

Whitney Curry

2023 TEEA Winner - Environmental Educator of the Year



Hired as boat captain and educator aboard the Texas A&M University (TAMU) Sea Grant's floating classroom in 2009, Captain Whitney Curry began her environmental education career by teaching school groups and providing public boat tours in Corpus Christi Bay. Her passion for teaching marine science grew so strong that when the Sea Grant program ended in 2014, Captain Whitney and her husband, Captain Bryan, acquired a 34-passenger USCG certified vessel with personal funds and established the 501(c)(3) Texas Floating Classroom.

In addition to hosting students aboard the vessel, known as the R/V Archimedes, Captain Whitney designed a Traveling Bay Touch Tank to provide on-campus experiential learning to students. This experience gives students the opportunity to interact with specimens collected from local bays.

Through her efforts, Captain Whitney has educated over 52,000 individuals from Pre-K to adults. She provides environmental education to over 50 schools, home-school programs, and summer camps educating future leaders and environmental stewards to protect and improve the continuum of ecosystems of the rivers to estuaries & bays, and the Gulf of Mexico.

Captain Whitney also customizes her curriculum to meet the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) at each grade level. She understands that students will determine the future of the environment and explains environmental concepts to be good stewards of the land, air, and water. She does this by introducing students to fish, crabs, oysters, and plankton.

Not only does she describe basic dynamics in their habitat like salinity, water pressure and buoyancy, but she also explains the environmental challenges they face like ocean acidification, pollution, erosion, and sedimentation.