions on the NANCY FOSTER the last five years. My role on the ship is to orchestrate all the science activities, make changes as need be, and communicate our requests to the ships command. Our time on the ship is very important for our continued efforts to map coral reef ecosystems. Our program is doing some very exciting applied research related to mapping coral ecosystem habitats. Integrating new technologies, applying and developing new data analysis techniques, making products available for other scientists and the public, and targeting the management needs of the jurisdictional managers.

How did you start working with NOAA or other background info?

I started working with NOAA in 1996 as a Sea Grant Fellow for the Biogeography Branch. I am a Biological Oceanographer by training but mostly do remote sensing, applied mapping, and geospatial modeling. I spent a couple years working for SAIC in Newport, RI but returned because NOAA offers tremendous opportunities and has great people.

How/why did you get involved in marine science?

I grew up sailing on the Chesapeake Bay with my parents. I got interested in the decline of oysters in the Bay, started working for the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, then it took off from there. I like being out on the water getting my hands dirty.

What do you like most about being out at sea?

In the office you don't get a lot of time to do any uninterrupted thinking. Cell phones, emails, and the usual distractions. On the ship, the other scientists and I can really strategize about what we are doing.

If you were a reef-associated animal, what would you be and why?

A flying fish. They look like they are having a lot of fun when flying. Unfortunately, they make good sandwiches too...

What do you like most about your job?

I have the greatest job anyone could imagine. Working with fantastic people at NOAA and other State and Federal organizations, traveling to exotic places, using the latest and greatest technologies, conducting science that will hopefully make a difference...

What would you like readers to know about you?

I would really like to interest more kids in the sciences. We know so little about our own oceans.



Tim Battista is a Biological Oceanographer and Chief Scientist for the Puerto Rico seafloor mapping mission.