

News Briefs

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Dickhut Gets To The Point

Dr. Rebecca Dickhut, Chair of Physical Sciences at VIMS, was interviewed on the nationally syndicated public radio program *To The Point* on April 21 concerning chemical contamination of the world's oceans. Dickhut was joined on the program by Vice Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard (Ret.) Roger Rufe, President and CEO of The Ocean Conservancy, who spoke on issues related to fisheries management; and by Drs. Ralph Keeling from the Scripps Institute of Oceanography and Rodney Fujita of Environmental Defense, who discussed issues related to ocean warming. *To The Point* is co-produced by KCRW and Public Radio International and airs on selected public radio stations around the U.S. Listen to the archived broadcast of "The Critical State of Our Oceans" via www.kcrw.com.

Tarantino Earns NSF Graduate Fellowship

Will Tarantino, a first-year graduate student with faculty advisor Dr. Emmett Duffy, has received a prestigious Graduate Research Fellowship Award from the National Science Foundation. The award will support Tarantino as he

uses theoretical modeling, observations of natural systems, and experiments to explore how the loss of species from a natural food web will affect interactions among remaining species and the stability of the ecosystem. The awards are made to outstanding graduate students from around the nation who demonstrate the potential to contribute significantly to research, teaching, and innovations in science and engineering. The award is based on a nationally competitive fellowship application that is evaluated according to the NSF Merit Review Criteria of Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts. The \$30,000 per year fellowship provides funding for a maximum of three years that can be used over a five-year period.

VIMS Quartet Chosen as Knauss Fellows

VIMS students Paul Bradley, Kristin France, Leonard Pace, and Matthew Strickler were recently awarded prestigious John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowships through the National Sea Grant Federal Fellows Program. This one-year fellowship matches outstanding graduate students from around the nation with hosts in legislative or executive offices in Washington, DC and provides an opportunity for a better understanding of the decision-making process affecting national policy toward marine resources. The fellows will learn about their specific assignments during Knauss placement

week in early December. The selection of the VIMS quartet continues a long tradition of involvement in the program by VIMS students. Of the 50 students from institutes of higher education in Virginia who have served as Knauss fellows since the program began in 1979, 34 (68%) have hailed from VIMS.

Faculty Member Provides Radio Musick

Henry Raines of American AM radio in Tampa Bay interviewed VIMS fisheries scientist Dr. Jack Musick on March 28th concerning reasons to preserve the Endangered Species Act. The half-hour interview is available via webcast at www.americanam.com. American AM is billed as providing a unique mix of news, talk, interviews, comedy, and music.

Veloza Broadcast from Pole to Equator

VIMS technician Adriana Veloza was interviewed for a story describing Hispanic scientists in Antarctica during her recent stint at the McMurdo Research Station. The story, which described Veloza's life and science at the largest U.S. research facility on the continent, aired on CNN Español and appeared in Colombia's largest newspaper *El Tiempo*. Veloza earned her Master's degree in the School of Marine Science at VIMS in November 2005 with Drs.

Kam Tang and Fu-Lin Chu, studying how microorganisms convert low-quality algal food sources into essential fatty acids that can be transferred to higher levels of the food chain.

Saba Wins Sea Turtle Award

VIMS graduate student Vincent Saba was awarded the second-place prize during the 26th Annual Symposium on Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation for his presentation on the link between El Niño and the nesting behavior of leatherback sea turtles. The symposium, hosted by the International Sea Turtle Society, drew more than 300 sea turtle experts from around the world to the Island of Crete in early April. Crete is home to the sea turtle conservation project ARCHELON and hosts a significant nesting population of loggerhead sea turtles. VIMS graduate student Kate Mansfield won the same award at the previous International Sea Turtle meeting.

VIMS Lands on State Map

The Virginia Dept. of Transportation (VDOT) has added VIMS to the latest edition of Virginia's Official State Transportation Map. The 2006-2008 map, which commemorates the 400th anniversary of Jamestown, is available in the state's welcome centers, regional tourism offices, and VDOT offices. Additional copies can be requested by contacting www.VirginiaDOT.org.

VIMS Alumna Receives Prestigious National Award

VIMS alumna Dr. Leigh McCallister has won the prestigious Lindeman Award from the American Society of Limnology and Oceanography (ASLO) for research she conducted while a graduate student in the School of Marine Science at VIMS.

ASLO presents the Lindeman award annually to recognize the outstanding paper in aquatic sciences by an early-career researcher. With 3,800 members from 58 countries around the world, ASLO is the nation's leading professional organization for researchers and educators in the field of aquatic science.

McCallister's award-winning paper, published in the journal *Limnology and Oceanography*, described her use

of carbon and nitrogen isotopes to estimate the sources and ages of organic matter in the York and Hudson rivers. Her findings suggest that bacteria profoundly alter the mean composition and age of the organic matter that rivers and estuaries carry to the coastal ocean. Her work leads to a better understanding of the fate of organic matter as it is transported through estuaries to the sea, a key conduit in the global carbon cycle.

In their award citation, the Lindeman

Award committee writes that McCallister's paper "provides a new answer to an old problem and raises a new question about something we thought we knew. These are prime criteria for key, landmark papers and your paper clearly belongs to this category."

While at VIMS, McCallister was co-advised by faculty members Drs. Hugh Ducklow and Jim Bauer.

Ducklow, who nominated his former student for the award,

notes that "Leigh's paper demonstrates many attributes of great science: elegance and determination, a new attack on an important and interesting problem, painstaking work, creative analysis, and graceful writing."

McCallister, now with the Institute of Marine and Coastal Sciences at Rutgers University, received a small cash prize as well as the opportunity to present the results of her research at the 2006 ASLO annual meeting in Victoria, British Columbia.

For more on McCallister's research, see "Assessing sources and ages of organic matter supporting river and estuarine bacterial production: A multiple isotope (^{14}C , ^{13}C , and ^{15}N) approach" *L&O* 49: 1687-1702.



Dr. Leigh McCallister