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May 4th, 2012

Magee

ENG 210-011

Louisiana Anthology: LUMCON

When planning a vacation to the coast, not many would choose Louisiana’s coast’s as a first choice. Although, we do not have pretty beaches and resorts; we do have wildlife in and around our swamps and marshes along the coast of Louisiana. We also have many people who come to research the wildlife Louisiana is proud to claim. Recently, we even got our own T.V. show, “Swamp People” although this show may stereotype Louisiana residents, it does showcase our swamps and the wildlife around them.

In 1979 there became a large demand for research capabilities; this led to the formation of LUMCON. LUMCON stands for Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium. LUMCON was formed to meet the growing needs of researchers, as well as to enrich students’ education. LUMCON’s facilities are located at the DeFelice Marine Center in Cocodrie, about 85 miles southwest of New Orleans. 

Although LUMCON is not open to the public, many schools take field trips so students can have a better understand of the types of research that go on at LUMCON as well as experience it first hand, themselves.

My 8th grade science class went to LUMCON in 2006, and it was an experience I will never forget. We went out to a marsh and took samples of water to look at different types of bacteria under a microscope, and we also went canoeing in marsh as well, with alligators swimming right by us! My favorite part of trip although, was when we got to go crabbing the last night!

LUMCON also operates the RV PELICAN, which was built in 1985; it is an oceanographic research vessel that can support up to 16 scientists for three weeks. In May of 2010 the RV Pelican was one of the first scientific vessels to arrive at the site of the Deep Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. The R/V PELICAN has also successfully conducted scientific trawling, large box core sampling, thirty foot piston cores, shallow seismic surveys, current meter array and benthic boundary array deployment and recovery.

LUMCON recently celebrated its 25-year anniversary in 2004; since then it has grown from one trailer to a huge facility. It has expanded its school programs for not only K-12 students, but also for university students and educators. LUMCON is right in the middle of many different bodies of water, such as: The Mississippi River, Atchafalaya River, the Gulf of Mexico, and not too far from Lake Pontchartrain. With LUMCON being so close to these bodies of water, the research is able to reach to a greater level. LUMCON scientists are devoted to answering questions Louisiana residents have, but also answering questions people all across the country have as well.

LUMCON is a place Louisiana is proud to call its own. Research can reach a new level with thanks to the supporters who never gave up on what LUMCON could become. 33 years later, and LUMCON is steadily improving the state’s research capabilities. LUMCON’s future is sure to be a bright one when we look back at how far it has come since it first started out.

Works Cited

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