

# Lewis & Clark **NEWS** Community College

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Alexandra Cousteau to Provide Keynote Address at NGRREC Symposium Aug. 12**

***Presentation is Free and Open to the Public***

**GODFREY** – Alexandra Cousteau, granddaughter of the legendary explorer Jacques-Yves Cousteau, will return to the River Bend Area next month to provide the keynote address at the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center's (NGRREC) annual symposium. Cousteau's presentation will begin at 8 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 12 in the Hatheway Theater at Lewis and Clark Community College in Godfrey. The event is free and open to the public.

Cousteau, who visited the area in April while filming her documentary "Expedition: Blue Planet", will speak about "This Blue Planet". Cousteau's presentation will launch an expedition into the water cycle and its role in global life. Through stories, compelling research, and expedition footage, she extols the wonders of water while explaining the current water crisis facing our "Blue Planet".

Cousteau's presentation is the keynote address for NGRREC's annual symposium. This year's theme "Visions of a Sustainable Mississippi River" will bring more than 150 conservationists, researchers, business people and policy makers to the area Aug. 10-13. The four-day conference will bring together diverse voices, each with a special stake in protecting, sustaining and making the most of the legendary river. The conference will focus on developing tangible policy ideas that will make the Mighty Mississippi an even greater cultural, economic and natural treasure.

Cousteau's presentation will tie into the theme of the conference and highlight the importance of conservation and sustainable management of water resources in order to preserve a healthy planet.

"Her global initiative seeks to inspire and empower individuals to protect not only the ocean and its inhabitants, but also the human communities that rely on the purity of our freshwater resources," Dr. John Chick, NGRREC affiliate and organizer of the conference said. "We are very excited to have Alexandra present our keynote address because her message and her expedition is not only the focus of this conference, but it highlights the very core of NGRREC's

research: to understand great rivers and the impact that communities and human actions have on them.”

Cousteau was honored in 2008 as a member of the National Geographic’s “Emerging Explorers”. The program is comprised of 11 visionaries and young trailblazers from around the world who have pushed the boundaries of discovery, adventure, and global problem solving.

Cousteau’s first exploration took place when she was just four-months old, as she accompanied her father Philippe. She has grown up traveling the globe, feeding her passion for adventure and learning firsthand the value of conserving the natural world. When asked about the impact that her father and grandfather have had on her life, Alexandra explains, “The best example they gave me was the importance of living a life of consequence, value and meaning. I honor their memories by creating a legacy of my own in speaking out for the preservation of our blue planet and all its waters.”

Cousteau’s most recent step in creating a legacy of her own came with the establishment of her own organization in 2008, Blue Legacy. The mission of Blue Legacy is to tell the story of our water planet to the world, to inspire people to take action on critical water issues in meaningful ways, and to help shape society’s dialogue to include water as one of the defining issues of our century and the primary vehicle through which climate change will be felt.

In February of this year Cousteau and her team embarked on a 100-day voyage of discovery on five continents looking at water issues and their impact on the human communities that rely on this increasingly scarce resource. “Expedition: Blue Planet” chronicles the interconnectivity of water and how individual stories are part of the larger, universal story of an independent, global water ecosystem.

Cousteau serves as one of CNN International’s principal voices, and she is a contributor and environmental columnist with both Women’s Health Magazine in the U.S. and Elle magazine in Spain. Additionally, Cousteau authors a monthly “Living Blue” column in Readers Digest publications internationally.

She has been a featured speaker on environmental issues at such organizations as the United Nations, National Geographic Explorer’s Symposium, Harvard University, the Smithsonian, Sea Rovers, the National Press Club, Coca-Cola, Canon, Aspen Institute’s Environment Forum and the Telluride Mountain Film Festival.

For more information about Cousteau’s presentation or the NGRREC symposium, contact Dr. Chick at 618-466-9690.

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