

Understanding Experiences of Women in Marine Science Fields in Rhode Island

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A common theme among all STEM fields and careers is the underrepresentation of women. This study examines how women view the field of marine science, and some of the challenges they face within marine science fields. In a collaboration with researchers at MIT Sea Grant, semi-structured interviews were conducted with marine natural and social scientists in Rhode Island and Massachusetts who identify as women. Interview questions asked respondents how they got involved in their field of work, what they do in their current position, how they envision success in their position, and their views on some of the challenges and advantages to being a woman in marine science. The research team recruited scientists in both academia and governmental sectors. This poster will describe preliminary results from the first set of interviews in Rhode Island, highlighting common themes that emerged from the interviews. Direct quotations will be used where appropriate to provide richer understanding of the themes. These findings bring to light the unique challenges faced by women in marine science in the office, lab, research vessels or other environments. Findings from this study aim to bring awareness to these challenges, in order to create more equality and fairness in this particular field.