

Speakers' Abstracts & Bios



Aron Amgrimsson



a diver since 2004, he has owned and run many world-renowned technical diving operations. His passion has taken him to some of the world's most remote diving locations, with his current focus and specialty on WWII wrecks in the Pacific Theatre with his expedition company Dirty Dozen Expeditions.

Truk Lagoon Vs. Bikini Atoll

Divers often think about Truk Lagoon and Bikini Atoll as similar locations with some kind of wreck diving on offer, but the reality could not be further from the truth. Besides a shared location in the Pacific, Truk and Bikini are vastly different for reasons that encompass politics, history, diving depths, required skill levels, the types of wrecks and more.

Thomas Anderson



Thomas has worked with Backscatter for over six years, and has a wealth of experience with a variety of cameras and underwater systems both big and small. Thomas is the Media Producer of Backscatter and enjoys teaching underwater photography above all else.

Getting Started in Underwater Photography

GoPro, smart phone, or compact camera? In this presentation I will cover the pros and cons of each system, their use for photo and video, and whether or not they can use strobes, video lights or lens accessories.

Dr. Anita George-Ares



Anita is a Women Divers Hall of Fame inductee. Her research at the Smithsonian resulted in the discovery of five new fish species. She was a research diver for National Geographic's Sleeping Shark Expeditions, Mote Marine Laboratory, and the Environmental Protection Agency. Anita contributes frequently to X-Ray International Dive Magazine.

John Ares



John is a professional photographer and has a Master's degree in Marine Sciences. While he has many photographic specialties, his passion is underwater photography. John's photographs and articles have appeared in many publications. John, an alumni PADI Course Director, teaches numerous Underwater Photography and Photoshop courses.

Egypt's Red Sea Wrecks

Egypt's reefs have claimed many ships from sail/steam cargo/passenger ships to a ferry. Germans sank other ships during World War 2. We dove on ships that sank between 1869 to 1991. We show the exteriors and interiors (including artifacts) of the Thistlegorn, Carnatic, Giannis D, Dunraven, and Salem Express wrecks.

Creative Lighting in Underwater Photography

We will discuss snoots, video lights, and ring flashes in addition to accidental and deliberate lighting. Snoot turn your lights into spotlights.

The trend of using video lights for stills is gaining in popularity. We will show how using other diver's lights can dramatically improve your images.

Jonathan Bird and Todd Kelly



Jonathan Bird is a professional underwater cinematographer and photographer. He has shot and produced over 40 films for broadcast and education. His films have appeared all over the world, on networks such as National Geographic Channel, PBS, ABC, USA Network, Discovery and even the SciFi Channel. He is the host and director of Jonathan Bird's Blue World, a family-friendly underwater science/adventure series on YouTube with over a million subscribers. He has directed three IMAX® films, including Secrets of the Sea, co-produced with legendary underwater filmmakers Howard and Michele Hall. He has won nine Emmy Awards, and published seven books of underwater photography.

Todd Kelly is an Emmy Award winning, underwater cinematographer for Jonathan Bird's Blue World. He has been diving since 1983. Based in New York City, Todd assists major broadcasters and film productions in editing and post production. He has advised on Super Bowl productions, multiple Olympic Games, and major Oscar winning film productions.

Cave Diving under the Arctic ice of Plura Valley Norway

On the edge of the Arctic circle lies a small lake surrounded by mountains, and covered in snow in ice. Below that ice, is the entrance to an extraordinary cave system. Join the Blue World team as the discuss the expedition to the edge of the world!

Rebreathers: Pros and Cons

This seminar is straight talk on the pros and cons of getting into rebreathers, from the perspective of both the new user and experienced rebreather diver. We get away from the "brochure," and look at a real-world transition to learning and using a rebreather, as well as the advantages and disadvantages.

Jeffrey Bozanic

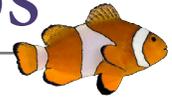


Jeff is a technical diving instructor and research scientist. He authored the seminal text Mastering Rebreathers. Jeff has participated or lead over 70 worldwide diving expeditions. His contributions were recognized with the AAUS Conrad Limbaugh Award for Scientific Diving Leadership and Beneath the Sea Diver of the Year (Science).

Using Rebreathers in Scientific Diving

Rebreathers have expanded the frontiers of ocean sciences. From deep diving, to exploration of underwater caves, collections and observations of marine organisms, and even exploring under polar icecaps, rebreathers provide scientists an ability to access and gather data that cannot be accomplished with standard scuba. Come visit this new frontier!

Speakers' Abstracts & Bios



Larry Cohen and Olga Torrey



Larry Cohen is a commercial photographer, and his underwater photos have appeared in many publications. He is the USA East Coast editor for X-Ray Magazine. Larry is a past president of the NYC Sea Gypsies and a founding member of The NY Underwater Photographic Society. See his work at www.liquidimagesuw.com

Olga Torrey is a fine artist and a Life member of the Art Students League of New York. She has taken her talent as a fine artist and applied her skills to photography both above and below the water. She has been published internationally. See her work at www.fitimage.nyc

The PNG Adventure

Join Olga Torrey and Larry Cohen for a presentation about their underwater adventures in Papua New Guinea. They will show images of healthy coral reefs and the diverse marine life. They will also discuss and show photos of the local people and their ceremonies.

Bob Collins



Bob currently serves as Director of Development at Edge Hog Dive Gear and Director of Training for Divers Supply Corp. With over 50+ years of diving experience, Bob holds both SDI Instructor Trainer Ambassador and NAUI Course Director Trainer. Bob is also a video producer, scuba show speaker, and YouTube Influencer on Divers Supply YouTube channel. He is also U.S. Army combat arms and U.S. Navy retired.

The Successful Independent Professional SCUBA Instructor

Have you wondered what it takes to become a truly successful independent Scuba Instructor? are you still trying to figure out what you're missing in your program that keeps holding you back? Join Bob as he shows you what has helped make 100% of *indies* become true scuba professionals.

Paul Cater Deaton



Paul Cater Deaton is an award-winning writer, producer, director and cinematographer. Based in Galveston, he works all over the world on film, TV, music video and documentary projects. Credits include The Travel Channel, NatGeo Wild, The Discovery Channel, HBO Documentaries and The Amazing Race.

The Only Good Shark

Will humans undo what nature has taken 400 million years to perfect? Based on Paul's TEDx Talk, this film outlines many of the dire threats facing shark populations, including overfishing, pollution and finning. Learn about the benefits of preserving them, and why "The Only Good Shark" is a live one.

Christopher Drew



Christopher Drew is the founder of Scuba Tech and videographer with Dive Voyager Expeditions. He loves instructing and filming on NJ&NY-area shipwrecks, with other research worldwide making use of digital survey. Whether training in archaeology, photogrammetry, or framing the perfect shot, he knows that every dive will uncover history and adventure!

Scanning the Depths

We introduce Neural Radiance Fields (NeRF) as a ground-breaking tool in shipwreck mapping, casting new light on underwater 3D survey. NeRF enables photorealistic reconstructions of submerged sites, opening novel chapters in maritime exploration and preservation. As we explore this, we will also compare NeRF with traditional survey methods and photogrammetry.

David Gallo



For the past 40 years David Gallo has been witness and participant in ocean exploration. He has used both submarines and robots and has led or co-led expeditions to all of the ocean basins. His TED talk, "Ocean Astonishments" has received more than 16 million views.

Deep Sea/Deep Secrets: Some thoughts about the past and future ocean exploration.

We are living on an ocean planet. More than 70 % of Earth is covered with water and to date we have explored less than 10%. What we have found in that little bit of sea gives us glimpses of the amazing and unfamiliar world that surrounds us.

Charles George, Esq.



Charles George is the managing partner of the George Law Firm LLC - Maritime Law Group - concentrating in Maritime, Corporate, Civil Litigation, White Collar Crime and Commercial and Recreational Diving Accidents and is a U.S. Merchant Marine Officer and a Technical Diving Instructor.

Ask the Dive Lawyer: Buddy Diving - What are the Legal Liabilities if Something Goes Wrong?

Diving with a buddy is the way we are taught to dive and most of the time things go well enough...But when things go wrong resulting in severe injury or death, does a Dive Buddy automatically assume any responsibility and will the law impose a duty of care on a Dive Buddy? Ask the Dive Lawyer - Charles George to explain the law and your legal responsibilities to you.

Howard & Michele Hall



For over 40 years, Howard and Michele Hall have specialized in underwater natural history film production for television and IMAX/Giant Screen. They have produced numerous award-winning television films for PBS Nature, National Geographic, the BBC, Terra Mater and other broadcasters, and are the recipients of seven Emmy Awards. Award winning IMAX films produced and/or directed by Howard and Michele include Into the Deep, Island of the Sharks,

Speakers' Abstracts & Bios



Deep Sea 3D, Under the Sea 3D, and most recently, Secrets of the Sea 3D which is opening in IMAX theaters in 2023 and 2024. Howard and Michele have participated in many other underwater IMAX productions in various capacities, including MacGillivray Freeman Films' IMAX film Coral Reef Adventure Journey to the South Pacific, Journey into Amazing Caves, and Humpback Whales. In 2011 Howard and Michele were named Divers of the Year at Beneath the Sea, and were also inducted into the International Scuba Diving Hall of Fame. They are honorees of the 2016 Hans Hass Fifty Fathoms Award, and both are recipients of the Academy of Underwater Arts and Sciences' NOGI Award. Howard is a member of the Directors Guild and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Michele is a member of the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences and the Woman Divers Hall of Fame.

Soul of the Ocean

Soul of the Ocean is a 78-minute natural history film that explores the complexity of ocean ecosystems. Spectacular underwater cinematography reveals communities of interdependent marine species and highlights the critical role biodiversity plays in maintaining a healthy ocean. Every species has a part to play. And today, as humans become increasingly intimate with the ocean, we discover that we have a part to play as well.

Jennifer Jones



Jennifer Jones is a Senior Research Scientist in the pharmaceutical industry and a recreational diver. She is an active member of DWP-Cares (Diving with a Purpose-Collective Approach to Restoring Our Ecosystems) and is an executive board member of NABS (National Association of Black Scuba Divers). Jennifer utilizes her scientific background and love for diving to help educate others on ocean conservation.

Diving With A Purpose: Collective Approach To Restoring Our Ecosystems

Scuba diving provides firsthand access to some of the most beautiful and biodiverse ecosystems on the planet. Unfortunately, it also provides a front row seat to the declining health of these systems. DWP-CARES provides recreational divers the opportunity to become citizen-scientists, playing an active role in saving our reefs.

Richie Kohler and Evan Kovacs



Richie Kohler's passion for maritime history has led him to explore some of the most challenging shipwrecks in the world, but it would be the identification of a mystery WWII German U-Boat, detailed in the bestselling Book "Shadow Divers" by Robert Kurson, that catapulted his diving career into the world of television and documentary film making. Kohler co-hosted the long running History Channel series, Deep Sea Detectives, and worked on film projects for Paramount Pictures, CBS, PBS, National Geographic and the Discovery Channel. In 2005 he headed an expedition to the worlds most famous ship wreck, RMS Titanic and most recently Kohler joined legendary under water explorer Dr. Bob Ballard documenting deep water shipwrecks in the Gulf of Mexico. This work was featured in the National Geographic/NOVA documentary film, "Nazi Attack on America". Kohler led his first expedition to HMHS Britannic for the History Channel in 2006 and returned again in 2009 on the National Geographic team. In the summer of 2015 Kohler returned

to the HMHS Britannic leading a Explorers Club flag expedition with the Russian Geographical Society, and successfully solved one of the mysteries surrounding this great ships loss.

Evan Kovacs owns and operates Marine Imaging Technologies, LLC, a company formed in 2010 that specializes in imaging the underwater world for documentary, science, and survey purposes. Evan has collaborated closely with multiple labs at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution ("WHOI") and has developed innovative camera technology for filming in challenging locations both shallow and deep. Additionally he has led numerous dive and film expeditions for broadcast television, museums, archaeologists and institutions across the world and his underwater and topside work can be seen on National Geographic, History Channel, Discovery Channel, PBS, CBC, NHK and elsewhere.

Inside the HMHS Britannic:

Join Richie Kohler for a video tour of Titanic's sister ship as never seen before! Interior footage from recent expeditions are combined with historical imagery that brings to life the largest shipwrecked passenger liner accessible to scuba divers!

Tek Dive 101: What is technical diving and why should I bother?

A detailed and at times humorous view of technical diving and why its grown so popular. What is it and why would you want to do it!

Sunday, Evan Kovacs Presents: Sea Floor to the Stars

A talk about Titanic/Britannic, Apollo 11 Engines and WWII planes with the DPAA, deep sea technology and a few big dive projects.

Katy Kohler



Caitlyn "Katy" Kohler is an advanced technical diver, since 2017. A certified trimix rebreather diver with experience in waters from Newfoundland, Canada to Chuuk, Micronesia Katy has been diving in all environs. A career firefighter/paramedic for over a decade, she's served on the local

fire district public safety dive team. With an academic background in human biology and a career in emergency medicine, she has assisted in physiological data collection in partnership with Divers Alert Network a number of both deep and remote projects. As a passionate amateur u/w photographer, she has had her work published in LDS advertisements and equipment reviews. Beyond diving, she is also an experienced ice climber, figure skater and helicopter pilot.

Journey into Expedition Diving and the Evolution of the SOP

From the perspective and experience of a career paramedic, Katy Kohler's development as a technical diver has been established through assisting on team driven technical shipwreck expeditions. Starting as in-water support, to establishing the role of team paramedic and ultimately becoming an exploration diver and the project's dive safety officer on a Explorers Club expedition to the HMHS Britannic, Katy details her experience in working her way to the bottom!

Capt. Kirby Kurkomelis



Captain Kirby Kurkomelis was the Diving Safety Officer (Instructor) for the United States Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA). President of the Eastern Dive Boat Association. Expedition Allred leader. Discovery of the XP-47b Thunderbolt plane project, Bayville Submarine project, Old Orchard Light House project, and Underwater Classroom TV series.

Diving the Bayville Submarine

The Underwater Classroom Team for six-months documented and created a video of the remains of a pre-World War-I, an American N-Class submarine off the shores of Long Island, New York.

Speakers' Abstracts & Bios



Steve & Maureen Langevin



Steve & Maureen, instructors, captains, own their dive-boat "Voyager". Maureen is a proud member of WDHOF. Through their company Dive Voyager Expeditions, specializing in scuba instruction and documentaries, they educate and entertain audiences about our rich maritime history and amazing undersea world. Christopher Drew, OWSI is also a key team member.

Learning the Dive Life with Kids Sea Camp - Bonaire

Take your family diving to the beautiful island of Bonaire, a trip tailored for the whole family. A diving paradise for learning and experienced divers. Crystal clear, calm waters bathe reefs accessible right from the stairs of Buddy Dive, or just a short boat ride to the shipwreck Hilma Hooker. {will discuss diving options for youth divers of all ages in addition to the video of the dive destination and the kids diving}

Diving Off the Grid - Sea of Cortez

Healthy marine ecosystems, Large pelagic's like the whale shark, large schools of pilot whales and dolphins. Sea Lions play with divers. Large schools of fish and macro-marine life thrive in its rocky terrain below the surface.

Natalie Lassalin and Mjee de Carufel



Award winning cinematographer and underwater explorer. Nathalie is being featured in tv shows and kids school book. Tech, cave, ccr instructor, she shares her passion as a

public speaker in 10 countries. Her explorations reveal new perspectives on our relation to the water. Fellow of WDHOF, RCGS and Explorers club. And as always supported by Mjee De Carufel

Exploring a Unique Crater Lake

Have you ever hear about the Eye of Quebec? NASA astronauts love to take pictures of it but no one filmed it inside. We had to check it out. Here is the story or the series of more than 214 millions years of stories. Deep cold dark ccr dives show us inside the Manicouagan reservoir.

Off the Beaten Tracks Expedition Tips and Tricks

Watching unique footage of Exploration in the Arctic, the Australian desert and other remote location in the wilderness, Learn about the logistic, the pitfall and the joy of underwater expeditions where no one else is around.

Susan Long and Dora Sierra



Susan Long has been a dive industry leader for almost 25 years, having spent 21 of them as President & CEO of Diving Unlimited International, Inc. (DUI). She now handles the sales and marketing for Rocio del Mar & Quino el Guardian Live-boards in Mexico. She has served

on the DEMA Board of Directors and since 2018 serves on the Board of Trustees for WDHOF. A major advocate of divers, the ocean and the industry, her passion and enthusiasm inspire others. Susan lives in San Diego, California.

Experience the Best of Mexico

Dora Sierra owns and operates Rocio del Mar and Quino el Guardian, also known as Mexico Liveaboards. She pioneered liveaboard trips to the Sea of Cortez, created Heroes del Mar, and helped to bring citizen science to Socorro. Experience the romance of diving Mexico with Dora through her presentations.

with a Southern Sea of Cortez Safari

Like a land safari, you never know what you are going to see; giant pods of dolphins, whales, huge sea lion colonies, schools of mobula rays, and countless eels, turtles, and colorful, tropical fish. On a live-aboard, divers experience intimate animal encounters, a friendly crew, and delicious food.

Heroes del Mar: How an Idea and Passion Can Make an Immediate Impact on the Ocean

How an idea and passion can make an immediate impact on the ocean. The oceans are out of time. To make conservation work, it has to be beneficial to the local communities and it needs to make an impact now. Learn how Heroes del Mar was created, how it works, and how you can do it, too.

Brian Nadwidny



I have been diving for 43 years, mostly technical since 1999. My passions are shipwrecks and exploration. Member of the Explorer's Club

Technical British Columbia Canada- The freshwater Stuff

British Columbia Canada is best known for its' spectacular saltwater diving however there is another side to technical opportunities inland.

Join me for some of my freshwater discoveries on Vancouver Island and in the inland lakes. Caves, wrecks, and the unexpected.

Dan Orr



Dan Orr, President of Dan Orr Consulting and retired President of Divers Alert Network. Dan speaks at international diver conferences and conducts webinars on a variety of diving safety subjects. He has published more than a dozen books and manuals including 101 Tips for Recreational Divers and Scuba Diving Safety.

Mistakes Divers Make

Recreational scuba diving is relatively safe but is very unforgiving of mistakes. This presentation looks at available diving accident data and reviews some significant mistakes made by divers that may compromise their safety or the safety of others. To help divers relate to these issues, case histories from actual diving accidents are used. Also, included is information and suggestions on how to mitigate risks.

Safety Issues for the Older Diver

When taking stock of our physical abilities and capabilities as we age there are absolutes that divers should be familiar with. These absolutes can affect diver safety. The good news is that with age, usually comes wisdom and that improved judgment and reasoning ability can help you compensate for most negative body function changes. Knowing that we will have some level of impairment as we age brings us to how we can make accommodations and still dive safely. Aging is a fact of life but how we handle growing older can make the difference between enjoying diving well into our Golden Years and having to prematurely hang up our fins.

Faith Ortins



Faith has spent her life educating people about diving through her love and enthusiasm for the ocean. Whether as a biology teacher, Dive Master, dive store retailer, charter operator, equipment manufacturer and distributor, she inspires people and instills in them a passion for local diving. Twenty years ago she worked with

Speakers' Abstracts & Bios



DUI to develop the first women's dry suits and now leads DUI's Sales Team worldwide. She created the DUI DOG Rally and Demo Tour Program which promotes local diving facilities across the US, teaming dive retailers together while divers test dive DUI products. Certified in 1979, she has over 2500 dives including 700 technical dives.

Exploration Diving: What is it... And What isn't it?

Do you have a thirst to explore new dive sites? To seek out new life and new ecosystems? To boldly go where no one has gone before? Well, then you may be an exploration diver! Exploration diving isn't for everyone. In this presentation, we will talk about what it means to be an exploration diver and the dive training and mental preparedness needed. The seminar will discuss different types of exploration diving as Faith shares images from expeditions conducted throughout the world- all with the goal of expanding our knowledge of and appreciation for undersea life and ecosystems found in some of the most remote parts of the world.

Michael Rothchild



I am an otolaryngologist-head & neck surgeon - past president of the American Bronchoesophological Association and the NY Pediatric Society. I am a ScubaBoard medical moderator, a technical rebreather diver, and past-president of the NYC Sea Gypsies. I have published many articles in underwater photography and in the medical literature.

Ear, nose and throat problems in diving

Many divers have ear or sinus issues, and it can be difficult to determine the source of these symptoms. There is often confusion about the anatomy and physiology of conditions like barotrauma, swimmer's ear, sinus squeeze, perilymph fistulas and inner ear DCS. This seminar will cover these troubling problem

Tips for Open Circuit Divers with a Buddy on a Rebreather

Rebreathers are increasingly popular, even at warm water recreational dive destinations. Open circuit divers may have rebreather buddies, either planned or as an "instabuddy". This seminar will review gear and procedural concerns in mixed teams, and will help the OC diver understand important issues to review in the pre-dive discussion.

Michael Salvatorezza and Christopher Weaver



Michael Salvatorezza and Christopher Weaver have been diving the waters the world since 1978. They have presented their work numerous times at Beneath the Sea, and all of the major dive conferences, and have published more than 200 articles in numerous magazines, including National Geographic Adventure.

Their work has been used to support a variety of research and educational programs. Their expeditions have taken them from the Arctic to the Antarctic and many places in between.

Malta: Magical Diving in the Mediterranean

The archipelago of the Republic of Malta lies in the heart of the Mediterranean Sea, between Sicily and Tunisia. Considered strategically important, Malta has been fought over since ancient times by numerous empires and warring nations. During World War II, the islands were ferociously attacked by the Axis powers, with relentless bombing causing tremendous deprivation and widespread destruction. Still, the Maltese held on and withstood the attacks, a testament to the pride and fortitude of the island nation. Today, Malta is emerging as a tourist mecca and one of Europe's capitals of culture. For SCUBA divers, the clear waters

of Malta abound with diving opportunities waiting to be explored, from historic shipwrecks to spellbinding blue holes. In this presentation, Eco-Photo Explorers will journey to Malta and reveal its underwater treasures.

Diving in the Land of the Pharaohs: The Egyptian Red Sea

In the shadow of the Pyramids of Giza and under the eternal gaze of the Great Sphinx, the Egyptian Red Sea beckons divers to explore its underwater treasure. Journey to these fabled lands with Eco-Photo Explorers to experience an adventure for the ages. Using photography and video, Eco-Photo Explorers will first visit ancient Egyptian monuments before exploring the jaw-dropping marine ecosystem of the Red Sea from a liveaboard dive operation.

Becky Kagan Schott



Becky is a 5-time Emmy award winning underwater cameraman and photographer whose work appears on major networks including National Geographic. She is co-owner of Liquid Productions Inc. and specializes in capturing images in extreme underwater environments including caves, under ice, deep shipwrecks, and wildlife. Her projects have taken her all over the world from the Arctic to Antarctic and many exciting locations in between.

The Art of Capturing Polar Wildlife Photography

Becky has been traveling to the Arctic and Antarctic for over a decade to capture imagery of polar bears, walrus underwater, leopard seals, penguins and captivating marine life only found in these unique environments. Becky will talk about what it takes to get the shot in challenging, cold-water conditions and share adventurous stories about these inspiring environments.

James Sears



James Sears has spent more than 45 years pursuing his passion for diving. He has served as New York State Divers Association web master, digest editor and since 2003 its President, sharing his enthusiasm for wreck diving, UW photography, marine archeology and history with his diving and shipwreck presentations.

Fresh Water Wrecks of New York

New York has thousands of fresh water wreck diving sites. These cover the entire state and include all types of dives from deep technical to beginner shore dives with temperatures ranging from very cold to near tropical. We'll take a tour around the state and look at some of these sites.

Greg Skomal



Dr. Gregory Skomal is an accomplished marine biologist, photographer, and author. For more than 40 years, he has studied the biology, physiology, and ecology of sharks. Greg's new book Chasing Shadows chronicles his personal history with white sharks. In 2017, he was the BTS Diver of the Year for Science.

Chasing Shadows: My Life Tracking the Great White Shark

The shark biologist who unexpectedly found himself in the middle of the newest white shark hotspot tells his story and the story of these magnificent creatures. Based on his book Chasing Shadows, written with Ret Talbot, Skomal highlights this remarkable conservation success story, which is loaded with cool science, drama, and controversy.

Speakers' Abstracts & Bios



Jim & Pat Stayer



The Stayer's, Explorer Club Fellows, are well-known underwater filmmakers dedicated to sharing shipwrecks, animal behavior, and remote dive destinations around the world. Jim & Pat have discovered several historic shipwrecks, co-authored 3 books, produced hundreds of multimedia presentations, and their footage has appeared on numerous major networks worldwide. They have directed several evening film festivals and are popular presenters across North America. Jim is a USCG Captain and Pat is in the Women Divers Hall of Fame. Together they have led an amazing life of adventure

Dragons, Mantas, and the Amazing Creatures of Komodo

Komodo is an amazing group of islands, where dragons roam freely, mantas soar gracefully, and exotic fish are everywhere. Brilliant corals, sea fans, and sponges carpet the reefs sheltering hundreds of crabs, nudibranchs, and shrimp with their vivid patterns and designs. It's a multi-colored jungle of life with remarkable biodiversity.

Socorro Islands: Scientific Studies and Sensational Diving

The Stayer's join a scientific expedition to Socorro Archipelago searching for new species of fish and collecting samples for DNA testing. The experience was amazing as is the diving. Several species of sharks including hammerheads,

Dr. David Vaughan and Dee Dee Vaughan Smause



Dee Dee Vaughan Smause is the co-founder of the Plant a Million Corals Foundation, an international coral restoration organization based in the Florida Keys. A diver since she was 13 and the daughter of a marine biologist, her commitment to the

oceans has molded her passion to protect and restore coral reefs. Dr. David Vaughan is the founder of the Plant a Million Corals Foundation and the scientist that discovered micro-fragmentation, a game-changing coral restoration technique used all over the world, growing coral 25-40 times faster. His accomplishments in aquaculture have earned him international recognition, including as an "Ocean Sentinel" in the Museum of Underwater Art on the Great Barrier Reef.

Coral Restoration: A Message of Hope

Summer 2023 saw unprecedented high temperatures on Florida's coral reef tract, with an alarmingly high rate of coral bleaching. This news is the latest in the harsh reality that coral reefs around the world are in trouble, but there is hope! Coral Restoration around the world has shown positive progress.

Peter Venoutsos



Peter Venoutsos has been a certified diver since 1976 and a commercial diver since 1983. His experience includes working with private underwater engineering firms, the Federal Government and the US Navy. His interests include underwater photography, shipwrecks & cave diving, with the goal of promoting diving in around the world.

Diving The South Pacific

The South Pacific has some of the most diverse sea life on the planet. From Sharks to Manta Rays and some of the healthiest coral reef systems around. So come and join us as we travel off the beaten path to exotic Islands surround by warm blue waters.

Diving Antarctica

Many divers have said they would go to the ends of the earth to dive. Join me as we literally travel to the bottom of the planet for some of the coldest diving possible. Glaciers, Icebergs and some of the most unique creatures around.

Nicole Zelek



Nicole Zelek is the outspoken dive professional who believes in harnessing digital technology to share ideas and tell stories that inspire tangible change, particularly within the diving industry. She founded innovative NYC dive school SuperDive, and established a nonprofit organization dedicated to "Underwater 4 All". Nicole invites others to question and re-imagine diving norms, to co-create a

future where safe underwater recreation and connection to water are reclaimed as crucial human rights - not luxuries.

Community Rally: Addressing Systemic Issues in Diving Together

This presentation sheds light on systemic barriers to safe underwater recreation, including freediving, mermaiding, and scuba diving. It explores local laws, global standards, and industry norms – and equips attendees with easily actionable strategies to contribute to meaningful improvements in the dive community.

Cristina Zenato



Cristina is an active shark behaviorist and ecologist, cave and ocean explorer, a champion for conservation, photographer, speaker and writer. Her work is summarized in Exploration, Education, and Conservation. She is the founder of the nonprofit People of the Water, organized to widen the distribution

of training, education, and research related to environmental issues.

Conservation: Saving Jaws

Cristina will share how her passion and desire to protect sharks started with a personal relationship with a small group of Caribbean Reef sharks and how it extends beyond the ocean and shorelines, how it has radiated in every aspect of her work and how she transfers this to new ocean ambassadors.

