

First Place, ORISE Participant Category

The Ocean Blues

My mother's ocean
is a south shore time capsule
summers spent whispering back to a salty breeze
while egrets bow to their great sun king-
I return here, to my mother's ocean
but it is not.

My father's ocean
is a small sailing dingy
ripping through the surf.
He tells tales
of his father's ocean
a fisherman's boat
a bustling harbor
dipping nets into the harvest of the sea-
I return here, to my father's ocean
but it is not.

The tragedy of the commons
is yelling-
"what could we have done?"
while we cut the lifelines of the sea.
The tragedy of the commons
is ignoring the forgiveness of
tides while we wail the ocean blues.

-by Michaela Cashman, EPA-NHEERL, Atlantic Aquatic Division, Rhode Island