



May 10, 2006

Dear NOSB[®] Student Participant:

I would like to personally invite you to participate in an exciting National Ocean Sciences Bowl (NOSB[®]) study. As a past participant of NOSB you may understand NOSB's focus on increasing awareness of science, and particularly ocean science, careers. Now that NOSB is entering its 10th year, an important task for us is to capture information about the college and career selections of past and present NOSB participants. If you join us as part of this study, you will be given special access through an NOSB alumni web page to complete on-line surveys, participate in online discussions and receive the CORE Weekly newsletter to keep you abreast of the most current issues occurring in the ocean science community. Your participation will be extremely important in obtaining required data necessary to establish future funding and ensure sustainability of the NOSB program.

As you know, over the past decade the NOSB has been a highly successful and exciting competition for high school students across the country. Sponsored by the Consortium for Oceanographic Research and Education (CORE) and the National Ocean Partnership Program (NOPP), the competition has grown from 16 to 25 regional competitions hosted at various institutions throughout the United States. More than 2000 students and 400 schools now actively take part in the competition each year. Over 14,000 students have participated in NOSB since its inception.

A prior study conducted between 2002 and 2004 looked at whether the NOSB was "just a competition" or whether it was something more substantial and enduring than simply a weekend program. The research found that the NOSB is significantly more substantive and that the program has developed into a "complex learning community." The results revealed that NOSB provides a platform to inspire and motivate students toward leadership and involvement in ocean sciences and environmental stewardship; contributes to students' career path and college decision-making by engaging them in a social network that provides specific information about careers and entry pathways to those careers; and facilitates student development of leadership and academic-focused skills that are highly transferable to other academic and vocational settings.

But now we need to find out from YOU where you are going. I hope that you will consider becoming part of the NOSB alumni community. Please join by going to <http://www.coexploration.org/nosb> and completing the online registration form. Your participation in this important study will help sustain and expand the NOSB program as well as help to bring the nation closer to obtaining an "ocean literate" society.

Sincerely,

Dick West
President