

FLORIDA CHAPTER THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

Outstanding Educator Award

The Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society is pleased to announce that **Andrea Hutwagner** is the recipient of the 2024 Outstanding Educator Award.



Andrea Hutwagner is an award-winning and seasoned environmental educator that has delivered marine science education to thousands of children in Florida through her work in the classroom and in the field. Following her tenure as Department Head of Science at G-Star School of the Arts in Palm Beach County where she taught IB Environmental Systems & Society, IB Biology, Marine Biology and Environmental Science, Andrea now leads the STEM Education programming at Loggerhead Marinelifelife Center (LMC). In her current role, Andrea delivers ocean education through a variety of innovative, engaging lessons and experiences at LMC's coastal campus, in K-12 classrooms and in the field.

It is through Andrea's curricula and STEM programs that over

10,000 students visit the Outdoor Sea Turtle Hospital at LMC annually to learn about Florida's coastal ecosystems and meet current sea turtle patients in active rehabilitation, during which many students see the ocean and its marine life for the very first time. Andrea was recently honored with the Presenting Excellence in Expanded Learning Award by Prime Time of Palm Beach County for her flagship Diving into Ocean Connections after school curriculum that delivers a series of six weekly in-class ocean education lessons to an additional 2,300 students annually in underserved communities and Title I Schools, supporting academic learning and promoting environmental stewardship during out-of-school time hours. It is also under Andrea's leadership that, in

partnership with the School District of Palm Beach County, LMC was selected to serve as their first-choice Community Experience Provider by seven middle school Principals across Palm Beach County in 2023. Andrea is a thought-leader and environmental advocate who has dedicated her career to connecting the next generation of diverse ocean leaders to quality, engaging environmental education across Florida. One of the many examples of her state-wide conservation education impacts is the “Unwrap the Waves” seasonal candy wrapper recycling initiative, encouraging more than 30,000 students each year to be mindful of their holiday waste and take an active (and fun) role in ensuring they are properly recycled. In its 8th year, the student led “Unwrap the Waves” initiative has saved over 2 million candy wrappers from the landfill and empowered 200,000+ students to participate.

As stated in her nomination letter, “On a personal level, Andrea is a kind and caring person. Her regard for her peers and those she teaches shines through her teaching and is reflected amongst her team.”