

NAUI Seminar Descriptions: DEMA Show 2025



NAUI is proud to announce our DEMA 2025 Seminar Descriptions!

These sessions offer a unique opportunity to expand your skills, deepen your understanding, and explore the multifaceted world of underwater exploration. For the official schedule, visit <https://www.naui.org/naui-dema-seminar-schedule-2025>. Follow us on [Social Media](#),

@NAUIWorldwide, for more updates and information as we get closer to DEMA Show 2025!



NAUI's Armed Forces Programs

Presented by Ray Reneau

NAUI.Armed.Forces.Coordinator

Join NAUI's Director of Armed Forces Programs, Ray Reneau, who will provide a comprehensive presentation on leveraging the Department of Defense (DoD) SkillBridge program and the GI Bill® reimbursement program. Since NAUI's authorization on June 1, 2021, by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, NAUI has been a proud participant in the SkillBridge program, enabling U.S. service members to maintain their military pay and benefits while gaining practical experience at one of NAUI's approved VA Testing Centers before leaving their military service.

Additionally, service members can utilize their G.I. Bill® benefits during their SkillBridge tenure to fully fund their certifications as a NAUI Dive Professional. Successful completion of the NAUI SkillBridge program offers direct access to over 5,000 job opportunities within our network. Come learn how NAUI's Armed Forces Programs can help level up your dive business.

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“DIVE LIKE A GIRL”

Presented by Alysha Acosta
Conservation Advocate

Join NAUI diver, educator, and conservation advocate Alysha Acosta for a powerful and insightful seminar exploring the past, present, and future of women in the world of scuba diving. From the early pioneers of scuba to today’s leaders in technical diving, marine science, and conservation, this session celebrates the groundbreaking contributions of women in underwater exploration

Through historical research, personal stories, interviews, and generational survey data, Alysha highlights the unique challenges women have encountered in the diving world alongside the progress and breakthroughs that continue to shape the future. The seminar also showcases inspiring female role models who are leading, innovating, and building strong communities within the dive industry.

Participants will leave with a renewed appreciation for the history of women in diving, a deeper understanding of ongoing challenges, and actionable ideas on how to mentor, support, and empower the next generation of divers—of all genders.

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Mission-Driven Diving: Embedding Conservation into Dive Travel & Your Local Community

Presented by: Kylie Smith, PhD

Co_Founder of I;CARE; Kylie received her doctorate from Clemson University with a focus on coral reef ecology

Presented by: Micheal Goldberg

I;CARE Co_Founder; Owner of Key Dives in Islamorada; 8689 CNN Hero?™. 8687 Scuba Diving Magazine Sea Hero

One of the fastest growing segments in diving is the “Diving with a Purpose” mentality. Divers of all types and their families are seeking ways to help give back to our oceans and protect them for future diving opportunities. From rebuilding our coral reefs to marine debris clean ups, divers are willing to spend money to help heal our ocean.

I.CARE, a coral reef restoration non-profit based in the Florida Keys, focuses on incorporating the recreational dive community in their restoration efforts. This forum will cover the science and techniques behind reef restoration and marine debris removal programs, I.CARE will also discuss how multi-day group travel conservation programs can impact the bottom line of partnering dive shops.

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Peak Inhale: A Look into NAUI's Apnea Programs

Presented by: Nick Nechay

NAUI.Representative

Join us for an insightful journey into NAUI's recreational and professional Apnea Programs designed for breath-hold enthusiasts around the world. This seminar delves into the comprehensive range of breath-hold courses that NAUI offers, each tailored to cater to a varying skill level, interest and expertise in the world of Freediving.

You will gain a thorough understanding of NAUI's Apnea curriculum, spanning from Introductory level courses to Advanced level and Professional level development. Discover how each program equips breath-hold divers with essential knowledge and training, preparing them for safe breath-hold practices and enjoyable freediving experiences. At the end of our seminar, you will have the opportunity to test out your apnea abilities in a controlled static session after receiving some insights into proper breath-hold techniques and instruction.

Whether you're looking to expand your professional development or deepen your personal diving skills, this seminar offers valuable insights into the world of NAUI Apnea training. Join us to explore how you can integrate these programs into your dive center or educational offerings.

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Inside the NAUI Public Safety Diver Program: Purpose-Driven Training for Real-World Missions

Presented by: George Mills

Public.Safety.Diving.Instructor?Firefighter?and.United.States.
Marine.Veteran

Join George Mills as he explores the realities of public safety diving, one of the most demanding and mission-critical disciplines in the underwater world. This seminar will examine how the NAUI Public Safety Diver (PSD) Program equips divers with the training, mindset, and operational skills necessary to perform in zero-visibility, high-risk environments. From body and evidence recovery to supporting multi-agency operations under the Incident Command System (ICS), the NAUI PSD Program prepares individuals and teams to respond with precision, professionalism, and purpose.

Unlike recreational diving, public safety diving requires rapid decision-making, strict adherence to legal procedures, and strong coordination among team members. As a nonprofit, instructor-driven organization, NAUI emphasizes scenario-based training, real-world adaptability, and ethical accountability. Graduates of the NAUI PSD Program emerge not only technically proficient but also as trusted assets to their communities. Whether attendees come from fire/rescue, law enforcement, emergency command, or are divers interested in entering the field, this session will highlight how NAUI's PSD training builds confident, mission-ready professionals.

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Discover the Secrets Beneath the Surface of the Northeast United States

Presented by: Captain Kirby Kurkomelis

Diving.Safety.Officer.at.Seahunt.Divers

Join Captain Kirby Kurkomelis for an electrifying dive into the cold, current-swept waters of the Northeastern United States—one of the most demanding and rewarding dive regions in the world. From navigating rugged coastlines to uncovering the hidden remains of aircraft and submarines, this seminar will take you beyond the basics and into the heart of true expedition-style diving.

Whether you're a seasoned wreck diver or just curious about what lies beneath the Atlantic's waves, this session delivers firsthand accounts, rare discoveries, and the grit it takes to explore some of the nation's most fascinating submerged history. Don't miss your chance to dive into the unknown!

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Bridging Standards and Innovation: An Innovative Leadership Conference Model for Transformative Dive Education

Presented by: David Caldwell

NAUI Northeastern Regional Representative

An exclusive seminar featuring David Caldwell, NAUI Northeastern Representative and technical diving expert. This presentation showcases a hybrid learning approach that is a community-led training model for leadership education that redefines value in a fragmented dive training industry.

Through an innovative project conducted as NAUI regional conferences, candidates engage in personalized, competency-driven development, integrating online & in-personal skills, non-

technical skills, peer collaboration, and global expertise—to elevate leadership training beyond standards and cultivate a new generation of dive professionals.

David has had a lifelong career in the scuba industry, beginning by working at a dive store while in high school. In 1987 he became an open water scuba instructor where his passion led him to Grenada West Indies leading dives to the noted shipwreck, Bianca C. Returning from the Grenada he became the co-owner and president of the dive store where he first learned how to dive. Following his tenure being a dive store owner David co-founded Northern Atlantic Dive Expeditions, Inc. NADE focuses on shipwreck diving, exploration, technical diving training and leadership development. Along with being the co-owner he is a co-captain of the dive charter boat Gauntlet and is the northeastern U.S. and eastern Canada's regional manager for NAUI Worldwide.

David continues to follow his passions of cave and mine diving throughout the U.S. and Europe, he has had the privilege to dive some of the worlds notable shipwrecks off the eastern seaboard of the U.S., Canada, South Pacific, Red Sea, South China Sea, and the Mediterranean Sea. In addition, he has co-led shipwreck discoveries in his local waters, including the USS Nezinscot, Allentown, among many others, and has collaborated on research projects with NOAA in support of exploration in Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary.

Through his position with NAUI Worldwide, David is a Course Director Trainer and Technical Examiner, he is a fellow member of the Explorers Club, associate member of the Boston Sea Rovers. David is also employed as an Assistant Harbormaster for the City of Beverly Massachusetts and is a member of the board of directors for Salem Sound Coast Watch. Parallel to having a career in the dive industry, he's had an industry career in global product management and application engineering.

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Women in Diving Discussion Panel

Presented by: Alysha Acosta

Conservation Advocate

Join moderator and NAUI diver, educator, and conservation advocate Alysha Acosta for a dynamic and inspiring panel discussion featuring influential women from across the diving industry. This session brings together diverse women voices to share their experiences, challenges, and victories from beneath the surface and beyond.

This interactive conversation will explore themes of leadership, mentorship, inclusivity, and resilience—highlighting the evolving role of women in diving and the communities they help shape.

Whether you're an experienced diver, industry professional, or just beginning your underwater journey, you'll gain valuable insight, practical takeaways, and powerful inspiration from women who are redefining what it means to dive with purpose.

Don't miss this opportunity to be part of the dialogue, ask questions, and connect with some of the most passionate and forward-thinking professionals in the diving world.

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Reef-Safe isn't Optional Anymore: What EVERY Instructor Should Know About Protecting Our Blue Planet

Presented by: Autumn Blum

WDHOF Member, Chemist, & CEO of [Stream2Sea](https://www.stream2sea.com/)

As dive instructors, we teach respect for the ocean—but what if the products we use and recommend are truly harming the ecosystems we love? In this eye-opening session, Autumn Blum—formulator, eco-activist, and founder of Stream2Sea—dives into the science behind what “reef-safe” really means.

You'll learn how common ingredients in sunscreens, personal care products and even mask defog can affect coral reefs, marine life, and water quality, and why “reef-safe” labeling is often misleading. Backed by real-world toxicity testing and years of advocacy, this talk will empower you with the knowledge to make informed choices, educate your students, and take meaningful action. Whether you're running a dive center or teaching your next open water class, you'll walk away with practical tools and insights to become a more impactful ocean educator.

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NAUI KEYNOTE SEMINAR

Sinking History: The SS United States Artificial Reef Project

Presented by: Alex Fogg

Natural Resources Chief? [Destin Fort Walton Beach Florida](#)

Get an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at the ambitious transformation of the SS United States—a 990-foot retired ocean liner—into the largest artificial reef in the world. In this presentation, Alex Fogg will walk attendees through the complex process of preparing and deploying this maritime icon off the Florida coast.

Whether you're a dive operator, marine biologist, or simply passionate about underwater exploration, this session offers a compelling look at innovation, sustainability, and the future of artificial reefs.

Learn how hazardous materials are remediated, how structural modifications are made to ensure diver safety and ecological benefit, and what it takes to collaborate with federal and state agencies on a project of this scale. Discover the environmental, tourism, and research impacts this one-of-a-kind reef will deliver—and how it will redefine technical and recreational diving in the Gulf of Mexico.

Attendees will also gain insights into the broader artificial reef program led by Destin-Fort Walton Beach, including ship deployments, 3D-printed reef modules, and marine conservation strategies that combine eco-tourism and habitat enhancement.

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Surviving an Incident at Sea: An Essential Guide to Passenger Safety Onboard Liveaboards

Presented by: Barry Lipski

President.of.Long.Island.Divers.Association

Liveaboard dive vessels operate throughout the world and provide divers the ability to explore some of the most beautiful and remote dive locations. For many divers there is no better way to comfortably experience the underwater world while maximizing their dive experiences. Despite decades of successful operations, several recent incidents have highlighted the need for liveaboard divers to become better equipped to protect their personal safety.

In this seminar, Barry Lipski with the Long Island Diver's Association will present a comprehensive review of safety protocols to improve your odds of survival in the unlikely event of an onboard emergency. Learn what safety equipment and procedures should exist on board the vessel, what equipment divers can bring with them to improve their own safety, and how to rehearse emergency procedures for evacuating a liveaboard experiencing an incident. The presentation is a must-attend for anyone planning to spend time at sea on board a dive vessel. What you don't know can hurt you...or worse. Don't let an incident onboard a dive vessel become a tragedy. After all, liveaboards are the way to go for many divers; surviving an unlikely but potentially tragic incident is the way to go for all divers!

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Why You Should Talk to Your Customers About Divers Alert Network (DAN)

Presented by: Shelli Wright

Director of Commercial Insurance Programs at [DAN Worldwide](https://www.danworldwide.com/)

This seminar is designed to show you why and how to discuss Divers Alert Network (DAN) with your clients. You will learn about the essential protection DAN offers divers, how promoting DAN can benefit your business through reward programs, and why these tools are a critical part of protecting your business.

Attendees will gain valuable insights into how DAN provides tailored protection for diving, securing financial investments, and the valuable resources available to industry professionals. This seminar is a must-attend for anyone looking to safeguard their professional practice while enhancing the safety of their customers.

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The Art of Upsell

Presented by: Dr. Shelli Hendricks, PHD

Founder of [Blue Horizon Solutions](https://www.bluehorizonsolutions.com/)

Dive businesses that use upselling and cross-selling techniques can increase value for the customer and maximize their own profit. In this seminar, attendees will learn the differences between these techniques, how to use upselling and cross-selling effectively, discuss mapping your customer journey and consider strategies for improving customer lifetime value. Join Dr. Shelli Hendricks, scuba instructor and founder of Blue Horizon Solutions, for this interactive workshop.

Dr. Shelli Hendricks is the Founder and President of Blue Horizon Solutions LLC. With over 20 years in corporate learning and leadership development, she is a scuba instructor who now serves the industry as a leadership coach to dive professionals and business leaders. As a DEMA member, Shelli regularly contributes her expertise as a speaker at the DEMA Show, as well as a contributing writer for industry publications like Dive Newswire and Scuba Diving Industry Magazine. She holds a

Masters in Instructional Design from Nova Southeastern University and a Ph.D. in Organizational Development & Change through Fielding Graduate University.

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NAUI Worldwide Annual General Meeting / Awards and Members Update

Members will enjoy camaraderie with colleagues and friends as we celebrate and recognize this year's NAUI Award recipients.

The NAUI Annual General Membership (AGM) meeting will include topics of interest to members, including the state of the organization and where NAUI is headed in the future. Additionally, time will be set aside so that audience members can have a question-and-answer period with the NAUI Board of Directors. Don't miss it!

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NAUI Worldwide Course Director and Instructor Trainer Round Table

NAUI Instructor Trainers, Course Directors, and Course Director Trainers join us for an engaging information session and informal discussion of NAUI leadership training. Come and find out what's new and where we are going as an organization.

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NAUI Worldwide Course Director and Instructor Trainer Re-Qualification Course

Complete the NAUI Worldwide required CD/IT Re-Qualification training while at DEMA. Registration costs and requirements will be sent out to all NAUI members before DEMA.

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