

INVESTING IN SCIENCE INVESTING IN SOLUTIONS

2023 DONOR IMPACT REPORT



University of Maryland
CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

GUIDING OUR STATE, NATION, AND WORLD TOWARD A MORE SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

The University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science leads the way toward better management of Maryland's natural resources and the protection and restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. From a network of laboratories located across the state, our scientists provide sound advice to help state and national leaders manage the environment and prepare future scientists to meet the global challenges of the 21st century.



RESEARCH

We work across disciplines and in diverse settings—from the Appalachian Mountains to the Arctic—seeking solutions that improve people's lives and sustain the natural world.

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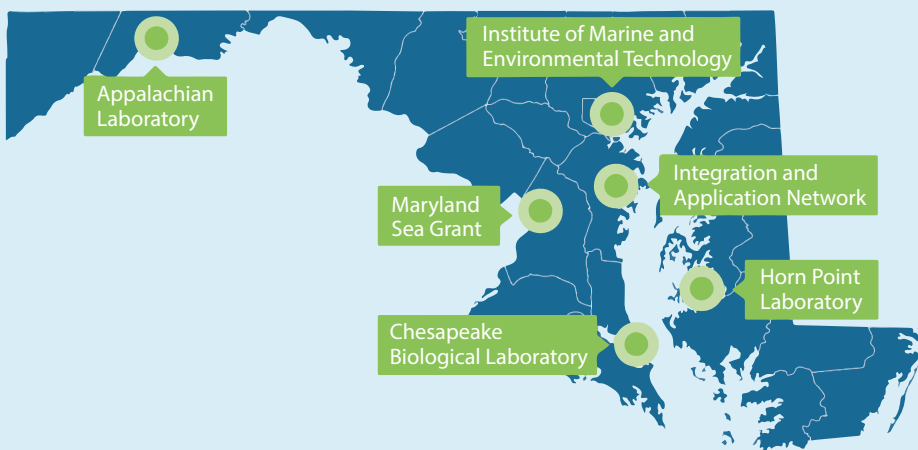
As trusted scientific advisors, our faculty provide unbiased research to inform management decisions and public policy on pressing environmental issues in our communities and around the world.

EDUCATION

Our renowned faculty train the next generation of environmental leaders as part of the University System of Maryland's nationally ranked graduate program in marine and environmental science.

OUR MISSION:

The University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science has a unique statutory mandate to conduct a comprehensive scientific program and apply predictive ecology for the improvement and preservation of Maryland's physical environment.



Here at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES), we are ever moving forward as we seek impactful ways to respond to the vast environmental and climate challenges facing our world. **We will soon reach our 100th anniversary.**

UMCES has embraced our charge as the **preeminent environmental research university for the State of Maryland.** University System of Maryland Chancellor Jay Perman

“UMCES’ reputation as an honest broker of environmental information strengthens its role in advising Maryland leaders and agencies... and [its] impact is hardly contained to Maryland. It’s a global leader in advancing a scientific basis for understanding our environment.”

– JAY PERMAN, USM Chancellor

has said, “UMCES’ reputation as an honest broker of environmental information strengthens its role in advising Maryland leaders and agencies... and [its] impact is hardly contained to Maryland. It’s a global leader in advancing a scientific basis for understanding our environment.”

Of special note, last year UMCES’ oyster hatchery provided the oyster spat that led to record oyster plantings to help restore the Chesapeake Bay, and the federal government, recognizing our expertise, funded important continued research. We are also paving the way for the future of environmental science launching the Chesapeake Global Collaboratory, a “think-do-innovate tank” that promises to revolutionize environmental research by employing advanced data science and cyberinfrastructure to develop solutions shaped by more people, richer information, better technology, and broader engagement.

UMCES is at an inflection point and poised for transformative impact, and we are grateful to our donors, leaders, and community supporters for helping to make that change in Maryland, the nation, and across the planet.



Gary Epstein
Chair, Board of Visitors



William C. Dennison
Interim President





Record number of oysters planted in bay, funding supports continued research

A record number of new juvenile oysters were planted on sanctuary and public oyster reefs in the Chesapeake Bay in 2023. The oysters are grown primarily at UMCES' **oyster hatchery** in Cambridge. As part of its mission to provide unbiased science to aid policymakers in the management of the environment, a \$960,000 federal earmark will also allow UMCES experts to study the oyster's ability to protect shorelines and improve the habitat of the Bay bottom while recovering oyster populations.

"Planting 1.7 billion oysters this year shows the success of the broad partnership of watermen, scientists, academics, nonprofits, and state and federal government officials dedicated to this vital natural resource and economic driver for Maryland."

– WES MOORE, Maryland Governor

UMCES to lead new global center on clean energy and environment

A new center, the Global Nitrogen Innovation Center for Clean Energy and the Environment, funded by the National Science Foundation and led by UMCES' Appalachian Lab faculty will address opportunities and challenges of the emerging technology, "green ammonia," which will provide clean energy and support food production while mitigating climate change.

1.7 billion

The number of new juvenile oysters planted on sanctuary and public oyster reefs in the Chesapeake Bay in 2023, a new record. Oysters for this restoration project are grown primarily at UMCES' oyster hatchery at the Horn Point Laboratory.

100

The number of graduate students enrolled at UMCES each year.

1.5 feet

The amount sea level along Maryland's shores will likely rise by 2050, according to projections led by UMCES scientists.

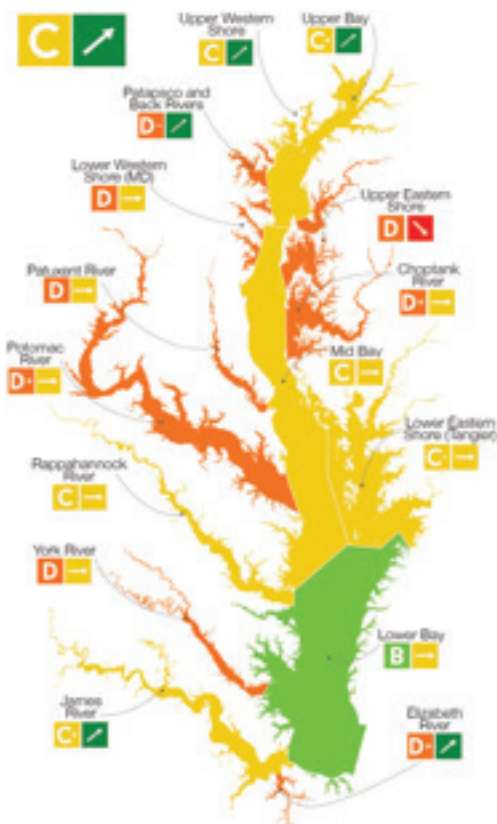


The next generation of environmental leaders

Every year, close to 100 graduate students study and work alongside UMCES scientists and faculty members through the nationally eminent Marine Estuarine Environmental Sciences graduate program. Students go on to become environmental leaders in both the public and private sectors, research, and environmental advocacy. In 2023, 27 students received graduate degrees.

Tracking the health of the Chesapeake Bay

UMCES released its 16th annual report card on the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. This is an essential tool for federal and state lawmakers and agencies to monitor progress on the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay.



25,000

The number of neighbors impacted by our campuses' community outreach across the state through open houses, lecture series, and local science education programs for kids.



12,000

Total enrollments in UMCES edX Professional Certificate courses, online continuing education taught by UMCES experts to strengthen the regional workforce and help build sustainable and resilient communities. 172 countries and regions are represented.



INVESTING IN SCIENCE, INVESTING IN SOLUTIONS

Dear friends,

At UMCES, we share your sense of urgency in addressing the vital environmental issues of the day, and we are deeply grateful to partner with you in seeking solutions.

We recognize and value the trust you place in the university to get the work done – the vote of confidence in science that your gift represents – and as you can see in the following pages, every dollar donated to UMCES impacts the university’s work in a tangible and transformational way.

Whether opening entire new avenues of environmental research, investing in cutting-edge innovation, providing important graduate student support, or fostering community engagement in watershed issues and citizen science, we rely on the generosity of people like you who wish to be a part of the aggressive search for solutions.

We know you are passionate about the health of the Chesapeake Bay watershed and our natural world. Please trust that your donation to UMCES is an investment that sees results.

Thank you, from a grateful UMCES community.

For more information about any of the programs listed here or to make a gift to UMCES, please visit umces.edu, or contact us at giving@umces.edu or 410-221-2005.

Transformative gift supports study of contaminated waterways

A \$1 million gift from Brian Hochheimer and Marjorie Wax established the Anthropogenic Changes in Estuarine Systems Initiative, a five-year project to study chemicals in waterways that could have harmful impacts on environmental and human health. The gift is the largest individual donation to UMCES to date and recognizes the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory’s long-standing tradition of working on chemicals of environmental concern.



“Our children grew up with Solomons and the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory, and we look forward to seeing the lab continue its leadership role to protect and improve our environment so that future generations can enjoy all that the Chesapeake Bay has to offer. We feel so fortunate to be able to make this gift to support CBL’s efforts.”

— BRIAN HOCHHEIMER



The following generous gifts were made between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023.

\$1,000,000+

Brian P. Hochheimer and Marjorie H. Wax

\$100,000 - \$999,999

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"I've reached a point in my life where I have the resources to make larger donations than in the past, and the creation of my donor-advised fund has enabled me to respond to things that inspire me. Because Maryland Sea Grant was so hugely important in supporting me throughout my undergraduate and graduate studies, I felt inspired to give back now."

— SARA GOTTLIEB '98, former Maryland Sea Grant supported undergraduate research student, graduate research fellow, and John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellow

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“We provide seed money to investigators at Horn Point to advance cutting-edge research that promises insights and technological innovations with broad and long-lasting benefits for the environment.”



— BILL BAILEY,
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COMMUNICATING CLIMATE CHANGE

Gary D. Lynch
Michael D. Martinez



Leaders in environmental education

In honor of outstanding contributions to environmental education in western Maryland, Annie Stark, an environmental science teacher at Allegany High School, was recipient of the 2023 **Richard A. Johnson Environmental Education Award**. The endowment supporting the award provides \$2,500 to further environmental education activities at an organization selected by the winner. Annie Stark (center) is pictured with award founder Barbara Johnson.

"From the jungles of South America, Africa, and Asia to the temperate and Arctic areas of North America and Europe there looms an environmental crisis that threatens not only the quality of life but life itself. Within the [Appalachian Laboratory], we have a world-class organization which, through its research and education programs, may provide significant help in this world crisis. It deserves our local support."

— THE LATE DR. RICHARD A. JOHNSON



Dolphins in the Chesapeake Bay

Thousands of residents and visitors with their eyes on the water have helped scientists understand when bottlenose dolphins are visiting the Chesapeake Bay through the **Chesapeake DolphinWatch** app. Since 2017, scientists have received over 7,000 reports of dolphin sightings—submitted by over 13,000 app users—to help track the patterns of dolphin visits. The JES Avanti Foundation’s \$60,000 grant over three years will enable necessary upgrades to the app’s capabilities and staff the research.

“We can continue to raise awareness of Chesapeake Bay bottlenose dolphin habitat, engage community members, and help inform natural resource managers and policy-makers as they continue their work in Chesapeake Bay conservation.”

– LIZ SANDERS, JES Avanti Foundation

DOLPHIN WATCH

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- L. Andrew Ball
- Lisa Benish
- Sara Schofield Booker
- Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center
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- Kathy Daniel
- Mark C. Del Bianco
- Thomas Duke
- Michael Housley
- JES Avanti Foundation
- Eileen A. Nivera
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- Donald L. Zwick

ANTHROPOGENIC CHANGES IN ESTUARINE SYSTEMS INITIATIVE

- Brian P. Hochheimer and Marjorie H. Wax

COMMUNITY INTERN PROGRAM

- Chesapeake Garden Club



Understanding our backyard

Scientists at the Horn Point Laboratory have been tracking **how microplastics move through the watershed** on the Eastern Shore, funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Marine Debris Program. Thanks to a \$30,000 matching grant from the Mid-Shore Community Foundation and a group of generous donors who met the match, a short-wave infrared microscope was purchased that transformed the project.

“We are thankful for the support we have found with people in the local community who contributed to our work on microplastics in the Choptank River. With this new microscope we will be able to tell not only how much microplastic is in our samples, but what are the kinds of plastic in different parts of the river.”

— WILLIAM NARDIN AND JAMIE PIERSON, Project Co-leaders

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Continuing the legacy: The Michael Kemp Student Award

Over his long and distinguished career at UMCES, Michael Kemp was an ecosystem ecologist whose ground-breaking research ranged from submerged aquatic vegetation to nutrient cycles. One of his great joys was mentoring students, and as a legacy to his many contributions to graduate students, his family created the Michael Kemp Student Fund.

“Receiving the Michael Kemp award was an honor and invaluable opportunity to share my research, learn from others, and make meaningful connections. In name and practice, the award captures the dedication Dr. Kemp showed in developing the next generation of environmental scientists. This legacy lives on thanks to the generosity of the supporting donors.”

– BEN MALMGREN, Graduate Student and 2023 Recipient

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Angel investors spark innovation

In 2018, funding provided by a small group of philanthropists, passionate about science and Chesapeake Bay and convinced that this work should be done right here in Maryland, enabled researchers at the Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology (IMET) to sequence the genome of the blue crab for the first time. Since then, this IMET Angel Investor group has continued to support important high-impact early-stage scientific research benefiting the Chesapeake Bay.

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Presidential transitions

After a 40-year career in science and higher education culminating in leading Maryland's university for the environment, UMCES President Peter Goodwin retired at the end of September. Longtime Vice President Bill Dennison has led UMCES forward in the interim, and renowned ecosystem hydrologist Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm will take the helm as UMCES' eighth president in July 2024.

Remembering Don Graf

UMCES lost long-time friend Don Graf, a supporter of UMCES for more than 30 years and member of the Board of Visitors since its inception. A Captain in the U.S. Navy who served as Deputy Commander, Submarine Force Atlantic Fleet, followed by a long and distinguished career in the power generation industry, he brought curiosity and rigor to his role, questioning researchers and getting to know students to support their endeavors. He rarely missed a Science for Citizens lecture at the Chesapeake Biological Laboratory, and he and his wife Tami supported a number of students directly with gifts to offset expenses to attend meetings and receive professional development training.



Charlie Monk



Gary Epstein

Leadership handoff

The Board of Visitors provides crucial advice and guidance on matters pertaining to public outreach, development, and policy issues. Through their involvement, UMCES is able to ensure it continues to meet its mission.

Charlie Monk stepped down after nine years as chair. He brought an in-depth understanding of the University System of Maryland and the state's political landscape to ensure that Maryland's environment is preserved for decades to come. Gary Epstein steps into the chair role after six years on the Board of Visitors.

"We thank Charlie for his commitment to UMCES and the Chesapeake Bay. We are grateful for his calm, steady counsel that brought us to the strong place we are today," said Interim President Bill Dennison.

UMCES welcomed two new BOV members: former Maryland State Treasurer Nancy Kopp and Crystal Upperman, a scientist and expert in business development and environmental services, including sustainability and climate equity.

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CHESAPEAKE GLOBAL COLLABORATORY SUMMIT

Accelerating solutions to the world's most complex environmental challenges

More than 150 leaders in science, industry, government, and the nonprofit world gathered in downtown Baltimore in September to discuss how to harness the power of big data and new technologies to accelerate solutions to the most complex environmental challenges. The conversation centered around the **Chesapeake Global Collaboratory**, a new 'think-do-innovate tank' at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science that will bring a new generation of tools, voices, and approaches to environmental research. The summit was sponsored by a generous gift from The Merrill Family Foundation.

"I want all of you to make a commitment that in ten years' time, you are going to be talking to a graduate student or an intern, and you're going to say to them, 'I helped create the Collaboratory.' Thank you for being here. Thank you for being part of making environmental history."

– NANCY MERRILL, Merrill Family Foundation



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