Dear CCME II Network,

As we review highlights from this quarter, we are excited about our many accomplishments as a center. Scholars returned from experiential development opportunities, NERTOs, EPP/MSI Graduate Fellowships, and soon from a Sea Grant Knauss Fellowship. I’m pleased to hear positive feedback from their mentors and supervisors. It is equally rewarding to hear of the scholars’ experiences. So, I invite you to visit the CCME-II website, social media profiles and NERTO blogs for details about these activities.

CCME-II alumni and scholars are the most visible ambassadors for the center. We released an alumni report of center alumni through the years. This quarter, we have NOAA CCME II scholars entering the NOAA workforce and continuing their education in NOAA mission aligned areas. I recently participated in a meeting for the NOAA CSC Champions working group with other Center Directors. During this process, we discussed many expansion opportunities and challenges. The latter highlights the need to strategically communicate the benefits of CCME-II with family, university administrators, stakeholders, and local US congressional representatives.

I hope you have a safe, productive and restful holiday break,

Richard A. Long

Richard A. Long, Ph.D
NOAA CCME II Center Director

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM FALL 2023

NOAA CCME II released its Centerwide Alumni Report to highlight some alumni throughout its 20 years of establishment.

NOAA CCME II Scholar at FAMU Queriah Simpson is collaborating with the Gullah Geechee Nation for a NOAA Transformational Habitat Grant.

NOAA CCME II Scholars at FAMU completed NERTOS: Forozoon Arkian (OAR/CSL), Jaden Hunt (NOS/NCCOS) and Christopher Olson (NWS/NCEP).

NOAA CCME II Scholar at CSUMB, Christina (Nina) Mauney started a role as an environmental scientist at NCCOS coastal resilience branch.

NOAA CCME II Scholar at CSUMB, Cristian Martinez presented at the Western Society of Naturalists.

NOAA CCME II BCU PI, Dr. J. Cho, had an invited seminar at Oak Ridge National Laboratory entitled ‘From Satellite Data to Mosquito Control Ditches: Coastal Resilience and Habitat Restoration.’

NOAA CCME II BCU PI, Dr. J. Cho was recently awarded leveraged funds for a collaborative project on Creating a storage standard for Methane with NASA.

NOAA CCME II Scholars Imani Ford (BCU) and Alyssa Outhwaite (TAMUCC) presented at the 2023 Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation (CERF).

NOAA CCME II JSU PI, Dr. Brent Thoma received funding from the National Academies of Science Gulf Research Program for the Mississippi River Delta Transition Initiative.

NOAA CCME II Scholars at JSU, Dwan Jackson, Kambial Love, and Reneisha Sweet participated in a NOAA SEAMAP Groundfish Survey from Pascagoula, MS to Galveston, TX.

NOAA CCME II TAMUCC PI, Dr. Paul Montagna was named the Director of the Texas OneGulf Center of Excellence, one of the centers of excellence established by the RESTORE Council.

NOAA CCME II Scholars at TAMUCC completed NERTOs: Christian Amos (OAR/AOML) and Neina Chapa (NMFS W. Coast Reg. Office).

NOAA CCME II Scholar at TAMUCC, Neina Chapa served as a judge at the Marine Science Graduate Student Organization Research Symposium.

NOAA CCME II Scholars at UTRGV completed NERTOS: Mya Brown (NMFS/PIFSC) and Geaceli Orive (NOAA NMFS). Geaceli Orive completed a blog on her NERTO experience.

NOAA CCME II Scholar from UTRGV, Jose Cisneros completed the E/V Nautilus seafloor mapping internship.

CCME II UTRGV PI, Dr. David Hicks presented on “Assessing the Rehabilitation Status of the Reflooded Bahia Grande” at the Texas Master Naturalist Annual Meeting.

CCME II Faculty at UTRGV, Dr. Erin Easton presented on ‘Mesophotic Coral Ecosystems of the western Gulf of Mexico’ at the Texas Master Naturalist Annual Meeting.

CCME II Faculty at UTRGV, Dr. Owen Temby presented on ‘Managing Collaboration in Binational Fisheries: Evidence from the Gulf of Maine’ at the Biennial conference of the Association for Canadian Studies in the United States in Washington D.C.
In partnership with NOAA Southeast Fisheries Science Center, CCME II scholars from Jackson State University participated in the NOAA SEAMAPP Groundfish Survey between Pascagoula, Mississippi and Galveston, Texas. The **objective of the survey** is to sample the abundance and distribution of organisms in the northern Gulf of Mexico.

The experiential opportunity used a multidisciplinary approach that intertwines microscopy and metabarcoding techniques. At multiple stations throughout the cruise, the catch was weighted, counted, identified and measured. CCME II Scholar Reneisha Sweet shared “Participating in the NOAA SEAMAP cruise was a great first-hand experience of the normal day-to-day field operations for NOAA's groundfish survey.”

**NOAA CCME II FALL 2023 GRADUATES**

Summer (Martinez) Crescent - completed her masters degree in biology from Florida A&M University under the advisement of Dr. Richard A. Long. She began an ORISE fellowship with the NOAA National Ocean Service at NCCOS.

Miles Jordan - completed his bachelors in environmental science from Florida A&M University under the guidance of Dr. Michael Abazinge. He has applied to graduate programs in NOAA aligned disciplines.

Dr. Anthony Lima - completed his doctoral study in coastal and marine system science from Texas A&M University at Corpus Christi under the advisement of Dr. Jennifer Pollack. He has applied to roles within NOAA and the private sector.
“Being an undergraduate CCME-II scholar at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University has been the key factor in my growth as a researcher. The program's emphasis on educating and training a new generation of scientists was extremely beneficial to me. The program under the NOAA mission has exposed me to diverse research projects, scientific conferences, and learning skills that I will use in my scientific career (i.e. coding). Additionally, the mentorship from CCME-II has been instrumental in my growth as a rising scientist and overall development. The opportunities provided by CCME-II throughout my academic and research journey have helped me solidify my passion for marine science, as well as given me the expertise and tools to further my education and better protect our natural resources.”

Miles Jordan,
NOAA EPP/MSI CCME II
Undergraduate Scholar at FAMU
December 2023 Graduate

ALUMNI AND OTHER CENTER SPOTLIGHTS

Terrius Bruce (FAMU/CCME I) was featured in a story at the University of Arkansas for his work in environmental dynamics and food insecurity

Jordan Roberts (FAMU/CCME I) was selected among the 40 Under 40 Awardees for 'Young, Gifted & Green' organized by Black Millennials for Flint

Dr. Mariana León-Pérez (TAMUCC/CCME I) started new employment as a Researcher at the Institute for Socio-Ecological Research (ISER Caribe)

Elena Flores (UTRGV/CCME I) was hired as a Coastal Ecologist (Natural Resource Specialist II) at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

Elizabeth Mogus-Garcia (UTRGV/CCMI I) coauthored a manuscript in Marine and Fisheries Science entitled Biodiversity of forage fishes in the Lower Laguna Madre, southernmost Texas

Evelyn Roozee (UTRGV/CCME I) coauthored a manuscript in Marine Policy entitled Managing inter-organizational trust and risk perceptions in transboundary fisheries governance networks

Juliet Vallejo (UTRGV/CCME I) started a role as a Grants Management Specialist with NOAA
IN THE KNOW

*Click on the underlined hyperlinks to learn about recent content on coastal/marine ecosystems and related topics

Biden-Harris Administration Unveils First-Ever Strategy to Advance Environmental Justice for Communities That Rely on the Ocean and Marine Resources

US Global Change Research Program released the Fifth National Climate Assessment

How AI is Helping Communities Anticipate Floods

Training and Professional Development opportunities available through NOAA Digital Coasts

NOAA Ocean Today Resources for Educators

The Biden-Harris Administration released the White House National Climate Resilience Framework

Strategy for NOAA Carbon Dioxide Removal Research

Florida researchers find stormwater ponds and reclaimed water feed red tide blooms

COASTAL AND MARINE TOPICS IN THE MEDIA AND LITERATURE

Best, K., He, Q., Reilly, A.C. et al. Demographics and risk of isolation due to sea level rise in the United States. Nature Communications 14, 7904 (2023)

PFAS 'forever chemicals' are getting into ocean ecosystems, where dolphins, fish and manatees dine – we traced their origins (The Conversation)

The Mississippi Is Losing Its Fight With the Ocean (The Atlantic)

When it comes to toxic algae, we’re pretty much surrounded. What’s that mean for our health? (Fort Myers News Press)

