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NH Sea Grant Extension Educator Receives Outstanding Outreach Award

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NH Sea Grant

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DURHAM, N.H. - Rollie Barnaby, a commercial fisheries extension educator for NH Sea Grant, is the recipient of the 2008 Northeast Sea Grant Outstanding Outreach Individual Award. Barnaby, who recently retired, received this award for his role in creating and fostering the Northeast Consortium (NEC).

The Northeast Sea Grant Outstanding Outreach Achievement Award is given out every two years to provide peer recognition of outstanding outreach programs developed by individuals or with multiple collaborators. The Northeast Sea Grant network is composed of programs in the states of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island and New York.

The NEC is a collaboration of the University of New Hampshire, the University of Maine, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. Since 2000, the NEC has funded more than 170 collaborative research projects involving commercial fishermen, fishing industry associations and businesses, scientists, students and research institutions.

Barnaby's previous work as a commercial fisherman made him aware of the animosities between fisheries regulators, environmentalists, scientists and fishermen.

"When I started working at UNH as a Sea Grant extension educator, I realized very quickly that one of the most important things I could do for fisheries management, marine users and the marine environment was to get stakeholders talking and working together," Barnaby explains.

Barnaby helped create the NEC in 1999 as a way to encourage and fund effective, equal partnerships among commercial fishermen, scientists and other stakeholders to engage in collaborative research and monitoring projects in the Gulf of Maine and Georges Bank.

"The Northeast Consortium is a place where scientists, fishermen, managers, environmentalists and concerned citizens can really talk with each other," Barnaby says. "They are solving problems and answering questions about fisheries and the marine environment. It is where the stakeholders learn to work together and respect each other."

"During my 20 years as a Sea Grant extension educator, the Northeast Consortium is definitely the project of which I am most proud," Barnaby adds.

