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For immediate release

Camden Youth Participate in Youth Summit in Washington, D.C.

The New Jersey Academy for Aquatic Sciences is proud to announce that five students from its Community and Urban Science Enrichment, CAUSE, program traveled to Washington D.C. to participate in the 4th Coastal America Partnership Student Summit on the Oceans and Coast.



The CAUSE teens analyzing fish stomachs for horseshoe crab larvae

Students from the US, Mexico, and Canada presented videos and short presentations on coastal issues and the promotion of ocean stewardship. The CAUSE youth presented research they conducted on horseshoe crab larvae. The CAUSE Interns have been working in the New Jersey Academy for Aquatic Sciences' lab with Dr. Alex Vagelli on a project related to horseshoe crab larvae found in the stomachs of small NJ coastal fish. The teens examined the stomach contents of these fish in order to get a better idea of the number of larvae present and when they are likely to be found. They documented their work on a video about the experience

(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=52R8Oxun9UA>).

Later in the day, the students had an opportunity to meet with scientists from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). CAUSE teens also met representatives from U.S. Congressman Andrews and Senator Lautenberg's offices. Although the youth found the glimpse into Capitol Hill fascinating, it was their own abilities that made the biggest impact. One student felt that she was "most proud of standing up in front of so many people and being able to explain our research."

CAUSE is a year-round program for high school students from Camden, New Jersey. During the year, the teens learn aquatic and other sciences, participate in workshops on 21st century

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workforce and leadership skills, and become paid employees of the Academy teaching Summer Science Camps to Camden elementary and middle school students. The teens are mentored through the program by caring staff and become mentors themselves for younger children. Twenty-five to forty high school students participate yearly. **100% of CAUSE youth have graduated from high school and in the past nine years 100% have enrolled in college.**

The New Jersey Academy for Aquatic Sciences is in its 24th year of furthering its mission “to promote the understanding, appreciation, and protection of aquatic life and habitats through research, education, and youth development programs.” In performing this mission, the Academy strives to be a responsible member of the community, assisting in its economic and social redevelopment by providing opportunities for education, enrichment and employment.

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