

May 30, 2017

From Dean D'Elia

Alumni, students and friends,

Spring is always a busy time at a university, and Spring 2017 has been no exception. We continue to partner with distinguished colleagues from across campus, around the region, nation and world as we further our mission to educate tomorrow's workforce and leaders, undertake interdisciplinary discovery, and improve the understanding of the interaction between complex human and natural systems, particularly in coastal regions.



Earlier this month the College graduated the next class of scientists, professionals, leaders and policy makers who will work on today's most pressing coastal and environmental challenges. We also held our convocation, at which we recognized our students, faculty and staff for their outstanding achievements over the past year and announced our scholarship recipients. We helped to stimulate high school students' interests in the STEM fields through the successful completion of our 2017 EnvironMentors program.

In April, LSU hosted the annual meeting of the Southeastern Universities Research Association, or SURA. As acting chair of the Coastal & Environmental Research Committee, I met with colleagues from throughout the region to discuss coastal and ocean modeling, coastal resilience and other new initiatives. Last week, LSU hosted the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research, or UCAR, for a site visit as part of the process of applying for membership in this prestigious organization.

Our outreach efforts to junior high and high school students continue as we prepare to launch Duke University's Talent Identification Program at LSU. In the fall we will introduce a new minor in Environmental Toxicology, and we will welcome new CES students into our 3+2 BS/MPH program with the School of Public Health in New Orleans.

As we move into the summer months, our student recruitment efforts continue. Our doors are open. Prospective students are invited to contact us so that we can discuss how a degree from LSU's College of the Coast & Environment prepares its graduates for careers in the high-demand fields of the coast and environment.

Sincerely,

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

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

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Thank you for your support!

CC&E News

From Students to Alumni

At our Spring Commencement diploma ceremony, held May 12, the College of the Coast & Environment presented the next class of scientists, leaders and policy makers for graduation.

"I am especially proud of this graduating class," said Chris D'Elia, dean. "Their dedication to coastal environmental issues and hard work make them highly qualified for their future endeavors."



Taught by highly-awarded experts, CC&E graduates address today's most pressing coastal and environmental challenges, such as energy and the environment, coastal land loss, storm impacts, environmental health, global environmental change, and more. CC&E offers multifaceted, interdisciplinary preparation for the real world. Students use science, law, economics, social sciences, communications and policy to handle environmental and coastal challenges.

[Read more.](#)

Faculty, Students & Staff Honored at Convocation

At the CC&E Spring Convocation, held May 5, we honored students, faculty and staff for their outstanding accomplishments throughout the year. In a college filled with overachievers, the selection of the honorees is difficult: The College's rigorous undergraduate degree



requirements, which include two years each of chemistry, mathematics, physics and biology, ensure that the college educates top students. Our faculty includes highly-awarded experts in their fields, including four Boyd professors—the highest ranking LSU gives to its faculty—a MacArthur "Genius" Award, Heinz Award, seven LSU Distinguished Faculty, six LSU Distinguished Research Masters, and more.



"I would like to thank the Awards Committee for selecting this year's honorees. They are outstanding representatives of the talent in our College," said Chris D'Elia, dean.

[Read more.](#)



Dietz Awarded Fellowship, GSA, NSF Grants

Marianne Dietz, Ph.D. student in the Department of Oceanography & Coastal Sciences, was recently chosen to receive three prestigious awards:

the [2017-2018 Evelyn L. Pruitt National Fellowship for Dissertation Research](#) by the Society of Woman Geographers; a [dissertation research grant from the Geological Society of America](#), or GSA; and a [National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement, or DDRI](#), grant.

[Read more.](#)

Xu Receives LSU Alumni Association Rising Faculty Research Award

On May 3, Kehui "Kevin" Xu, assistant professor, Department of Oceanography & Coastal Sciences, received the LSU Alumni Association Rising Faculty Research Award for 2017. The honor recognizes faculty at the rank of assistant professor who have "outstanding records of scholarship and published research" and includes a \$5,000 cash award. Xu and other recipients were honored at a reception at the LSU Lod Cook Alumni Center.



CC&E congratulates Kevin for this prestigious honor.

Rabalais Re-elected to GCOOS Board

Professor Nancy Rabalais has been re-elected to the Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System (GCOOS) Board of Directors. She was first elected to the initial Board in 2005 and has served continuously since then. The next three-year term will start in fall 2017. Rabalais is a representative from the Academic community. Other sectors are Private, Government, Education and Outreach.



GCOOS, the Gulf of Mexico regional component of the U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS), is the Gulf's only comprehensive data collection and dissemination center for coastal and ocean data.

[Read more.](#)

Rabalais Presents at Eutrophication Workshop

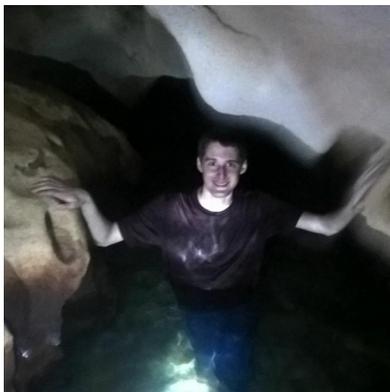
Professor Nancy Rabalais participated in the International Workshop on Eutrophication in Paris, April 18-20, at the headquarters of France's Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique.

"The first presentation at the workshop was an analysis of all the various definitions of eutrophication over the years, from simple to complex," said Rabalais. "But basically, it is the explosive growth of phytoplankton (single-celled plants) and macroalgae because of excessive nitrogen and phosphorus in the water, primarily from human activities and their sources."



[Read more.](#)

Winston Awarded Hollings Scholarship



Joseph B. Winston, a junior majoring in both coastal environmental sciences and history, has been awarded the [Ernest F. Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship](#), which includes both a scholarship and an internship at NOAA next summer.

The Hollings Scholarship Program provides undergraduates academic assistance (up to \$9,500 per year) for two years of full-time study and a 10-week, full-time paid (\$700/week) internship at a NOAA facility during the summer.

"I hope to go on to graduate school after my time at LSU to study public health with a focus on how global warming will affect the health of the population," said Winston, a native of Shalimar, Fla.

Over the past 10 years, the Hollings Scholarship Program has provided approximately 120 undergraduate students per year with tuition support and paid summer internships with NOAA across the country.

Spring Advisory Council Meets, Welcomes New Members

CC&E's spring Advisory Council meeting, held April 25, focused on the LSU strategic plan, specifically on the coast,

energy and environment theme, and welcomed new members Lee Bloch, Jay Grymes, Kimberly Davis Reyher, Tara Levy and Russ Chapman. Member Liz Hampton was introduced as the new chair of the membership committee.

The Council, dedicated to the creative development of the financial and intellectual resources of the College, assists in raising funds to support the College, educate the community on



Dean Chris D'Elia (center), with new Advisory Council members Lee Bloch (l) and Jay Grymes.



New Advisory Council member Tara Levy was welcomed by AC member Liz Hampton and Dean D'Elia at the spring meeting of the Council held April 25.

CC&E's mission and work, and increase the visibility and stature of the College among coastal and environmental leaders.

[Read more.](#)

Advisory Council Tours CC&E's Zooplankton Ecology Laboratory

On Tuesday, April 25, Oceanography & Coastal Sciences Professor Mark Benfield treated CC&E Advisory Council members to a tour of his Zooplankton Ecology Laboratory in the Energy, Coast & Environment Building.

Benfield explained how the laboratory's digital imaging systems, nets, and high-frequency acoustic instruments are used to count and identify zooplankton-tiny organisms in marine ecosystems that form the base of most marine food webs-in the ocean or in preserved samples.

[Read more.](#)



Dismukes Describes Energy Landscape at BR Rotary Luncheon

David E. Dismukes, executive director of LSU's Center for Energy Studies and professor with the College of the Coast & Environment, presented "Navigating through the Energy Landscape" at the Baton Rouge Rotary Club on May 24. Dismukes discussed historical energy trends and some predictions for the future.



[Read more.](#)

EnvironMentors Poster Competition Winners Announced

EnvironMentors pairs science students from Scotlandville Magnet High School with graduate students at LSU for a year-long, extra-curricular environmental science research project. Their work culminates in a science fair and poster display where the students succinctly summarize their data from throughout the year.



The posters are judged by scientists from industry and academia, and the results determine those who will represent LSU at the National Fair in Washington, D.C., in June. This year's winners are all high school juniors and second-year participants in the program.

[Read more.](#)

CC&E Introduces Minor in Environmental Toxicology

The College of the Coast and Environment is pleased to offer an environmental toxicology minor starting in Fall 2017.



The minor provides students with knowledge of chemical, physical, and environmental hazards, including pollutants in air, dust, sediment, soil and water, and natural toxins in the environment. This topic is immediately relevant to human and animal health and safety. "Students receiving this minor will have the scientifically-based knowledge to create, promote and maintain a healthier society," explained Kevin L. Armbrust, professor and chair of the Department of Environmental Sciences.

The minor is open to both undergraduate and graduate students in all colleges except for the College of Coast & Environment. Twelve hours of coursework are required, and all ENVS courses must be passed with a C or better. A residency requirement of nine hours of credit must be earned at LSU to receive a minor in environmental toxicology.

For more information, contact Kevin Armbrust at Armbrust@lsu.edu or 225-578-4281 or Vince Wilson at vwilson@lsu.edu or 225-578-1753.

Penguin Research Topic of April Science Café

Michael Polito, assistant professor in LSU's College of the Coast & Environment, was the speaker at the LSU Science Café, held April 25. Speaking to an overflow crowd, Polito discussed the methods that he and his students use to study how penguins and other animals in Antarctica are responding to changes in the environment.



Polito has conducted research in the Antarctic for more than 15 years.

Faculty Spotlight

Robert Twilley, Ph.D.

Executive Director, Louisiana Sea Grant College Program
Professor, Department of Oceanography and Coastal Science

Sea Grant, EnvironMentors Align in Pursuit of Impactful Wetlands Research

Louisiana Sea Grant Executive Director Robert Twilley has spent his career researching coastal issues and addressing challenges facing communities who dwell along the coast. In keeping with his lifelong dedication to education and outreach on coastal environmental issues, he is an enthusiastic supporter of LSU EnvironMentors, CC&E's youth mentoring and college preparation program for underrepresented high school students.



[Read more.](#)

Alumni Spotlight

R. Mark Conger

B.S., Geology, 1982

M.S., Environmental Science, 1996

Ph.D., Oceanography & Coastal Sciences, 2003

Mark Conger is a senior environmental specialist at BASF Corporation, Environmental Expert Services, North America, in Geismar, La. He completed all three of his degrees at LSU. Professor Ralph Portier served as his primary advisor during the completion of his M.S. and Ph.D.



"The environmental studies that I received, especially in toxicology from Dr. Portier, have been invaluable to me over the years in working with wastewater treatment and environmental remediation projects," Conger said. "I rely on those same basic concepts daily when evaluating water and environmental risks."

[Read more.](#)

Upcoming Events

Benfield Presents "Microplastics in the Mississippi" Today @ LSU Science Café

Mark Benfield, professor, Department of Oceanography & Coastal Sciences, will present "Microplastics in the Mississippi," at the next installment of the [LSU Science Café](#), presented by the LSU Office of Research & Economic Development, later today.

Tuesday, May 30, 2017
5 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Varsity Theatre
3353 Highland Road
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

[Read more.](#)



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

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