

ENVIRONMENTAL INSIGHTS

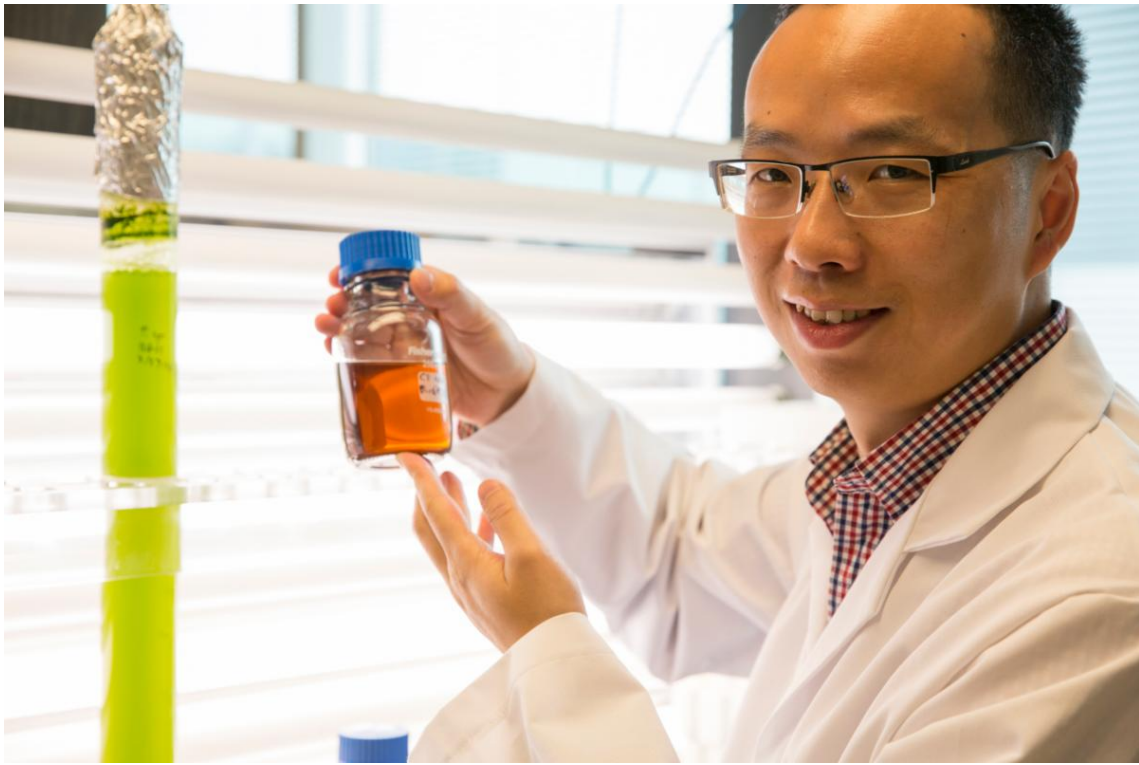
NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE



UMCES graduates next generation of environmental leaders

The University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES) held its graduate commencement ceremony May 31 at its Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology campus in Baltimore's Inner Harbor. It featured the conferral of 11 master's and doctorate degrees to the next generation of leaders in environmental science, distinguished speakers and university awards, and inspiring words from keynote speaker Dr. Rick Spinrad, Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and NOAA Administrator.

"I encourage you to put yourselves under the microscope and know your passion," said Dr. Spinrad. "Get to know people and your community. Network. And know your risk tolerance and what you're willing to try that's different. Engage with people and be prepared to pivot. If you do those things, you will not only have a successful career, but a rewarding career." [MORE](#)



Yantao Li honored twice for Excellence in the Application of Science, being an Outstanding Faculty Mentor

Yantao Li, an associate professor and expert in microalgal biology and biotechnology at UMCES' Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology, received the *President's Award for Excellence in the Application of Science* and was also selected as the 2024 *Outstanding Faculty Mentor* at UMCES Commencement. Li exemplifies dedication as both a professor and a principal investigator. He creates a welcoming atmosphere that encourages open discussion and critical thinking, which deepens understanding, bolsters learning and inspires innovation. His research is leading to applications of growing algae to create biofuels and bioproducts, helping to reduce the impacts of climate change.

"Dr. Li's pioneering efforts in the scientific application of microalgae are crucial as we attempt to ameliorate the global impacts of rising carbon dioxide levels," said UMCES Interim President **Bill Dennison**. "We are fortunate to have him and his outstanding research contributions as part of the UMCES community." [MORE](#)

Alexandra Fries receives Presidential Award for Outstanding Research Support



Alexandra Fries, program manager at the UMCES Integration and Application Network, is the recipient of the 2024 award for *Outstanding Research Support*. Fries has made significant contributions to leadership in research innovation, mentoring and service. She is principal investigator and project manager for numerous large projects, supervises employees, conducts data analysis, and teaches science communication courses. Alex is dedicated to teaching, mentoring and helping to empower other science communicators.

"Alex is managing one of the largest report card projects we've ever had, with over \$500K in funding from a private foundation to co-create socio-environmental report cards for five watersheds in Detroit, Michigan," said IAN Director **Heath Kelsey**. "Her work has taken her around the globe and she has been an excellent UMCES ambassador." [MORE](#)

Chelsea Fowler receives 2024 Student Service Award



UMCES Ph.D. Student **Chelsea Fowler** received the *Student Service Award* for her tireless efforts to create a welcoming student environment and diving into outreach with gusto. Fowler served as a Marine Estuarine Environmental Sciences graduate student representative, a volunteer liaison for the summer Research Experiences for Undergraduates students, and is a leader on the Horn Point Chapter of the Society for Women in Marine Science. She is dedicated to community engagement and has helped the Horn Point Laboratory in Cambridge expand its presence and impact in the local community.

"Since her arrival at UMCES in 2020, Chelsea has been ever-present, active and deeply invested in numerous facets of UMCES science, education and community life, and our campuses are so much better for it," said Associate Professor and mentor Louis Plough. "Her positive attitude and passion for engaging the community is remarkable and I'm sure she will continue to have a positive impact on our community and workplace going forward." [MORE](#)

UMCES in the News

[Maryland Map Shows Where State Could Be Underwater From Sea Level Rise](#) (Newsweek)

[Ocean City plans for tourist season but not climate change](#) (Baltimore Sun)

[Researchers Prepare for Blue Crab Stock Assessment To Help Guide Future Management](#) (Maryland Department of Natural Resources)

[Policymakers, advocates look to remake Bay cleanup program even as some goals go unmet](#) (Maryland Matters)

[From the Potomac to the Patuxent — Dolphins visit rivers in the Chesapeake Bay and you can help track them](#) (WTOP News)

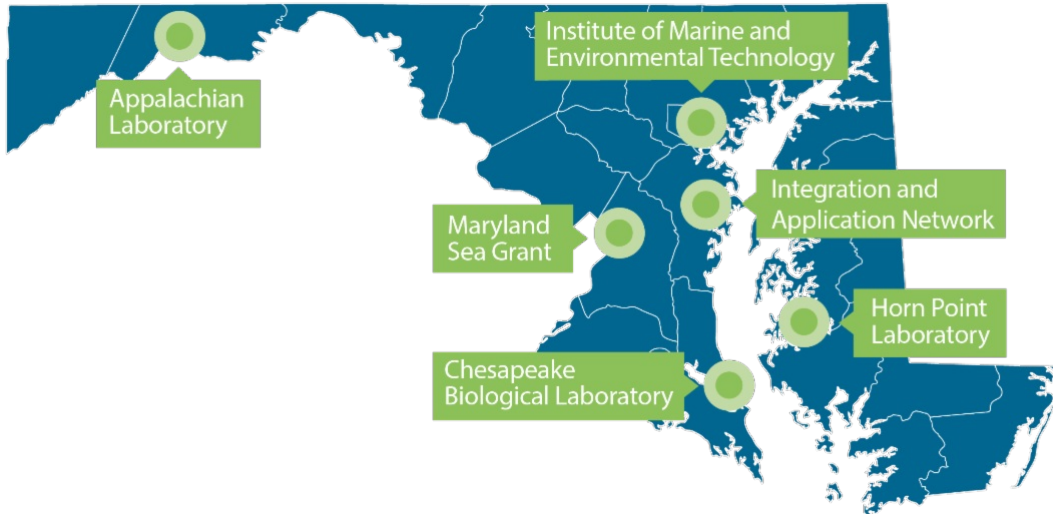
[As water temperature rises, researchers ask public's help in recording size of dolphin population in Chesapeake Bay](#) (Baltimore Sun/Capital Gazette)

[Community-Driven app reveals dolphin patterns in Chesapeake](#) (Southern Maryland Chronicle)

[Report dolphin sightings with Chesapeake Dolphin Watch and help scientists with Chesapeake Bay research](#) (Chestertown Spy)

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Appalachian Laboratory - Chesapeake Biological Laboratory

Horn Point Laboratory - Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology

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