

Credit: Dan DiNicola, University of Miami

DISCOVERY STARTS HERE

Faculty Facts

Science and Art Collide

Dr. Ken Dunton Featured in Painting Selected by U.S. State Department

Artist Bob Selby captured the collaboration of ecologists and the U.S. Coast Guard in the pursuit of knowledge in the vast Arctic Ocean. Long interested in Arctic missions, artist Shelby deployed in 2013 on the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Healy with several research teams from a variety of universities, including Dr. Ken Dunton and his research group from UTMSI. Shelby's painting captures UTMSI scientists as they take samples of ice to measure importance of the ice algae under changing conditions. The painting titled "Chukchi Reach" received the 2014 George Gray Award and it's on view at the residence of Charles Adams, the American Ambassador to Finland. Artist Bob Shelby and the endeavor was supported by the U.S. Coast Guard Art Program.

Awards

Brett Baker Receives the Sloan Research Fellowship

Assistant Professor, Dr. Brett Baker, is one of four trailblazing faculty members from The University of Texas at Austin, who have been awarded Sloan Research Fellowships for 2016. The prestigious fellowships are awarded every year by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation to stimulate fundamental research by early-career engineers, scientists and scholars of outstanding promise. The 126 winners for 2016 were selected out of more

In this work from the U.S. Coast Guard Art Program 2014 Collection, "Chukchi Reach" scientist Dr. Ken Dunton, in grey hardhat, aboard a small boat from the USCGC Healy gathers Chukchi Sea ice samples from a large floe that the cutter broke apart by ramming it. U.S. Coast Guard Art Program work by Robert Selby.



Marine Science News

The University of Texas at Austin
Marine Science Institute
Activities and Events (Dec - Feb)




1st Quarter 2016

than 600 nominations from top research universities in the United States and Canada. Fellows receive awards of \$55,000 each to further their research.

BLUE Gulf Film Festival

Dr. Brad Erisman and Jace Tunnell received two of the three awards in the BLUE Gulf film competition sponsored by the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. Dr. Brad Erisman, fisheries professor at UTMSI, received the *Viewer's Choice Award* for

his short film “Illusions of Plenty: Spawning Aggregations.” Mr. Jace Tunnell, the Director of the Mission-Aransas Reserve at UTMSI, received one of the two *Making Waves Award* for his video “All the Cups” of which he produced and directed. These films and others were screened at the BLUE On Tour film festival held in January.

Joan Holt Receives Lifetime Achievement Award

Professor Emerita, Dr. Joan Holt, was honored with the lifetime achievement award at the 36th annual “Y Women In Career Awards Ceremony” on March 3, 2016 held at the YWCA. The ceremony celebrated Dr. Holt and six other women who serve their community through their careers. Dr. Joan Holt was selected to receive the esteemed lifetime achievement award because she is a pioneer in marine science and mariculture. She is known throughout the world and entered the field of marine science at a time when there were few women. Dr. Holt’s contribution to community and society are also very notable. From her involvement with fishery conservation to her promotion of birding, she has helped make the local region a tourist destination for visitors to enjoy and learn about the natural environment that surrounds them.

Ken Dunton Receives 2016 Ramón Margalef Award for Excellence in Education

The Ramón Margalef Award for Excellence in Education recognizes excellence in teaching and mentoring in the fields of limnology and oceanography. Dr. Ken Dunton is the 2016 recipient of the Ramón Margalef Award for “being a visionary and continually creating new and innovative approaches to bridge science and education, bringing hands-on, real world outreach into local communities, and training science teachers and the next generation of marine scientists and ecologists.” The award will be presented to Dr. Dunton at the upcoming summer ASLO meeting.

Advisory Committees and Journal Editorship

- Dr. Robert Dickey is delegate to the National and Southern Associations of Marine Laboratories; co-chair of the NOAA RESTORE Science Program Advisory Working Group; a member of the Blue Ribbon Panel for the National Estuarine Research

Reserve Program; and a member of the Texas Sea Grant Advisory Committee.

- Dr. Wayne Gardner is Co-Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Estuaries and Coasts* published by Springer.
- Dr. Ed Buskey is a member of the National Estuarine Research Reserve - Integrated Ocean Observing System Integration Committee and the Steering Committee for Our Global Estuary.
- Dr. Deana Erdner serves on the U.S. National Harmful Algal Blooms Committee, is an Associate Editor for *Estuaries and Coasts*, and Review Editor for the journal *Frontiers in Marine Molecular Biology and Ecology*.
- Dr. Brad Erisman serves as the Director of Texas Chapter of the American Institute of Fisheries Research Biologists and is a member of the Coastal Resources Advisory Committee for Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.
- Dr. Lee Fuiman is the Editor for the newsletter *Early Life History Section of the American Fisheries Society* and a member of the editorial board of *Biology Letters* journal.
- Dr. Zhanfei Liu serves as an Associate Editor for the journal *Estuaries and Coasts*.
- Dr. James McClelland serves as an Associate Editor for the journal *Global Biogeochemical Cycles and Estuarine Coastal and Shelf Science*.

Note-worthy Manuscripts & Reports

Black Carbon’s Influence on Climate

Professor James McClelland from UTMSI and colleagues from University of Georgia Skidaway Institute of Oceanography, completed a study that found that the input of black carbon from rivers to the Arctic Ocean is likely to increase with warming. Black carbon, or biochar, is formed when vegetation and other organic matter burns, such as in a tundra or forest fire. Black carbon does not degrade readily, causing it to become buried in the soil. Today black carbon is a massive store of carbon in global soils, where it is thought to be very stable—so stable, that researchers have previously suggested that adding black carbon to soils might be a good way to lock away carbon dioxide and reduce climate change. This new research

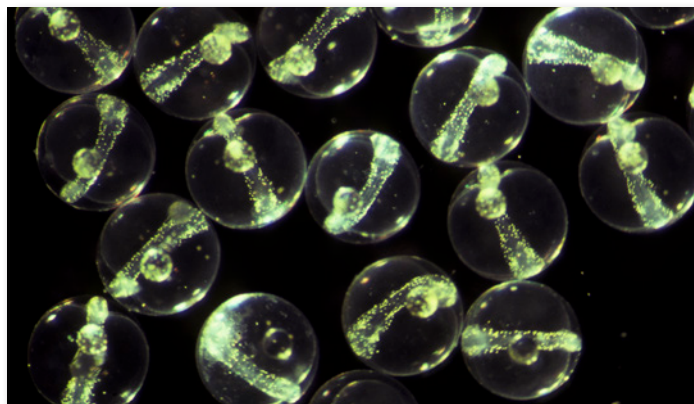
reveals that the black carbon stored in Arctic soils is being exported to the oceans. Once dissolved in the ocean and exposed to sunlight, black carbon may be rapidly converted back to the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide. The results of their study were recently published in the journal *Frontiers in Earth Science*, lead author Aron Stubbins. The scientists are now continuing to determine just how much black carbon will be exported to the Arctic Ocean as the Arctic continues to warm, and once it reaches the oceans, what percentage will reach the atmosphere as carbon dioxide. *This work is supported by the National Science Foundation and the Hanse Institute for Advanced Studies.*



Arctic rivers are primary mechanism that black carbon is transported to the ocean. Credit: Matt Khosh.

Diet in Fish Affects Offspring's Metabolism

Scientists at The University of Texas Marine Science Institute in Port Aransas have discovered that in fish, just like in humans, the nutrients that are passed from a mother to her offspring can change the way her offspring develop and make a big difference in how well they do in life. This phenomenon in which prenatal nutrition can permanently alter the metabolism of offspring – called metabolic programming – has been studied almost exclusively in mammals and is believed to be a cause of important medical disorders in humans including hypertension, obesity, and heart disease. Never before have scientists considered what metabolic programming might mean in nature. In a study released in the respected science journal *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*, Dr. Lee Fuiman and co-author Dr. Kestrel Perez presented their work on red drum, a fish



Researchers have discovered that a red drum's diet affects the metabolism of its offspring by changing the composition of its eggs. Credit: Joan Holt, UTMSI.

popular among anglers and chefs. The scientists found that the amount of a specific nutrient, the omega-3 fatty acid DHA, that a female fish puts into the yolk in her eggs controls how much DHA her offspring can obtain from their own diet several weeks after they hatch. They also demonstrated that the amount of DHA young fishes get from their diet plays a big role in how well they can swim, grow, and escape from predators. Adult red drum get most of the DHA that is passed onto their offspring from shrimp and crabs. Decreases in these two food sources, caused by environmental conditions or commercial harvest, is likely to have an impact on the ability of young fish to survive at a time in life when they are small and especially susceptible to predators and starvation. The research provides information for the use of metabolic programming to benefit fish populations. Several states have stocking programs in which they breed red drum in hatcheries and release millions of young fish into the wild to supplement natural populations. This new research suggests that those hatcheries may be able to improve the survival of the fish they release through close attention to the nutrition of the adult fish and the quality of eggs they produce. *This research was supported by funding from Texas Sea Grant and the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation.*

Scientists Decode Genomes to Infer Lifestyles of Subsurface Microbes

An international team led by microbiologists Brett Baker of The University of Texas at Austin and Thijs Ettema of Uppsala University in Sweden have discovered genetic

evidence that a group of subsurface microbes consume carbon monoxide, a weak greenhouse gas, to produce energy. These microbes, first discovered in a gold mine two miles below South Africa, live in environments devoid of oxygen and light. So far, no one has successfully grown them in the laboratory, so it wasn't clear how these microbes generate energy. Baker and his colleagues found these microbes in vastly different environments of land and sea: the mud of a temperate estuary in North Carolina and underneath hot springs at Yellowstone National Park. "This new class of microbes are specialized for survival beneath the surface, so we called them Hadesarchaea," says Baker, referring to Hades, the ancient Greek god of the underworld. As its name suggests, the Hadesarchaea belong to a poorly studied group of microorganisms, the archaea.

Like bacteria, archaea are single-celled and microscopically small, but from an evolutionary perspective, bacteria and archaea differ more from each other than a human does from a tree. The discovery of the Hadesarchaea will help increase our understanding of the biology and lifestyle of archaea that thrive in the deep biosphere. "It's not clear yet what role Hadesarchaea have in the global carbon cycle or our climate," says Baker. "But because they are found in the subsurface all over the world, they are likely very important players."

This research is supported by the US Department of Energy, Swedish Research Council, Knut and Alice Wallenberg Foundation, European Research Council and the Center for Dark Energy Biosphere Investigations, Swedish Foundation for Strategic Research, and by the European Union.

Administrative Services

New Funding Received Since December

(Primary funding organization in parenthesis)

- Dispersion research on oil: physics and plankton (DROPPS II) year 2 - Ed Buskey, Deana Erdner, Zhanfei Liu (Consortium for Ocean Leadership - GOMRI)
- Conservation and Management Plan - Kiersten Stanzel (Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program)
- Pre-Construction salinity and vegetation monitoring in Egery Flats - Jace Tunnell (Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program)
- Relative Sea Level Rise Habitat Assessment in Aransas Bay - Katie Swanson (Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program)
- Relationship of Effects of Cardiac outcomes in fish for validation of Ecological Risk (RECOVER) year 2 - Andrew Esbaugh (Consortium for Ocean Leadership - GOMRI)

Annual Library Arts and Crafts Holiday Party

Before the Holiday break, UTMSI staff, students and friends celebrated the holidays in their 5th Annual Library Arts and Crafts Holiday Party. The UTMSI Green Team sponsored an art contest with a recycled art theme. It was a fun way

to celebrate the holidays and help raise awareness about sustainability. Hunter Pelfrey received the art contest award and Dr. Steve Lanoux was presented with an Environmental Hero Award by the UTMSI Green Team.



Staff and students view submitted art at the Annual Library Arts and Crafts Holiday Party. Credit: Liz DeHart, UTMSI.

External Affairs

Wall of Honor In Lyceum

This past August, a Director's Honor Society was established to commemorate service to The University of Texas Marine Science Institute. Three longtime advocates for the Institute were inducted: The Honorable Todd Hunter of Corpus Christi, Mrs. Edith McAllister of San Antonio, and Ben Vaughan, III of Austin. Their portraits are on display with a new *Wall of Honor* in the Lyceum.

Growing Fish in a New Green House

Thanks to a generous donation from the Ed Rachal Foundation, the greenhouse at the Fisheries and Mariculture Laboratory is being replaced with a metal pre-fabricated building similar to the SEALab. We are conducting design and engineering plans and anticipate beginning installation this spring.

Pelican Enclosure

UTMSI just finished construction of a new enclosure to house non-releasable and recovering pelicans, and other seabirds in the Animal Rehabilitation Keep (ARK). Taddy McAllister tirelessly worked to raise the funds for these improvements from friends and the public with support for the construction from Director Robert Dickey and the UTMSI maintenance crew. Additional repairs and renovations to the ARK are ongoing and will serve to create a well-maintained environment conducive to educational outreach programs to raise awareness and stewardship of our coastal marine environment and wildlife.



The new pelican enclosure keeps injured pelicans in and the healthy (but entrepreneurial) pelicans out. Credit: Jace Tunnell.

Where We've Been

- In December, researchers, students, and staff presented at and/or attended the American Geophysical Union Fall Meeting in San Francisco, California; and the Annual Road Scholar Conference in Boston, Massachusetts.
- In January, researchers, students, and staff presented at and/or attended the Alaska Marine Science Symposium in Anchorage, Alaska; Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative Compass Training in New Orleans, Louisiana; Texas Aquaculture Association Meeting in Fredericksburg,



Marine Science Advisory Council Member, Bobby Patton, provided his boat the Fastball, an 82-foot Viking, and crew to Dr. Brad Erisman to study spawning sites in the Sea of Cortez. Pictured here are Brad Erisman, Alfredo Barroso, Timothy Rowell, Andrew Johnson, and David Castro aboard the Fastball before departure.



Marine Science Advisory Council Member, Burt Moorhouse, recently donated his 20-foot Mako, which is the perfect craft for conducting research in both shallow-bottom estuaries and the nearshore Gulf of Mexico.

Texas; NERRS-IOOS Partnership Meeting Workshop in St. Augustine, Florida; Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society Meeting in Kerrville, Texas; and the Gulf of Mexico Ecosystem Modeling workshop in Miami, Florida.

- In February, researcher, students, and staff presented at and/or attended the Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill and Ecosystem Science Conference in Tampa, Florida; Association for the Sciences of Limnology and Oceanography Meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana; and legislative visits to Washington D.C. UTMSI also hosted prospective graduate students in February.

Around Campus

Campus Improvements

The engineering and design work for the renovation of the marina and bulkhead has begun with the \$2.8 million received in the 84th State Legislature. A major electrical upgrade was also completed in main laboratory to provide more reliable power distribution, better grounding, and protection for power surges.

Signage

The exterior signage throughout campus has recently been upgraded to include new logos and updated existing directional signs. In particular, there is a new sign announcing the name change of our visitors center to the *Marine Science Education Center*. This new sign will greatly improve visitor guidance and should also help to alleviate the confusion between our public visitor space and the Chamber of Commerce Visitors Center.

Water Wise Wildlife Garden

The water wise wildlife garden is almost complete. New grading, trails and native plants have been incorporated to create a scenic area to showcase the importance of native plants and water use. A community planting event will be held on March 11th from 2-4 p.m. and a Grand Opening Ceremony will be held later this spring. This garden is adjacent to the dune habitat, which will also include an improvement with new interpretive trails focused on dune habitat education and restoration of the area. The Mission-Aransas Reserve secured a grant from the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program (CBBEP) for the new dune project, which will begin this summer.

The new water wise wildlife garden was recently planted and will be in full bloom this summer. Come over and take a stroll! Supported by UT Green Fee and CBBEP.



Coming Soon

- Replacement of most exterior doors with storm-rated fiberglass doors.
- Renovation of the main laboratory elevator to correct long-standing design deficiencies and to restore reliability.
- Concrete and waterproofing repairs on buildings throughout the main campus and at the Fisheries and Mariculture Laboratory to maintain integrity of the structures.
- Dr. Robert Dickey is committed to the additional build-out of laboratories in the Estuarine Research Center third floor.
- Fisheries and Mariculture Laboratory will be receiving an improved electrical distribution system and renovation of the pump house behind the main laboratory.
- Campus housing at Wilson Cottages and Beach Street will soon be equipped with WiFi through Time Warner Cable.
- UTMSI will soon have a one-stop system for reserving meeting rooms, classrooms, short-term housing, vehicles, boats, and R/V Katy trips through a new event management system. Patty Webb has been working with colleagues at the Commons Learning Center on the main campus to utilize their system to replace the old and outdated intranet.
- We received 45 competitive applicants for the Facility Manager position. Interviews will begin the second week of March.

Mission-Aransas Reserve and Education

Missionaransas.org

Students Go Head-to-Head to Battle in the Regional Ocean Sciences Bowl

In early February, ten teams from seven schools throughout South Texas competed in the Loggerhead Challenge, the Southern Texas Regional competition of the National Ocean Sciences Bowl (NOSB), which was hosted by Texas Sea Grant and co-hosted by the Mission-Aransas Reserve, and The University of Texas Marine Science Institute. In this competition, high school students from across the region demonstrated their knowledge of marine and coastal science by answering questions ranging from biology, physics, chemistry, geology, geography, mathematics and the social science. Each team consisted of four students and a coach. The purpose behind all of the mental match-ups is to increase ocean literacy and prepare students for ocean science and other related careers. Through this experience they will become knowledgeable citizens and better their understanding of environmental stewardship. The ocean is an ideal interdisciplinary teaching tool for science, technology, education, and mathematics (STEM) that applies learning in a real world context. Working in the ocean environment poses challenges that push the innovation, engineering, and technology development

needed in our workforce. Ocean science is not a course generally offered at the high school level, but this opportunity combines high school science and math in a format that is both exciting and challenging. The NOSB is one of the few ways students gain exposure to all of ocean science and related careers as they are beginning to chart their course in life. This year, Brandeis High School from San Antonio took the top honors. They will go on to compete at the National Ocean Science Bowl on April 21-24, 2016 in Morehead City, North Carolina at the University of North Carolina Institute of Marine Sciences. Harlingen High School – South Team A received second place, Gregory-Portland High School Team A received third place and McAllen Memorial High School Team A received the award for best sportsmanship.



Visitors are wild about estuaries. Credit: Nicole Pringle, UTMSI.



Students from Brandeis High School in San Antonio (Nathan Corbin, Pranjal Singh, Daniel Cao, Rodolfo Muzquiz), placed first in the Regional Competition.

Visitors Get Excited about Estuaries

The last Saturday in September was National Estuaries Day, an event that is celebrated throughout the United States. We are fortunate to have our very own Mission-Aransas National Estuarine Research Reserve to help celebrate and commemorate what special places our estuaries are. This year visitors participated in several games and activities that imparted why estuaries are important and how they can also be fun. Stay tuned for next year's event – Saturday September 24, 2016.

Tracking Trash on Texas Beaches

Ecologists with the Mission-Aransas National Estuarine Research Reserve recently received a \$51,000 grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to track marine debris on our Coastal Bend beaches for two years. The scientists will determine the extent of impact of debris on sea turtles, and what visitors or resource managers might do to reduce debris on our shores. In order to collect significant amounts of data, they are surveying four local shorelines monthly: Padre Island National Seashore, Fish Pass on Mustang Island Gulf Beach, San José Island Gulf Beach, and Lighthouse Lakes in Redfish Bay. Both traditional methods and new technologies are used to count and sort the debris for one of these designated areas. On average, 500 tons of marine debris are removed from Texas beaches each year. The goal of the project is to better understand when and where marine debris impacts our beaches so that policy makers and resource managers can focus their resources toward solutions to this widespread and often times damaging problem. *This project is supported by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.*



Collin Croulet, Research Scientist Associate, collects marine debris at the Padre Island National Seashore.

Putting the Science into the Port Aransas Science Fair

The Port Aransas Science Fair occurred this November, which was a culmination of six weeks of research and experimentation by 4th and 5th grade students at the H.G. Olsen Elementary School in Port Aransas, Texas.



The 2015 Science Fair at the H.G. Olsen Elementary School in Port Aransas was a success. Credit: Matt Khosh.

The students were assisted by graduate student Craig Connolly who helped the students understand what it takes to develop an experiment and how to communicate the results. Each student designed, executed, and analyzed the results of their own science experiment. Students presented posters detailing their experiments to local judges from The University of Texas Marine Science Institute and members of the Port Aransas community. Student projects spanned a range of topics from what tape sticks the best underwater, to the effect of salt on the freezing point of water, and determining what color skittle candy has the most food dye. An award ceremony and public viewing was also held to congratulate the winners and all student participants. Special thanks to Matt Khosh, recent graduate and Science Fair Coordinator, and participating teachers Janis Moore and Amanda Tipps. *This project is supported by Port Aransas Independent School District, Port Aransas Education Foundation, UTMSI and the Mission-Aransas Reserve.*

Summer Science Program Registration is Now Open

UT Summer Science is an exciting, inquiry-based learning experience for students entering 3rd through 8th grade. Working alongside marine scientists from the University of Texas, students will experience science outside of the classroom in several week-long summer programs. By the end of the program, students will gain a deep personal appreciation for the marine environment, become aware of local and global threats, learn to solve complex problems using the scientific method and understand what it truly

means to be a scientist. Young scientists can enroll in our week long program now. Dates for summer 2016 are:

- Week 1 “Ocean Exploration”: June 6-10
- Week 2 “Connecting to the Oceans”: June 13-17
- Week 3 “Ocean Exploration”: June 20-24
- Week 4 “Connecting to the Oceans”: June 27 - July 1

The curriculum will be different for Weeks 1 and 2, then repeat for Weeks 3 and 4. Go to the website to register and receive more information: <https://www.utmsi.utexas.edu/blog/entry/summer-science-reg>

This project is supported by Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program, City of Port Aransas, Port Aransas Independent School District, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Mission-Aransas Reserve, The University of Texas Marine Science Institute, and several individual donors.

Advisory Committees

- Jace Tunnell was recently selected to serve on the Texas Sea Grant Advisory Board.
- Jace Tunnell also serves as the President of Coastal Bend Bays Foundation.
- Ed Buskey serves on the Guadalupe San Antonio (GSA) Bay and Basin Science Team (BBEST) and Jace serves on the GSA Advisory Committee in addition to the Nueces BBEST.
- Jace Tunnell serves on the Region N, Coastal Bend, Water Planning Committee
- Several members of the Reserve serve on implementation teams for the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program.

Spotlight on Students

Conference Awards

- Matt Seeley, in Bryan Black’s laboratory, was recently awarded travel funds from the Southern Association of Marine Laboratories to attend the Ocean Sciences Meeting for the Association for the Sciences of Limnology and Oceanography in New Orleans, Louisiana that was held in February.
- Meredith Evans, in Zhanfei Liu’s laboratory, was awarded the James D. Watkins Student Award for Excellence in Research at the 2016 Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill & Ecosystem Science Conference.
- Several students were nominated for the 2015-2016 Graduate Student Professional Development (Travel) Awards through the Graduate School and they each received \$500: Carrie Harris, Claire Griffin, Matt Seeley, Meredith Evans, Gene Oh, and Shuting Liu.

Fellowships

- Christina Bonsell, in Ken Dunton’s laboratory, was awarded a University Graduate Continuing Fellowship for next fiscal year, beginning in fall 2016.

- Two recently admitted Ph.D. students will also receive fellowships: Ian Rambo, in Brett Baker’s laboratory, will receive the new Discovery Fellowship and Arley Muth, in Ken Dunton’s laboratory, will receive an Environmental Protection Agency Star Fellowship
- Shuting Liu, in Zhanfei Liu’s laboratory, received the Graduate School Dissertation Writing Fellowship for spring 2016.
- Claire Griffin and Meredith Evans continue to be supported on a 2015-2016 UTMSI Research Fellowship this semester.

Candidacy

- Christina Bonsell, in Ken Dunton’s laboratory, and Kaijun Lu, in Zhanfei Liu’s laboratory, officially advanced to candidacy this semester.

Welcome & Celebrations

Tony Amos is a Recovery Champion

Tony Amos, Director of the Animal Rehabilitation Keep (ARK), University of Texas Marine Science Institute (UTMSI), was one of two recipients for the prestigious U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Recovery Champions Award. Over the course of more than 30 years, Tony Amos has served as a major contributor to our knowledge of shorebirds, sea turtles, and manatees along the Central Texas coast. Mr. Amos compiled an incredible long-term data set of bird and sea turtle observations that has proven invaluable to the recovery efforts of many species. He has worked tirelessly to rescue and rehabilitate sea turtles and birds, including piping plovers, red knots, brown pelicans, and bald eagles. He is an outstanding spokesman for wildlife conservation in the Texas Coastal Bend region and his dedication to wildlife rescue has been an effective outreach and education resource for listed sea turtles and birds. The award ceremony occurred December 9, 2015, at The University of Texas Marine Science Institute with a special presentation by Dr. Joy Nicolopolous, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Deputy Regional Director, Southwest Region.



The USFWS, Robyn Cobb (left) and Dr. Joy Nicolopolous (right), awarded Tony Amos (center) the Recovery Champion honor on December 9, 2015.

Coastal Bend Bays Foundation Honors Marine Scientists

Several researchers at The University of Texas Marine Science Institute were recognized at the 13th Annual Conservation & Environmental Stewardship Awards Banquet hosted by the Coastal Bend Bays Foundation. Scott Holt and Ken Dunton were dual recipients of the top award of the night, the *President's Award*, and Mission-Aransas Reserve Director, Jace Tunnell, was the *Coastal Steward* award recipient.



Dr. Ken Dunton, Jace Tunnell, and Scott Holt were honored by the Coastal Bend Bays Foundation for significant contributions to education and the protection of Coastal Bend natural resources, habitats and native species.

Dr. Chris Shank Receives Appreciation Award

Dr. Christopher Shank was nominated this year to receive an appreciation award from The University of Texas at Austin services for students with disabilities. Faculty and staff play an integral part in making sure that students receive their accommodations, and this semester Dr. Shank was one of the faculty recognized for going above and beyond the call of duty to help students with disabilities.

New Employees

Welcome! Allen Coates (Fiscal) and Tammy Linton (Animal Rehabilitation Keep).

Would you like to be added to our newsletter mailing list? E-mail Sally Palmer at sally.palmer@utexas.edu



The City of Port Aransas recently named the portion of the beach at Access Road 1 in Port Aransas, Texas as the *Tony Amos City Beach*. Amos has been measuring the wildlife and oceanography on that stretch of the beach every other day for 38 years.



Georgia Neblett, UTMSI's Director of External Affairs, was recognized by the Nueces County Commissioner's Court today for her years of service on the Texas Windstorm Insurance Board of Directors. Georgia Neblett (left with award) and Ann Bracher Vaughan (right with award) were recognized for their public service by the Nueces County Commissioners Court. Credit: Ann Vaughan.



Dr. Steve Lanoux, left, was the Assistant Director for Operations at The University of Texas Marine Science Institute. He retired this January after 15 years of service. Pictured here with Director, Dr. Robert Dickey, right.



Susan Lawson (right) is a research technician in Dr. Peter Thomas's laboratory (left). Susan retired this January after 19 years of service, but plans to come back part-time this spring.



A volunteer appreciation event was hosted on February 20th. The event featured Marci Voorhees, owner of "The Horses Glass," who lead the participants in a step-by-step lesson to paint a one-of-a-kind glass piece. There are currently around 100 active volunteers that help us advance the knowledge of and stewardship for our estuaries and blue water oceans.