

The Coastal Waters Consortium Presents:

Scientist Spotlight

Roberta Sheffer



What is your role as a scientist for CWC?

Research Technician for Anne Bernhard, Connecticut College

Can you summarize your oil spill research and describe any surprising findings you have come across?

My oil spill work consists primarily of extracting DNA and RNA from sediment samples and analyzing for them for abundance and diversity of specific bacteria through q-PCR and fragment analysis.

The Coastal Waters Consortium's mission is to assess the chemical evolution, biological degradation, and environmental stresses of petroleum and dispersant within Gulf of Mexico coastal and shelf ecosystems.

What is your educational background?

BA Biology Elon University, MS University of Hartford

What inspired you to become a scientist?

I was inspired by college courses and laboratories. My interest continued as a research assistant in different laboratories as well as a secondary school teacher.

Can you describe what you enjoy the most about conducting scientific research?

I enjoy doing experiments knowing that I have put forth my very best efforts to achieve successful results. I also enjoy trouble doing experiments that do not always work out as expected the first time around