

VIMS welcomes 2011 Governor School students

(July 7, 2011) The Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) has welcomed this year's group of high school students as part of the Virginia Governor's School program.

The VIMS Governor's School is a 4-week summer residential program provided in cooperation with Christopher Newport University. The program has provided high-achieving Virginia high school students with hands-on experiences in marine research for nearly 20 years.

The program is structured as an apprenticeship in which each student works with a faculty sponsor and VIMS graduate students on an authentic research project.

The 2011 Governor's School students are Sarah Burns (South Lakes High School, Reston), Shane Grzegorzcyk (Charlottesville High School, Charlottesville), Morgan Hughes (Cosby High School, Midlothian), Ashley Meredith (Yorktown High School, Arlington), Catherine Mitchell (Wakefield High School, Arlington), and Kharis Schrage (West Potomac High School, Alexandria).

Dr. Rochelle Seitz of VIMS manages the program, which this year runs from June 27th through July 22nd.



2011 Class of VIMS Governor's School Students: From L: Morgan Hughes, Catherine Mitchell, Kharis Schrage, Shane Grzegorzcyk, Ashley Meredith, and Sarah Burns.

Research projects

Each student in the Governor's School program at VIMS chooses a research topic that is related to an on-going study conducted by his or her faculty and graduate student advisors:

- Ms. Burns is working with Dr. Rom Lipcius and graduate student Megan Wood to study whether blue crabs prefer native underwater grasses or an invasive alga for habitat.
- Mr. Grzegorzcyk is working with Dr. Jim Perry and graduate student Wes Hudson to investigate how the size of trees at planting relates to their survival in wetland restoration projects within the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
- Ms. Hughes is working with Dr. Rochelle Seitz and staff member Katie Knick to study how different types of shoreline in the Poquoson region of Chesapeake Bay affect the population density of blue crabs and the diversity of other bottom-dwelling organisms.

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- Ms. Meredith is working with Dr. Elizabeth Canuel, Ms. Erin Ferer and graduate student Hadley McIntosh to determine whether the algal floway at VIMS is a useful tool for improving water quality through removal of suspended sediment from Bay waters.
- Ms. Mitchell is working with Dr. Rom Lipcius and graduate student Allison Colden to study how the height of restored oyster reefs in the Great Wicomico River affects the reefs' performance and persistence.
- Ms. Schrage is working in the York River with Dr. Rochelle Seitz and graduate student Cassie Glaspie to study whether the type of sea grass present affects blue crab predation on bay scallops and Baltic macoma clams.

Seitz says the projects “reflect both the wide variety of organisms and habitats under study at VIMS, and the exceptional abilities and curiosity that the Governor’s School students bring with them to our campus.”

Virginia Governor’s Schools have been providing some of the state’s most able students with academically challenging and enriching programs since the inception of the program in 1973. The schools include summer residential, summer regional, and academic-year programs in science, mathematics, technology, the arts, and humanities that are consistent with Virginia’s Standards of Learning. Support comes from the Virginia General Assembly and the Virginia Department of Education.

VIMS is an independent state agency that conducts marine research for a healthier tomorrow. The School of Marine Science at VIMS is a graduate school of the College of William and Mary.