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Three Professors awarded grant to study beach water quality

December 1, 2014

Three Georgia Southern professors have recently been awarded a more than \$233,000 grant from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to aid their research project titled "Identification of the sources of pathogens in wetland sediments and their influence on beach water quality." Funded for one year, research is now underway.

A collaborative study including Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health professors Asli Aslan and Marina Eremeeva, and College of Science and Mathematics professor John Van Stan, the researchers will use state-of-the-art molecular laboratory techniques and geographic mapping tools to create a database for more informed resource management decisions to help develop healthier beaches in Georgia. The study will be conducted at Kings Ferry, a beach that has been under permanent advisory since 2005 because of high concentrations of enterococci, a fecal indicator bacterium to detect pollution at recreational marine beaches.

The results of this project will be disseminated through a series of public meetings jointly organized by Georgia Southern University, Chatham County Health Department and Ogeechee Riverkeeper to educate the public on recreational activities and health outcomes at rural beaches in Georgia.

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