

Refuge Kids Make a Splash at Tsunami Bowl



Moderator: "Tossup question – Biology
Which of these is NOT a bird?
w. Cormorant
x. Murre
y. Greenling
z. Fulmar"

BUZZ

Moderator: "A Captain"

A Captain: "y"

Moderator: "Correct, a greenling is a fish.
Bonus question – Geology - to team A

"Why are most atolls in the Pacific Ocean?"

Team A (after 15 seconds of group deliberation): "Atolls are formed when a coral reef forms around a volcanic island and the island then sinks or is eroded so that the original volcanic island is below sea level. Coral reefs only form in tropical waters and most volcanic islands are found in the Pacific Ocean."

Moderator: "Great answer, next question..."

Imagine the game show *Jeopardy*, with 20 teams of high school students from around the state including the refuge communities of Unalaska, Seward and Homer competing to see who is the most savvy about the world's oceans and watersheds. This is what happens at the Tsunami Bowl held in Seward every March and at other Ocean Sciences Bowl competitions around the country. The winning teams from the regional contests advance to the National Ocean Sciences Bowl.

While no refuge teams won this year they did place, learn a lot, and have fun meeting and competing with kids from throughout the state. Homer fielded teams for the first time with the "Twilight Zone" placing 3rd overall; and the "Abyssal Guessers" placing 13th. Seward's "PodCasts" took 5th and Unalaska's "Mighty Molluscs" took 11th up four places from last year. The unstoppable Juneau Douglas High won the competition as usual.

For fifteen years, the National Ocean Sciences Bowl has been broadening both teachers' and students' knowledge of biology, geology, physical oceanography, chemistry, technology, marine policy, and even social sciences to give students a full understanding of the marine environment and watersheds that feed it. The competition includes teams of 4-5 students who have to study and answer quick tossup questions, more complex bonus questions, and very complicated multi-part team challenge questions from all of these marine science disciplines. The national sponsors implement an ongoing evaluation that follows alumni of the competition to learn what their career choices are as adults, and a large number of them are heading into scientific careers.

Since 2008 the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge has been actively involved in the "Tsunami Bowl", as judges and this year as co-coaches for the Homer teams. Scholarships are offered to competitors through UAFs College of Ocean Sciences and through fishing and transportation industry groups. For more information on this year's competition visit the Tsunami Bowl website at <http://seagrant.uaf.edu/nosb/index.html>