



## News From VIMS

### VIMS RESEARCHERS MAKE AN UNUSUAL DISCOVERY

When seagrass researcher Corey Holbert glanced into the waters of the VIMS boat basin on the day after Halloween, he did a double take. Where the basin's access channel empties into the York River lotted a 6- to 8-foot-long manatee.

As Holbert stood on the edge of the canal wondering what he had seen, the mysterious creature suddenly reappeared, and this time he got a good look. "It was fairly close to the top of the water and I could see that broad, flat tail and its distinctive face and snout. When I saw those features I knew it was a manatee."

That same day a manatee was spotted about five miles downriver from VIMS near Crown Pointe Marina,

and a few days after Thanksgiving a manatee was spotted east of the Coleman Bridge. It could be the same animal, but none of the observers were able to get a good look at the animal, leaving everyone wondering.

Normally found in warmer waters, manatees are rare visitors to Chesapeake Bay, especially outside the summer months. The 65° water temperature in the York River on the day of Holbert's sighting was several degrees below the animals' preferred lower limit of 68°.

With current temperatures in the low 50s, a manatee would be in danger of hypothermia.

VIMS scientists specialize in fishes, not mammals, so anyone who



*Photo of manatee taken at the Crown Pointe Marina. ©Scott Smith*

observes a manatee in local waters should call the Virginia Aquarium's 24-hour Stranding Response hotline at 757.385.7575 with an exact location and photos or video of the animal. The aquarium asks that people maintain a safe distance to prevent harm to themselves or the manatee.

### EASTERN SHORE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM HONORS THE *BONNIE SUE* AND HER CAPTAIN

Since 2009 the summer internship program at the VIMS Eastern Shore Lab in Wachapreague has attracted 33 local marine science-minded students, many of whom returned for multiple summers. Rebecca Turner, hatchery manager at the ESL, was one of those students.

"I knew I wanted to pursue a career in biology, but I wasn't quite sure what to focus my efforts on until I was experiencing marine science firsthand," she said. After completing her sophomore and junior years at James Madison University, the Eastern Shore native interned at the ESL where she had "extremely positive" experiences. "I was able to play small

parts in several research studies being conducted. Being exposed to different projects allowed me to learn what I did and did not like as I shaped my career goals."



*The Bonnie Sue is an Eastern Shore icon. ©Marcus Kilmon*

Today Turner is working at the lab that so strongly influenced her career. "I feel so fortunate to have been able to start my career in marine biology here at ESL," Turner said. "I'm the manager of the Castagna Shellfish Research Hatchery and a technician in the molecular lab here."

The success of Turner and other former interns is a source of pride for the community. Steve Johnsen, president of the VIMS Foundation Board of Directors and resident of the Eastern Shore, has long been an advocate of the internship program. This fall he approached long-time Wachapreague boat captain Bobby

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## CITIZEN SCIENTIST PROGRAM GETS STUDENTS OUT IN THE FIELD

While all students in Virginia are required to study science, not many of them have the opportunity to go out into the field to lead scientific research. With funding from the Dominion Foundation, VIMS recently launched a citizen scientist project that gets students out of the classroom and into the water to study the ecology of global change in Chesapeake Bay.

Under the direction of VIMS Assistant Professor Emily Rivest and graduate student Annie Schatz, students from area high schools are taking part in real-world research as they help develop data collection programs that integrate the study of Chesapeake Bay water quality and oyster ecology.

“It’s important to have citizen scientists because it puts more boots on the ground ... and in the water,” Rivest said. “It allows us to be in more places at once and be able to really understand how oysters are doing across their natural landscape.”

Partnering with the Chesapeake Bay Governor’s School, Cape Henry Collegiate, VIMS Advisory Services, and Oyster Reef Keepers of Virginia, Dr. Rivest identified three data collection sites in the Chesapeake Bay watershed for each participating school. Five W&M undergraduate students are also doing weekly

data collection at the VIMS pier in Gloucester Point. This summer, area teachers helped Rivest’s team of undergraduate and high school student volunteers place bags of oysters at those sites and learned how to collect water samples and to measure oyster size using calipers and photographs.

Volunteers collected and measured throughout the summer; in the fall the high school students took over. Since then, they have been collecting and measuring each week, gathering data that will help create a better understanding of the correlation between oyster growth and environmental conditions. The students are now creating a project database and learning to compare data and identify trends. “Is it better to use calipers or take a picture to measure oyster growth?” Rivest asked. “This is a simple experiment that is suitable for the classroom.”

The project will culminate in the spring of 2018 when Dr. Rivest and the students present project results and their relevance to environmental stewardship at a VIMS lecture.

“I have three goals for this project,” Rivest said. “I want students to learn how to compare scientific methods and make an informed decision about which one is most effective. I want

them to understand the correlation between oyster growth and environmental conditions, with the broader understanding



*A student from the Chesapeake Bay Governor’s School measures an oyster in Urbanna. ©Dominion Energy*

that our impacts on environmental conditions will in turn affect the oysters. I also want students to determine which of the seven sites is best for oyster growth and be able to explain why.” This isn’t just a learning exercise; best practices revealed in this project will be important if the citizen science program continues to grow. And there is plenty of real-world applicability.

“Learning how oysters respond to changes in environmental conditions will help us be better prepared for future environmental changes,” says Dr. Rivest. “Knowing where oysters grow faster and why can help improve restoration efforts by helping us choose good sites. This information may even help oyster farmers choose better sites to lease.”

Rivest hopes that she will be able to continue the project beyond this year. “My goal would be to develop this into a bigger citizen scientist program where we would have volunteers wherever oysters grow helping us measure water quality and oyster growth. That would give us a sense of how conditions differ throughout the watershed and help us identify sites where oysters can grow well in the future. We could crowdsource data analysis of our oyster photos. Ultimately, it would be exciting to engage volunteers around the globe and be able to connect what is happening in Chesapeake Bay with the world.”



*A student deploys oysters in Urbanna as part of the Citizen Scientist program. ©Dominion Energy*

### FOR THE BOLD CAMPAIGN

**Goal:  
\$35 Million**



Every gift to the VIMS Foundation underpins efforts to better understand and protect precious marine environments. Become a VIMS supporter by making a gift of any size at [www.vims.edu/giving](http://www.vims.edu/giving) or by using the enclosed envelope.

## DONORS STEP UP TO HELP SAVE OUR BAY SCALLOPS

The inaugural VIMS crowd-sourcing campaign through the William & Mary Tribefunding platform was an unqualified success. The Save Our Bay Scallops effort raised more than \$20,000 for VIMS' work to restore Bay scallops to Virginia's seaside bays. More than 200 donors participated in the effort, including VIMS faculty, staff, students, board members, friends, and alumni. Challenge money was provided by VIMS Foundation Board members Stephen Johnsen and Cliff Cutchins and VIMS staff member Adam Miller.

The success of eelgrass restoration in Chesapeake Bay and Virginia's coastal bays was the genesis for this project, which was led by Dr. Robert Orth. Bay scallops, once abundant in the seaside bays along Virginia's Eastern Shore, went from being a viable commercial crop with a harvest high of more than 1.8 million pounds in 1930 to zero in 1933. Disease and

the 1933 hurricane wiped out eelgrass locally and, with the disappearance of eelgrass, the Bay scallop's habitat, scallops vanished, too.

A successful eelgrass restoration project began in 1997 when a small patch of eelgrass was discovered in South Bay. Now, 71 million seeds later, there are more than 7,000 acres of eelgrass, and it is spreading naturally. Encouraged by those results, Dr. Orth and his team began seeding Bay scallops into the eelgrass. In 2012 they began conducting an annual assessment to measure the success of the effort. Snorkeling slowly over grids placed in the water, VIMS staff and volunteers counted any Bay scallops they could find. In the 2015-17 assessment, covering four acres and three locations, the number of Bay scallops was rising, but slowly.

"With the monies raised from Tribefunding we are now working with several shellfish aquaculture farmers to raise large numbers of juvenile Bay scallops." Dr. Orth said. "In spring



Donors visit VIMS to see live Bay scallops from the Eastern Shore. ©Shannon Retzbach/VIMS

2018, we will carry these tiny scallops out to the bays where they will be seeded into the eelgrass!" There they will attach to the grasses and begin to grow. Dr. Orth hopes that seeding this large number of scallops will provide the needed boost for the population and the Bay scallops will begin to spread naturally.

## MERMAID CUP SUPPORTS VIMS RESEARCH

Nearly 100 golfers turned out on a beautiful fall day to support VIMS at the 3rd annual Mermaid Cup golf tournament at Kiln Creek Golf and Country Club in Newport News. The Peninsula chapter of the Associated General Contractors of Virginia hosted the event, which benefits the VIMS Foundation.

VIMS Ph.D. students Gail Schweiterman and Willy Goldsmith were on hand to talk with golfers about their research topics. Schweiterman answered questions about her shark research – studying the impact capture stress has on cardiac function – and Goldsmith presented a photo essay that described results of his survey work with recreational anglers fishing for Atlantic Bluefin tuna along the U.S. East Coast.

"VIMS is still a well-kept secret around our Bay watershed," said ACG member Bill Walsh of Yorktown-based Walsh Electric. "The more events like the Mermaid Cup we can encourage each year, the better for our beloved Chesapeake." The VIMS Foundation helps support research, student fellowships, and institutional needs.

## DINNER HONORS LEADERSHIP DONORS

This spring VIMS welcomed its Maury Society donors to a special evening at the Gloucester Point campus. The yearly event honors those who support VIMS at an annual level of \$1,000 or greater. More than 100 donors enjoyed a reception and dinner overlooking the York River. Guest speakers

included William & Mary President Taylor Reveley, VIMS Dean and Director John Wells, and Research Associate Professor Ryan Carnegie. VIMS Foundation Board President Stephen Johnsen presented a gift of appreciation to A. Marshall Acuff in recognition of his gift to advance shellfish aquaculture research and



A. Marshall Acuff (second from left) accepts an original David Turner sculpture presented by Steve Johnsen, John Wells, and Taylor Reveley at the annual Maury Dinner. ©Josh Powers

position Virginia first worldwide in sustainable shellfish aquaculture. Johnsen was presented with the VIMS Volunteer of the Year Award for his work on the merger of the VIMS Foundation Board and Council.

## BUSY TIMES AT THE VIMS EASTERN SHORE LAB

As weather along Virginia's coast improves each year, the activity level at the VIMS Eastern Shore Laboratory in Wachapreague, VA, increases. This hub for research and teaching is a center for coastal and barrier island studies, shellfish research, and aquaculture. Good weather means teachers, researchers, and students return to the Shore.

In June the VIMS Foundation Board of Directors held its summer meeting and retreat at the ESL. During the meeting board members learned that funding earmarked by the Virginia General Assembly will make a long-desired buildout of the ESL complex possible. The first building phase will include an administration building, education and research building, maintenance shop, and two storage buildings. Phase two will complete the buildout with a visiting scientist/student facility and a shellfish aquaculture facility.

"I am extremely pleased that the General Assembly has made the Eastern Shore Lab a priority," said VIMS Dean & Director John Wells. "This project will significantly change the footprint of this campus and bring many long-awaited improvements." The dean said he hopes construction of phase one will begin in late spring 2018.

Each summer high school and college students from the Eastern Shore look forward to internships at the Eastern Shore Lab. This summer six students participated: Jazmine Evans, Mary Katherine Holmes, Evan Lawrence, James Lord, John Elijah Turner, and Ryan Wright. The program culminated at the end of August with each student presenting his or her research project to an audience of family, friends, and donors who support the internship program.

On Saturday, September 23, the Eastern Shore Lab opened its doors to the public for Marine Life Day. Held every September, visitors come to discover how science and real-world questions intersect at the Wachapreague lab.

This year live displays of oysters, scallops, and fish fascinated visitors, and children enjoyed making marine life art. Everyone got to feel like a marine scientist using microscopes to get a closer look at sea life and learning more about ESL research. The brave even had an opportunity to get close to the research by exploring the lab's touch tanks. It's a behind-the-scenes look at the lab that perfectly combines education and fun.



Visitors talk with scientists and explore marine life at the Eastern Shore Lab's Marine Life Day in September.

© Chris Katella/VIMS

*Eastern Shore Internship  
continued from page 1*

Turner about renaming the internship program in his honor.

"Bobby was very well-known and very well-liked," Johnsen said. "It didn't matter if you were a senior executive or a working man; he treated everyone the same." The captain told Johnsen he didn't want any personal recognition, so Johnsen and former Foundation president Tom Young agreed to rename the internship program after Captain Turner's iconic boat, the *Bonnie Sue*, instead.

In late October Captain Turner died at the age of 86. He had been fishing off the shores of Wachapreague on the *Bonnie Sue*, a boat he and his father had built together, since he was 15 years old.

"I fished with Bobby for 35 years," Johnsen said. "I liked being on the

boat with him, liked his personality. Bobby always would say we didn't catch many fish compared to how it used to be. People on the boat would say, 'It's not about how many fish we catch, it's about hearing your stories.' He was just someone you want to spend time with."

Johnsen and Young have already raised about \$70,000 from those who wanted to honor Turner by supporting the *Bonnie Sue* Internship Program. Virginia Rountree was in the hospital visiting Turner while Johnsen was there. She felt so strongly about the beloved captain that she immediately agreed to make a donation to the internship program; she had already named her own boat the *Bonnie Sue*.

In August Rebecca Turner and her father, sculptor David Turner, paid a visit to Captain Turner (no relation). "We passed around his old photos of Wachapreague when it was a bustling

town on the Shore," Rebecca Turner recalled. "He told us stories of his days on the *Bonnie Sue* and mentioned a few notable times that he had at the Eastern Shore Lab. I don't think I'll ever forget that day; he was an extraordinary man."

"He seemed truly interested in the research that was conducted at the ESL and on the Shore in general," Turner added. "As someone who made his living from working on the water, he seemed to truly value the work that allowed us a better understanding of the marine life all around us."

"He was a living legend," Johnsen said. "What he did, who he was, and how he treated people made an impression on everyone he met." His memory will forever be tied to the waters he loved and to the young Eastern Shore interns who share that love.

## CONCHOLOGIST WITH LIFELONG LOVE OF CHESAPEAKE BAY CREATES HER LEGACY

Some people might think of Amelia Ann “Amy” Dick as that lady who’s crazy about shells. And they wouldn’t be wrong. She is also crazy about oceans, rivers, creeks, lakes, and particularly Chesapeake Bay. Dick is fascinated with water and the life it gives.

Her childhood memories are full of sunny summer days at Hampton’s Buckroe Beach with her mother and sister, and today she lives near the Pagan River in Smithfield, VA. An award-winning amateur conchologist – someone who studies shells – she is never far from a beach or planning her next trip to visit one.

“Being near the water makes me happy,” Dick said. “To smell the ocean air and to hear it moving brings me joy. Water is alive.”

More importantly, water gives her purpose. Since she was a child, Dick has learned from nature and her experiences near, on, and in the water. She understands the importance of a healthy bay ecosystem. This is why she chose to include the VIMS Foundation in her will, to protect and maintain water quality in Chesapeake Bay.

“I’ve always considered myself a naturalist,” said Dick. Her earliest books were about science and nature. Her favorite toy, a child’s microscope, allowed her to closely inspect insects and other natural objects such as feathers and leaves and to observe their structures.

Still today her shelves are full of science books. Her fondest activities include offering information on shells and the mollusks that live inside them, explaining their commercial and scientific value through informal conversations or formal scientific exhibits at shell shows.

A member of Conchologists of America, the North Carolina Shell Club, and the Astronaut Trail Shell Club, she has won several awards for her scientific presentations and for her discoveries as a beachcomber through the years. Among her many achievements: In 2016 she won a blue ribbon and a judge’s special merit ribbon for her presentation, “The Ultimate Location, Hydrothermal Vents and ALVIN (DSV-2)” at the

Philadelphia Shell Show. Earlier this year she made a significant find on Portsmouth Island, NC, unearthing a subfossil *Scaphella junonia*, also known as Juno’s volute.

Her interest goes beyond the shell itself to include what does or did exist inside them. Ask her about shells and she can tell you how the sea creatures within live, look for food, kill their prey, and which of them are virulent enough to poison a human. (Note: Keep your distance from cone shell mollusks!)

The wonder of water has always been with her, and her biggest regret is not becoming a marine biologist. So after attending a few community lectures offered by VIMS and seeing how well they were done, she knew that she wanted to bequeath a portion of her estate to an organization that loves the water as much as she does.

In particular, she says, she has been impressed with VIMS’ mission to improve water quality in Chesapeake Bay and by doing so, maintain a vibrant ecosystem. “If you don’t have water quality,” Dick said, “you have nothing. Water quality is the key to a vibrant and successful ecosystem.”

Dick has established a bequest to the VIMS Foundation, which is a non-profit organization created to support the mission of VIMS. She specifically earmarked her planned gift to help students studying water quality, so “this love of mine will continue on after I’m gone...that means a great deal to me. That is my legacy.”

It will also mean a great deal to the future of VIMS. A quarter of the commitments for the current fundraising campaign are planned gifts, noted VIMS Executive Director of Advancement Amy Fisher.

“Bequests help VIMS and its Foundation plan for the future,” said Fisher. If you are thinking of including VIMS in your estate planning, Fisher or an expert with William & Mary’s



*Amy Dick presents at the Academy of Natural Sciences, Drexel University, where she was awarded two ribbons for her exhibit.*

Gift Planning Office would be happy to offer assistance. “We can provide sample language to make sure the gift works efficiently and effectively to mirror the wishes of the giver,” Fisher said. Anyone who has made a bequest that has not been reported to VIMS should contact Fisher as well.

For more information, go to [www.vims.edu/giving](http://www.vims.edu/giving).

### WANT TO TAKE A DEEPER DIVE?

A new **video series** from VIMS provides an insider’s look at the institute for its friends and supporters. The first video launched in December, and through mid-2018 a new video will be released each month. Thanks to our generous supporters, Jim and Bootsie Rogers, viewers will learn about VIMS researchers and students who are finding practical solutions to challenges faced by marine life and coastal communities around the world. Watch your email for your invitation: “Want to take a deeper dive?” If you don’t receive VIMS emails, sign up on the VIMS home page: [www.vims.edu](http://www.vims.edu) or text “VIMS” to 22828.

# VIMS WELCOMES VISITORS ON MARINE SCIENCE DAY

More than 2,000 people visited VIMS during the 15th annual Marine Science Day on May 20. The theme for this year's event, "Marine Technology," recognized the important role scientific equipment plays in marine research. Exhibits and activities highlighted next-generation technologies such as drones, virtual-reality goggles, autonomous underwater vehicles, and VIMS' new confocal microscope, in addition to traditional gear such as nets and buoys.

Visitors enjoyed guided tours of the VIMS teaching marsh, opportunities to seine in the York River, and close-up looks at research vessels. Children

explored science through activities in the Kids' Pavilion and joined fun-loving adults in the annual Marine Life Costume Contest. The prize for best costume was won by Canton Murphy for his squid costume.

Another highlight was the seafood cooking demonstration by Chef Wade O'Neil of the Culinary Institute of Virginia. With a spotlight on sea scallops, the chef prepared three entrees for attendees to sample. Around campus visitors also learned how VIMS scientists help manage blue crabs, breed oysters, survey fish populations, monitor water quality,



restore underwater grasses, and many other highlighted programs.

Programs, posters, and tee shirts featured a drawing of an underwater glider, the winning entry in the annual Marine Science Day artwork contest submitted by Emma Reilly, a ninth grader at York High School.

Along with VIMS faculty, staff, students, and volunteers, sponsors helped make the event possible. Major sponsors were Dominion Energy, the Christopher Wren Association, The Owens Foundation, Ferguson Enterprises, Inc., Phillips Energy, and Canon Virginia, Inc..



VIMS Marine Science Day adventures included seining on the beach (above left), a seafood cooking demonstration (above right), and learning about blue crabs (top right). ©Chris Katella/VIMS

## ANCIENT FISH FINDS NEW HOME

When the tank of the coelacanth broke at the VIMS Visitors Center, friends stepped in to help this ancient fish get a new home. Acquired in 1987 after being caught off the Grand Comoro Island, the VIMS coelacanth is nearly five feet long and has been a highlight of the VIMS Visitors Center for many years.

Purchase of a new tank was made possible through a generous contribution from the Owens Foundation, along with a gift from the Coelacanth Brewing Company in Norfolk, VA.

Coelacanth are primitive fishes, known from fossils dating back to the Triassic period (240 million years ago). They were thought to have become extinct 65 million years ago until a live coelacanth was caught by a commercial trawler that landed in East London, South Africa, in 1938. Study of the VIMS coelacanth has shed important light on the biology and evolutionary history of this "living fossil."

The VIMS coelacanth is part of the Nunnally Ichthyology Collection, which contains more than 128,000 specimens.

## "A FAMILY OF DOLPHINS" COMES TO VIMS

Though dolphins are frequent visitors to the York River near VIMS, the family of dolphins that has taken up residence on campus is a sculpture donated by Steve and Barbara Johnsen.

An original David Turner sculpture, "Generations: A Family of Dolphins," is a beautiful addition to the campus and creates a striking entrance for Watermen's Hall. Turner is a William & Mary alumnus and a nationally known Eastern Shore artist strongly influenced

by the marine life of Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic coast. One of his larger pieces, the impressive sculpture also features a sea turtle and other marine life.

Steve Johnsen is president of the VIMS Foundation and, along with wife, Barbara, a strong supporter of VIMS. He joined the sculptor on campus for the installation after helping to transport it from the Eastern Shore.

Visitors to campus are welcome to stop at Watermen's Hall to see the playful dolphins firsthand.



Donor Steve Johnsen, sculptor David Turner, and VIMS Dean and Director John Wells survey the statue after its installation. ©Chris Katella/VIMS

## CREATING FELLOWSHIP OFFERS COUPLE A WAY TO INSPIRE FUTURE SCIENTISTS

Anne Waleski Smith and Dale Smith are oyster fans who are hoping to turn their passion for the tasty creatures into a lifetime legacy. It's one of those things that just seems meant to be.

Take Anne Waleski Smith. As an undergraduate at William & Mary she was intrigued by the university's Virginia Institute of Marine Science and the work they do studying and improving the waters of Virginia and the Chesapeake Bay. Her curiosity was piqued, but a degree in economics with a minor in history led her to a career in finance and accounting. Ultimately she settled into the insurance industry, and today she is executive vice president and chief financial officer for the Richmond-based Fortune 500 company, Markel Corporation.

Her husband, Dale Smith, went to school at James Madison University,

but ended up in Richmond. A certified public accountant by profession, he worked his way up to deputy comptroller at Capitol One Financial, also a Fortune 500 company.

A similar background in corporate accounting and a shared passion for giving back to the community by serving on the boards of various nonprofit organizations eventually led the couple back to VIMS.

The Smiths enjoyed weekends spent on the Rappahannock River. For fun, they began growing oysters off their dock. They cultivated a passion for the tasty and hard-working bivalves that they loved "any which way you can prepare them," said Dale Smith.

Interest in the delicious delicacy, which has a rich history in the Chesapeake Bay region, turned into interest in the science behind oysters, then the bay, then all shellfish, and ultimately the quality of the

water where those shellfish live, the couple said. Much of their education came through literature and other information produced by VIMS.

Eventually Dale Smith's skills and experience at Capitol One led him to a role as CEO at Rappahannock Oyster Company. He began meeting with the two cousins who in the last decade or so have restarted an old Chesapeake seafood firm, Rappahannock Oyster Co. Smith said he worked with Travis Croxton at Capital One and knew Ryan Croxton, also a JMU graduate, as well. And he knew of their growing oyster business and expanding restaurant presence. When the cousins, who have also worked closely with VIMS in establishing their aquaculture farms, approached him with a business proposition, Smith thought it was meant to be.

Meanwhile the pair were looking for ways to be more involved in the William & Mary community. Adding their support to VIMS seemed an obvious choice. In discussing options with VIMS and W&M officials, the idea finally coalesced to fund a fellowship in support of a student studying anything that advances aquaculture.

While oysters may seem to be the underlying theme, the couple is interested in anything having to do with aquaculture and the preservation of water quality. They have long been concerned with supporting the scientific efforts behind that preservation, particularly in recent years as funding has been more perilous, said Waleski. They chose to fund a fellowship instead of an outright donation or future bequest because it offered a chance to stay engaged. "For us, it was the type of thing we could do now and watch progress and influence over future years, as opposed to funding it when you're dead and hoping it goes ok," said Waleski.

Smith said the future of aquaculture and water quality is something they have as a shared passion. Supporting a student who can impact those areas is important to them, he said. "If you can inspire a single person in this field, that can have exponential impact."

## ANNUAL TOURNAMENT RAISES AWARENESS FOR VIMS

VIMS students had an opportunity to teach and learn at Cobia Bowl, a tournament held by the Peninsula Salt Water Sport Fisherman's Association and hosted by Dare Marina and Yacht Sales in June. Dr. John Graves, Chancellor Professor of Marine Science, was invited to attend and bring the students for the two-day event.

"This was an incredible opportunity for outreach into the community," said Dr. Graves. "We do a lot of research for that [cobia fishing] community, but it's not widely known."

After being weighed, each cobia was examined by Dr. Graves and the students, who were getting genetic samples for a study and taking notes on each fish's reproductive condition and stomach contents.

"The tournament gave students an opportunity to really be involved," Graves said. "People would come by and talk with them about the stomach



*Students Kate Bemis and Matt Oliver collect data with Dr. John Graves at Cobia Bowl. ©Paul Crisp*

contents and the work they were doing."

Over the two days of the tournament, nearly a dozen VIMS students participated. They not only worked with the fish, they staffed a VIMS information tent and helped out wherever they were needed.

Formerly the Flounder Bowl, tournament organizers changed the focus to cobia out of concern for the state of the cobia fishery. The tournament raised \$11,000 for cobia research at VIMS.

## SAVE THE DATE

### **Discovery Lab Series**

**Select Tuesdays, January – September**

**All ages. No charge.**

### **After Hours Lecture Series**

**Select Thursdays, January – November**

**Adults and 10+. No charge.**

**Saturday, May 19, 10am-3pm**

**VIMS Marine Science Day**

**Open house: tours, exhibits, hands-on activities, and more.**

**All ages. No charge.**

*Reservations required for most events.*

*Visit [www.vims.edu/events](http://www.vims.edu/events) or call 804.684.7061*

## VIMS SUPPORTERS MAKE OTOD FUN AND SUCCESSFUL

On the annual William & Mary day of giving known as One Tribe One Day, the VIMS community had some fun while raising serious money for science. More than \$27,000 was donated by 333 friends of VIMS, including challenge money from VIMS Foundation Board member Charlie

Natale for the General Graduate Student Endowment.

During the day, VIMS posted fun pictures and videos to keep everyone engaged, including pictures of students, staff, faculty, and friends posing with the VIMS science sign and explaining why they #StandWithScience.



*Staff from the Center for Coastal Resources Management stand with science. ©Chris Katella/VIMS*



[www.vims.edu/impact](http://www.vims.edu/impact)

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