

CREST Scholars Program

The Coastal Restoration and Enhancement through Science and Technology (CREST) Program is proud to announce the introduction of a CREST Scholars' Program. CREST is making \$10,000 available to each of its constituent institutions to support research by graduate students (undergraduates in the case of Loyola and SUNO). Students receiving an award are expected to present the results of their research at a CREST meeting in the year following the award, as well as write a report on the work done. Details of the work will be publicized via the website.

The first universities have announced the names and research topics of their CREST Scholars for 2006. Selection is being made internally and additional names will be announced as they become available. The students' supervising faculty are named in parentheses.

CREST congratulates all these students and looks forward to hearing the results of their work.

Louisiana State University

- Barry Aronhime** - Comparison of Food Web Dynamics in Estuarine and Coastal Louisiana Oyster Reefs (Dr. Ken Brown)
- Gerald George** - Movements of Black Drum on natural and artificial substrata (Dr. Ken Brown)
- April Mason** - Determination of denitrification capacity of Atchafalaya River Basin wetlands using isotopic tracers (Dr. Jun Xu)
- Fugui Wang** - Utilization of satellite imagery for determination of spatiotemporal salinity distribution in Lake Ponchartrain (Dr. Jun Xu)
- Abbey Tyrna** – Watershed wonders and rain garden

Louisiana State University Agricultural Center

- Diptemayee Sahoo** – Sea oats micropropagation for coastal restoration (Dr. Prasanta Subudhi)

Loyola University

- Rachel Nuwer** – Primary productivity within the Mississippi River delta (Dr. David White)
- Randy Englert** – Genetics of invasive Phragmites within the delta (Dr. Don Hauber)

McNeese State University

- Deepika Pilla** – Determination of selected heavy metals in waters, sediments, and soils in restored habitats in southwest Louisiana (Dr. J. Sneddon)
- Somashaker Masuram** – Determination of selected organics in waters and soils in restored habitats in southwest Louisiana affected by Hurricane Rita (Dr. J. Sneddon)
- Vanessa Molina** – Vegetation percent coverage of Louisiana coastal beneficial dredge marshes (Dr. F. Phillips)

Nicholls State University

- Jeremy Dunn** – Effect of phosphorus enrichment on growth and density of the reef coral *Acropora Formosa* (Drs. Gary LaFleur/Paul Sammarco)
- Matthew Benoit** – Growth and survival of three ecotypes of *Spartina alterniflora* in coastal Louisiana restoration plantings and the assessment of different storage and

- processing techniques of *Avicennia germinans* seeds (Dr. Allyse Ferrara)
- Lainey Pitre** – Seasonal differences in the diet composition of spotted gar *Lepisosteus oculatus* in the Bayou Chevreuil area, Louisiana (Dr. Quentin Fontenot)
- Olivia Smith** – Influence of water level on reproductive potential of floodplain and swamp spawning species (Dr. Allyse Ferrara)
- Heather Dyer** – Fish assemblages of Bayou Lafourche above and below the Thibodaux weir (Dr. Allyse Ferrara)

Southeastern Louisiana University

- Chris Harris** – The role of bacteria in the carbon cycle at the Joyce Wildlife Management Area (Dr. Gary Childers)
- Edward Koch** – Habitat state change in the Manchac/Maurepas wetlands under varying restoration scenarios: a modification of an existing experiment (Dr. Gary Shaffer)
- Chris Lundberg** – The impact of tertiary sewage effluent on bald cypress growth rates (Dr. Gary Shaffer)
- Alicia Manuel** – The effects of wastewater assimilation on Joyce Wildlife Management Area (Dr. Gary Childers)

Southern University at New Orleans

- Carmen Maldonado** – Distribution and ecological significance of seagrass in coastal wetlands (Dr. Murty Kambhampati)
- Shaundrick Washington** – Sediment analysis in coastal wetlands: mathematical modeling (Dr. Murty Kambhampati and Dr. Joe Omojola)

Tulane University

- Kevin Caillouet** – Modeling the trophic interactions of aquatic mosquito predators in the Barataria Basin, Louisiana
- Juan Gonzalez** – Reconstructing relative sea-level change to quantify the long term rate of tectonic subsidence in the Mississippi delta.

University of Louisiana at Lafayette

- Boone Larson** – Analysis of uncertainties involved with model forecasting of salinity and nutrients in a coastal estuarine system (Dr. Emad. Habib)
- Sharmila Pathikonda** – Modeling interactions between native and invasive plants in hurricane-impacted coastal wetlands (Dr. Susan Mopper)
- Shannon Martin** – Assessing the likely impacts of coastal restoration, water diversions and sea level rise on reproduction in coastal marsh fishes (Dr. Paul Leberg)
- Kevin Purcell** – Evaluating the impacts of river diversions on the genetic structure and demography of coastal marsh fishes (Dr. Paul Leberg)

University of New Orleans

- Thomas Lorenz** - How have cichlids disrupted the condition and food web positions of native fishes? (Dr. Martin O'Connell)
- Jeffrey van Vrancken** - Are elevated environmental levels of endocrine disruptors (e.g., estradiol) the basis for the extirpation of blacktail shiners (*Cyprinella venusta*) from Bayou Lacombe? (Dr. Martin O'Connell)
- Chad Ellinwood** – Do hurricane-generated wash-over corridors at the Chandeleur Islands impact local fish interactions? (Dr. Martin O'Connell)

University of Southern Mississippi

- Alix Guidry** – Faunal composition and food web dynamics in natural versus constructed intertidal oyster reefs in the northern Gulf of Mexico: a partnership approach to sustainable restoration (Dr. Mark Peterson)