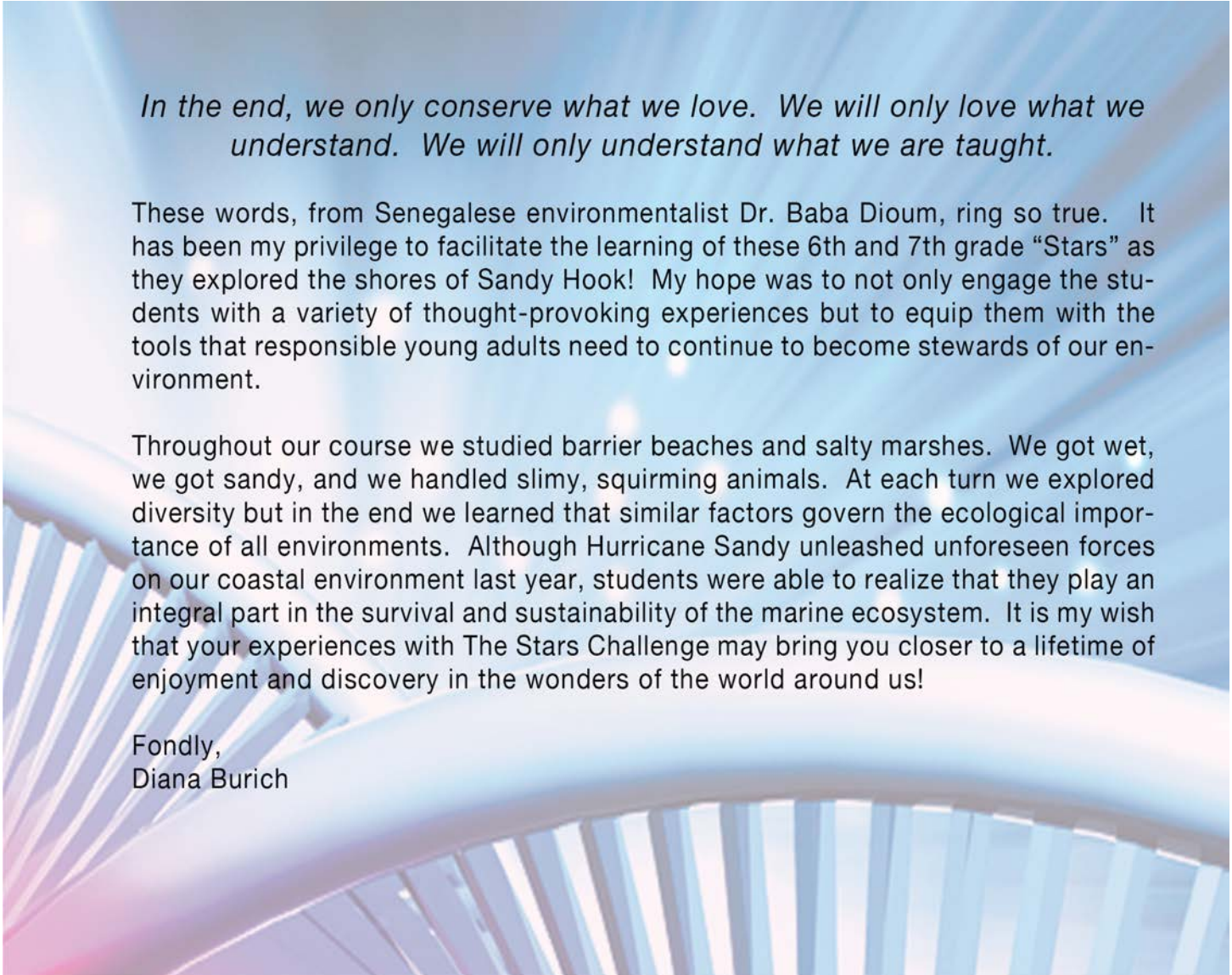




the stars
challenge

Explore Our Shore
Like Never Before
Fall 2013





In the end, we only conserve what we love. We will only love what we understand. We will only understand what we are taught.

These words, from Senegalese environmentalist Dr. Baba Dioum, ring so true. It has been my privilege to facilitate the learning of these 6th and 7th grade “Stars” as they explored the shores of Sandy Hook! My hope was to not only engage the students with a variety of thought-provoking experiences but to equip them with the tools that responsible young adults need to continue to become stewards of our environment.

Throughout our course we studied barrier beaches and salty marshes. We got wet, we got sandy, and we handled slimy, squirming animals. At each turn we explored diversity but in the end we learned that similar factors govern the ecological importance of all environments. Although Hurricane Sandy unleashed unforeseen forces on our coastal environment last year, students were able to realize that they play an integral part in the survival and sustainability of the marine ecosystem. It is my wish that your experiences with The Stars Challenge may bring you closer to a lifetime of enjoyment and discovery in the wonders of the world around us!

Fondly,
Diana Burich



Learning about fish anatomy and physiology with a shark dissection.





Seining is a great way to discover the diversity of marine species in the nearshore community. Students analyze chemical parameters in the estuary to determine the quality needed to support marine life.



Students line up to view freshly-caught plankton at Horseshoe Cove on Sandy Hook.





Beach profiling at North Beach on Sandy Hooks gives the students perspective into our shoreline's topography.



So many seashells, so little time!





Exploring the estuary at Officer's Row Beach, Sandy Hook.





Seining, organism identification, benthic sampling, plankton collection, and water quality analysis – it's all in a day's work!





Students examine the characteristics of sand to determine that it is not the same the world over.



Graphing the profile of the beach.





Students learn how salinity, temperature, and density move our world's oceans.



