Message from Director

The Marine Science Program at the University of South Carolina had a banner year in 2010-2011. Our students and faculty continued to receive national and international recognition for their outstanding research and scholarship. With over 275 undergraduate majors and 25 graduate students, we continue to be among the outstanding Marine Science programs across the country. Given all of the wonderful events of this past year, we wanted to share with you some of the highlights. I hope you enjoy our newsletter.

A picture of a few of our outstanding Marine Science graduates from this past year. Approximately 30 students received their undergraduate degrees and 6 graduate students received either their Master’s or Doctoral Degrees in 2010-2011 (back row, l-r) Les Sonefeld (UG), Brian Smith (UG), Michele Repetto (UG), Hallie Mosblack (UG), Matt Nienhaus (UG), Peter Washam (UG)(front row, l-r) Yan Jia (GS), Kai len Gilde (UG), Alex Hooks (UG), Emily Goldman (GS), Eric Lachenmyer (UG)

Student Corner

MARINE SCIENCE UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS

L to R: Gwen Geidel, Undergraduate Director of School of the Earth, Ocean and Environment; Catherine Hodierne, Kadee Hicks, Hallie Mosblack, and Claudia Benitez-Nelson, Director of the Marine Science Program. Stephen Timko (not pictured) was at sea.
Traci Heincelman Memorial Scholarship

The Traci Heincelman Memorial Scholarship was established in memory of Traci Jeanne Heincelman, an outstanding Marine Science major who died in 2002 due to injuries sustained in an automobile accident. The $1000 gift is awarded to a junior majoring in Marine Science who exemplifies academic excellence, research and volunteerism.

This year, two Marine Science majors received the award: Kadee Hicks and Catherine Hodierne.

Kadee is a native of Kingsport, Tennessee. She is a Capstone Scholar and a founding member of WISE (Women in Science and Engineering), as well as volunteering for the dance marathon, Relay for Life, and a therapeutic horse back riding facility! A biology minor, Kadee spent last summer on the Costa Rican/Panamanian border working to conserve sea turtles and manatees through International Student Volunteers. She currently works in the Dr. Kresovich research lab studying genomics and evolutionary biology.

A Summerville, SC native, Cat is a member of the South Carolina Honors College and the University 101 Advisory Council. An active member of Students Engaged in Aquatic Sciences (SEAS) with a biological emphasis, Cat also contributed to the Lake Wateree Water Quality Project and spent last summer in an 8-week Discover Program taught by the university’s Director of Undergraduate Research.

Rising Senior in Marine Science Award

The Rising Senior Award is given by the College of Arts and Sciences to a rising senior major who has demonstrated excellence in Marine Science. Criteria for selection include GPA, research activities, volunteerism, overall academic performance, and nomination by a faculty member. The award is a $500 scholarship for the student’s senior year ($250 per semester).

This year’s recipient, Stephen Timko, has a perfect 4.00 GPA at USC Columbia. A Chemistry double-major, Stephen works in Dr. Ferry’s research lab and spent the Spring 2011 semester participating in three different research cruises: with the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI), with Dr. Tammi Richardson in the Sargasso Sea off Bermuda, and with Dr. Timothy Shaw in the North Sea above Germany. On campus, Stephen is active with the SEAS Education Outreach program which brings sea creatures to local schoolchildren, and is also the associate editor of the student-run scientific journal MarSci. Stephen has won the prestigious Hollings Scholarship, both the McNair and the Lieber Scholarships from USC, and was named a Goldwater Honorable Mention.

Interestingly, Stephen also received the Rising Senior award from the Chemistry Department, indicating that he is one of the top juniors in that major as well.
**Outstanding Marine Science Major Award**

Selected from a pool of extraordinarily talented seniors, **Hallie Mosblack** was named the Outstanding MSCI major. This $500 cash award is given annually to one or more senior majors most recognized for outstanding academic performance, research participation, and support of the MSCI Program through volunteer efforts.

Hallie has worked for Dr. Blaine Griffen for two full years, conducting independent research which has led to a Magellan grant and co-authorship of three papers. During her time at USC, Hallie worked with both SEAS and Science Quest, earned a minor in Spanish, and spent a semester in Costa Rica. Having graduated in May with an emphasis in coastal resource management and marine policy, Hallie is now working for an environment nonprofit organization based in Albuquerque.

**Hollings Scholars**

A record five rising juniors in Marine Science were named 2011 Ernest F. Hollings Scholars. They are- Emma Ann Kelley, Hali Collins Kerr, Tristan Richard Lawson, Kyra Elizabeth Marsigliano and Erin Lynn McParland. The Hollings Scholarship Program exposes rising juniors and seniors to the mission of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and our nation’s history of ocean and atmospheric stewardship, which are both reflected in the dedication and service of Senator Ernest F. Hollings. Hollings Scholars are expected to become scientists, policy-makers or educators in the U.S. oceanic and atmospheric workforce. Hollings Scholars study a variety of disciplines including: biological, life, agricultural sciences, physical sciences, mathematics, engineering, computer and information sciences, social and behavioral science and teacher education. The scholarship provides up to $8,000 of academic assistance per school year for full-time study during their junior and senior years. Students must complete a 10-week paid summer internship. Their travel and living expenses are paid and they receive a stipend of $650 per week. For more information on our 2010-2011 Hollings Scholars, go to: [http://www.cas.sc.edu/dean/news/2011/0411-hollings.html](http://www.cas.sc.edu/dean/news/2011/0411-hollings.html)

**Morris K. Udall – and - Barry M. Goldwater Scholarships**

The Morris K. Udall Scholarship is a national award given to only 80 undergraduates throughout the United States who have an interest in Environmental careers. We are very pleased to announce that we have two recipients this year, Erin Fedewa and Hallie Kerr, who may receive up to $5000 as part of the award. For more information on our 2010-2011 Udall Scholars, go to: [http://www.sc.edu/news/newsarticle.php?nid=1692](http://www.sc.edu/news/newsarticle.php?nid=1692)

Erin Fedewa was also named a Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship Finalist. Founded in 1986 by Congress to honor Senator Barry M. Goldwater who served his country for 56 years as a soldier, Statesman and 30 years in the U.S. Senate. The endowed recognition program fosters and encourages excellence in science and mathematics with a goal of alleviating a critical shortage of skilled scientists, mathematicians and engineers.


**MARINE SCIENCE GRADUATE AWARDS**

**Vernberg Awards**

The Vernberg Awards were founded in 2004 to honor Dr. F. John Vernberg, former director of the Baruch Institute who was instrumental in making the Marine Science Program a reality. Each year two awards are given in his honor. One is a publication award awarded to a graduate student who has the best published journal article or book chapter, and the second is given to the best graduate instructional assistant.

**Evelyn Lawrenz** is the recipient of the 2011 Vernberg Publication Award for her publication entitled, “Spectral irradiance and phytoplankton community composition in a black-water dominated estuary, Winyah Bay, SC, USA” that appeared in Estuaries and Coasts (2010). She graduated in 2011 with a Ph.D. in Marine Science under the supervision of Dr. Tammi Richardson. Evelyn was also the sole recipient of the SC Graduate School Dean’s Award for Excellence in Graduate Studies.

**Si Chen** earned the 2011 Vernberg Teaching Award. She is a doctoral student working under the supervision of Dr. Raymond Torres. Students touted Chen for her enthusiasm, patience and willingness to answer questions at any time of day.

**USC Graduate Student Day**

Each year, the Graduate School holds a campus wide competition called Graduate Student Day. This event provides graduate students an opportunity to present their scholarly and creative work with cash prizes awarded to the winners of each category as judged by USC Faculty. The Marine Science Program had a number of award winning presentations:

- Oral Presentation, 1st Prize for Environment/Geology: **Si Chen** (Supervisor: Dr. Ray Torres)
- Oral Presentation, 2nd Prize, Environment/Geology: **Ebenezet Nyadjo** (Dr. Subra Bulusu)
- Poster Presentation, 2nd Prize, Environment: **Yan Jia** (Dr. Sasha Yankovsky)

**USC Presidential Awards**

In 2010, USC started the Presidential Award, which is given to the top incoming doctoral students. Minimum qualifications include a combined verbal and quantitative GRE score of 1375 and an undergraduate or graduate GPA of 3.7. Presidential scholars are provided with a supplemental stipend for four years ($4,000), which is used to augment the usual stipends provided to students via teaching or research assistantships. **Mike Philben**, a doctoral student currently working with Dr. Ron Benner, received this award in 2010. **Brady Cunningham**, an incoming doctoral student who will work with Dr. Seth John, received the award for 2011.
Facult Corner

The Marine Science Program welcomed two new jointly appointed Marine-Science Faculty in 2011: **Dr. Seth John** in the Department of Earth and Ocean Sciences and **Dr. Jean Ellis** in the Department of Geography. Dr. Seth John is a trace metal and stable isotope geochemist and Dr. Jean Ellis is a coastal and aeolian geomorphologist.

**Dr. Ron Benner** was named a 2011 Fellow of the American Geophysical Union (AGU). “To be elected a Fellow of AGU is a special tribute for those who have made exceptional scientific contributions. Nominated Fellows must have attained acknowledged eminence in the Earth and space sciences. Primary criteria for evaluation in scientific eminence are major breakthrough/discovery and paradigm shift. This designation is conferred upon not more than 0.1% of all AGU members in any given year. New Fellows are chosen by a Committee of Fellows.”

**Dr. Jim Morris** was named a 2011 Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and earned the Educational Foundation Award for Science, Mathematics and Engineering. Election as an AAAS Fellow is an honor bestowed upon members by their peers for meritorious efforts to advance science or its applications. The USC Educational Foundation Award is given to a Faculty member for either a significant contribution or achievements over a lifetime.

**Dr. Tammi Richardson** was a finalist for the Michael J. Mungo Undergraduate Teaching Award and was named one of USC’s 2011 Rising Stars, one of only 18 faculty whose scholarly pursuits, scientific inquiry, and passion for learning would make them the envy of any university's faculty. For more information USC’s 2011 Rising Stars, go to: [http://sc.edu/rising_stars/](http://sc.edu/rising_stars/)
**Briefs**

- Check out the redesigned Marine Science Program website at [www.msci.sc.edu](http://www.msci.sc.edu)
- More than 20 Marine Science majors earned a perfect 4.0 GPA in Fall and Spring 2011 and a spot on the President’s Honor Roll, while another 70 earned a spot on the Dean’s List (>3.5 GPA)!
- 30 Marine Science undergraduate and 6 graduate students completed their degrees during the 2010-2011 academic year. Congratulations!
- Dr. Blain Griffen had a paper published in *Nature* magazine: [http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v467/n7314/full/nature09389.html](http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v467/n7314/full/nature09389.html)
- Dr. Seth John received his very first NSF Award as lead Principal Investigator entitled, "Trace-metal isotopes in Atlantic seawater and particles from Geotraces transects A03 and A10," for $453,514.
- Dr. Blaine Griffen received his very first NSF Award as lead Principal Investigator entitled, "Linking variation in metabolic processes as a key to prediction," for $551,226.

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