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MICHIGAN EDUCATOR WINS VALLENTYNE AWARD

Ann Arbor, MI — The International Association for Great Lakes Research (IAGLR) recently awarded its highest outreach honor to Dr. Janet Vail. Vail is an Associate Research Scientist at Grand Valley State University’s (GVSU) Anis Water Resources Institute. IAGLR is the primary professional scientific organization dedicated to research and outreach on large lakes of the world including U.S. and Canadian Great Lakes.

Vail received the John R. (Jack) Vallentyne Award at the group’s annual meeting, held in West Layafette, Indiana, June 4-6, 2013. The award is named after and dedicated to the late Dr. Vallentyne who had a long and distinguished career as a scientist, but also dedicated decades of work to education and outreach.

The award goes to those who have contributed substantially to educating the public and informing policymakers about Great Lakes issues, leading to protection and restoration of great lakes of the world. Over a span of two decades, Vail has served as the education and outreach coordinator at the Annis Water Resources Institute, where her hands-on shipboard education program has helped over 100,000 students of all ages to learn about Great Lakes science issues. She is involved in science curriculum development for K-12 education, even as she actively teaches at the undergraduate level. She has collaborated on National Science Foundation (NSF) and National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) funded projects facilitating dissemination of scientific findings to students and the public.

Vail was selected to write the Air Quality Unit for the Michigan Environmental Education Curriculum Support (MEECS) Project that is used in classrooms around the state. Vail is also the GVSU coordinator for the GLOBE Project. GLOBE is an international environmental monitoring system that unites middle grades students and international scientists as they collect and analyze data from varied locations on earth. The program provides students with an incredible opportunity to interact and collaborate with scientists. Vail also serves as an event supervisor for environmental events during the Michigan Science Olympiad Tournament.

Vail’s outreach and education efforts extend throughout the entire Lake Michigan basin through additional roles that she has assumed: 1) Co-chair of the U.S. EPA’s Lake Michigan Forum; 2) Coordinator of the Making Lake Michigan Great Tours; and 3) Co-founder of the Lake Michigan: State of the Lake Conference, including service as Chair in 1999, 2001, and 2003.

Contacts
For more information about this award, contact Val Klump, Awards Committee Chair, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Great Lakes WATER Institute, 600 E. Greenfield Ave. Milwaukee, WI 53204, (414) 382-1700, vklump@uwm.edu.

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