

stop looking and start seeing



Biography

Dawn Benko, an award winning photographer based in Northwestern New Jersey, specializes in fine art nature and environmental photography. Her passion for capturing “the moment” has seen her through an A.S. degree in photographic technology at Florida Institute of Technology and a thirty-year photojournalism career in her native New Jersey. In 2007, she began in earnest to pursue her true passion—nature and wildlife photography.

Dawn has driven a 15-passenger storm chasing van thousands of miles across the Midwest, chronicling tornadoes and violent thunderstorms. She has taken her camera 250 feet under the earth, to photograph a New York State caving expedition in complete darkness and up into the mountains of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, where she took pictures while dangling from a rock-climbing rope.

Dawn obtained the nickname “Saw Master” from teens during an Appalachian Service Project mission to West Virginia, where she helped to build a house for a needy family and concurrently documented the trip for the newspaper for which she worked. While helping in relief efforts in Haiti and post-Katrina Louisiana, she has photographed life in both locations and in 2011 took a trip to South Africa, where she documented the work of Hands On The World Global. During this trip she also helped install a water pump at a South African primary school and a new roof on a student’s home. She also conducted a photography workshop for South African high school students.

Since turning her focus to fine art photography, Dawn has shown her work at numerous galleries and exhibitions in the NJ-NY-PA area and is an exhibiting artist at the ARTery Gallery in Milford, PA. In addition to her many photo journalism awards, she has won awards in the Annual Louisville National Juried Photography Show and in Light, Space, Time's monthly juried art shows and was named an “Honorary Spider Fellow” as a nominee in nature photography for the 11th and 12th Annual Black and White Spider Awards, which were juried by captains of the photography industry such as National Geographic, Studio Hansa, Australian Center for Photography, et al.

Dawn’s work has been published by the likes of National Geographic and the Nature Conservancy. Currently, she is working on a volunteer project for the Whippany River Watershed Action Committee in Morris County, NJ, taking photographs in the watershed. She volunteers her talents to GAIT Therapeutic Riding Center in Milford, PA, and is co-author/artist of “A Guide to Waterfalls Along the Upper Delaware River”.

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