

Duffy receives Virginia Outstanding Faculty Award

By David Malmquist

(January 23, 2013) Professor Emmett Duffy of William & Mary's Virginia Institute of Marine Science has been selected as one of the Commonwealth's outstanding faculty members by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV).

Duffy, the Loretta and Lewis Glucksman Professor of Marine Science in W&M's School of Marine Science at VIMS, was one of 12 faculty members from Virginia's public and private colleges and universities honored with a 2013 SCHEV Outstanding Faculty Award. The awards program has been sponsored by Dominion Resources since 2005.



At the flowway: VIMS professors Emmett Duffy and Elizabeth Canuel look over the algae flowway on the VIMS Gloucester Point campus. Photo by Stephen Salpukas

Duffy joins five other VIMS faculty in winning the SCHEV award. Including this year's awardees, 36 W&M professors have received the honor since the awards' inception in 1987, more than any other university in the Commonwealth. The University of Virginia is the closest to W&M's record with 32 faculty winners, or 34, if including the University of Virginia's College at Wise. Virginia Tech follows with 31.

Duffy, who arrived at VIMS in 1994, has established an international reputation in marine ecology, with his current research focusing on the importance of biodiversity in Chesapeake Bay and other marine ecosystems worldwide. He was the inaugural winner of Japan's Kobe Award in Marine Science, in 2011; and in 2010 received a 3-year, \$728,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to establish a global network of experiments to study how nutrient pollution and changes in biodiversity impact the world's threatened seagrass ecosystems.

To date, Duffy has authored or co-authored 96 articles in peer-reviewed journals, including 2 papers in *Science* and 4 in *Nature*—widely considered the leading international journals. He has—in the last decade alone—brought more than \$2 million in research grants to the Commonwealth from the National Science Foundation, and has also earned research funding from the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis, the National Geographic Society, and the Smithsonian. Recent funding from StatoilHydro Corporation and the U.S. Department of Energy supported a unique project exploring how to turn the algae that is clogging Chesapeake Bay and other coastal ecosystems worldwide into a fuel that can help power our cars.

Dr. Ken Moore, Chair of the Biological Sciences Department at VIMS, says “Emmett has crafted an exemplary record in academics, research, advisory service, and outreach, and shows a wonderful capacity to integrate new scientific knowledge into real-world applications. His work brings worldwide recognition to himself, his students, and the College.”

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W&M Provost Michael R. Halleran adds “Emmett excels in every dimension of his profession—teaching, research, and service. This type of overall excellence is extremely important to the educational culture of William & Mary and of course to the university’s marine science school at VIMS.”

Duffy says “It’s a high honor to receive this award—and very humbling, following in the footsteps of the distinguished previous recipients. I also appreciate the recognition of how important our work at VIMS is in preparing the next generation of leaders in environmental science, and in providing the applied knowledge needed to meet the challenges facing society.”

Teaching, mentoring, and outreach

In addition to his accomplishments in research, Duffy is also well respected for his teaching and mentoring. He is a past recipient of a Plumeri Award for faculty excellence from W&M, in recognition of his work in courses such as “Principles of Oceanography,” “Evolutionary Ecology,” “Trophic Ecology,” and “Biodiversity and Human Well-Being.”

VIMS Dean and Director John Wells says “The students in Emmett’s classes benefit not only from his extensive real-world knowledge of marine ecology, but also from his remarkable ability to present the results of his and others’ research in understandable and engaging ways.”

Duffy’s skill and interest in communicating science were recognized nationally in 2006, when he was selected for a prestigious Aldo Leopold Leadership Fellowship. The program, the brainchild of current NOAA Administrator Jane Lubchenco, was the first in North America to train mid-career researchers in effective communication of science beyond traditional academic audiences.

A lasting mark of Duffy’s prowess in teaching and mentoring is the success of his graduate students, who have themselves earned numerous fellowships and awards, with many moving on to notable careers in marine science and other fields.

Three of Duffy’s past graduate students—Jennifer Rhode, Kristin France, and Will Tarantino—were recipients of highly competitive Graduate Research Fellowships from the National Science Foundation. These fellowships, NSF’s flagship investment in our nation’s graduate students, recognize individuals with demonstrated potential for significant achievements in science and engineering. Rhode (Ph.D. ‘02) is currently an assistant professor at the University of North Carolina, Asheville, while France (Ph.D. ‘07) is a senior scientist with The Nature Conservancy. Tarantino (M.S. ‘08) is a wilderness medic in the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California.

Other former Duffy students have positions at Florida Gulf Coast University (James Douglass, Ph.D. ‘08; assistant professor), the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (Amanda Spivak, Ph.D. ‘08; staff scientist), and the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (John Parker, M.S. ‘98; senior scientist). Molly Mitchell, whom Duffy mentored as a W&M undergraduate in Biology, is lead author on VIMS’ recent report on recurrent coastal flooding, which was presented to Virginia’s General Assembly on January 10th.



Marine Biodiversity Lab: From L: research technician Paul Richardson, W&M undergraduate Katelyn Jenkins, Brown University undergrad Nicole Rento, post-doctoral research associate Pamela Reynolds, graduate student Jon Lefcheck, professor Emmett Duffy, VIMS REU student Caitlin Fikes, visiting graduate student Serena Donadi (University of Groningen), and graduate student Solomon Chak.

The SCHEV OFA Award Program

This year marks the 27th anniversary of SCHEV's statewide awards program for higher education faculty. The 12 recipients were selected from a pool of 109 applications based on accomplishments that strongly reflect the missions of their respective institutions.

Speaking of this year's award winners, SCHEV Director Peter Blake says "The Council is honored to recognize 12 of the extraordinary educators who help make Virginia's system of higher education among the finest in the nation. These individuals strengthen their respective communities and the entire Commonwealth through their commitment to teaching, research, and service. They serve as an inspiration to us all, both in and out of the classroom."

The 12 recipients will be recognized during a Feb. 12 ceremony in Richmond, where each will receive an engraved award and a \$5,000 check underwritten by the Dominion Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Dominion Resources. Dominion Resources is the parent company of Dominion Virginia Power.

The OFA program is administered by SCHEV and funded by a grant from the Dominion Foundation. Since the first awards ceremony in 1987, 316 Virginia faculty members—including the 2013 recipients—have received this high honor.

SCHEV is the Commonwealth's coordinating body for Virginia's system of higher education. The agency provides policy guidance and budget recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly, and is a resource for information on higher education issues for Virginia colleges and universities.

Dominion is one of the nation's largest producers and transporters of energy, with a portfolio of approximately 28,000 megawatts of generation. Dominion operates the nation's largest natural gas storage system and serves retail energy customers in 15 states.



Marine Research: Duffy's research has given him in-depth familiarity with marine ecosystems worldwide. Here is he in Cuba.