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Great Bay Coast Watch Honors Local Volunteers

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Dec. 9, 2005

DURHAM, N.H. -- Several Great Bay Coast Watch volunteers have received awards for their service to the water quality monitoring program.

Johanna Hock of Newmarket received the Great Bay Coast Watch Blue Water Award for exemplary service in monitoring both water quality and phytoplankton during the 2005 season. Pam Sampson of Dover and Heather Hochuli of Nashua were also honored for their contributions. Claire Antaya of Hampton received the student volunteer of the year award.

Awards were presented at the Chili and Chowdah Fest, an annual event that celebrates the more than 100 volunteers that donate their time to Great Bay Coast Watch.

Sponsored by UNH Cooperative Extension and NH Sea Grant, Great Bay Coast Watch is a volunteer effort dedicated to protecting the long-term health of New Hampshire's coastal waters and estuarine systems through monitoring and education projects. Founded in 1989, the Watch now monitors water quality at 21 sites and phytoplankton levels at six sites around Great Bay.

This year the New Hampshire Estuaries Project provided funding for Great Bay Coast Watch to assist the NH Department of Environmental Service's Shellfish Program in monitoring shellfish-growing areas for water quality and red tide. In addition, Great Bay Coast Watch received funding from the New Hampshire Coastal Program, the town of Greenland, and a number of small private donations. For more information about making donations or volunteering with the program, contact Great Bay Coast Watch coordinator Ann Reid (603-749-1565; ann.reid@unh.edu).