

The successful candidate will create a compelling 1000-word essay describing how she hopes to make a difference in the world through her passion for the oceans.

The bow of the ship appeared out of nowhere, like a giant being awoken from sleep. It was dark and cold, but I felt completely at peace with this strange underwater environment. I swam to the port side of the sunken vessel and came face to face with a large octopus. We both froze and looked each other in the eye. A moment later, my dive buddy came up behind me and frightened the graceful eight legged creature into the dark insides of the vessel. This was my first dive as a SCUBA diver, eight years ago. From that moment on, I knew I was destined for a life beneath the water. I was so enthusiastic to spend as much time exploring the ocean as possible that I became a Divemaster to help others appreciate the same experiences that I have had. My studies throughout college have led me to a career in underwater archaeology and conservation. I became intensely interested in preserving the excavated objects and the wreck itself. Some may describe my love for the ocean as obsessive but I feel it is comparable to the relationship between a human being and the spiritual world: completely mystical yet peaceful.

Using my experiences and methods that I attained from the University of West Florida (UWF) and Flinders University, Australia, I feel that I can make a contribution to the world by discovering and documenting human kind's history that has existed beneath the ocean's depths for centuries. The international team that I was able to work with in Australia, during a maritime archaeology field school, gave me a deep appreciation and respect for other cultures and traditions. These experiences have allowed me to communicate with professionals across the globe and collaborate on ideas and discoveries. I hope to make a difference in the world through my love and passion for the ocean by educating and demonstrating the intense beauty that exists in the mysterious depths of the oceans through cultural heritage.



During my internship with the *H.L. Hunley* project I was able to share conservation and archaeology with the public by participating in public tours of the facility. This would include displaying the objects, performing conservation procedures and discussing the methods while the public observed. I feel that this allowed the public to have a better understanding and appreciation for archaeological objects and sites which is crucial to the sustention of our cultural heritage. A publication was released in the Wet Organic Archaeological Material Journal- ICCROM that is entitled, "*A Preliminary Investigation into the Effects of Diammonium Citrate on Waterlogged Leather from the H.L. Hunley Submarine (1864)*", in which I was a co-author. By publishing research and knowledge of new scientific techniques, the professional academia world will benefit considerably. I believe that through knowledge and experience, humans will begin to



appreciate the precious gift that Mother Nature has given us, the oceans. By completing my Bachelor and Masters degrees in underwater archaeology and conservation, I hope to be able to better understand past cultures through their material remains lost to the sea.

Part of the ability to educate the public is through museum displays and presentations. During my position as a laboratory assistant at UWF, I designed and arranged showcases for the Institute of Archaeology Museum. Currently, the topic of my dissertation focuses on a collection of Roman shoes located at the London Archaeological Archive Resource Center (LAARC) where I participate in open days for the public. I respect the underwater environment and have participated in educating the public on how they can preserve submerged historical sites, such as shipwrecks, through my experience as a PADI Divemaster. In this position I was able to assist the Instructor in underwater classroom sessions and through site tours of new diving locations.

Using my experience, I am able to teach others an appreciation for submerged cultural heritage. My intense love for the oceans will excite others to understand that the ocean contains the key to human kind's past and I feel that I can contribute to opening that door of knowledge.

With my experiences of professionally excavating and surveying an underwater archaeological site, as well as, being able to handle and prevent deterioration of materials, I am able to make a difference in the world. I consider diving an integral part of my life and enjoy partaking in SCUBA diving as a recreational activity as well as professionally in maritime archaeology.

In the future, I hope to conduct laboratory tours and give public presentations on the research that I will undertake during my internship with the *Mary Rose* Project. The experience that I hope to gain with the *Mary Rose* will increase my conservation skills; therefore, improving myself as a conservator and archaeologist. External funding and grants must be secured in order for this internship to commence. By joining the *Mary Rose* team, I hope to improve general scientific knowledge on the relationships between corrosion products and organic materials. Utilizing my past experience with the Civil War submarine, the *H.L. Hunley*, will allow me to continue crucial groundbreaking research into the interaction of corrosion products with waterlogged organic artifacts. The *Mary Rose* presents an exceptional opportunity to work with remarkably well preserved material from the early 16th century. Research into the removal of detrimental corrosion products from sensitive organic materials will allow me to apply skills that I will learn with the *Mary Rose* to future projects; therefore, I will contribute to the conservation and material science research of archaeological materials by continuing to work with a variety of organic artifacts from different time periods. The diffusion of knowledge to the public and professional community is crucial to the development of conservation as a science. Research that will be conducted at the *Mary Rose* is expected to be presented at future conferences to contribute to the advancement of corrosion product research. Conservation research with the *Mary Rose* and professional development will not be possible without the necessary funding.

Thank you for considering me for the Dolores E. Fisher Award.