

Summer interns complete research at VIMS

(August 9, 2010) Ten college and university students from around the nation completed their summer internships at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science last week, presenting the results of their research projects to an audience of faculty, staff, and students in VIMS' McHugh Auditorium.

The students were part of the "Research Experience for Undergraduates" program at VIMS, now in its 21st year. Directed by professors Linda Schaffner and Rochelle Seitz, the program is funded by the National Science Foundation, VIMS, The College of William and Mary (W&M), private donors, and grants to individual faculty.

During the 10-week program, each student worked with one or more faculty mentors on an in-depth research project, typically gaining experience in both the field and laboratory. The subjects of this year's research projects varied widely, from a study of how by-catch reduction devices affect the commercial crab catch to a field trial that attempted to use robotic subs to monitor oil in water.

REU program director Linda Schaffner says "the REU program is a transformative experience for students." She notes that many REU students continue on to graduate school and successful careers in science. "Even if a student's project doesn't turn out exactly as planned," she says "they still gain valuable experience as to how science really works."

Program co-director Rochelle Seitz notes that "this year's students were particularly enthusiastic. We expect great things from them in the years ahead."



Summer Intern (REU) Class of 2010: Front row: Angelina Haines, Courtney Wickel, Leslie Bland, Zoe Almeida, Elizabeth Gomez, David Fryxell, co-director Rochelle Seitz, and Director Linda Schaffner. Back Row: Nyanza Rothman, Molly Martin, William Bennett, and Robert Isdell.

Student projects

L. Zoe Almeida (Scripps College): Responses of tidal freshwater plants to increases in salinity. Mentors: Dr. Jim Perry and Lori Sutter.

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Will Bennett (University of Mary Washington): Effects of by-catch reduction devices (BRDs) on the commercial crab catch. Mentors: Dr. Romuald Lipcius, Dr. Rochelle Seitz, and Danielle McCulloch.

Leslie Bland (James Madison University): Studying and comparing Chesapeake Bay 3-D hydrodynamic models. Mentors: Dr. Marjy Friedrichs and Dr. Carl Friedrichs.

David Fryxell (University of Connecticut): The effect of nutrient depletion on biomass accumulation and species composition in a natural algal community. Mentor: Dr. Emmett Duffy.

Elizabeth Gomez (Brown University): Effects of shoreline development and upland usage on multiple trophic levels in Chesapeake Bay. Mentors: Dr. Rochelle Seitz and Theresa Davenport.

Angelina Haines (Randolph College): Effects of current and bioturbation on sediment reduction and oxidation. Mentor: Dr. Robert Diaz.

Robert Isdell (University of North Carolina, Greensboro): A study of habitat type and its effects on juvenile blue crabs. Mentor: Dr. Romuald Lipcius.

Molly Martin (Massachusetts Institute of Technology): Using AUVs to monitor oil in the water column. Mentor: Dr. Mark Patterson.

Nyanza Rothman (Vassar College): Trace metal cycling in an algal floway system. Mentors: Dr. Aaron Beck and Dr. Elizabeth Canuel.

Courtney Wickel (The College of William and Mary): Macrobenthic production and food-web structure in shallow tidal-freshwater habitats, including beds of *Hydrilla verticillata*. Mentor: Dr. Linda Schaffner.