

RACHEL POTTER

Destiny to the Sea and the Northern Lights!

Graduate: Class of 1994 Occupation: Physical Oceanography

Not many people study the delicate parts of the planet; Rachel Potter researches the largest and most delicate object in our world. Exploring the ocean, Rachel Potter experiences one of the most interesting sections of the earth. From the dark depths of the sea to the shores that anyone who sees loves, many exciting processes occur.

In 1994, Rachel Potter graduated as valedictorian of her class. Winning the sectional with her girl's track team in 1993 also ranks as a highlight of her high school career. Another 1993 memory involves the boy's basketball team winning sectional.

Excited and ready to go to college to major in oceanography, Rachel enrolled at the University of South Carolina. She enjoyed living in a different place and having a different lifestyle. While in college, she joined the Marine Science Undergraduate Society and the scuba club. On the weekends, she went scuba diving. In 1998, she graduated with a bachelor's degree in oceanography.

After college, Rachel became an organic geochemistry laboratory technician at the University of South Carolina. As a geological oceanographer, she studied the sediments on the ocean floor. Although these experiences became important to Rachel, she did not have an interest anymore to study the sea floor. In 1999, she went back to college at Duke University and received a master's degree in physical oceanography. While taking classes, she became a teacher's assistant in the oceanography department at Duke.

After earning her master's degree, Rachel started to think about where she wanted to work. Finding an opening in Fairbanks, Alaska, at the University of Alaska, she thought, "Hmm. . . Did I want to move all of the way to Alaska? Isn't it always cold there? Isn't it dark half the year? Yikes! On the other hand, doesn't everyone want to go to Alaska?" To meet different people, live in a different place and climate, and experience a different culture would become an exciting experience for her.

Happy to take the job, Rachel has worked at the university for six and a half years. She enjoys her colleagues. A hard worker with unique skills, Rachel studies the following phenomena by satellite: waves, tides, ocean currents, temperature of the water, sea ice, and chlorophyll. As an oceanographer, Rachel works both in an office where she studies the information that arrives from sites around Alaska and outside where she repairs equipment at the sites. She also gets to go on cruises-free-when she

works. When Rachel acquires the information, she relays it to all parties involved via the internet, databases, and reports. She even gives presentations for the public.

From learning about the earth in Southeast Dubois County through college, Rachel now discovers new phenomena in the waters off the coast of Alaska and teaches people all around the world about these events. Liking the northern lights, Rachel Potter is happy with where she lives. She would like to give everyone this advice, "Live life to its fullest!"