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Students, faculty recognized at American Elasmobranch Society meeting

JULY 31, 2017



Christine Bedore, Ph.D., is pictured holding her award with Director of the Center for Shark Research at Mote Marine Laboratory, Bob Heuter, Ph.D.

Georgia Southern graduate students and faculty were invited to present research at the American Elasmobranch Society (AES) annual meeting in Austin, Texas, in July, and some took home awards. The AES meeting is a national scientific conference that is hosted as part of the annual Joint Meeting of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists (JMIH).

Matt Scanlon gave a talk in the AES conservation session about his work on shark interactions with Georgia's commercial shrimp fleet. Brianna Hall presented a poster as part of the Physiological Ecology Symposium about cownose ray brain warming. Ricky Orton, recent M.S. graduate and student from Lance McBrayer's, Ph.D., lab, gave a talk about his work on lizard sexually dimorphic coloration, and presented a poster on gene flow in the Florida scrub lizard, both as part of the reptile ecology and behavior sections of the JMIH.

Graduate student Theresa Gunn was also selected to speak about her work on stingray color change as part of the AES's symposium titled "Applications of Physiological Ecology in Elasmobranch Research." Gunn took home a \$1,000 Mollet Research Award for her research proposal.

The students attended the conference with the help of Assistant Professor of biology, Christine Bedore, Ph.D., who has been bringing her students to the annual AES meeting every year since she started her career at Georgia Southern in 2015.

At the meeting, Bedore was given the prestigious [Eugenie Clark Award](#), which is given to a female early career scientist in the field of elasmobranch biology in memory of Dr. Genie Clark, founder of Mote Marine Lab and a pioneer in elasmobranch biology.

"For nearly any elasmobranch biologist, Dr. Eugenie Clark has served as a source of inspiration at some point in their career," Bedore said. "...Genie's ground-breaking work on shark behavior, along with her charming personality, really helped make it possible for our field of elasmobranch biology to

be where it is today. To be recognized as 'the next Genie Clark' is an amazing honor, and to be presented the award by my long-time mentor Dr. Bob Hueter made this award even more special."

Bedore has been studying sharks and rays for more than 10 years. In that time, she's published several research papers on elasmobranch sensory systems, engaged with the general public through outreach events, and participated in both laboratory and field-based research with sharks and rays. She currently has an active research lab at the University with four graduate students and two undergraduate honors students who are studying sensory biology and conservation of sharks and rays.

Any undergraduate or graduate student interested in working on elasmobranchs can join the AES as a student member. Students in at least their second year of membership who are conducting research on sharks, skates or rays can submit research proposals and be considered for one of these awards. The AES also offers travel awards for students traveling to the meeting to present their research. For more information regarding membership and awards, visit www.elasmo.org.

Georgia Southern's M.P.A. program receives accreditation from NASPAA

JULY 31, 2017

The Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA) has granted the [Master of Public Administration](#) (M.P.A.) program at Georgia Southern full accreditation for seven years.

The University's M.P.A. program joins more than 190 degrees accredited by NASPAA worldwide, and was recognized by the Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation for substantial conformity with NASPAA standards. The program is housed in the Institute for Public and Nonprofit Studies and the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences.

Trent Davis, Ph.D., director of the Institute for Public and Nonprofit Studies, led the program through the rigorous peer-review process and has served as the director of the institute since 2012.

"It is a mark of quality in terms of the cutting edge training in public and nonprofit management that students can expect to receive," said Davis. "Successfully accrediting the M.P.A. program required commitment from the program faculty, our students, University administration, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences Dean Curtis Ricker, D.A., and the M.P.A. Program advisory board."

Georgia Southern was one of eight other M.P.A. programs that received accreditation on July 18.

"It [NASPAA accreditation] is also a signal that the program's faculty are leaders in the field and are actively engaged in public service-based education and research," Davis said. "The M.P.A. program's NASPAA accreditation coupled with the department's status as a member of the Nonprofit Academic Centers Council (NACC), demonstrates our strong commitment to training the current and next generation of public and nonprofit sector leaders."

NASPAA is the global standard in public service education. It is the membership association of 325 schools of public policy, public affairs, public administration, and public and nonprofit management. NASPAA is also the recognized global accreditor of master's degree programs in these fields, having accredited more than 190 programs from its member schools. NASPAA's twofold mission is to promote excellence in education and training for public service and to promote the ideal of public service.

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/Research University founded in 1906, offers 118 degree programs serving 20,673 students. Through eight colleges, the University offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs built on more than a century of academic achievement. Georgia Southern is recognized for its student-centered and hands-on approach to education. Visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu.