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Ralph and Kitty Aylesworth, long-time members of the Florida fishing industry, established the Aylesworth Foundation for the Advancement of Marine Science in 1984. Since the mid 1940’s, they operated the business currently known as Aylesworth’s Fish & Bait, Inc. in St. Petersburg. The Aylesworths formed the foundation as a means to return something to the industry and state that had been so good to them and their family. This scholarship was created because the Aylesworths believed that scientific knowledge in marine-related areas is the way to develop, use and manage our renewable marine resources on a long-term basis.

Today the foundation and Aylesworth’s Fish & Bait are operated by Ralph and Kitty’s son, Bob, and his wife Dawn, pictured below with scholarship winners. While the scholarship program remains the cornerstone of the foundation’s activities, the foundation’s goals have been expanded to include the funding of research and other educational activities that benefit Florida’s marine environment.

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This publication is supported by the National Sea Grant College Program of the United States Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, under NOAA Grant NA10-GAR-717009. The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of any of these organizations.

Florida Sea Grant is committed to responsible and sustainable printing practices. This document is printed on recycled paper using vegetable-based ink.

TP-190
May 2012