



*Character Before Career*  
**THE STONY BROOK SCHOOL**

---

Patricia Montanio  
Director, Office of Habitat Conservation  
NOAA Fisheries DOC/NOAA/NMFS/F/HC3  
1315 East West Highway (Fl. 14)  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Director Montanio:

The letter of recommendation is submitted on behalf of the Coastal Steward and its application for a substantial federal grant for its Sponsor-A-Beach Program.

As director of The Stony Brook School's Marine & Environmental Programs, a marine science and environmental science instructor for the last thirty-five years, and former vice-president of the NY State Marine Educators Association in charge of secondary education for the whole state, I am a marine educator who has known and worked with Dave Johnson, the Coastal Steward executive director and founder, for the last 15 years on many projects. Together we have partnered on too-many-to-count beach clean-ups where he has provided the municipal and private support and I have recruited and organized the student volunteer involvement and the on-the-water supervision with my school's fleet of 40 vessels and staff of licensed captains. As a result of Dave Johnson's tireless energy and support, we have together been able to remove hundreds of tons of garbage from our so important shorelines and significantly reduce the negative impacts on marine life.

Myself and my school will continue to be involved with Coastal Steward in future projects, especially if the current grant is awarded. This grant would be used to mobilize so many more NY students and parents to be involved in this important work of restoring and preserving the shores of NY State from the constant onslaught of refuse and debris that is severely damaging marine ecosystems. Up till now, we have been only been able to make a dent in the problem. With the award of this grant to Coastal Steward, an organization that has an impeccable record with shell restoration projects as well as beach clean-ups, a significant number of citizens will be facilitated to the level of bringing a successful remedy to this very serious environmental problem.

In 1994, my son and I organized the RAISE (Row Around the Island to Support the Environment) project with 32 different state, federal, and local agencies to draw attention to the problems facing our coastlines. We personally observed on the beaches and just under the surface of the water the extent of the floatables problem that had been so well identified and documented by the EPA Long Island Sound Study. The deadly fate of so many endangered species as well as ecosystems is now in the balance. I therefore give my full support to the awarding of this grant to Coastal Steward.

Sincerely yours,

Capt. George Linzee  
Director of School Marine and Environment Programs  
Director of Summer Specialty and Residential Programs  
The Stony Brook School  
631 786-3293