UNOLS 2020 Annual Meeting

US Academic Research Fleet COVID-19 Response

UNOLS Office
COVID-19 Response & Return to Operations

- Pause in Operations – 17 March, return to ops ~1 July
- Guidance for restarting science operations developed & promulgated
  - Operators conduct risk assessments, implement risk mitigation, develop outbreak management plans for each science cruise
  - Joint decision with Chief Scientist on Go / No-Go
  - Risk Reviews with funding agencies & UNOLS Office
- Each institution developed Risk Management Plans that met their own particular needs
- On-line Meetings with Marine Superintendents & Principal Investigators to review updated guidance
- Focus on high priority (“Priority 1”) / low risk cruises
- 72 cruises in process or successfully completed!
- One cruise cancelled due to positive test before planned departure
- Resources – see UNOLS Coronavirus Webpage
- Many cruises deferred to 2021
  - ~1/3 of scheduled 2020 fleet days lost/deferred
- Monthly Check-Ins with Marine Superintendents
Background for UNOLS COVID-19 Considerations and Guidance Cont’d

- Real world events
  - U.S. Navy Vessels
  - F/V American Dynasty & sister ships
- CDC, WHO, ICS, USCG
- GW Medical
- UW Medical
- Discovery Health
UNOLS COVID-19 Considerations and Guidance

- Pre-cruise planning
- Preparing for Operations
- Risk Assessment & Mitigation
  - Marine Superintendent & Chief Scientist
- Self Isolation and Testing
  - Strict self isolation
  - Testing results timelines
- Final Risk Determination – Go / No-Go
  - Joint decision
- Agency concurrence
- Continually reviewing about virus progress & adjusting the Guidelines as necessary

Exceptional collaborative effort by Ship Operators, Scientists & Federal Agencies to make science happen!
Life onboard ship in these COVID times

- Masks required
- Social Distancing
- Increased cleaning regimes
- Lots of hand-washing
- Single state rooms when possible
- No/limited self-service of food & drinks
- Meals in shifts – reduced mess deck seating
- Limits to personnel in the gym & lounges
- Relax protocols after 14 days underway if no issues