



Beneath the Sea
 March 25, 26, 2023
 Meadowlands Exposition Center
 Secaucus, New Jersey



Beneath the Sea proudly presents their DIVERS OF THE YEAR

Since its inception, the Beneath the Sea Diver of the Year Award Program has honored men and women whose presence in the Dive Industry has made significant and lasting contributions to the diving community. By selecting for honor only those divers of eminence who rank in the top of their field Beneath the Sea created a fraternity of men and women whose visions are fixed on the future and whose future is tied to each other. It is with immense pride that Beneath the Sea presents the Divers of the Year: Class of 2020.

Dr. Michael Lang ... Diver of the Year for Science



Michael A. Lang, Ph.D., is an environmental physiologist, marine biologist, author, and international lecturer with experience as a scientific, recreational and commercial diver trainer. Michael's long-term interests in marine science, hyperbaric medicine and diving physiology allowed him to serve as Senior Vice President of OxyHeal Health Group, Senior Research Fellow at The Ocean Foundation, and currently as Co-Director of the San Diego Center of Excellence in Diving and Research Faculty in the UC San Diego Emergency Medicine Department. Lang served as director for nonprofit organizations, including the American Academy of Underwater Sciences, Divers Alert Network, the Academy of Underwater Arts & Sciences/NOGI, chaired Undersea and Hyperbaric Medical Society committees, and advised as expert consultant the National Science Foundation, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Geological Survey, The Nature Conservancy, and Conservation International. Former service as Marine Collector/Curator at San Diego State University, Director of the Smithsonian Marine Science Network, Smithsonian Scientific Diving Officer, and National Science Foundation Polar Diving Safety Officer. He is fluent in five languages, has published over 60 scientific papers, popular articles and presented 350 seminars/papers on current marine science and diving safety topics. Lang is the chair and chief editor of 24 international, interdisciplinary symposia and workshop proceedings. His research concerns marine science with special reference to the development and use of new technologies for working safely under water in extreme and remote environments. Dr. Lang's 2013 Smithsonian book is titled "Research and Discoveries: The Revolution of Science through Scuba."

Barry Lipsky ... Diver of the Year for Service



As President of the Long Island Divers Association, (LIDA) since 2011, Barry worked to preserve and enrich the diving community of Long Island. A notable accomplishment during his presidency is the preservation and restoration of the Old Ponquogue Bridge located in Hampton Bays, NY. This site, considered by many dive enthusiasts as one of Long Island's premier dive sites, was badly damaged by Hurricane Sandy in 2012. LIDA, the Town of Southampton Trustees, and the Hampton Bays Civic Association sought to educate and guide Town of Southampton officials on how to restore and preserve this underwater site rather than tear it down. Barry was also successful in granting divers' access to "Secret Beach" which was closed to the public. He petitioned for the Village of Greenport to give divers access in exchange for keeping the beach area clean, doing underwater surveys, and examining underwater pipes in surrounding waters. LIDA was also gifted the rebuilding of a staircase leading to the historic British warship HMS Culloden that sank in 1781. One of his most substantial successes in his role as LIDA president was the creation of the Twelve Mile Reef. Barry and LIDA, worked in conjunction with Governor Cuomo and his office, to produce an artificial reef off Shinnecock and Moriches, Long Island. It is Barry's passion for the water and all that lies beneath it that has driven him persistently and resolutely to protect and preserve Long Island's waters for all divers.

Brian Skerry ... Diver of the Year for Arts



Brian Skerry is a photojournalist specializing in marine wildlife and underwater environments. Since 1998 he has been a contributing photographer for National Geographic Magazine covering a wide range of subjects and stories. In 2014 he was named as a National Geographic Society Photography Fellow and named a National Geographic Society Storytelling Fellow in 2017. In 2017 he was also awarded the title of Rolex National Geographic Explorer of the Year. For National Geographic Magazine, Brian has covered a wide range of stories, from the harp seal's struggle to survive in frozen waters to the alarming decrease in the world's fisheries to dolphin intelligence, all cover stories. Brian has also worked on assignment for or had images featured in magazines such as Sports Illustrated, The NY Times, The Washington Post, Paris Match, Esquire, and Audubon. Brian is the author of 11 books including the acclaimed monographs Ocean Soul and SHARK. Brian is the Explorer-In-Residence and a Trustee at the New England Aquarium, a founding member of the International League of Conservation Photographers, Director of The New England Ocean Odyssey for The Conservation Law Foundation and a Fellow National of The Explorers Club. He also serves as a Nikon Ambassador, a Marine Fellow with Conservation International, serves on the World Wildlife Fund's National Council and WWF's Marine Leadership Council.

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Contact: Maria Hults, Multi-Mediahouse, 631.728.2285, mediahouse5309@Gmail.com