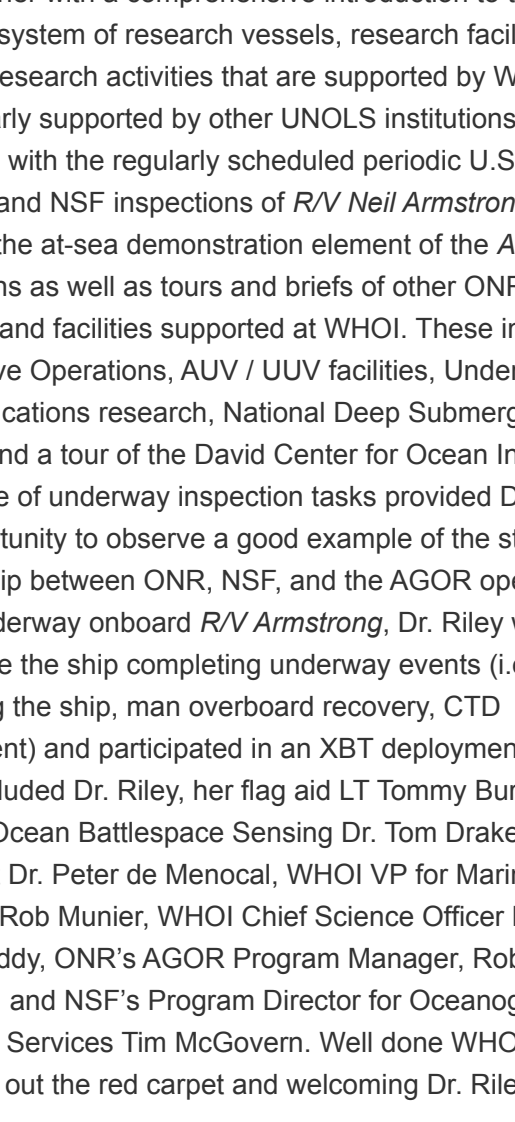


Community Updates

Scheduling Update

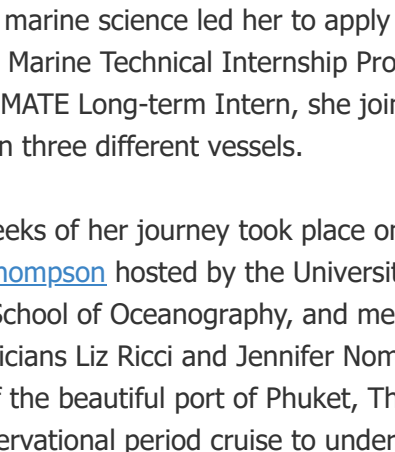
2026 ship scheduling continues to evolve – especially now that NSF and NOAA funding bills have been passed in Washington DC. Long term high priority projects, such as OOI and GO-SHIP, are back in the mix as the ship schedulers continue to adjust 2026 ship schedules. It is recommended that Principal Investigators who have been anticipating going to sea in 2026 check in with the ship scheduler(s) they have been working with and/or doug@unols.org to confirm the status of their project if they haven't done so recently. Additionally, the ship schedulers are beginning work on preliminary 2027 ship schedules.

Commander of the Office of Naval Research Visits Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution



CNR Visit to R/V Armstrong. Dr. D. McGillicuddy, Dr. Rachel Riley, Dr. Peter de Menocal, Rob Munier, Dr. Tom Drake, LT Tommy Burns
Photo credit: WHOI

WHOI welcomed Dr. Rachel Riley, the newly appointed Chief of Naval Research (CNR), on 17 December 2025. The visit provided her with a comprehensive introduction to the broad ONR ecosystem of research vessels, research facilities, and ongoing research activities that are supported by WHOI and are similarly supported by other UNOLS institutions. The visit coincided with the regularly scheduled periodic U.S. Navy INSURV and NSF inspections of *R/V Neil Armstrong*. It included the at-sea demonstration element of the *Armstrong's* inspections as well as tours and briefs of other ONR-related research and facilities supported at WHOI. These included: WHOI Dive Operations, AUV / UUV facilities, Underwater Communications research, National Deep Submergence Facility, and a tour of the David Center for Ocean Innovation. The range of underway inspection tasks provided Dr. Riley the opportunity to observe a good example of the strong partnership between ONR, NSF, and the AGOR operators. While underway onboard *R/V Armstrong*, Dr. Riley was able to observe the ship completing underway events (i.e. anchoring the ship, man overboard recovery, CTD deployment) and participated in an XBT deployment. The tour group included Dr. Riley, her flag aid LT Tommy Burns, ONR's Head of Ocean Battlespace Sensing Dr. Tom Drake, WHOI President Dr. Peter de Menocal, WHOI VP for Marine Facilities Dr. Rob Munier, WHOI Chief Science Officer Dr. Dennis McGillicuddy, NSF's AGOR Program Manager, Rob Sparrock, and NSF's Program Director for Oceanographic Technical Services Tim McGovern. Well done WHOI – thanks for rolling out the red carpet and welcoming Dr. Riley to the fleet!



Dr. Rachel Riley & WHOI Marine Tech Croy Carlin prepare to launch XBT.
Photo credit: Rob Munier

New UNOLS Institutions

Three new universities became UNOLS member institutions in the 2025 UNOLS elections. Welcome [Kent State University](#), [Plattsburgh University](#) and [University of Southern Alabama/Dauphin Island Sea Lab](#). Follow the links above to learn more about the institutions and their marine science programs. We are excited for these quality institutions to become a part of the UNOLS Community and are looking forward to their participation.

Congratulations to Micah Barton for Completing the 2025 UNOLS-MATE Marine Technical Long-term Internship!

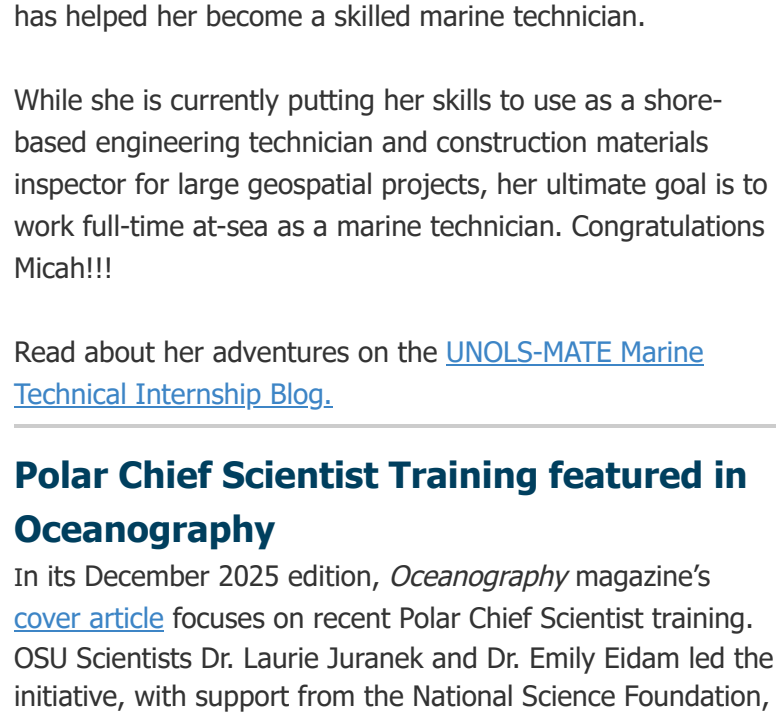


Photo credit: Micah Barton

Micah Barton graduated from the [Marine Technology Program](#) at Cape Fear Community College (CFCC). During her studies, she spent a lot of time working aboard the [R/V Cape Hatteras](#). These educational experiences coupled with her deep love for marine science led her to apply to the 2025 UNOLS-MATE Marine Technical Internship Program. As the 2025 UNOLS-MATE Long-term Intern, she joined various expeditions on three different vessels.

The first 8 weeks of her journey took place on the [R/V Thomas G. Thompson](#) hosted by the University of Washington School of Oceanography, and mentored by Marine Technicians Liz Ricci and Jennifer Nomura. The ship set sail out of the beautiful port of Phuket, Thailand for an intensive observational period cruise to understand the multiscale atmospheric and oceanic interaction processes that contribute to the Indian monsoon. Micah beautifully describes the breathtaking experience of this rigorous expedition in her weekly posts: *"Science never sleeps on board, not when there is data to be collected."*

Micah's next journey took her to the Arctic Region on the [US Coast Guard Cutter Healy](#). She spent 5 weeks working with Marine Technicians from the University of Washington, Oregon State University and the UC San Diego Scripps Institution of Oceanography providing Ship-based Technical Support in the Arctic (STARC). Micah's primary mentors were Maya Thompson and Tyler Peterson. "As an ice breaker, the Healy is specially equipped to [sail through] areas that other ships are seldom able to traverse," making the many transits, training sessions and troubleshooting activities in this extreme environment nothing short of thrilling.

For the final leg of her long-term journey, Micah joined the [R/V Point Sur](#) which happens to be the sister ship of the R/V Cape Hatteras where she completed a lot of her CFCC training. Hosted by the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium (LUMCON) and mentored by Marine Technician Grace Fulton, she spent 4 weeks in the Gulf of Mexico performing a wide variety of marine technical duties including supporting ROV operations, deploying CTD casts, and Megacoring (collecting sediment). Watch some of the [ROV footage](#) that was captured during one of her expeditions. Micah completed a very successful long-term internship, giving it her very best every step of the way. She performed deck operations, maintained and operated oceanographic instruments, and gained valuable hands-on experience that has helped her become a skilled marine technician.

While she is currently putting her skills to use as a shore-based engineering technician and construction materials inspector for large geospatial projects, her ultimate goal is to work full-time at-sea as a marine technician. Congratulations Micah!!!

Read about her adventures on the [UNOLS-MATE Marine Technical Internship Blog](#).

Polar Chief Scientist Training featured in Oceanography

In its December 2025 edition, *Oceanography* magazine's [cover article](#) focuses on recent Polar Chief Scientist training. OSU Scientists Dr. Laurie Juranek and Dr. Emily Edam led the initiative, with support from the National Science Foundation, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the University of Alaska Fairbanks to conduct comprehensive training for early career scientists who focus on Polar science. Polar Chief Scientist Training cruises were conducted in 2023 and 2024 on *R/V Sikuliaq* and *USCGC Healy* respectively. Prior to each cruise, an extensive agenda of workshops and classroom training were completed. These highly successful training opportunities follow in the footsteps of previous seagoing Chief Scientist training events that have been conducted in the Academic Research Fleet since 2011 thanks to the unwavering support of the federal agencies, especially NSF as the primary funding source for these initiatives. In addition – these valuable training opportunities would not happen without the incredible support of the ARF ship operators and their superb, enthusiastic crews and marine technicians, and the science community leaders who step up to initiate and lead the Chief Scientist training cruises.

Committee News

UNOLS 2025 RVTEC Meeting

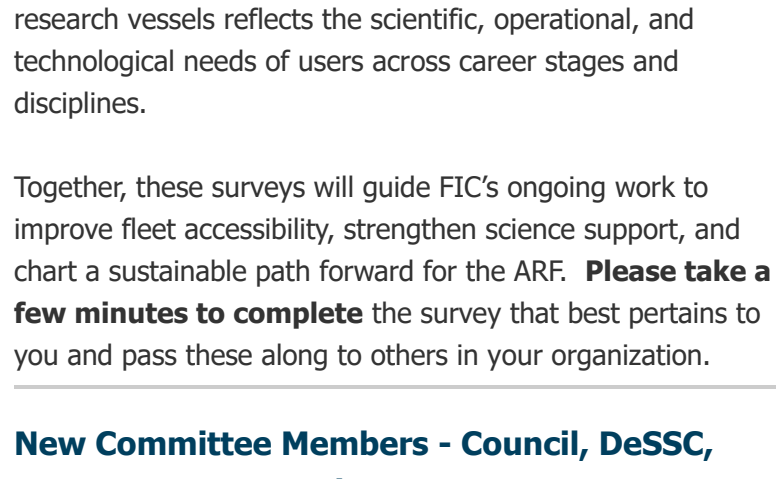


Photo credit: Nick Benz

The 2025 UNOLS Research Vessel Technical Enhancement Committee (RVTEC) Meeting, held November 3–7, 2025, at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in San Diego, California, was a fantastic week and an important milestone for the RVTEC community. With **170 people attending in person and 28 joining virtually**, the year's meeting had the **largest in-person turnout yet**, reflecting the strong engagement and continued momentum across the research vessel technical community.

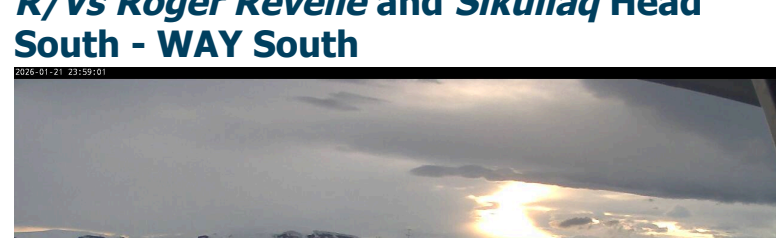
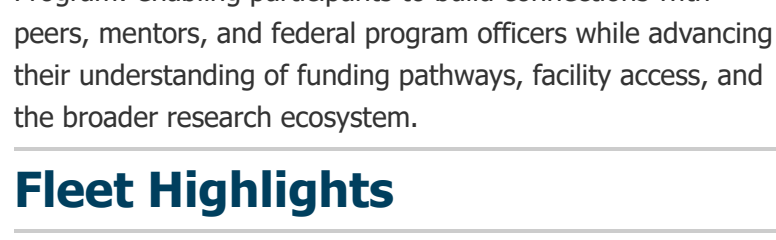
Over five full days, marine technicians, engineers, operators, and program partners from across the U.S. Academic Research Fleet came together to share experiences, learn from one another, and strengthen the connections that keep science at sea running smoothly. The Scripps campus provided a beautiful and welcoming setting that made it easy to collaborate, learn, and reconnect with colleagues, both familiar faces and new ones.

The program included a solid mix of plenary sessions, technical breakouts, and hands-on training opportunities. Conversations covered fleet initiatives, emerging technologies, operational best practices, and common technical challenges faced across the fleet. Specialized workshops and trainings, such as rigging gear inspection and basic rigging, a Kongsberg SIS workshop, and a Fortinet SD-WAN workshop focused on vessel networking and cybersecurity, offered practical, technician-focused content that attendees could take straight back to their ships and shops.

Just as important as the technical sessions were the opportunities to connect as a community. Highlights included a lively icebreaker reception at Birch Aquarium, a networking dinner at the Ida and Cecil Green Faculty Club, and an exclusive tour of the *R/V Sally Ride* and the Scripps Nitelab Marine Facility, giving participants a behind-the-scenes look at one of the world's premier oceanographic research operations.

The energy throughout the week was consistently positive and welcoming. From first-time attendees to long-time RVTEC regulars, the record turnout and active participation reinforced the value of RVTEC as a place to learn, share ideas, and support one another across the fleet.

A heartfelt thank you to Scripps Institution of Oceanography, all of the presenters and trainers, and everyone who attended and contributed to making the 2025 RVTEC Meeting such a success. We're excited to build on this momentum and look forward to seeing the community again in 2026.



Annual and Council Meetings

The 2025 UNOLS Annual Meeting, held on November 12, 2025, in Alexandria, VA, brought together representatives from academic institutions, the UNOLS Council, and UNOLS committees for a full day of program updates, fleet planning, and community discussion. Sessions throughout the day highlighted fleet operations for 2025 and 2026, early-career initiatives, internship and outreach programs, and updates on key facilities including regional and global research vessels. Committee reports covered Arctic research capabilities, technical enhancements, data repository activities, and broader coordination with the Ocean Sciences Board.

The UNOLS Annual meeting was followed by a ½ day focused Fall UNOLS Council meeting. Council members engaged in a productive Q&A with agency representatives, exploring current policies, and future planning priorities. The group then reviewed outcomes from the previous day's Annual Meeting and moved into substantive updates, including the Seafloor Sampling Working Group, global-class recapitalization advocacy efforts, and best practices for fleet reporting and accountability. Discussions on ARF efficiency, cost-saving alternatives, and ongoing NOMEAC initiatives were particularly constructive, reflecting a shared commitment to strengthening fleet operations and community standards.

UNOLS Fleet Improvement Committee Launches Two Community Surveys

The UNOLS Fleet Improvement Committee (FIC) is pleased to announce the release of two important community surveys designed to gather broad input on the present and future needs of the U.S. Academic Research Fleet (ARF). The first, the [UNOLS Coastal and Local Class Research Vessel Scientist Survey](#), seeks to better understand how scientists use Coastal and Local Class vessels, the challenges they face in accessing ship time, and where improvements in equipment, capabilities, or support could have the greatest impact. This survey was developed in response to growing recognition that these smaller vessels play an important and evolving role in coastal and nearshore research, training, and technology testing.

The second survey, [Town Hall Survey: The Future of the U.S. Academic Research Fleet \(ARF\)](#), invites the broader community to help shape the long-term vision for the fleet. It asks respondents to reflect on their experiences across vessel classes, identify barriers to accessing ship time, and prioritize the capabilities most critical for future Global and Ocean Class vessels. This survey was assembled to inform national-level planning efforts and ensure that the next generation of research vessels reflects the scientific, operational, and technological needs of users across career stages and disciplines.

Together, these surveys will guide FIC's ongoing work to improve fleet accessibility, strengthen science support, and chart a sustainable path forward for the ARF. **Please take a few minutes to complete the survey** that best pertains to you and pass these along to others in your organization.

New Committee Members - Council, DeSSC, MSROC, MERAS, and RVTEC

Departing Members

Thank you so much to the following individuals for their contributions to the UNOLS community:

- Dr. Amy Baco-Taylor / FSU - Council
- Dr. Joan Bernard / WHOI - Council
- Dr. Lella Hamdan / USM - DeSSC
- Dr. Brandon Shuck / LSU - MERAS
- Dr. Satish Singh - MSROC
- Andrew Woogen / OSU - RVTEC Chair

New Committee Members

All of our committees are staffed by volunteers and we are grateful for their contributions of time and experience. We would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest committee members:

- Dr. Lella Hamdan / USM - Council
- Dr. Angelique White / UH - Council
- Dr. Shawn Arellano / WWU - DeSSC
- Dr. Victoria Preston / Olin - DeSSC
- Dr. Adam Skarke / MSU - DeSSC
- Dr. Gabrielle Ellis / UH - MERAS
- Dr. Brad Rosenheim / USF - MERAS
- Dr. Dominik Kardell / LLOG - MSROC
- Dr. YoungHee Kim - MSROC
- Sarah Fuller / WHOI - RVTEC Chair
- Gabe Matthias / UAF - RVTEC Chair Elect

MSROC and DeSSC New User Programs at 2025 Annual Geophysical Union (AGU) Meeting

Photo credit: Tara Clemente

Both the Marine Seismic Research Operator Committee (MSROC) and the Deep Submergence Science Committee (DeSSC) conducted ½ day New User Programs (13 December) in conjunction with their Community meetings (14 December) at Loyola University in New Orleans.

The 2025 MSROC Early Career Workshop welcomed 35 early career participants for a workshop focused on introducing students, scientists, engineers, and technicians to marine seismic and geophysical research. Through presentations, discussions, a poster session, and dedicated networking opportunities, participants learned about available facilities, funding pathways, and best practices while engaging directly with experienced researchers, federal agency representatives, and MSROC leadership. The Early Career Workshop led seamlessly into the MSROC Community Meeting where the broader community gathered for an open and collaborative forum highlighting scientific advances, facility updates, and opportunities for community input on NSF-supported marine seismic capabilities.

The 2025 DeSSC New User Program, welcomed early-career researchers and first-time deep-submergence users for a day of orientation, training, and community building. The program introduced participants to the National Deep Submergence Facility (NDSF), and the federal agencies and operators that support deep-submergence science. Throughout the day, New Users learned about the capabilities of key vehicles—including Alvin, Jason, Sentry, and mROV—while also gaining valuable insight into data management, scheduling, and marine facilities planning. Breakout sessions offered hands-on guidance on selecting the right tools, preparing proposals, budgeting, and understanding operational requirements, allowing attendees to ask direct questions of operators, agency representatives, and experienced deep-sea investigators.

As part of their experience, the New Users also participated in the following day's DeSSC and MSROC Community Meetings respectively, where they engaged with a wider group of scientists and facility representatives. This integration reinforces one of the core goals of the New User Program: enabling participants to build connections with peers, mentors, and federal program officers while advancing their understanding of funding pathways, facility access, and the broader research ecosystem.

Fleet Highlights

R/Vs Roger Revelle and Sikuliaq Head South – WAY South

Photo from R/V Sikuliaq's bow camera

The *R/Vs Roger Revelle* and *Sikuliaq* headed south late in 2025 to support four separate U.S. Antarctic Program projects in the Antarctic Peninsula area. The *R/V Revelle* is supporting the [Palmer Station Long Term Ecological Research \(LTER\)](#). The Palmer LTER studies a polar marine biome with research focused on the Antarctic pelagic marine ecosystem, including sea ice habitats, regional oceanography and terrestrial nesting sites of seabird predators.

The *R/V Sikuliaq* is supporting 3 projects on 2 separate expeditions. The first expedition includes a field camp for Dr. Thomas Tobin/University of Alabama which seeks to clarify extinction patterns and depositional environments at high southern latitudes by recovering deep sediment cores that avoid weathering issues affecting the island's otherwise well-preserved but surface-altered fossils and sediments. These fresh cores will enable higher-resolution sampling and more reliable geochemical analyses. As part of this, the team is scheduled to work from a land-based field camp. While they are deployed on the field camp, the *R/V Sikuliaq* will support Dr. Maggi Brislin/USF's team who will examine how Weddell Sea ice melt alters biological communities and carbon export by combining environmental observations with controlled incubation experiments. It integrates physical and chemical analyses of snow and ice with transect-based seawater, plankton, and particle measurements to quantify melt-driven changes in productivity and particle flux. After returning to Punta Arenas for a port call, the *R/V Sikuliaq* will head back south for its final expedition supporting Dr. Alison Murray/DRI, whose team will characterize ascidian microbiomes, metabolomes, and genetic diversity across multiple regions, use multi-omics to resolve host-microbe interactions, and determine how palA and its associated bacterium influence VHA activity and ascidian ecophysiology in situ. As part of this, they will conduct, among other things, small ROV operations, extensive scientific diving, and CTD casts.

The *R/Vs Revelle* and *Sikuliaq* teams worked diligently to prepare for the expeditions and are learning and adapting each day to operations in this new, harsh environment.

R/V Langseth Recent Cruise

At 01:38 on Christmas morning, with the Pacific still dark and the ship quiet except for the hum of machinery, we completed the final operation of MGL 2514 as the heat-flow probe pulled free of the mud. As it came on deck, the labs filled with cheers, smiles, high fives, and handshakes.

Over the past several weeks aboard the *R/V Marcus G. Langseth*, our team executed an ambitious geophysical program off the coast of Guerrero, Mexico:

- Acquired approximately 1,250 km of high-resolution 2D seismic data across three acquisition phases
- Completed 165 successful heat-flow probe deployments
- Operated across water depths from 3,000 to over 5,000 meters
- Integrated multibeam bathymetry, Knudsen sub-bottom profiling, gravimetry, and magnetics into a fully synchronized geophysical dataset
- Maintained continuous 24/7 operations with consistently favorable weather and efficient deep-water station work

All of this in support of the 8-G program's effort to better understand hydrothermal circulation and crustal structure along the Mexican margin.

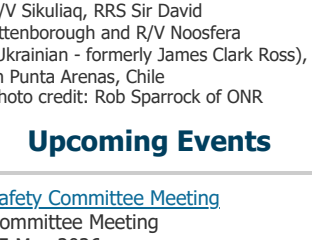
Just as important as the science, the entire program was completed safely and without incident, a testament to the professionalism, preparation, and teamwork of everyone involved.

Contributed by: Cody Bahlau - Sr. Marine Tech.

Congratulations to the Langseth team, LDEO, and the science party for a successful conclusion to what was a very successful and busy 2025!

PDF versions of the Newsletter can be found [here](#). To unsubscribe from UNOLS News, please reply to this email with the word "unsubscribe" in the body. Thank you!

Featured Photo



R/V Skua, IRS for David Altabernough and R/V Woodruff (Ukranian) - formerly James Clark Ross, in Santa Anna, Chile.
Photo credit: Rob Sparrock of ONR

Upcoming Events

Safety Committee Meeting
Committee Meeting
03 May 2026
Woods Hole, MA

RVOC Meeting
06 & 07 May 2026
Woods Hole, MA

2027 Winter AICC Meeting
13 & 14 Jan 2027
Seattle, WA

Did you know...

Two Global Class ARF vessels are currently down in Antarctica to support the U.S. Antarctic Program Projects. Read more about the *R/Vs Skua* and *Revelle* Antarctic missions further down in this newsletter.

