

## VIMS offers new “Inside to Seaside” program for beachgoers

(June 5, 2012) On most summer days, hundreds of people pass through the campus of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science on their way to the beach, public fishing pier, and boat launch at nearby Gloucester Point.

VIMS’ new outreach program—“Inside to Seaside”—offers these and other visitors a fun and educational way to enrich their trip to “the Point” and the waters of the York River. The program sessions are scheduled for selected Friday afternoons and Saturday mornings from June into August, with the next offering on June 8th.

The hands-on program begins in the Visitors’ Center in Watermen’s Hall at VIMS with an up-close look at animals that live in Chesapeake Bay. Program staff will use the Center’s aquarium displays and observation pool to help participants recognize some of the fish, shellfish, and crustaceans they might encounter in the York River, and to appreciate the different ways in which these creatures make a living within the Bay ecosystem.



*Seining is a fun and educational way to learn about marine life in the York River and Chesapeake Bay.*

Following the inside session, which typically lasts 20 to 30 minutes, participants will walk to the nearby beach for an interpreter-led educational seining adventure in the protected waters of the York River. There they will spend 40 to 60 minutes collecting and observing Bay life in its native habitat before returning the organisms to the water.

Susan Maples, public outreach coordinator at VIMS, says “We designed our new program to help residents—children and adults—better appreciate the Bay and its marine life. Greater appreciation and understanding will hopefully encourage us all to take better care of the Bay both when we’re at the beach and at home.”

VIMS provides the nets, collection jars, and flotation devices for the seining activity, which is led by a VIMS docent. All participants must wear clothing that can get wet and muddy, as well as water shoes or lace-up sneakers (no flip-flops or Crocs). Those under 13 must be accompanied by an adult.

“Inside to Seaside” will be offered on Fridays June 8, 15, 22 & 29 and Saturdays on June 16, July 21, and August 11. Friday programs will begin at 1:00 pm and Saturday programs will begin at 10:00, each lasting an hour and a half.

Enrollment for each “Inside to Seaside” session is limited to 30 participants. There is no charge for the program but registration is required due to limited space. Visit the VIMS Events Calendar to register online, or call 804-684-7010.

The VIMS website also provides details on other upcoming public events, including the Institute’s summer Friday morning tours, After Hours Lecture series, and monthly Discovery Labs.

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