

# AERS NEWS



All the news  
that'll fit, and  
then some

Volume 2016 Number 1

May 10, 2016

## AERS Spring Meeting 2016, Mar. 10-12 Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Brock Environmental Center, Virginia Beach, VA

**What a great spring meeting!** I'm jazzed to write this summary and remember all the fantastic things that happened. We met at the beautiful *LEED Platinum CBF Brock Environmental*



*Center* on the Lynnhaven River at the Chesapeake Bay mouth in **Virginia Beach, VA**. Even with surrounding wetlands, impacts of the built environment were on everyone's mind.

The meeting held to the theme "Urban Estuaries" and recognized increasing demands placed on many environments by growing populations in coastal Atlantic cities. Estuarine functions of shoreline stabilization, soil retention, nutrient cycling and habitat are important to the long-term success of both natural and human populations. For me, the impacts of the rapid pace of urbanization was solidified when **Keynote Speaker Dr. Andrew Elmore's** (University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, Appalachian Laboratory) showed changes in phenology and surface water temperatures in the Washington, D.C. area over three decades. Living in Baltimore County, MD I was particularly heartened by **Keynote Speaker Dr. Ariana Sutton-Grier** (University of Maryland, Earth System Science Center and NOAA adviser) who discussed combined natural and built infrastructure ("hybrid" approaches) for storm and flooding protection to enhance coastal resiliency. I look forward to seeing how the adaptation designs including nature-based solutions and economic incentives (e.g. flood insurance rates) discussed by **Keynote Speaker Mr. William A. (Skip) Stiles, Jr.** (Wetlands Watch) will be implemented and potentially impact future human behavior and coastal ecosystem health.



Keynote Speakers (left to right): Dr. Ariana Sutton-Grier, Ecosystem Ecologist, University of Maryland Earth System Center and Ecosystem Science Adviser for NOAA; Dr. Andrew Elmore, Landscape Ecologist, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES); and Mr. William A. (Skip) Stiles, Jr., Executive Director of Wetlands Watch., Virginia non-profit environmental group.

## Save the Date! Fall AERS Meeting November 17-19, 2016 Community College of Baltimore County

The Fall Meeting will be at the Community College of Baltimore County CCBC), Owings Mills, MD, which is just outside of Baltimore. Local Hosts are Dave O'Neill (CCBC), George Mateja (CCBC), Elka Porter (University of Baltimore), and Ben Fertig (University of Maryland College Park and Ronin Institute, Montclair, NJ). Stay tuned for more details.

**All of the 27 contributed talks in the four sessions** (Engaging the Public, A Changing World, Urban Coasts, and Nutrient Dynamics) were great! Among them were **1 Undergraduate, 6 Masters, and 7 Ph.D. students**. Congratulations to Student Awardees for travel and presentations (pp. 4-5). Our Local Hosts secured a delicious lunch from Taste. Program Co-Chair Sara Blachman organized and held a silent auction during Friday's sessions raising \$510, and the winners were revealed during the **Banquet** at the very swank waterfront **The Lesner Inn Catering Club**. Thank you Sara!

**Members attended the AERS Business Meeting** to elect the new AERS Secretary, **Jessie Jarvis (UNC Wilmington)**. **Spencer Tassone (Virginia Commonwealth University)** will be the new AERS Student Representative. **Dave Yozzo** was awarded the venerable clam and gave knuckle salutes to all. Locations for future meetings were discussed with locations promised through Fall 2018.

**Two workshops** engrossed participants before the Thursday social, helping us to take advantage of diversity of specialized expertise in the AERS network. **C.J. Schlick** (graduating Ph.D. student, George Mason University) prepared an excellent Early Career and Employment Workshop focusing on building and

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## AERS News – President's Corner

Treda Smith Grayson  
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Greetings Fellow AERSians!

Where did the time go? Spring has returned, and it was two years ago at this time that I took office as AERS President. Just that fast, it has come to an end. Over the past couple of years we have continued to host well-attended meetings with a formidable list of keynote speakers, compelling and relevant themes and kind sponsors (check out the summary from the March meeting in this issue of the newsletter!). We have consistently supported students with a safe and friendly environment to present talks, as well as travel awards. Membership continues to remain steady and the organization's financial outlook is still stable and strong. Most importantly, we officially re-established our tax exempt status!

All in all, AERS is thriving and I could not be more proud to sit at the helm during this time of growth and prosperity. This has been one of the most enriching and rewarding experiences of my life, and I thank each and every one of you for allowing me to serve you, CERF and the community in this way. Thank you especially to the Board that has been by my side along the way; I appreciate all of the feedback and support each of you have provided to me. I am elated to pass the gavel on to Danielle Kreeger, as I am confident she will continue to lead AERS into more greatness! Congratulations Danielle! I look forward to serving under your leadership!



Treda Grayson Smith (President) receiving gifts from Danielle Kreeger representing the AERS Board thanking Treda for being a wonderful AERS President. Photo by C. Krahforst.



## Welcome from the AERS Incoming President

Danielle Kreeger  
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AERS Rocks! As Treda pointed out AERS is thriving. As one indicator, our finances remain strong, thanks to our engaged members, board, and our outgoing treasurer Sam Lake. Sam went above and beyond to clean up our files, accounts and persevere getting the tax status fixed at last. Meeting attendance and membership are steady, thanks in large part to a steady stream of bright young scientists and students coming to AERS. This obviously bodes well for our future! AERS is populated with dedicated volunteers, people who are eager to serve on committees and the board despite increasingly busy schedules. I'm deeply grateful for all that Treda has done as AERS President these past 2 years, plus her earlier service as treasurer and on many committees – please reach out and thank Treda.

AERS will be 70 years old in 2018! The fact that we're doing well when some scientific societies are struggling is because we have a solid formula – high caliber science that is relevant, engaged members, friendly meetings, low membership and meeting costs, and a commitment to students. But we can't just coast on our past success. Looking to the future, there's more that we can do. In the coming year we'll be exploring some new and different ways to expand and strengthen AERS activities and products, such as testing new business services, strengthening ties with CERF, exploring new awards and grants for students, and increasing our use of social media. If you're not already volunteering for AERS, please consider getting more involved. Some of our committees are still led by folks who paid their dues over many years, and some new blood would be welcome. Check the "officers" page of the AERS website to get contact info.

My first scientific meeting was an AERS meeting in 1984. It made such an impression, helping to cement my love for estuaries! I'm therefore deeply honored to do what I can to "give back" to our wonderful society, and I look forward to working with your new secretary Joe Wood, treasurer Jessie Jarvis, and the rest of the board. Please send us your ideas!



David Yozzo sports the Venerable Clam which was given to him during the AERS Business Meeting. Dave is a past President of AERS and has been an outstanding Endowment Chair for several years. Photo by C. Krahforst.

**AERS the Original Estuarine Research Society**



## Development of the Next CERF Strategic Plan Is Underway

Mark Brush, CERF Member-at-Large, 2015-19

Activities on the CERF Governing Board over the next two years are going to be dominated by development of the next strategic plan, Visions IV. The current plan, Visions III, was developed for the period 2012-2016, and the new plan is due to be rolled out in 2017. As with the current plan, Visions IV will be comprised of a number of sections covering the key activities of CERF, and will be focused on development and strengthening of the Affiliate Societies, enhancing our relationships with each other and with CERF. I am very pleased to be chairing the working group focused on the Affiliate section of Visions IV, which includes a representative from each of the seven affiliates and CERF President-Elect Hilary Neckles. Our own President Danielle Kreeger is the AERS representative on the committee.

Since the November Governing Board meeting in which we received our charge from CERF President Robert Twilley, we reviewed progress made under Visions III and reviewed last year's discussions of the Affiliate Society Presidents Committee to get us started on planning for the next five years. In reviewing Visions III, it was clear that a great deal of progress has been made in the last five years to strengthen and better connect the Affiliates with each other and with CERF. On the operational side, CERF is now providing an increased array of services to the Affiliates such as collection of membership dues, provision of meeting insurance, and provision of funds to support speakers at Affiliate meetings, and the new relationship with SBI will facilitate expanding these services as appropriate. Efforts on the CERF Governing Board and creation of the Affiliate Society Presidents Committee have greatly strengthened the connections among CERF and the Affiliates. Extensive joint efforts have been put into expanding membership at both levels, and we have all enjoyed having CERF representatives at our AERS meetings.

Using these past efforts as a springboard, our committee has developed draft objectives, a list of key issues, and proposed strategic actions as the basis for the Affiliate section of Visions IV. We have organized our proposed issues and actions under the overarching objectives of (1) developing mission-oriented collaborations between CERF and the Affiliates that add value to our members, and (2) developing business collaborations between CERF and the Affiliates that enhance our operation. We particularly see the need to focus the next plan on enhanced use of the Affiliates as catalysts for regional collaborations that enhance information sharing, increase knowledge, and generate syntheses that lead to management actions, strengthening the role of the Affiliates as a pipeline for CERF membership and visa versa, continued expansion of membership and membership benefits, particularly for students and early career members, enhanced communication among CERF and the Affiliates, and coming to some decisions on provision of business services by CERF/SBI as appropriate for each Affiliate.

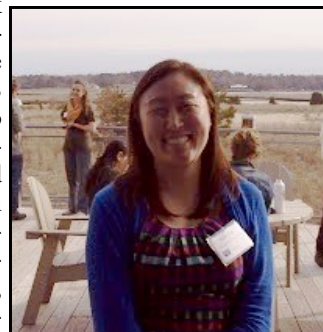
Danielle and I are off to New Orleans for the Spring Governing Board meeting May 5-7 and will be reporting on our progress, after which we'll move into the next phase which will involve further vetting of our proposed issues and actions, and crafting our section of Visions IV. We welcome input from the AERS family as we move forward.



## Susan Park, new CERF Executive Director comes to AERS SP16

We were honored to have Susan Park, the new Executive Director at CERF, attend our spring meeting and give a talk.

Susan is eager for CERF to work with the Affiliates (which include AERS) to envision the future. CERF has helped AERS with funds to bring speakers to our meetings, which has increased has greatly helped AERS provide timely and high quality panels. Other collaborations with CERF include coordination of membership and dues, and possibilities of collaborations between Affiliates. AERS members enjoyed talking to Susan and look forward to working with her.



Susan Park, CERF Executive Director. Photo by Cecilia Krahforst.

## Saturday Keynote Speaker Donald F. Boesch President, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science

Donald Boesch, long time member of AERS and past President of CERF, gave an informal Saturday keynote talk about how we all must become climate change scientists by considering what climate change will do to the organisms and ecosystems we study. The following is an abstract of his talk sent to AERS.

I gave my first scientific talk 46 years ago, as a graduate student at an AERS meeting right here on Hampton Roads. It was near the end of a decade-long drought period, salinities were higher and the fauna more diverse. Estuaries are notoriously variable that way. But now we have entered a new era of continuous and effectively permanent change. Sea level is rising at a faster global rate than it has for at least 2,800 years and rising even faster along the Mid-Atlantic coast. Our coastal waters have warmed nearly 2°C since I started my research career. Precipitation in the northeastern U.S. has increased about 8 percent and has become more episodic. Ocean waters have a lower pH than at any time during the past 800,000 years. All of these global changes are affecting the estuaries we study in significant ways. The assumption of stationarity was formally declared dead in 2008, as changes are destined to become even greater throughout the careers of those of you who are now graduate students and beyond. Moreover, how much conditions will change depends on human actions to limit the changes, principally how fast global society moves to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions.

Whatever the subject of your research you must now factor in the consequences of climate change. As estuarine scientists we must all be climate scientists at some level. Je suis un scientifique du climat! We must all commit to gaining and maintaining literacy on the causes and consequences of climate change. We must all evaluate the effects of the changing climate on the phenomenon we are studying. And as those privileged by society's support to pursue science, we have an obligation to help that society not only to adapt to climate change, but also to take steps to limit it—to manage the unavoidable and avoid the unmanageable.

Photo by Joe Wood

## AERS Presentation Award Winners

The AERS Board starts a new tradition by including profiles of the student award winners from the Spring meeting. AERSNews Editor Julie Ambler asked the awardees questions about their research, career goals and hobbies. The following profiles are “in their own words.” Congratulations to our student presentation award winners!



Outstanding Graduate Poster Presentation –

Cassandra Cook, College of W&M

“Potential threats to diamondback terrapin nesting success caused by the invasive reed *Phragmites australis*”

I received my B.S. in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and B.S. in Program in the Environment (specialized in Terrestrial Ecosystems) from The University of Michigan (Ann Arbor). I first had the opportunity to learn about and work with diamondback terrapins while I was working for a National Wildlife Refuge in Florida. They intrigued me not only because of their unique appearance (and so cute!) but because of the brackish water habitat they live in and their extensive range across the Atlantic coast that overlaps with different ecosystem types - New England salt marshes all the way to Florida mangrove swamps. I am also interested in the impacts of habitat change on wildlife, and the invasion of the grass *Phragmites australis* is a hot topic. So I saw an opportunity to incorporate two very interesting species into one study.

I like the enthusiasm the public has about these charismatic turtles and the interest in learning more about their conservation. When mentioning that an invasive grass species can impact the reproduction and recruitment of this species, this is a topic that many people can relate to and understand because we are looking at large scale topics. I really like thinking about how habitat features influence species conservation and what we can do to solve some complex issues.

I want to continue on in the conservation field, particularly herpetology if I am lucky. But I really just want to keep learning more about how animals respond to changes in habitat and the best practices on how we can minimize any negative human impacts. I'm not sure what type of agency that path will lead me to, but I am open to many different options.

In my leisure time, I really enjoy cooking, so I'm always looking for new recipes to try out and people to cook for. I also spend a lot of my free time outdoors – hiking, biking, and kayaking when I get the chance. I have been slowly but surely tackling some of the popular and beautiful hiking spots in western Virginia.

You might be surprised to know that I'm in an Appalachian Music Ensemble class at William and Mary where I play the mandolin. It's a great style of music and culture that I did not know about before I came to Virginia. We really get into the old time oral tradition and learn a lot of music by ear – it's a blast!



Outstanding Undergraduate Presentation

Katharine Ommanney, DSU

“Analysis of Heavy Metal (Cadmium and Lead) Concentrations within Sub-surface Soils of Blackbird Creek, Delaware”

Originally, I was assigned this topic as a summer research project, but I enjoyed the topic and being a member in Dr. Ozbay's lab so much that I stayed on. My favorite part of my research is the sample collection out on the marsh. I always enjoy the days when we return and are covered head to toe in mud, are sometimes sunburned, and are happily exhausted. I thoroughly enjoy being outside in just about any capacity, reading, and spending time with my dog, Roman. My long term career goals will actually take me outside the field of estuarine research as my interests lie in the field of animal behavior, specifically elephant behavior. With the support and guidance of my advisor Dr. Ozbay, my supervisor Dr. Chintapenta, and my fellow lab members and the experience my time here (at the AERS meeting) has offered me, I have become the scientist I am today.



Outstanding Graduate Oral presentation –

Carter Smith, UNC -

“Hurricane damage along natural and engineered shorelines in NC: An economic and environmental Evaluation”

Before coming to UNC for graduate studies, I studied Theater Arts at Wesleyan University and graduated in 2009. I knew I wanted to study coastal ecology and this particular research project about hurricane damage appealed to me because it is extremely applied and has management and policy implications. This project has some social science aspects, some policy aspects, and some pure ecological aspects which is very intellectually stimulating. I love getting outside and doing fieldwork, and I like working on collaborative projects with different people and perspectives.

I originally pursued a PhD because I wanted to be a college professor, which is still an ambition, but now I'm also interested in opportunities to get directly involved in management and policy. Luckily I still have several years to go, and hopefully plenty of time to figure this out!

I think people are usually surprised that I made such a drastic switch from my undergraduate major to doing a PhD in a STEM field. But, I think there are a lot of advantages to merging the arts and the sciences- particularly that the skills I gained from years of performing translate well to giving a research presentation.

Do you have any hobbies? Anything that gets me outside- I love to run, surf, scuba dive, and do yoga.

Photos by C. Krahforst



## Recap Virginia Beach SP16 Meeting from p. 1

controlling an online presence. I thought I was somewhat savvy, but learned a lot from this workshop and will be updating my own online presence more consciously. **William Johnson**, (Professor, Emeritus, Goucher College, Baltimore, MD) demonstrated an easy-to-use online key to decapod zoeae using original photos of diagnostic features and PowerPoint links to each step of the identification process.

<http://zooplanktononline.com/>

**Local Hosts organized two field trips** to acclimate attendees to the meeting area. **Joe Rieger** (Elizabeth River Project) led an expedition to Money Point sediment remediation projects that replaced >16,000 yards<sup>3</sup> of contaminated sediment with >3 acres of oyster reefs, 7 acres of wetlands and buffer, and a reclaimed river bottom. The tour continued at Paradise Nature Park in Portsmouth, VA – an urban park hosting an 11 acre tidal wetland project, urban storm water projects, hiking trails, and more. **Joe Wood** organized a canoe paddle through the Lynnhaven River to see local oyster reefs and seagrass beds. Afterwards, attendees gathered for the Thursday night social at the Brock Center with choice beverages from our meeting sponsor SmartMouth.

**Our members are what makes AERS such a great society.** It

was reassuring to me to see so many stay for the AERS Business Meeting and step up to volunteer with AERS. Help shape your regional CERF affiliate by providing feedback and input to better suit your needs. *Willing to help out? Join one of the standing committees! Please reach out to any of the AERS Governing Board Members!*

A hearty round of thanks to Local Hosts **Todd Egerton** (Old Dominion University), **Joe Rieger** (Elizabeth River Project), and **Joe Wood** (Chesapeake Bay Foundation) for putting together a fantastic meeting! Much thanks also to President **Treda Grayson**, President-Elect **Danielle Kreeger**, and Treasurer **Sam Lake** for their tireless work behind the scenes and jobs well done!

Hope you had a fun-filled and intellectually stimulating meeting! I very much look forward to seeing you at the **Fall AERS Meeting 17-19 November at the Community College of Baltimore County!**

Ben Fertig, *AERS Program Committee Co-Chair*

A Knuckle Salute & "Thank You" to

Chesapeake Bay Foundation's  
Brock Environmental Center  
Student Travel Endowment Contributors



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## AERS Endowment Gives Student Travel Awards David Yozzo, Endowment Chair

For the Fall 2015 CERF Meeting in Portland, OR, AERS gave awards of \$300 to fifteen students who came from universities in New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina. For the Spring AERS 2016 meeting in Virginia Beach, VA, travel awards of \$200 each were given to fifteen applicants, both graduate and undergraduate students representing nine academic institutions through out the Mid-Atlantic Region. Congratulations to all our students for your hard work on your research, and commitment to sharing your research with AERS.




Students receiving Travel Awards for AERS Spring 2016. Front Row: Treda Grayson (AERS Pres.), Emily Russ (UMCES), C.J. Schlick (GMU), Heather Franz (UBaltimore), Jessica Valenti (Rutgers), Melanie Fuoco (DSU), Carter Smith (UNC). Back Row: Spencer Tassone (VCU), Matthew Stone (DSU), Katherine Ommannney (DSU), Cecilia Krahforst (ECU), Sammie Alexander (GMU), Christine Burns (UNC), Petrina McKenzie-Reynolds (DSU), Isabelle Neylan (UNC), Dave Yozzo (Student Endowment Chair), Joshua Moody (Drexel). Photo by Ben Fertig



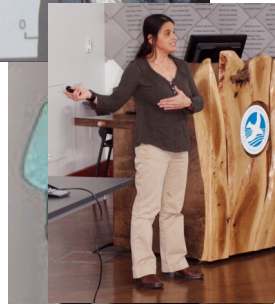


Thursday Workshops. Bill Johnson explains his photographic zoea key (left). CJ Schlick gave advise about how to manage social media and your Professional/Scientific Reputation. Photos by Cecilia Krahforst.

### Social Media and Your Professional/Scientific Reputation



CJ Carroll Schlick  
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PhD Candidate      Student Representative  
George Mason University      Atlantic Estuarine Research Society







Thursday Field Trip. Joe Wood led a canoe paddle through the Lynnhaven River to see local oyster reefs and seagrass beds (Top, left middle). What did we catch in the seine? (right middle). Canoe group (bottom). Photo Credits Joe Wood.

Saturday Speakers: First Row: Melanie Fuoco, James Haluska, Todd Egerton, Christine Voss, Susanna Musick. Second Row: Matthew Stone, Emily Russ, Megan Wood, Paul Jivoff, C.J.Schlick. Third Row: Ken Czapla, Patricia Delago, J. Brooke Landry, Joe Rieger, Adam Copeland. Photos of speakers (left) and meeting scenes (bottom) by Cecilia Krahforst, except photo in bottom left hand corner by Joe Wood.



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**Parliamentarian**

Position open

**Membership in AERS**

AERS Membership Corner. Thank you to all for your continuing support of AERS. Remember there are three ways to pay your dues. The easiest is to select and pay for you AERS dues when renewing with CERF. The second is to follow the link from [www.aers.info](http://www.aers.info) to pay your dues by PayPal. The third is to write a check at the meeting or send it to our Treasurer at the address provided on the website. Dues remain a bargain at \$20 for regular members and \$10 for students.

**Shelley E. Katsuki**, Membership Chair.