

# **THE SFAAS “NEWSREEL”**

## **Number 3 / November / December 2020**

It is that time of the year again – ending the semester, enjoying the holidays, and prepping for the new year. This year we have the additional consideration of the pandemic.

The good news is that the world now has four vaccines very near regulatory approval. Hopefully, we will see vaccinations beginning very soon. I think we are all ready to get back to normal.

In the meantime, everyone please continue to be careful and enjoy the season.

Joe Tomasso  
Professor & Director (and Newsreel editor!)





## **AWARD OF EXCELLENCE**

**Luke Roy** is the 2020 recipient of the **Dean's Award for Excellence in Extension and Outreach.**

Dr. Roy is an extension associate professor stationed at the Alabama Fish Farming Center in Greensboro.

He took his PhD from AU in 2006 and spent seven years as a research fellow in Greensboro before becoming an extension specialist at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. He returned to AU to take his current position in 2017.



## NEW ENDOWED AWARD



**The Mike Maceina Endowed Graduate Award** has been established by his family for the purpose of providing support and recognition for students in the School of Fisheries, Aquaculture & Aquatic Sciences.

Dr. Maceina was a professor of fisheries management at AU, specializing in modeling gamefish populations. He retired from AU in 2010 and spent his retirement fishing in Canada and hunting in Alabama.

The award will be made annually to a graduate student in SFAAS who is studying wild aquatic organisms. Preference will be given to students using quantitative techniques and computer modeling.

## GRANTSMANSHIP AWARDS

Seven faculty members in the School have received the **Dean's Grantsmanship Award for 2020.**

The award recognizes people who, during the year, received \$250 thousand or more from national or regional programs in response to a formal request for proposals. The awards must also include a minimum of 15% in indirect costs.

***Ash Bullard***  
***Ian Butts***  
***Dennis DeVries***  
***Steve Szedlmayer***  
***Bill Walton***  
***PJ Waters***  
***Rusty Wright***



## NEW PhD GRADUATE



**Peter Mudrack** recently completed his PhD. His dissertation title was *Juvenile Density, Fishing Mortality, and Habitat use of Red Snapper, *Lutjanus campechanus*, on Artificial and Natural Reefs in the Northern Gulf of Mexico*

Steve Szedlmayer served as major professor with Terry Hanson, Ash Bullard, and Benny Galloway serving as committee members.

## NEW PhD GRADUATE



**Vicki Priente** recently completed her PhD. Her dissertation title was *The effects of geography, gear type, and culture techniques on Vibrio risks associated with farm-raised oysters.*

Bill Walton served as major professor with Jim Stoeckel, Todd Steury and Jessica Jones serving as committee members.

Vicki plans to work as a post-doc at AUSL this spring and then move to the Harte Research Institute in Corpus Christi as the Director of Research for Palacios Marine Agricultural Research, Inc.



## NEW MS GRADUATE



**Aaron Fewell** recently completed his MS. His thesis title was *Examining early growth genetic potential of two distinct localities of Florida Bass and an F1 hybrid bass (*Micropterus floridanus* x *Micropterus salmoides*).*

Eric Peatman served as major professor with Ben Beck, Shawn McNulty, and Allen Davis serving as committee members.

Aron plans to work as a fishery biologist for Red Hills Fishery (a largemouth bass hatchery) in Boston, Georgia.



## POSTER COMPETITION WINNER



**Harsha Galkanda-Arachchige**, a PhD student in Allen Davis' lab won first place in the competition among PhD students in the Food Animal Systems / Integrated Food and Health Systems section of the **2020 College of Agriculture Virtual Graduate Student Research Poster Showcase.**

The poster was entitled *Efficacy of genetically engineered canola oil in the feed of Pacific white shrimp *Litopenaeus vannamei*.*



## POSTER COMPETITION WINNER



**Riley Burley**, a PhD student in Alan Wilson's lab won first place in the Group 2 competition among PhD students in the Sustainable Ecosystems and Renewable Resource Management section of the **2020 College of Agriculture Virtual Graduate Student Research Poster Showcase**.

The poster was entitled *Predicting Microcystin concentrations in freshwater lakes and reservoirs around the world: assessing environmental variables*.



## POSTER COMPETITION WINNER

**Matthew Gladfelter**, a MS student in Alan Wilson's lab won first place in the competition among MS students in the Sustainable Ecosystems and Renewable Resource Management section of the **2020 College of Agriculture Virtual Graduate Student Research Poster Showcase**.

The poster was entitled *Nitrogen form dictates use and uptake rate in cyanobacterial communities*.







## NEW MS STUDENT

**Rayne Palmer** will conduct her thesis research with PJ Waters at AUMERC.

She graduated from the University of Southern Mississippi in 2017 with a Bachelor of Science in Marine Biology.

She is the program coordinator for the Mississippi Oyster Gardening Program.

For her research, she will be looking at how the frequency of oyster garden care relates to the growth rate of the oysters.





## NEW MS STUDENT

**Logan Bern** is a new MS student in Rex Dunham's lab.

He was born and raised in Findlay Ohio and did his undergraduate work in Environmental Science at the University of Toledo.

As an undergraduate he studied the effects of *Microcystis* blooms in Lake Eries on red-headed woodpecker diets and movements.

He hopes to become a hatchery manager/ fishery biologist.





## NEW MS STUDENT

**Aidan ‘Miki’ Leahy** is joining Bill Walton’s lab on Dauphin Island where he will analyze different aspects of the lab’s selective oyster breeding program.

He earned his BS in Marine Biology at the College of Charleston’s Honor College, and did research on sea urchins.

In his spare time, he hikes, surfs and holds a student pilot license.

## PASSING



**Nguyen Anh Tuan**, professor and former rector of Can Tho University, died on November 17. He was 67 years old.

He took his PhD from our program in 2001, studying nutrition under Tom Lovell's direction.

The announcement of his death can be found at <https://en.ctu.edu.vn/>





## **NEW BABY!**

Small fry **Liz Amydalla Simora.**

Born to Dr. Rhoda Mae Simora recent PhD graduate from our Fish Genetics program.

Born 2 weeks early on Oct. 1 weighing 2.4 kg and 50cm in length.

Mama is currently on the faculty at the College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences, University of the Philippines Visayas, Miagao, Iloilo, Philippines



## OYSTER RESTORATION

Construction will begin at **AUMERC** on trial gear funded through ADCNR and the ALTIG to evaluate protective dense aggregate 'nests' for long-term holding of restoration oysters.





## NEW OUTREACH ACTIVITY

**AUMERC** received funding from MASGC to develop lesson plans and kiosk-style displays that will focus on oyster gardening programs.

The lesson plans will focus on oyster anatomy and ecology.

The Kiosks will consist of 55-gallon barrels, painted by local high school art classes with estuarine themed scenes. Atop each barrel will be a digital display which cycles updatable, relevant, and timely information about local oyster restoration, and oyster ecology. The kiosks will be placed in various high-traffic areas.

