



OCEAN RESEARCH & CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION, INC.

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CONTACT: Lauren Tracy | PHONE: 772-467-1600 | [ltracy@teamorca.org](mailto:ltracy@teamorca.org)

## DR. EDITH WIDDER, ORCA'S TOP SCIENTIST, RECEIVES CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR AWARD

**Ft. Pierce, Florida -May 21, 2009** | Dr. Edith “Edie” Widder, co-founder, president and senior scientist of the Ocean Research & Conservation Association (ORCA), has received the Conservation Alliance of St. Lucie County’s Environmentalist of the Year award. Dr. Widder was recognized for her leadership in developing the ORCA Kilroy, a new water quality monitoring system deployed to help protect the Indian River Lagoon.

The award was presented by George Jones of the Indian Riverkeeper, which protects and restores the waters of the Indian River Lagoon, its tributaries, fisheries and habitats through advocacy, enforcement and citizen action. “As a marine conservationist for over 30 years, I have never been more excited about the potential for a technology to help resource managers do their jobs than ORCA’s Kilroy system,” said Mr. Jones.

A 15-year resident of St. Lucie County and also the recipient of a prestigious McArthur Foundation “genius grant,” Dr. Widder, received this honor for her role in developing the ORCA Kilroy water quality monitoring device that gauges the health of coastal waters.

The ORCA Kilroy monitoring system is the most comprehensive and affordable aquatic monitoring system that will empower governments and communities to develop and implement more informed conservation programs to address coastal water quality challenges. The ORCA Kilroy has the ability to monitor the chemical and biological indicators of health in a particular body of water, and in turn we can track them precisely to their source. Slightly larger than a football and costing significantly less than other sensors, the ORCA Kilroy monitors a water body’s vital signs: flow, speed, direction, turbidity, temperature, salinity and the prevalence of key microorganisms that include those responsible for red tides associated with paralytic shellfish poisoning. ORCA developed this device with the hope that it will soon become as ubiquitous, yet inconspicuous, as was Kilroy during WWII. ORCA envisions that one day it will hang its sign above a nation of revitalized and vibrant waters to proudly declare that “Kilroy is here.”

ORCA is dedicated to the protection and restoration of marine ecosystems and the species they sustain through the development of innovative technologies and science based conservation action. For more information, visit [www.teamorca.org](http://www.teamorca.org).



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Duerr Laboratory for Marine Conservation • 1420 Seaway Drive • Fort Pierce, FL 34949 • phone 772-467-1600 • fax 772-467-1602

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