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**For Immediate Release**

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**Blue Ocean Institute & Lindblad Expeditions Award  
Kalpana Chawla Ocean Journey Scholarship**

*Two Student Winners Destined to Explore Arctic Norway*

**(East Norwich, NY – May 8, 2008)** – A 17-year-old Florida student whose school science labs were destroyed in hurricanes and a 21-year-old Ohio student with a passion for studying extreme animals are the first winners of the Kalpana Chawla Ocean Journey Scholarship from Blue Ocean Institute and Lindblad Expeditions.

Megan Betteley of Madison, Ohio and Amanda Yongue of Port St. Lucie, Florida will embark on a Lindblad Expeditions voyage to Arctic Norway in July. Accompanied by skilled scientists, naturalists, and researchers, the winners will explore the Arctic Norway ecosystem, searching for and studying the wildlife that calls it home.

The Kalpana Chawla Ocean Journey Scholarship was established by Blue Ocean Institute and Lindblad Expeditions in 2007. It is named in honor of Kalpana Chawla, an astronaut who perished aboard the Columbia Space Shuttle in 2003. Her abiding love of the ocean and her interest in the work of Blue Ocean President and Co-Founder, Dr. Carl Safina, led her to bring Safina's acclaimed book, *Song for the Blue Ocean*, on her final mission.

A year after her death, her family and friends established the Kalpana Chawla Spirit of Columbia Fund at Blue Ocean, which supports the Ocean Journey Scholarship. In honor of Chawla's profound connection with the ocean and concern for its conservation, the scholarship is designed to introduce students who are passionate about the oceans to wonderful marine habitats they would otherwise not have the opportunity to visit.

“You can’t really become an expert unless you experience what you’re studying,” said Dr. Carl Safina, President and Co-Founder of Blue Ocean Institute. “For young people with dreams of entering the world of science, being in it for real is vital. With this scholarship, we are happy to give them this chance and to honor Kalpana’s adventurous, courageous spirit.”

“It’s a great pleasure to introduce young people to these wild geographies and the ability to explore them up close,” said Sven Lindblad, President and Founder of Lindblad Expeditions. “My own life was strongly influenced by my father, who not only introduced me to exploration, but also how travel links to conservation. We look forward to introducing those same concepts to these the winners’ experiences onboard.”

Betteley and Yongue will journey as far north as it is possible to travel without an icebreaker, exploring the remote Svalbard archipelago, about 350 miles north of Norway’s North Cape. They’ll kayak among icebergs, observe seals and arctic foxes, and search for polar pears on the 11-day voyage.

Betteley will begin her senior year at Marietta College this fall. A former political science major, Betteley recently discovered biology as an inspiring and important field of study. Through this artic expedition, she said she hopes “to gain valuable experiences, stories to share with others, and the chance to meet wonderful, knowledgeable people.”

Yongue recently completed 11<sup>th</sup> grade at Fort Pierce Central High School in Florida. In August 2007 her school was devastated by hurricanes. The science facilities, among other portions of the building, were destroyed, and are yet to be rebuilt. Yongue views the expedition as an opportunity to immerse herself in “a purely scientific environment” and “reinforce my belief that there are others who want to have a large impact upon the preservation of this world.”

Throughout the voyage, Betteley and Young will keep journals to record their daily observations, experiences, and personal thoughts. Samples of their writing will be posted on the Blue Ocean Institute website ([www.blueocean.org](http://www.blueocean.org)) later this year.

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#### **About Kalpana Chawla**

Kalpana Chawla was deeply committed to stewardship of the environment. She enjoyed hiking and bird-watching - enjoying the world’s natural wonders. In lieu of birthday gifts, she asked that family and friends donate to environmental organizations. She chose Carl Safina’s book as one of the few personal belongings to accompany her in space. While on that mission, in a personal email, she asserted that upon her return, she would meet Carl Safina and devote herself to conservation. The charred remains of Kalpana’s copy of *Song for the Blue Ocean*, supplied by NASA, are enshrined in the Blue Ocean Institute’s headquarters - a reminder that the power of passionate words can quite literally encircle Earth.

#### **About Blue Ocean Institute**

Founded in 2003 by MacArthur Fellow Dr. Carl Safina ([www.carlsafina.org](http://www.carlsafina.org), [www.carlsafina.wordpress.com](http://www.carlsafina.wordpress.com)) and Mercédès Lee, Blue Ocean Institute ([www.blueocean.org](http://www.blueocean.org)) developed the first sustainable seafood guide (and made it scientifically transparent) and forged a significant, rapidly expanding sustainable seafood movement. Blue Ocean develops conservation solutions that enlighten personal choices, instill hope and inspire people to take action in a growing effort to restore living abundance in the ocean. Blue Ocean's programs include ***From Sea to Table***, ***Schooling Chefs***, ***Safe Seas***, ***the Friendship Collaborative*** and ***Sea Stories***. Blue Ocean's youth education program, ***Next Wave***, teaches students about the ocean in hands-on classroom workshops and boat tours with partner Atlantis Marine World in Riverhead. Safina is author of the award-winning *Song for the Blue Ocean*, *Eye of the Albatross*, and *Voyage of the Turtle*.

#### **About Lindblad Expeditions**

Lindblad Expeditions is a pioneering expedition travel company providing voyages in Galápagos, Antarctica, Baja California, Alaska, the Arctic, and beyond. The company works in partnership with the National Geographic Society to inspire people to explore and care about the planet by providing innovative marine expedition programs and by promoting conservation and sustainable tourism around the world. Sven Lindblad has received international recognition including the 2007 Global Tourism Business Award, 2007 Seafood Champion Award, U.N. Programme Global 500 Award and recognition from HRH, Grand Duke Henri of Luxembourg for his dedication to the conservation and environmental stewardship of the Galápagos archipelago. The company has also been named #1 Small-Ship Cruise Line (*Travel + Leisure's* World's Best Value Awards 2006); "The Best Ships in the World" and "The Best Itineraries" (*Condé Nast Traveler: Truth in Travel Awards* 2006).