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## SoMAS gets money for projects

emctavish | Apr 23, 2012 | Comments 0

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Stony Brook researchers at the School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences and Department of Ecology and Evolution have swept five out of the nine projects to be funded with a part of the \$2.4 million from the New York Sea Grant for the 2012-2013 fiscal year.

"NYSG has begun a new round of nine funded research projects which address critical coastal concerns from diverse regions of the state: the Lake Ontario shoreline, the Hudson estuary, and New York Harbor, and both the north and south shores of Long Island," NYSG Director James Ammerman said in a press release earlier this month.

The researchers at SBU are excited. "It's great to start a new research project," Dr. Robert Cerrato, an associate professor at SoMAS who has been sponsored by NYSG, said in an email.

Cerrato will be starting a project to look into the effects of red tide blooms on clam production for commercial use, according to the press release. His research will be used by coastal managers at the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and shellfish growers and harvesters.

Other SBU professors that are to be a part of research projects with the NYSG include Nicholas Fisher, Malcolm Bowman, Michael Frisk, Stephen Baines and Christopher Gobler.

In order to receive money from the NYSG, the SBU professors went through rigorous anonymous peer and panel reviews of their grant proposals. "Individuals at SoMAS...have a long history of successfully competing for Sea Grant funding," Cerrato said in an email.

NYSG has been sponsoring efforts and research to promote "the coastal economic vitality, environmental sustainability and citizen awareness and understanding about the State's marine and Great Lakes resources," according to the NYSG website.

NYSG is the largest of the college programs through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The administrative and communications offices for NYSG are located at SBU, but the NYSG programs are a partnership between the State University New York and Cornell University according to the NYSG website.

"New York Sea Grant has been around for over 40 years and is an important regional resource, not only because of its support of research, but also because of its education and extension work," Cerrato said in an email.

The projects by NYSG are often collaborative studies between SUNY campuses as well as Cornell University. "Because we have all these professors ... working together, it goes to the greater good," said Barbara Branca, the NYSG communications manager.

Branca also stressed NYSG's importance as New York is a part of the Great Lakes network, northeast network and mid-Atlantic network. New York has 3,400 miles of diverse coastlines, according to the NYSG website. Many of the coastal areas in New York share the same concerns and problems with other states that the NYSG and other Sea Grant programs work to address.

"That's the beauty of the Sea Grant network...the collaboration is really, really key," Branca said.

The NYSG also has a large Sea Grant Scholars program which allows professors to bring graduate and undergraduate students into their projects to assist, learn and do their own research.

"In those 40 years, we've spent about \$40 million on grad students furthering their education and research.

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Then they become the next generation of scientists and researchers," Branca said.

Gobler, who has received money from NYSG, was once a part of the Sea Grant Scholar program, according to Branca.

"[The NYSG] is among the most successful in the nation at educating the next generation of marine scientists," Gobler said.

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