



SOFO Marine and Environmental Science Summer Program 2023

Director / Instructor: Robert Gelling

Rob “Rockfish” Gelling taught science at Kings Park High School for 31 years until his retirement in 2017. After completing his BS in Geology and MAT in Earth Science Education at Binghamton University in 1984/86, he began his career at KPHS teaching Biology and Environmental Science. He has over those years taught Regents Earth Science, AP Geology, Independent Science research, Astronomy, and an independent study program called the Environment Team. Rob created an extracurricular program called the *Student Environmental Action Society* in his first year and advised the group that engaged in eco-projects every year thereafter. The room he taught in was called the Environmental Center and featured a Critter Lab, Courtyard Classroom with greenhouses and a pond, and recycling station. Rob also coached Kings Park’s Boys Winter and Spring Track and is First Aid/CPR certified.

After “retirement”, Rob took a leave replacement position at St. John the Baptist High School. There he taught Regents and Honors Biology and coached JV Boys basketball. The three school years that followed, Rob was the STEM Specialist at the K-8 Laurel Hill School in East Setauket. Over the span of this time, Kindergarten through Middle School aged students came to his STEM lab for project-based experiences that provided an opportunity to explore the engineering design process. As of this past September, Rob has signed on as an Environmental Educator & Aquarist at SOFO.

Summer experiences for Rob have included research at the Brookhaven National Laboratory, teaching in a residential BOCES Marine Science Enrichment program in the Hamptons/Montauk, directing the SCOPE Environmental World summer program, eight summers on the Long Island Aquarium education staff, shark satellite tagging and release experiences with SOFO’s Shark Research & Education Program, and directing SOFO’s Marine Science Summer Programs 2014-23.

