

ANGARI Tackles Remote Learning Challenges and Brings Marine Scientists into Homes



WEST PALM BEACH, FL - The COVID-19 pandemic quickly reshaped the way we live, work and learn. In doing so, it raised unprecedented challenges for the education community, which experienced new demands for distance and at-home learning. In response, ANGARI Foundation, a West Palm Beach-headquartered nonprofit dedicated to marine science research and education, quickly pivoted their programming. While ANGARI's primary initiatives typically involve hands-on experiences aboard the Foundation's 65-foot vessel, R/V ANGARI, an exceptional research and education platform, the need for more flexible and distance learning-oriented opportunities required a different approach.

ANGARI Foundation was determined to continue to provide engaging marine and environmental science opportunities despite the distance between themselves, their affiliated scientists, teachers and students. In addition to sharing and supporting the educational use of the Foundation's 360/virtual reality film, *Generation Ocean: Coral Reefs* (<https://angari.org/film>) and associated activities, the Foundation partnered with the University of Florida Thompson Earth Systems Institute's Scientist in Every Florida School program to deliver a series of free live webinar events connecting students, teachers and the general public with marine scientists.

Branded Ocean Expert Exchange (OEE), the webinar series was designed to be accessible to audiences of all ages, with each 30-minute event featuring a scientist who had participated in a research expedition aboard R/V ANGARI. OEE live-stream events were broadcast via Zoom and Facebook Live, and each segment included a brief presentation on the scientist's area of expertise followed by a moderated question and answer session with participants.

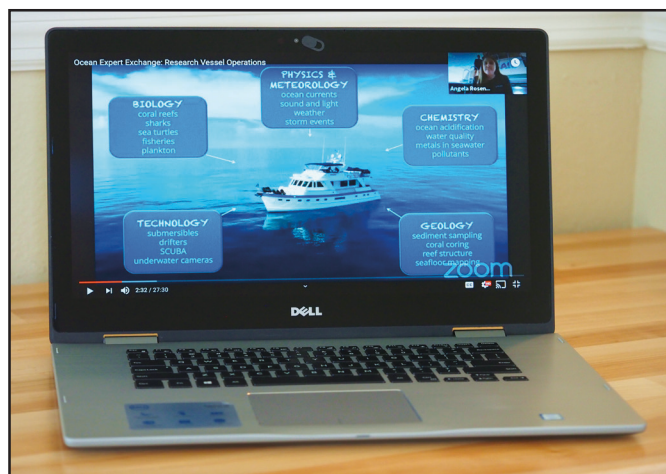
The Foundation and its collaborators also curated and shared educational resources to complement each presenter's focus area for teachers integrating the OEE events into their remote instruction. The resources include video shorts, readings, activities and career profiles that enable students and lifelong learners to dig deeper into the subject matter, advancing ocean literacy and raising environmental awareness. To further supplement these resources, ANGARI Foundation's website also hosts detailed information about the R/V ANGARI expeditions in which the speakers participated.

The spring OEE series drew diverse and international audiences, with participants ranging from school age children to science curious adults. The first event was held in mid-April and featured Meteorologist Joe Merchant from the National Weather Service who spoke about hurricane formation and how to prepare for impending storms. A couple weeks later, Stephen Kajiura, Professor and shark expert from Florida Atlantic University, shared his research and techniques for studying the blacktip shark migration observed along the east coast of Florida every winter. Next, Angela Rosenberg, ANGARI Foundation's own President and Captain of R/V ANGARI, shared insider information on operating a research vessel to

support fieldwork ranging from sea turtle studies to coral reef research to manned submersible dives. More recently, Krista Sherman, Senior Scientist at the Perry Institute for Marine Science, spoke about her work to conserve key fisheries, including grouper and conch, in The Bahamas. The spring series wrapped on June 15th with Roxane Boonstra, Dive and Volunteer Coordinator for Coral Restoration Foundation™, speaking about reef degradation and restoration efforts in the Florida Keys.



YouTube recordings of all of the spring 2020 OEE live events, along with links to the associated educational resources, are accessible via ANGARI Foundation's website (<https://angari.org/oceanexpertexchange>). The success and popularity of the OEE series points to continuation of the collaborative program in the fall. The Foundation also anticipates further expanding its online offerings as it works to create a global community that is interested, knowledgeable and invested in marine and environmental science by directly supporting research initiatives that foster a greater trust and dialogue between scientists and the public.



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