

December 16, 2016

From Dean D'Elia

Alumni, students and friends,

As year-end approaches, I wanted to extend a personal thank-you to our friends and supporters for truly making a difference in advancing coastal and environmental issues. The impact of your support is reflected in our high-achieving students, world-renowned faculty, cutting-edge research and quality programs. Tangible results include:



- Undergraduate enrollment is at a record high.
- Our graduate enrollment remains robust and includes students from around the globe.
- Cutting-edge tenure track faculty (i.e. microbiologist, coastal hydrologist) continue to be hired.
- New and better ways to manage Louisiana's coastal and environmental issues are being explored through research being conducted on all continents and oceans. This research directly impacts families and businesses in Louisiana's coastal zone.
- Students, faculty and staff are serving others by providing flood relief efforts, mentoring science students from an underperforming high school and educating children about coastal processes and erosion.

Please consider continuing this impact by financially supporting the College of the Coast & Environment. Make your gift by December 31 to receive charitable giving tax credit for 2016. Best wishes for a happy, healthy and safe holiday season.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christopher F. D'Elia". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Christopher F. D'Elia, Ph. D.
Professor and Dean

[CLICK HERE TO GIVE](#)

Thank you for your support!

CC&E Celebrates Fall Commencement

Friday, December 16, 2016



Environmental Sciences

B.S.

Johnathon William Angers
 Nathaniel Thomas Bradley
 Davis Houston Cowles*
 Jordan Joseph Earls
 Teresa Marianne Guibault
 Kristin Michelle Mangrum
 Katy Mae Murray
 Fabienne Hannan Placide
 Matthew Paul Schaefer
 **Summa Cum Laude*

M.S.

Pierce Damian Gautreau
 Brendan Michael Marsh

Oceanography and Coastal Sciences

M.S.

Tess Marie Danielson
 Brian Michael Levine

Ph.D.

Azure Bevington
 Elizabeth LaBone

Congrats, grads!

View our Facebook album [here](#).

CC&E News

Pham Leads CC&E Thanksgiving Toy Drive

In giving thanks for the good health of her two daughters, Lily Pham, coordinator, Department of Oceanography and Coastal Sciences, sought to spread a little joy at Thanksgiving to children at Our Lady of the Lake Children's Hospital.

"I can't imagine being stuck in the hospital during the holidays," Pham said. "I thought toys for Thanksgiving would cheer these kids up a bit."



Delivering Thanksgiving toys to the Our Lady of the Lake Children's Hospital are Lily Pham and daughters Katelyn and Natalie, along with Professor Dubravko Justic and his son Dominic.

Pham collected three wagons full of toys donated by family, friends and coworkers, and delivered them to the hospital with the help of her daughters Katelyn and Natalie, as

well as Dubravko Justic, professor, Department of Oceanography and Coastal Sciences, and his son Dominic.

"I didn't do the exact count, but am sure there were more than 50 boxes of toys," Pham said.

The idea for the Thanksgiving toy drive stemmed from a Christmas shoebox gift drive at Pham's daughter's daycare last year, for which volunteers placed gifts in shoeboxes that were then shipped to children around the world.

"When I asked for help with that drive from the faculty, staff and students here, thinking I would make only a few boxes, I ended up with 34 boxes, plus shipping money to return to the daycare," Pham said. With that show of generosity, she was confident that a Thanksgiving toy drive would be not only a possibility, but a success this year.

"I must say that we have some very generous people working here," she said. "I could not have done the shoebox drive or the toy drive without their help."

Faculty Spotlight

DeLorme Brings Science Communication Expertise to CC&E

Effective communication is key to a scientist's success, regardless of field or career path. Professor of Environmental Communication Denise DeLorme is conducting research and teaching future scientists to better understand target audiences, communicate clearly, think and plan strategically and develop creative branding through her courses Environmental Communication and Qualitative Research Methods for Environmental Decision Making.

DeLorme came to LSU in the fall of 2015 after 18 years in the School of Communication at the University of Central Florida, where she was professor of advertising. At UCF, she taught graduate courses in qualitative social science research methods, mass communication theory, and advertising and society, and undergraduate courses in advertising campaign planning and advertising and public relations ethics and law. In 2015 she was recognized as a University of Georgia Grady College Distinguished Alumni Scholar.



DeLorme was named 2015 University of Georgia Grady College Distinguished Alumni Scholar.

"I'm able to apply my advertising background as I help students understand the importance of, and methods for, communicating scientific subjects in a manner that is easily accessible and relevant to their audience," DeLorme said.

With interdisciplinary research interests focusing on environmental communication, health communication and advertising effects, DeLorme acknowledges the valuable opportunity she has in the CC&E to draw from and expand upon her research.

"I was attracted to LSU because of the interdisciplinary emphasis and variety of backgrounds used to address complex environmental issues," she said.

In addition to publishing in leading academic journals, DeLorme has received research funding as PI or co-PI from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (through the Florida Sea Grant, Louisiana Sea Grant, and the National Centers for Coastal and Ocean Sciences), Gulf of Mexico Alliance, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Advisory Council on Environmental Education, American Academy of Advertising, and Promotional Products Association of Florida. She is also on the team recently awarded a [\\$1.3 million NOAA grant](#) to pursue coastal resiliency research.

The culmination of DeLorme's science communication work as part of a large interdisciplinary team examining impacts of sea level rise was [recently published in the journal *Earth's Future*](#). Her role has been to facilitate stakeholder engagement and help to realize transdisciplinary research results.

Alumni Spotlight

Ellen Prager Ph.D. '92, Coastal Studies Institute

From CC&E to Hollywood: Marine scientist, author shares expertise with Disney

Marine scientist Ellen Prager teaches earth and ocean science through her popular science and children's adventure books, public speaking engagements and media interviews. She is the science adviser for Celebrity's small ships in the Galapagos Islands and was recently a consultant on Disney's newest animated feature film, *Moana*. Prager was previously the assistant dean at the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science and at one time the chief scientist for the world's only undersea research station in the Florida Keys. She has participated in research expeditions to the Galapagos Islands, Papua New Guinea, Caribbean, Bahamas, and the deep waters of the Florida Reef tract.



Ellen Prager, Ph.D. '92, with her book *Shark Whisperer*, the first in her undersea adventure series.

Noted for her ability to make science entertaining and understandable to the general public, she has appeared on national television programs and has written numerous articles for scientific journals, general interest magazines, and books, including *Sex, Drugs, and Sea Slime: The oceans' oddest creatures and why they matter* and *Chasing Science at Sea*, both published by University of Chicago Press. She has also published several children's books with the National Geographic Society, for which she received the 2000 Parents Choice Award.

Prager's most recent book, *Stingray City*, published in May 2016 by Mighty Media Press, is her third book in a fiction series for middle graders (ages 8-12) that tells of the ocean adventures of 12-year-old Tristan Hunt. Described as "an underwater Harry Potter," the books combine humor and fast-paced adventure with learning about the ocean and marine life.

Prager's earlier works included popular science publications aimed at readers in high school and beyond, as well as illustrated children's books for four- to seven-year-olds.



Walt Disney Animation Studio's feature film *Moana* tells the tale of an adventurous teen who leaves her island home and sets sail on a mission to save her people.

CC&E Today: What work did you do for *Moana*, and how did that come about?

Prager: I gave a talk to and answered questions for the Disney animators and others working on the movie about the ocean. We discussed what the ocean can look like under a variety of conditions, waves, interaction with

islands, and more. It was great fun, and they asked excellent and often very creative questions. I was contacted through the [Science and Entertainment Exchange](#) in California. Scientists interested in getting involved with the entertainment industry can provide their name and field of expertise. I was just lucky they called me for *Moana*. My colleague and friend, Captain Peg Brandon (president, Sea Education Association) answered questions about sailing and navigation as well.

CC&E Today: Your career thus far exemplifies the rich variety and wide scope of opportunities available to coastal and marine scientists. In what ways did your experience at LSU prepare you for the work you've been doing?

Prager: My experience at LSU broadened my expertise, especially within physical oceanography and computer modeling. My background is now really well rounded to include marine geology, biology, and physical oceanography. This has allowed me a wider variety of opportunities in terms of teaching, writing, speaking, and working with the media.

CC&E Today: Any advice for current and potential CC&E oceanography and coastal sciences majors?

Prager: Take risks, be proactive, and go after opportunities. Don't be afraid of failing or of being rejected, those things are very often part of the path toward success. And take advantage of networking opportunities and work hard. But be careful not to come across as entitled. Believe me when I say I have had to work for the opportunities I now have, starting at the bottom and showing people that I am willing to work hard, laugh at adversity, and love a good challenge. There are a lot of different and amazing opportunities out there today, so explore your interests, while you discover your strengths and weaknesses. And don't give up!



Sea-life stories: Prager performs an underwater book reading at The Florida Aquarium.

CC&E Today: What's next for you?

Prager: I'm hoping to start a new adventure fiction series for middle graders with the first book taking place in the Galapagos Islands. I'm continuing to work in the Galapagos with Celebrity Cruise lines, and this year I'm a spokesperson for Dawn dish detergent,

which is the cleaner of choice for oiled or contaminated birds and marine mammals. I'm excited to work with a company that has donated its product and some \$5 million dollars to animal rescue organizations. In addition, I'm also very proud to be the chief scientist for [Force Blue](#), an organization that will be training ex-combat and recon divers to help in coral reef restoration, to be spokespeople for the ocean, and to assist them with their PTSD issues and in finding a new positive mission in life.

In Brief...

Rachel Croy, Abbey Hotard, and Shannon Matzke were selected to receive the [Tiger Athletic Foundation](#) (TAF) Scholarship for the spring 2017 semester. TAF Scholarships have been awarded to full-time coastal environmental science (CES) students every year since 2011. All three CES seniors selected are members of the LSU Ogden Honors College and have outstanding GPAs, research experience, and a history of prior employment.



On December 2, CC&E students hailing from China, Iran, South Korea, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the U.S. joined members of the Coast and Environment Graduate Organization, Associate Dean Rick Shaw and Dean D'Elia for a potluck dinner to celebrate different cultures and cuisines. Fan favorites included homemade peach cobbler from Georgia, Cajun gumbo and jambalaya, Persian fesenjan, and baked macaroni and cheese. The "international potluck" has become a pre-holiday tradition for the College.

Correction

In last month's *CC&E Today*, we listed James Cowan as mentor for LSU alumna Stephanie Sharuga. Her mentor was Mark Benfield, professor, Department of Oceanography & Coastal Sciences.



Photo by Sandra Prusoff

Happy Holidays from the LSU College of the Coast & Environment

CC&E ALUMNI -- New job? New location? We want to hear from you!
Send your Alumni Update to kfalls1@lsu.edu

STAY CONNECTED

