



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Gulf of Mexico Fishery Leader Honored with National Seafood Sustainability Award**

(Galveston, TX): Yesterday evening, the White House announced that [Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Shareholders' Alliance](#) Vice President and [Gulf Wild](#) Executive Director **Jason DeLaCruz** was one of twelve honorees nation-wide to receive the first-ever award for “Champion of Change for Sustainable Seafood.”

The President and his Administration established this award program as a way to “honor America’s fishers and our coastal communities for their efforts... [in leading] the way to the United States becoming a global leader in sustainable seafood management.”

On Friday, October 7, DeLaCruz along with 11 other active fishery leaders from throughout the United States will be recognized for their work doing extraordinary things to empower and inspire members of their fishing communities and the stakeholders charged with managing our natural fishery resources. The event will be live streamed on the White House website at 1 pm eastern at [www.whitehouse.gov/live](http://www.whitehouse.gov/live). You may also follow the event on Twitter at #WHChamps.

*Jason’s deep understanding of marine fisheries and his efforts in working to improve Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management through sustainable fishing practices are marks of his leadership in both the Commercial and Recreational Fishing Communities. Jason has been a member of my Fisheries Advisory Council since its beginning, and he provides expert advice that helps me to better represent the fisherman of all types throughout Pinellas County, and indeed all of Florida.*  
**Congressman David Jolly (FL-13)**

*We congratulate Jason DeLaCruz on his well-deserved award and extend our thanks for his steady participation in the fishery management process. Jason truly stands out as a seafood industry leader in the Gulf of Mexico as he understands the importance of our living marine resources, is collaborative, solution-oriented and works hard to brand domestic sustainable seafood.*

**Dr. Roy Crabtree**, Southeast Regional Administrator for NOAA Fisheries

*The Shareholders' Alliance is one of the most effective and relevant commercial fishing organizations in the Gulf of Mexico, thanks in large part to Jason's leadership and commitment to success. Jason truly understands the mechanics behind how healthy fish populations provide stable fishing businesses and sustainable seafood access to millions of Americans, and that clearly comes across to state, regional, and federal fishery managers. He's always driving our organization to be effective, relevant, and proactive whether he's leading a Board call or representing us in public. We are thankful for his leadership.*  
**Bubba Cochran**, President, [Shareholders' Alliance](#), Galveston, Texas

*Jason is one of the driving forces behind Gulf Wild and the Shareholders' Alliance. His commitment to seafood traceability and conservation has helped brand Gulf Wild as the nation's premier seafood traceability program. Jason is constantly promoting the Gulf Wild brand to seafood distributors, fisheries managers, stakeholders, fishermen, and consumers. He invests a lot of time building relationships, which makes him a great businessman and an exceptional leader. We're glad to have him onboard and believe he's more than worthy of this national award.*

**Glen Brooks**, President, [Gulf Wild](#), Madeira Beach, Florida

*I nominated Jason Delacruz for this prestigious award for the White House Champion of Change for Sustainable Seafood. Jason best exemplifies this award by helping to develop the Gulf Wild Brand which tags and traces fish for retailers and restaurants to publicly educate and promote awareness for responsibly caught fish by our local fisherman here in the Gulf of Mexico. He also is heavily involved with fisheries management and policy through the Shareholders' Alliance by promoting accountability in our fisheries and the need for conservation as a means for protecting our fishing communities. I have known Jason and his wife Vicky for years, and Jason's always willing to lend a hand or talk to me about how we can make this fishery better for today and the next generation of fishermen. His "can-do" attitude has helped him become a leader in our community. He's extremely deserving of this honor.*

**Lisa Schmidt**, President of Bohica Inc commercial fishing business, Madeira Beach, Florida

*Jason DeLaCruz has been an asset to the charter fishermen and private anglers throughout the Gulf of Mexico. Through his recreational dock and retail business, Jason has daily conversations with these fishermen and is always going out of his way to help them understand why it's important they be directly involved in the fishery management process. Jason understands fishery science and management, and does a great job of explaining these often-complicated ideas and proposals to fishermen in a way that they understand. Fishermen of all kinds turn to him for advice and leadership and he's always bending over backwards to help. As the charter fleet advances ideas for sustainable and accountable management plans - like our commercial fishermen friends have already been able to achieve - we look forward to working with Jason and our other allies to bring real solutions to life.*

**Shane Cantrell**, Executive Director, [Charter Fisherman's Association](#), Galveston, Texas

*I've worked with Jason and his wife Vicky for years, and there are few people that are as committed to sustainable fisheries and sustainable seafood as they are. Jason not only provides me and others with some of the best snapper and grouper to distribute throughout the U.S., but he has dedicated a significant amount of time to fighting to make sure that strong fisheries management measures will continue to make this possible into the future. He truly grasps all aspects of the seafood supply chain - from the fish to the plate. The Shareholders' Alliance and Gulf Wild are setting the bar for how we should manage fisheries and promote traceable, sustainable seafood in the United States and I'm proud to call Jason a partner and friend.*

**Johnny Caradine**, Fishmonger.

*There is no better person in the industry to receive such an award. I am thankful to have Jason as a friend and truly value him as a business partner. Wild Seafood Co. and Gulf Wild have been a leading part of my inventory and seafood programs for years. As a co-owner of Revere Meat Co. - a meat and seafood distribution company in Atlanta - I will never compromise when it comes to integrity, transparency and quality. The Gulf Wild program ensures that each one these priorities are constantly met and this is something our customers value. They appreciate traceable, sustainable and responsibly sourced products that tell a tremendous story. Further, and most important, Gulf Wild has been an integral part of promoting the trust between the seafood industry and the end users that can only come with a fully traceable and sustainable system. Jason has helped make that happen.*

**Connor Boney**, Vice President of [Revere Meat Co.](#), Atlanta, Georgia

For more information on the White House Champion of Change for Sustainable Seafood program, visit: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/champions>

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*The **Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Shareholders' Alliance** is a non-profit organization that represents the interests of commercial reef fish fishermen and other stakeholders in the Gulf of Mexico. We work hard to maintain accountability and conservation-based management for our region's fisheries for today and future generations. By working closely with regional managers, state agencies, and federal representatives, we strive to stabilize and improve fishery management to ensure that we can continue to provide the American public with a sustainable source of domestically-caught Gulf of Mexico seafood. Everything we do is founded in our belief that conservation and stewardship protect fish populations and fishermen's businesses.*

**[www.shareholdersalliance.org](http://www.shareholdersalliance.org)**

As a non-profit conservation based organization supporting U.S. fisherman operating in the Gulf of Mexico, **Gulf Wild** is setting the standard for genuine, responsibly caught, traceable and reliable wild domestic seafood. When you encounter the Gulf Wild trademark, it represents a level of integrity, honesty, professionalism and responsibility that is second to none. When it comes to seafood, the Gulf Wild trademark ensures that your Grouper, Snapper and other seafood was harvested by US fishermen and came from a well-monitored and continuously improving fishery in the Gulf of Mexico under innovative conservation standards.

**[www.gulfwild.com](http://www.gulfwild.com)**

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