MARINE SKILL REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII MARINE OPTION PROGRAM

Blue-Water Marine Laboratory Cruise Leader Program

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BLUE-WATER MARINE LABORATORY CRUISE LEADER PROGRAM

by Maia L. Zaiger

ABSTRACT

The author found the Cruise Leader Program to be a rewarding learning experience, providing exposure and training in leadership and teaching, both on board ocean-going vessels and within the classroom.

Valuable skills connected with marine education were acquired such as teaching, organizing, administrating and leading groups in a wide variety of activities.

This program is highly recommended to those seeking skills and leadership training in marine education.
The Situation

During my early childhood at Ponape, Eastern Caroline Islands, our family spent much leisure time at the seashore, sailing or shelling. My fascination with the seashore and marine life grew after coming to Kona. In 1978, during my sophomore year at Konawaena High School, my science teacher, Mr. Arthur Renken arranged for our class to take an afternoon cruise on the RV Machias. This was a sea-going experience for high school and college students. The Blue-Water Marine Laboratory Program at the University of Hawaii runs cruises for high school students, senior citizens, and other members of the community. These cruises allow the participants to learn first-hand about marine science through experiments, samplings, and navigation. Most of these activities are supervised by Cruise Instructors, who are trained high school students.

This rewarding experience gave me a keen desire to learn all I could about marine science. Mr. Leonard Torricer suggested I apply for the summer training program. With Mr. Renken's assistance, I submitted an application and was accepted.

The Summer Training Program (STP) is an eight week oceanography course at the University of Hawaii at Manoa comprised of Physical, Biological and Chemical Oceanography, seamanship and sailing, first aid, life saving, and laboratory work. Students also attend various field trips, and a training
cruise which involves a four-day trip to the outer islands.

High school students between their sophomore and junior years are eligible to become Cruise Instructors on graduation from this program. If the student excels or shows good potential during STP, they are then given the opportunity to participate in the Cruise Instructor Program. As Cruise Instructors, they are required to teach aboard ship during the fall and spring semesters and incorporate what they have learned over the summer. Each Cruise Instructor is assigned to teach a particular station which covers one aspect of marine studies. These stations are water studies, benthos, sediments, plankton, and navigation.

I successfully graduated from the Summer Training Program and was selected as a Cruise Instructor. I had gained all the experiences that I had hoped for, which were a broad fundamental knowledge of, and relevant skills about, marine science. In addition, I learned to work with others in a productive way.

The following academic year (high school junior), I was engaged as a Cruise Instructor serving under cruise leaders Bonnie Hunter, Bert Tanoue, and Leonard Torricer. During my senior year at high school, I presented a student research paper, A Wave-Powered Generator for Hawaii (using the mechanics of natural blowholes), at the 5th Annual Secondary Student Symposium on Marine Affairs sponsored by the University of Hawaii Sea Grant Program. My paper was awarded a certificate of excellence which gave me a good feeling of accomplishment.
I enrolled at the University of Hawaii at Manoa in the fall of 1980 with a major in Travel Industry Management. During my second semester, I concluded that this program was not for me. My interests were completely oriented to the sea. This conclusion led me to explore the liberal studies program and with the help of Dr. Ruth Dawson, Director of Liberal Studies, and my faculty advisor Dr. Joseph Morgan, I was accepted in a major called Oceania Studies. This major is comprised of integrated courses covering the geology, geography, and biology of the Pacific Ocean and island ecosystems. The history, anthropology and ethnography of the region, together with marine recreational management is also an integral part of the major. As a result of the interests, knowledge and skills discovered and acquired by being part of the BML Cruise Instructor Program, my entire academic background is, and hopefully my future career will be, centered on Oceania.

While contemplating a change of major, I determined to become a part of the Cruise Leader Program of the Blue-Water Marine Laboratory. My application was accepted and I was entered on the program with (now Dr.) Sherwood Maynard, Director and Karen P. Hunt, Coordinator-BML, June 8, 1981.

The Work
Training for the position began with two weeks of orientation, material preparation and program scheduling. It was preparation for the Summer Training Program. Twenty-three high school
students from various high schools in the State participated.

Cruise Leaders function in the Summer Training Program by conducting group presentations on various marine subjects, organizing and carrying out field trip excursions, and assisting in laboratory preparation and cleaning up. In addition, they prepare evaluations of Cruise Instructors' performances, lead group activities, learn and demonstrate the BML station work, and participate in all pertinent sea-going activities.

Additional duties that I performed as Cruise Leader was to provide resource materials for student projects, guide student production of project materials, carry out responsibilities aboard ship, plan and conduct 'activity day' activities, grade student projects, and participate in special Cruise Instructor workshops. Other responsibilities include maintaining equipment, designing and conducting 'special' cruises, such as water quality and harbor cruises, and promoting the Blue-Water Marine Laboratory.

As a Cruise Leader, I performed these duties and gained a lot of experience in leadership. During the semester program I coordinated four cruises, two on Oahu, one on Maui, and one on the Kona Coast of the Big Island. My last cruise in Kona was one week of two cruises a day. Every activity of the cruise was under my supervision and direction, including the directing of the Captain and his assistant to research areas, supervising the cruise instructors in performance of their
work at their station, providing leadership in living,
sleeping and galley arrangement, settling conflicts and
promoting their leisure activities.

Evaluation

The Cruise Leader Program was a most valuable and
motivating learning experience for me. The requisite skills
needed to be an effective leader (particularly being totally
responsible for the success of the project) were present.
Dealing with subordinates and solving complex problems (both
interpersonal and operational) were challenging.
Skills in these leadership functions develop through experi-
ence. I am grateful to this program for all I have learned
and the leadership skills I have acquired. Therefore, I would
strongly recommend this experience to anyone interested in
developing leadership and management skills.

References:

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