

Undersea Explorer Says “every school in the country” should be doing this to improve our appreciation of the ocean

Seekonk High School Incorporates SCUBA Into Science Curriculum



Providence, Rhode Island Nov 9, 2022 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Quite ironically, many marine scientists never have the opportunity to personally go underwater, even as post-graduate professionals. Seekonk High School in Seekonk MA is one of a handful of high schools in the entire country working to turn this around and make a SCUBA experience a regular part of the curriculum – for 16 years and counting.

This year was the first in which the experience was extended to the parents of students to attend and learn with their children. Seekonk’s Discover SCUBA Diving is a modified introduction to the SCUBA diving course designed specifically to mesh well with the marine science curriculum. The program is offered as a collaboration between East Bay Dive Center in Warren, Rhode Island, and SHS Marine Science teacher Mr. Matthew Wills.

Mr. Wills stated, “We’re fortunate to have a community that believes in the importance of this experience and commits the resources to support this endeavor. The East Bay Dive Center has generously volunteered their time and equipment to the program 18 times in the last 16 years.”

During the late October program, 24 students were introduced to SCUBA. Many of the students expressed a desire to continue with SCUBA training, and many students talked about how the experience further solidified their desire to become marine scientists.

The instructional staff from East Bay stated, “I believe that if students have these opportunities early in

their lives they will be better stewards of the oceans.”

Seekonk High School alumnus (Class of '97) Michael Lombardi, a diving professional whose accolades include work with National Geographic, Discovery, the University of Arizona, Marine Technology Society, and others, joined the recent program in the pool and emphasized that every high school in the country should be doing this. “I first learned how to dive in high school, and went on to dive professionally”, Michael said, “the life lessons that diving brings you can only be experienced in one place – underwater. We can’t possibly live on a Blue Planet responsibly, nor think that we can bolster a sustainable ‘Blue Economy’ without a considerable improvement in how everyday life is intertwined with this part of the world. That requires people being there.”

Michael dived a custom Presenters Suite developed by his Middletown RI-based company for the program to briefly introduce advanced diving systems to the students. This will be followed by a classroom presentation about marine science and ocean exploration in the coming weeks.

<https://youtu.be/GaKPofkTBEI>

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