

January 31, 2018

*From Dean D'Elia*

Alumni, students and friends,

I would like to give a warm welcome back to our faculty, staff, and students after the winter break. We have had a rare phenomenon of two snow occurrences in South Louisiana so far in the past few months, one of which has affected the start of the spring semester. Despite the three-day closure, when I look around campus I find many students ready and eager to get back to work. I wish you all luck on your new studies this session.



January is National Mentoring Month. In keeping with that theme, LSU EnvironMentors also returned to campus after the winter break and kicked off the second half of the school year. EnvironMentors students have donned their lab coats and begun setting up the experiments on which they will report their findings this April.

Also, the start of the New Year means it has been 10 years since the inception of our Bachelor of Science in Coastal Environmental Sciences (CES) in 2008. The CES program is based on a rigorous quantitative curriculum and offers an opportunity for students to become engaged in research early in their academic careers. The program is designed to keep pace with environmental change in the global social-ecological system.

The Bachelor of Science in CES builds upon CC&E's international reputation for excellence in coastal processes, wetland ecology, environmental sciences, and much more. There are very few undergraduate degrees like it nationwide.

I would also like to mention our Fall 2017 graduation. Our graduates have gained real-life experience through their work in our laboratories and have had international exposure to faculty and other students from around the world. I am proud of this diversity and how this global engagement embodies LSU's core values. These are just a few of the fine qualities that set our college apart. Congratulations, graduates!

I hope that all our students have a successful and stimulating spring semester.

Sincerely,

*Christopher F. D'Elia*

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

## Want to learn more about CC&E?

Supporters and potential supporters of the **College of the Coast & Environment** are invited to a **presentation and tour of the College**.

Contact Kathe Falls for details at [kfalls1@lsu.edu](mailto:kfalls1@lsu.edu)

[CLICK HERE TO GIVE](#)

Thank you for your support!

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## College of the Coast & Environment at AGU Fall Meeting

The largest Earth and space science meeting in the world, held by The American Geophysical Union (AGU), occurred this fall at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans on Dec. 11-15, 2017. LSU's coastal accomplishments were highlighted at this event through a phenomenal university display, strategic messaging, and strong outreach efforts coordinated by LSU Strategic Communications and LSU's Office of Research and Economic Development.



The College of the Coast & Environment (CC&E) was represented by 41 faculty and students who gave 21 technical presentations and presented 27 poster abstracts. Additionally, 12 high school students from the EnvironMentors program attended - 10 of which presented their research.

The College of Science took the lead in organizing an LSU Mix and Mingle, which was also hosted by the College of the Coast & Environment, Department of Geology & Geophysics, Department of Geography and

Anthropology, and the Franks Chair in Geology & Geophysics. Over 100 attendees discussed the latest LSU research at the Mix and Mingle.

"AGU is a major event for our college and an opportunity to share our latest research. With research highlighting the causes of coastal land loss, its impact, and potential solutions for our delta, our college is an integral part of LSU's coastal legacy, and we enjoy sharing our findings at meeting such as AGU," said Christopher F. D'Elia, professor and dean of CC&E.

In June 2017, D'Elia was recognized by the New Orleans Convention and Visitor's Bureau for his role in helping AGU select New Orleans as the venue for its 2017 meeting.

[Click here](#) to see an interview on AGU TV by Sam Bentley, associate dean for research at College of Science, Billy & Ann Harrison Chair in Sedimentary Geology, and adjunct professor at CC&E.



LSU Joins Atmospheric Research Consortium and LSU Student

## Awarded Fellowship

During the American Geophysical Union (AGU) Fall Meeting on Dec. 14 in New Orleans, LSU President F. King Alexander and University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (UCAR) President Antonio J. Busalacchi signed a declaration of membership agreement that officially made LSU a member of UCAR.

[UCAR](#) is a nonprofit consortium of more than 100 colleges and universities undertaking cutting-edge research and education in atmospheric and related sciences. Headquartered in Boulder, Colorado, UCAR manages the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) and provides additional services to strengthen and support research and education through its community programs.



LSU supporters who attended the UCAR signing ceremony.

Following the AGU Fall Meeting, Department of Oceanography & Coastal Sciences graduate student Dongxiao Yin, under the supervision of Adviser George Xue, was awarded UCAR's Graduate Visitor Program in 2018.

"This would be impossible if LSU was not part of UCAR," Xue said, "My student will be supported to spend three months at NCAR this summer working with the model developing team to incorporate a sediment model into the National Water Model, a.k.a., WRF-Hydro."



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## College of the Coast & Environment Fall Graduation



CC&E Fall 2017 Commencement

At the fall commencement ceremony on Dec. 15, the College of the Coast & Environment (CC&E) added the next class of scientists, leaders, and policy makers to its coastal legacy.

Because our degrees are built on rigorous, multi-disciplined curricula, our graduates have a reputation for solving problems quickly and efficiently, working well in groups, and thinking critically. Students gain real-life experience through their work in research laboratories, both in the classroom

and in the natural environment, and exposure to a diverse array of concepts, theories, and perspectives offered by a college which attracts students and faculty from around the world.

"I am proud of this graduating class," said Dean Chris D'Elia. "It's an honor to have such talented students in our college."

Congratulations to all of CC&E's Fall graduates!

### **Bachelor of Science in Coastal Environmental Science**

- Monique Gabrielle Boudreaux
- Dorothy Rose Bourgeois
- Thomas Michael Mansur, III
- Lauren Elise Nickles

### **Master of Science in Environmental Science**

- Patrick Alteus
- Michael Allen Layne, II
- Ahsennur Soysal
- Matthew Daniel Voitier

### **Master of Science in Oceanography and Coastal Sciences**

- Amy Johanna Mallozzi, Oceanography and Coastal Sciences
- Patrick Aaron Robichaux, Oceanography and Coastal Sciences

### **Doctor of Philosophy in Oceanography and Coastal Sciences**

- Jeffrey Blake Obelcz, Oceanography and Coastal Sciences, "Sediment Transport and Slope Stability in the Northern Gulf of Mexico" (Professor Kehui Xu)

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## **College of the Coast & Environment Fall 2017 Honor Roll Students**

### **President's List Fall 2017**

Undergraduate students enrolled in at least 15 credit hours who earned grade-point averages of 4.0 or higher during the semester are listed on the President's Honor Roll. CC&E students include:

- Viet Dao, Baton Rouge, LA
- Denise Poveda, Baton Rouge, LA

### **CC&E Dean's List Fall 2017**

Undergraduate students who earned grade-point averages of 3.5 to 3.9 in at least 15 credit hours are listed on the Dean's List. CC&E students include:

- Osman Ali Fazili, Shreveport, LA
- Amanda Marie Fontenot, Baton Rouge, LA
- Peter T Mates, Baton Rouge, LA
- Madeline R LeBlanc, Sunshine, LA
- Chance Michael Melancon, Luling, LA
- Katerine Alexis Kjos, Slidell, LA
- Jenna C Cheramie, Houma, LA
- Anthony Joseph Bologna, Marion, Arkansas
- Robert Conan Mitchell, Alpharetta, GA
- Katelyn Lamb, Diamondhead, MS
- Andrew Robert Evangelisti, Memphis, TN

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## **College of the Coast & Environment Toy Drive**

Lily Pham, coordinator in the Department of Oceanography and Coastal Sciences, sought to spread a little joy to children at Our Lady of the Lake Children's Hospital this past Thanksgiving.

Pham collected toys donated by family, friends and coworkers, and delivered them to the hospital with the help of her daughters, Katelyn and Natalie; Dubravko Justic, professor, Department of Oceanography and Coastal Sciences; and his son Dominic.

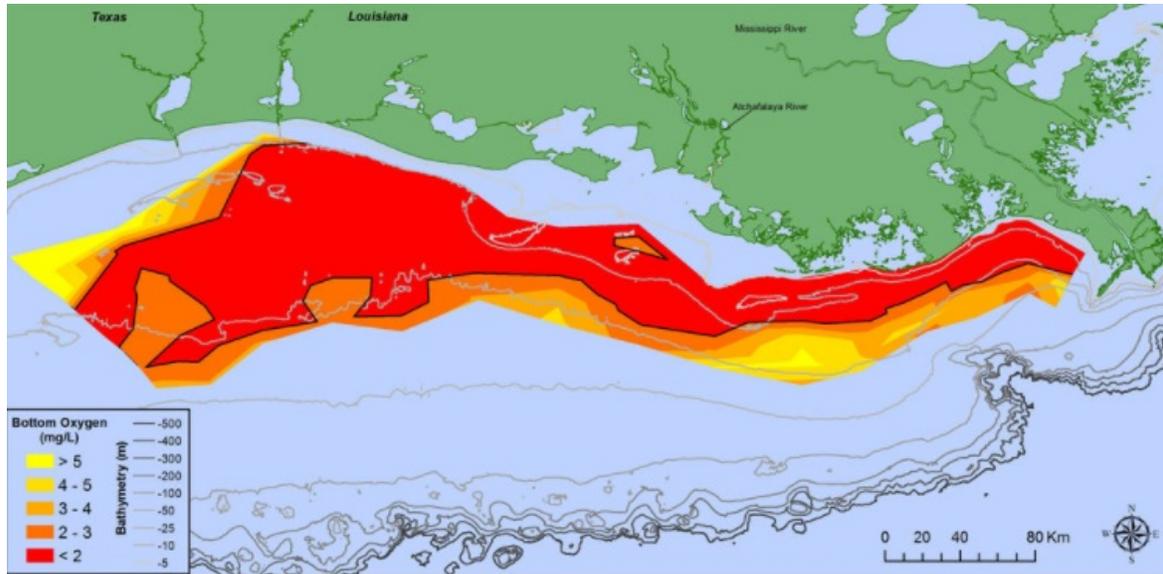
In 2016, Pham was confident that hosting a toy drive at CC&E would turn out to be a success and to everyone's delight it exceeded expectations.

"I'd say 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, for which volunteers placed gifts in shoeboxes that were then shipped to children around the world.

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## In the News: Nancy Rabalais published in *Science*



A map of dissolved oxygen on the ocean floor using data obtained from the 2017 Shelfwide Cruise.

Courtesy of Nancy Rabalais

LSU Department of Oceanography & Coastal Sciences Professor Nancy Rabalais' paper, "Declining oxygen in the global ocean and coastal waters" was published in the journal *Science* on Jan. 5.

She co-authored the paper with a group of 22 other researchers representing 13 different countries as part of the Global Ocean Oxygen Network. She has been studying deoxygenation in the Gulf of Mexico for over 34 years. This paper posits that human activity is changing ocean biogeochemistry and increasing oxygen consumption. Rabalais' research focuses specifically on coastal deoxygenation, and she says the Gulf is also experiencing this phenomenon.

"There is a large area of low oxygen in the Gulf of Mexico that's been low in oxygen probably since the 1970s, but we didn't really get money to start studying it until 1985," Rabalais said. "We found that it was a large and persistent area in the summer and that it's related to excess nitrogen inputs from the Mississippi River."

For more info on causes and solutions of ocean deoxygenation, [click here to access an article featuring Rabalais in the Reveille](#).

[Click here to access her paper in Science](#).

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## LSU CC&E Professors Awarded New Grants

### Nina Lam

Nina Lam, professor in the Department of Environmental Sciences, received a new grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF), titled "The Changing Roles of Social Media in Disaster Resilience: The Case of Hurricane Harvey" for \$199,989 for the 2018 calendar year.



Aftermath of the 500-year inland floods in Louisiana, August 2016. Credit: Nina Lam

The grant is an interdisciplinary project including co-principal investigator's (co-PI's) from LSU Center for Computation and Technology (CCT) and other disciplines. Co-PI's are: Michelle Meyer (Sociology), Seung-Jong Park (CCT and Computer Science), Margaret Reams (Environmental Sciences), Seungwon Yang (CCT & Information Science), and Kisung Lee (Computer Science).

"We established an Interdisciplinary Computation and Analysis of Resilience (ICAR) at LSU based on our existing

NSF project," Lam said. "For this new grant, we will analyze over 45 million tweets during Hurricane Harvey and conduct time-series surveys to learn how social media use may affect disaster resilience."

In addition, in collaboration with the LSU-NSF Coupled Natural-Human Dynamics in a Vulnerable Coastal System project, colleagues from the East China Normal University have recently received a grant from China's Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) for a three-year project titled, "A Comparative Study on Mega-Delta Erosion Hazard and Adaptation Measures in China and USA." The award amount is 3.7 million yuan (\$576,000). Investigators from the LSU group include Nina Lam (Environmental Sciences), Kam-biu Liu (Oceanography and Coastal Sciences), and Yi-Jun Xu (School of Renewable Natural Resources).

"This project requires an active NSF project on a similar topic. We are very excited that we are successful in leveraging our existing NSF CNH grant to develop new international collaboration. This new project will definitely help our existing effort in capacity building into a globally engaged community," Lam said.

### Dubravko Justic

Dubravko Justic, professor in the Department of Oceanography and Coastal Sciences, was recently awarded \$100,000 for a four-year Economic Development Assistantship.

These funds will help in recruiting a doctoral student to work on a research project to develop a high-resolution coupled estuarine-shelf model for Barataria Bay estuary and north-central Gulf of Mexico and to conduct modeling studies that will assess the effects of existing and proposed river diversions on estuarine and coastal salinity patterns, nutrient transport pathways, and the extent of hypoxia.



The model will provide policy makers and resource managers with an important management tool that can be used to guide diversion operations, meet salinity criteria for estuaries, achieve coastal hypoxia goals, and assist in designing marine protected areas that will offset the negative impacts of hypoxia on fisheries.

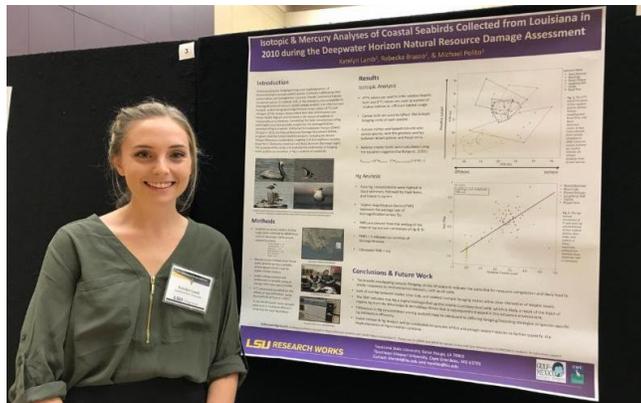
## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

### Katelyn Lamb

Undergraduate Senior, Coastal Environmental Science and Research

*Katelyn Lamb won first place in the Engineering & Technology Awards category of the*

*2017 LSU Undergraduate Research Conference's student research competition. The 9th annual LSU Undergraduate Research Conference (URC), entitled "Excite/Explore/Experiment," was held on Friday, November 17, 2017 in the LSU Student Union.*



*In addition to presenting her winning topic, Lamb was on the CC&E Dean's List for Fall 2017. Undergraduate students who have earned grade-point averages of 3.5 to 3.9 in at least 15 credit hours are listed on the Dean's List.*

### What made you decide to enter this competition?

Back in February 2017, I was privileged to present a poster at the Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill & Ecosystem Science Conference. Going into the conference, I was terrified. I prepared as well as I could, but I still had no idea what to expect. I was so nervous about talking to professionals and making a mistake. However, once I began interacting with people, I was pleasantly surprised by how positive and interested everyone was. Seeing professionals actually take interest in my work motivated me to keep learning and commit to finishing this project.

### Tell us about your prize-winning topic.

The topic of my research was, "Isotopic and mercury analyses of coastal seabirds collected from Louisiana in 2010 during the Deepwater Horizon Natural Resource Damage Assessment."

Seabirds are fantastic biomonitors and provide insight into the health of their environment. Understanding their diets and exposure to heavy metals is the critical step in addressing their conservation and management concerns.

I began working on this project in the fall semester of 2016 as a volunteer, which eventually became a student job. Initially, I had no idea what stable isotopes had to do with the diet of a seabird, but I asked MANY questions and quickly became fascinated with the concept. I decided to attend the competition because I was so excited to talk about the mercury data that I had just received. The competition was a great way to connect with other research students and staff from other disciplines.

# CC&E Department of Environmental Sciences Unveils New Kayne's Fire Award

The Department of Environmental Sciences will implement the new Kayne's Fire Award in the spring of 2018. This annual award is intended to reward teaching assistants (TAs) who go out of their way to encourage undergraduates' excitement about science. The idea for the award came from Crystal Johnson, Associate Professor, Department of Environmental Sciences while teaching ENV 1126: Introduction to Environmental Sciences to incoming freshmen last fall.



Crystal Johnson, Associate Professor, Department of Environmental Sciences

Johnson noticed a student attending her class who always had an English Mastiff service dog, named Moose, and a wheelchair. The student, Nathaniel "Kayne" Finley, attended class regularly and seemed excited to be there. It wasn't until much later that Johnson discovered he had terminal cancer. Finley died in November 2017.

"If I had known this was going to be his only semester in college, I would have connected with him more and made class more exciting. I would have lit a fire in him to make it memorable. That's where the award comes from. I want to honor him by reminding TAs to always light a fire. That's why it's

called Kayne's Fire Award," Johnson said.

She hopes the memory of Kayne Finley, who valiantly fought Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Glioma brain cancer, will inspire TAs to make meaningful connections with their students.

Applicants must be a master's or doctoral student who is serving as a teaching assistant in the LSU Department of Environmental Sciences with a minimum GPA of 2.5. They must be nominated by an undergraduate whom they teach. The undergraduate must write a 500-word essay supporting the nominee and the nominee must also write a 500-word essay expressing their merit and how they lit a fire within their students for science. Winners will be selected by a committee.

To learn more about Finley and his rare form of brain cancer, visit the Cannonballs for Kayne Foundation website at [CannonballsForKayne.org](http://CannonballsForKayne.org).

[Click here for a 2017 Feature Tiger story on Kayne Finley.](#)

## WELCOME NEW EMPLOYEES

### Please Welcome Matthew Hiatt and Christine Wendling

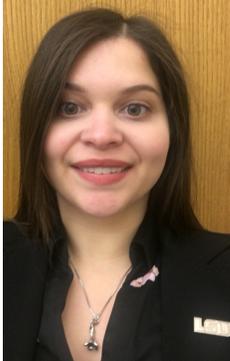
The College of the Coast & Environment recently acquired two new team members to start off the spring semester.

We have a new assistant professor in the Department of Oceanography and Coastal Sciences, Matthew Hiatt. He earned a bachelor's degree in civil engineering at the University of Kansas before earning both a master's and Ph.D in civil engineering at the University of Texas in Austin. His research interests include coastal hydrology, environmental fluid dynamics, water transport timescales in deltas and wetlands, hydrological connectivity in coastal environments, and network analysis. Hiatt will lead the Coastal Hydrology and Hydrodynamics research group and will be studying how the transport of water, sediment, and nutrients affects ecological and morphological development in river deltas, estuaries, and wetlands.



Matthew Hiatt

"I'm very excited to have the opportunity to do research alongside the great faculty and students in the Department of Oceanography and Coastal Studies. Having the chance to work on hydrology in Louisiana is really special since much of what we study has immediate and important implications for the coastal environment, its restoration, and the coastal communities. I'm happy to be here and ready to get started," Matt said.



Christine Wendling

New CC&E Communications Specialist (and newsletter editor) Christine Wendling previously worked for LSU Strategic Communications as a coordinator and now, after working at Community Coffee Company, LLC., she has returned to campus. She earned a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in English at Southeastern Louisiana University. She will work closely with Kathe Falls, director of Corporate and Foundation Relations, to cultivate the college's messaging and showcase CC&E's trailblazing research and its vital impact on the community.

If you have suggestions for newsletter topics, she can be reached at christinew@lsu.edu.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

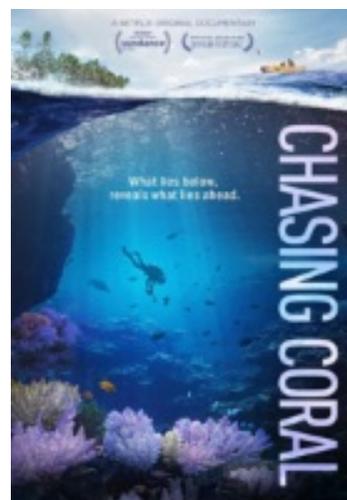
### Coral Reefs in Crisis

LSU's College of the Coast and Environment (CC&E) will be hosting a two-day lecture series, titled "Coral Reefs in Crisis," on March 1-2, 2018, in the Dalton J. Woods Auditorium at the Energy, Coast, & Environment Building.

On March 1, as part of that lecture series, there will be a 6 p.m. screening of the Netflix documentary *Chasing Coral*, followed by a panel discussion featuring leading experts from the film: Ruth Gates, a coral reef biologist from the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology, and Jim Porter, a marine biologist from the University of Georgia.

On March 2, there will be further discussions examining the impact of climate change on imperiled coral reefs that will feature Gates and Porter as well as Antonio Busalacchi, president of the University Consortium for Atmospheric Research. Panel discussions will be moderated by LSU's own coral reef expert Chris D'Elia, professor and dean of CC&E.

This event was made possible by the generous philanthropic support of Dr. Eric Abraham.



[Click here for more information, including how to register to attend.](#)

### Coast & Environment Graduate Organization (CEGO)

#### Spring 2018 Seminar Series

The Coast and Environment Graduate Organization (CEGO) will be hosting a Spring 2018 seminar series on Fridays at 11:30 a.m. in the Dalton J. Woods Auditorium. The events scheduled for February are below:



*February 2*

"Reconstructing past climate and environments from Antarctica to the Gulf Coast" features Sophie Warny, LSU Department of Geology and Geophysics.

*February 16*

"Global controls of carbon storage in mangroves" features Andre Rovai, LSU Department of Oceanography and Coastal Sciences.



*February 23*

"Hearing in Stranded and Captive Odontocete Cetaceans" features Danielle Greenhow, University of Southern Mississippi Division of Marine Sciences.

## 2018 Annual Patrick Lectures

LSU Graduate School, The School of Nutrition and Food Sciences, and Dr. Ruth Patrick will be co-hosting a two-day lecture series featuring George A. Bray, professor emeritus from Pennington Biomedical Research Center.

### *Wednesday, February 7*

(Events located in the lobby of the Energy, Coast, & Environment Building at LSU)

- 5:00-6:00 p.m.-Reception honoring Dr. Bray
- 6:00-7:00 p.m.-Public Lecture: "Food Is More Than Calories: Some Pennington Contributions"

### *Thursday, February 8*

(Event located at Pennington Biomedical Research Center Administration Building in the Reilly Auditorium)

- 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.-Scientific Lecture: "Is There an Ideal Diet? Lessons from the POUNDS Lost Study"

**CC&E ALUMNI** -- New job? New location? We want to hear from you!  
Send your Alumni Update to [kfalls1@lsu.edu](mailto:kfalls1@lsu.edu)

STAY CONNECTED:

