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news from the NAIS school community

the **REPORTER**

WINTER 2010

Extreme teaching

From mountain heights to ocean depths

Winter 2010

How did a Colorado-Rocky-Mountain-High teacher dude end up deep-sea diving in pursuit of the rare Goosefish? Connections like these come naturally for Christopher Imhof, a Montessori School of Denver teacher who was selected to join the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Teacher at Sea Program.

"Colorado — landlocked as it is — is the headwaters to at least three major rivers that empty into both the Pacific and Atlantic," Imhof explains. "It's important to connect students here to the oceans because we are connected there via these rivers." Colorado also has a rich trove of fossils — formed when it was at one time beach to prehistoric seas. And finally, says Imhof, the connection between Colorado and the ocean is inescapable as water is one of the world's critical resources.

During the summer of 2009, Imhof was aboard the research vessel *Nancy Foster* working with scientists from NOAA, the U.S. Geological Survey, the University of North Carolina, the United Kingdom, and Denmark. The team was observing and sampling deepwater corals with remotely operated underwater vehicles (ROVs), conducting water sampling, side-scan sonar mapping, and more.

Imhof was in charge of posting logs, blogs, and video linking with schools, including his own. The underwater experience continued to stretch Imhof's talents, and allowed him to mine the depths for material for his students. "This is an exciting opportunity as well as one that reflects many of the ideas of a 21st-century independent school," he said.

It's clear that NOAA picks top talent for its Teacher at Sea program. In 2008, Imhof was chosen as an NAIS Teacher of the Future, partnering with a school in Zambia on a water project for the Challenge 20/20 program.

To learn more about NOAA's Teacher at Sea program, visit: <http://teacheratsea.noaa.gov/>, and to read Imhof's blog, visit: <http://naturalsciences.org/microsites/education/deepsea/index.html>.

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