

SEVENTH GRADE STATE WINNER

Chasing a Dream

BY: JAYNA WENGER

SHEILA AMARAL
4-H CLUB LEADER
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- ILLUSTRATED BY -
MONTEREY TRAIL
HIGH SCHOOL

In a land called San Francisco Bay, where dreams come true and technology is very advanced, there was a girl named Kate. Kate grew up loving the ocean and the beach, and jumping over waves with her dad. She had just graduated high school and was accepted into her dream college.



One day, she was on the website for her new school and noticed there was a class she could take that would involve being on a boat in the ocean. It was called Aquaculture 101. Kate did her research, and because she loved the ocean so much, she signed up for the class. She was so excited for the first day of school, especially Aquaculture 101.

“Here we go,” she thought. “I can do this.” Time went by so fast. Math, science, history, and English zoomed by. Then, it was time for her last class of the day, and the one she was most looking forward to, Aquaculture 101.

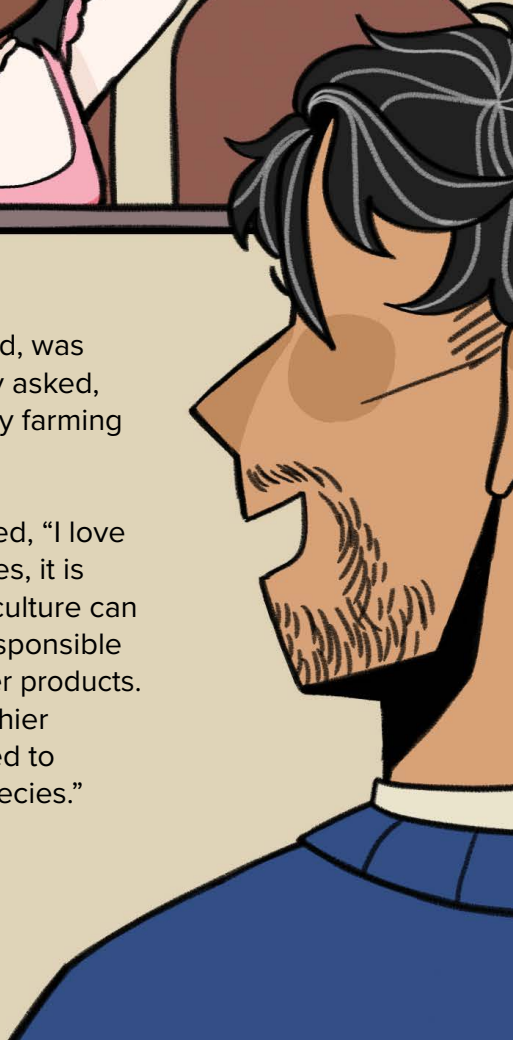


As she sat in her seat, people greeted her with smiles. She felt welcomed and knew she would like this class because these people must also like the ocean just as much as her. The professor started talking about aquaculture, also known as aquafarming, which is breeding, raising, and harvesting fish, shellfish, and aquatic plants.



Kate raised her hand, was called on, and excitedly asked, “Is aquaculture basically farming in water?”

The professor replied, “I love your excitement, and yes, it is farming in water. Aquaculture can be an Earth-friendly, responsible source of food and other products. It helps to rebuild healthier habitats and is also used to rebuild endangered species.”



The teacher went on to tell the class, “We have a field trip tomorrow on the college’s research boat. The research crew will be there showing us what they do and how it relates to California aquaculture. I think everyone should go.”

Kate was so excited about what she had just heard. “A field trip on the second day of class to the ocean!” she thought to herself excitedly. Of course she would be there.



The next morning, just to be safe, she took motion sickness medicine and headed to the classroom. The professor was waiting and led the way to the dock. As each student boarded, they were handed a life jacket by crew member Mike and were instructed to put it on. Captain David greeted each student.



Once on the boat, they were ready to head out to sea! Captain David explained they would be stopping at several locations. The first was to check on the crab traps. He explained that in the California Bay area they mostly catch different types of Rock Crabs. He went on to tell the students that crab is packed with protein and contains high levels of omega-3 fatty acids and vitamin B12, which play vital roles in improving general health while helping prevent a variety of chronic conditions. Mike showed the students how he and the other crew members take traps out of the water and dump the crabs on the boat deck to count. Crabs are then stored on ice until the boat docks and are unloaded to be processed for people to eat.



Then, the boat navigated to a new area where they were harvesting seaweed. Kate and her class learned that 97% of the world's seaweed harvested for consumption comes from aquaculture and that seaweed contains many vitamins and minerals, like vitamins K, B, also, iron, zinc, and other nutrients that help protect the cells in your body and keep you healthy.



As they quickly moved on to another area to harvest more seaweed, Mike stated, "Seaweed is one of the best dietary sources of iodine, which is a mineral that is necessary for metabolism and thyroid function." Mike then looked at his watch and said, "Time to head back!"

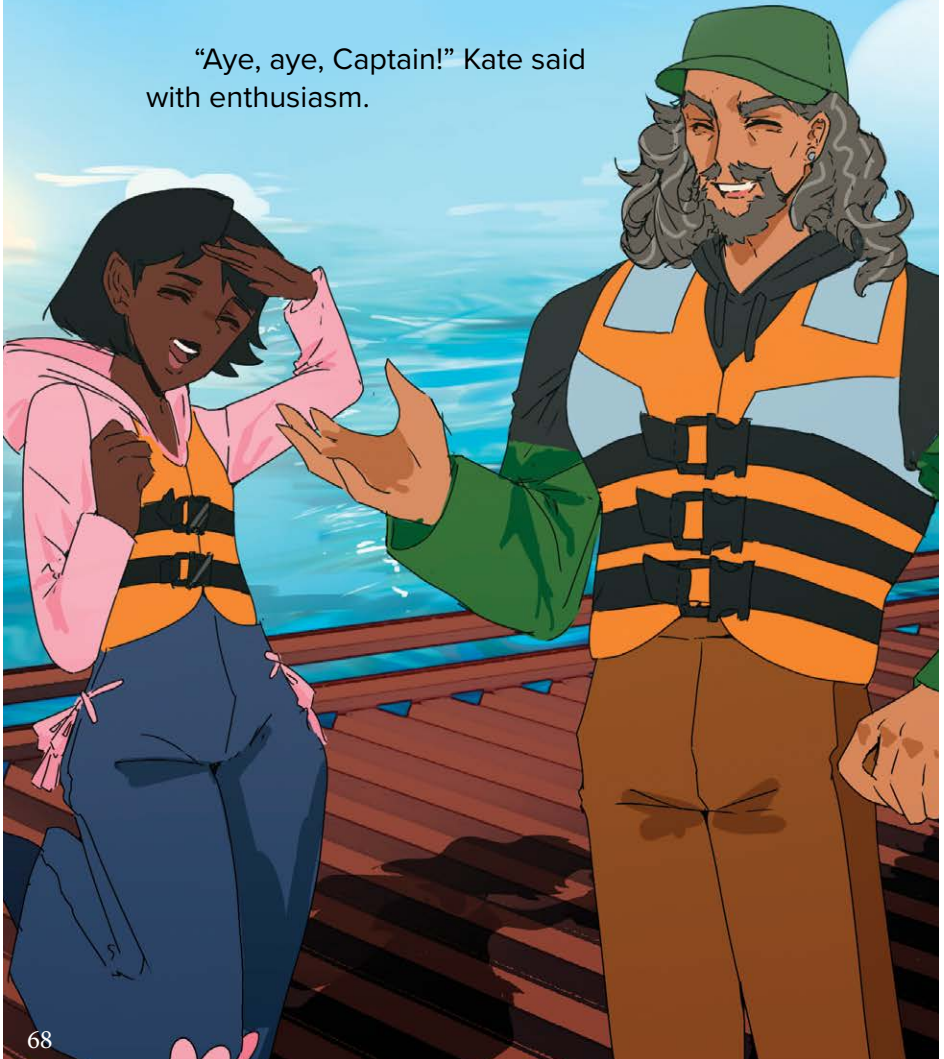


As Kate was walking off the boat she spotted her professor and Captain David.

Kate stopped and said, “I love this class! Is there a chance I can be a crew member? I get the feeling that there is so much more to learn about aquaculture.”

Captain David said, “In a couple of years, if you work hard in class, you can for sure become a crewmember.”

“Aye, aye, Captain!” Kate said with enthusiasm.



Kate looked forward to her next four years of college and learning more about her favorite place, the ocean. Knowing that she could be a crewmember, study more about aquaculture, and follow her dream made her even more excited for those next four years!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Jayna Wenger

7TH GRADE

4-H CLUB LEADER: SHEILA AMARAL

A love of the ocean sparked Jayna's story idea. Wanting to write about an innovative and unique topic, she was drawn to the subject of aquaculture.

Through the writing process the seventh-grader learned the difference between freshwater and marine aquaculture. She also learned the effort needed to create a story from setting the scene and character development to revisions and additional edits to make the story flow. She hopes readers find the topic, and the creativity behind it, entertaining and educational.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATORS



Vanessa Palofox & Cherelle Parker

MONTEREY TRAIL HIGH SCHOOL
MONICA ORTEGA, ART TEACHER

These seniors had a blast illustrating “Chasing a Dream!” They learned a lot about aquaculture, a lesser known agricultural topic, and they learned new skills as artists.

Research led the way as they explored how to illustrate sea life, seaweed, crabs and more. They spent a lot of time sketching and experimenting artistically with line weight and shading, to get their visuals just right. They used digital art for their illustrations. Both Vanessa and Cherelle found the story premise interesting and informative and had fun designing the protagonist Kate.