The SSU Marine Sciences Program:

BIO DIVERSITY

In a field where minorities are thinly represented, Savannah sends more African-American marine experts out into the world than any other city, thanks to Savannah State University’s Marine Sciences program.

“We’ve had a national impact on preparing underrepresented groups for success in marine and ocean sciences,” said Dr. Matthew Gilligan, coordinator of the ethnically rich program. “Our enrollment and graduation rates in the marine sciences are 47 percent African American and 53 percent non-African American — white, international, Asian, Hispanic and multi-ethnic.”

Driven to create a "diverse community of individuals capable of creatively solving problems related to coastal and ocean ecosystem health," SSU has a new gun in its arsenal. The university has just christened a state-of-the-art, 36-foot research vessel: the Margaret C. Robinson, named after the retired dean of the College of Sciences and Technology, an alumna who was the architect and advocate for the program.

We hopped on board and got to know some of the students and faculty.

SPRIT ANIMALS: “I most identify with the octopus — because of its ability to get into and out of any situation and overcome.” (Lance Love, undergraduate)

“The seadragon or leafy sea dragon — a relative of the seahorse. With its ornate beauty, unique individuality and sense of regality and freedom, this is the sea creature I identify with most.” (Sanya S. Compton, graduate research assistant)

“On this point it’s the foraminifer, a single-celled protist that creates highly ornate calcareous shells. My doctoral work focused on these organisms, and we were one of maybe three or four laboratories worldwide that was able to keep these deep-sea creatures alive and reproducing in culture for months and years.” (Dr. Christopher J. Hintz)

BEST BITES: “The captain of the (local shrimp boat) Agnes Marie has been kind enough to let me do some of my research from his vessel. I try to help out sorting shrimp when I have down time, and he has let me take shrimp home — they’re delicious in a Lowcountry boil!” (Carolyn Kovacs, graduate student)

“My favorite seafoods are boiled crab and bacalaoitos — fried fish. My favorite spot to find these special foods was my grandmother’s kitchen.” (Ana Reyes, undergraduate)

BOAT DRINK: “I’m from a small island in the Caribbean, and my dad makes a drink with sea moss, Guinness and milk — that’s all I know!” (Sanya S. Compton)

LIFE PRESERVER: “My research focuses on finding out what factors — (such as) overfishing, drought, climate change and habitat — cause changes in populations of shrimp, crabs, oysters and other important coastal fishery species.” (Dr. Matthew B. Ogburn)

AQUATIC ESSENTIALS: “Anyone who messes about on boats should be able to tie a bowline and fasten a line to a cleat properly. There are a thousand ways to do the latter but only one is correct. I make all my students demonstrate these to me.” (Dr. Matthew Gilligan)

THE VIEW FROM HERE: “I’ve seen mammal deaths caused by ingestion of fishing gear. I’ve been present far too many times when gear needed to be pulled out of the cloaca of a female turtle so she could properly lay her eggs, and I’ve found plastic bags stuck inside of stranded turtles’ stomachs.” (Rebecca Hazelkorn, graduate student)

Back row, left to right: Dr. Matthew Gilligan, Dr. Christopher J. Hintz, Sanya S. Compton, Dr. Matthew Ogburn and Ammaria Phillips. Front row, left to right: Rebecca Hazelkorn, Carolyn Kovacs, Ana Reyes and Lance Love.
REAL WORLD EDUCATION, RIGHT IN YOUR BACKYARD

- One of the top four culinary programs in the country according to the American Culinary Federation.
- An up and coming Historic Preservation program as featured in Traditional Building Magazine.
- Georgia’s first hands-on solar energy technology program.

Only at SAVANNAH TECH

General Studies | Public Service | Business and Technology | Health Sciences | Industrial Technology

SAVANNAH TECHNICAL COLLEGE

APPLY NOW!
Fall semester starts August 24
Daytime, evening and online classes
912.443.5437
www.savannahhtech.edu

SEA FOR YOURSELF...

There’s no better place to study Marine Sciences than at Savannah State University, home to the only program in the state based in a natural saltwater marsh setting. With the natural environment as a learning laboratory, conduct your research in marshes, wetlands and the ocean.

BACHELOR’S AND MASTER’S DEGREES IN MARINE SCIENCES
visit www.savannahstate.edu