Tackling Global Environmental Change at GSO

Metcalf Institute will welcome five top experts in global environmental change to the URI Graduate School of Oceanography this June for a five-day annual public lecture series. Held in the Coastal Institute on Narragansett Bay Monday through Thursday, June 8 – 11, and in the Corless Auditorium on Friday, June 12, speakers will delve into current issues in environmental research, media coverage, and impacts on public policy.

Monday, June 8, 3:30 p.m. Coastal Institute
Making Sense of Uncertainty: What Do Climate Models Tell Us?
Mathematical models help researchers understand the range of possible climate conditions in the future. But how accurate are those projections? Claudia Tebaldi, project scientist at the National Center for Atmospheric Research, science fellow at Climate Central and a lead author of the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, will explain how she determines the degree of uncertainty in climate projections.

Tuesday, June 9, 3:30 p.m. Coastal Institute
Small Actions, Large Impacts: How Humans Are Changing the Ocean and What We Can Do About It
Douglas McCauley, University of California Santa Barbara professor and Sloan Research Fellow, will discuss marine species loss in the global ocean and shifts in the ways that humans use marine ecosystems—including how decision makers can use information about ecological communities to protect the health and resiliency of our oceans.

Wednesday, June 10, 3:30 p.m. Coastal Institute
Climate Change, Coastal Urbanization, and Water: A Recipe for Disaster
How safe is the water we drink and swim in and the seafood we consume? Geoffrey I. Scott, University of South Carolina’s Arnold School of Public Health, will present findings on the effects of urban runoff, pollution, and as-yet unregulated contaminants on water quality, ecosystem health and the future impact climate change may pose.

Thursday, June 11, 3:30 p.m. Coastal Institute
Sink or Swim: How Coastal Communities Are Dealing with Climate Change
Many communities are actively working to reduce the societal impacts of climate change through innovative planning and collaborations. Benjamin Preston, senior researcher at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory’s Climate Change Science Institute, will describe some of the socioeconomic impacts of climate change and the role of adaptation and planning in reducing risk.

Friday, June 12, 11 a.m. Corless Auditorium
Citizen Science and the Future of Environmental Journalism
Julia Kumari Drapkin, reporter with the New Orleans Times-Picayune, executive producer of iSee Change, and former Metcalf Environmental Reporting Fellow, works on the cutting edge of environmental journalism. Learn about her unique crowdsourced public media experiment that helps citizens observe and report scientific data and understand the environmental changes happening in their own backyards.

The Metcalf Annual Public Lecture Series is held at the URI Narragansett Bay Campus on South Ferry Road in Narragansett, R.I. Lectures are free and open to the public. Additional information: 401-874-6134 • metcalfinstitute.org • info@metcalfinstitute.org
Annual Metcalf Fellowships Awarded

Ten journalists from the U.S., the Philippines, and Canada will attend Metcalf Institute’s 17th Annual Science Immersion Workshop for Journalists. The fellows were chosen from an exceptionally competitive pool of applicants, leading the institute to break precedent and announce a list of 24 “finalists” in April.

The 2015 Fellows come from a wide variety of media organizations, representing diverse locations and media types:

**Annalyn Ardoña**
Segment producer, GMA Network Incorporated in the Philippines

**Kevin Bunch**
Staff writer, C&G Newspapers in Warren, Michigan

**Kelly House**
Environment reporter, The Oregonian in Portland, Oregon

**Sarah McCammon**
Bureau chief, Georgia Public Radio in Savannah, Georgia

**David McFadden**
Correspondent, The Associated Press in Kingston, Jamaica

**Sonia Narang**
Freelance journalist in Los Angeles, California

**Dennis Pillion**
Reporter, Alabama Media Group in Pensacola, Florida

**Jacqueline Ronson**
Reporter, Yukon News in Canada

**Elijah Wolfson**
Senior editor, Newsweek in New York

**Emily Yehle**

The Annual Science Immersion Workshop, June 7–June 12, will put the Fellows in the field, laboratory, and classroom to learn the fundamentals of scientific research and sharpen their investigative reporting skills. They will learn about a spectrum of changes in marine and coastal ecosystems caused by human activities from top scientists at the University of Rhode Island Graduate School of Oceanography (URI GSO), one of the nation’s premier oceanographic research institutions. To understand these environmental impacts, the journalists will explore research on sea level rise, water quality, salt marsh restoration, and fish and plankton populations in Narragansett Bay.

**Metcalf Alumni Pay It Forward**

Meera Subramanian knows the value of Metcalf Institute training. An award-winning freelance journalist who writes about culture and the environment for newspapers and magazines worldwide, Subramanian still appreciates the generosity that made her 2012 fellowship possible.

“Being able to arrive for Metcalf’s Annual Workshop knowing that all our needs were taken care of, and our only duty was to learn—with intent and curiosity and accuracy—was invaluable to me as a freelance journalist,” said Subramanian.

This is one of the reasons Meera joined other alumni who donated money to fund the costs of a 2015 Annual Science Immersion Workshop fellowship. Metcalf Institute alumni contributed more than $3,000 so far this year, which will support travel, room and board, and other direct program costs of the Annual Workshop for one 2015 fellow.

“It’s great to know that I’m helping other journalists like myself receive great hands-on, lab-based, rigorous training,” said Subramanian. “The result is better, smarter reporting for the public.”

Some of the donations came from alumni who attended other Metcalf programs, like Benjamin Alexander-Bloch, a participant in Metcalf’s 2014 Oil Spill Seminar for Journalists held in Mobile, Alabama.

“Metcalf’s seminar helped me better understand scientists’ difficulties communicating with journalists, and our difficulties communicating with them,” said Alexander-Bloch, a reporter with The Times-Picayune in New Orleans. “There is such a wonderful camaraderie at the workshops, between the Metcalf staff, visiting scientists, and journalists, and I felt it was important to give a financial contribution, however small, to help someone else experience that gift.”

“I’m thrilled by this strong show of support from our alumni,” said Sunshine Menezes, Metcalf’s executive director. “Every single donation, big and small, goes a long way toward ensuring that more journalists receive the science training they need—without incurring personal costs—to produce accurate stories about the science underlying environmental issues.

In addition to donations from Metcalf Institute alumni and other supporters, the Annual Science Immersion Workshop for Journalists is underwritten by generous contributions from Pamela M. Thye and John Frederick Thye.
Journalists to Study Innovations in Climate Change Response

Towns, states and regions have begun working to minimize the impacts of rising sea levels, warming temperatures and changing weather patterns on homes, businesses, public safety, and critical infrastructure. Climate change adaptation, as this practice is known, is bringing about innovation and new partnerships.

Journalists from across the U.S. will have the rare opportunity to explore adaptation approaches and discover fresh and important story ideas about climate change in Metcalf’s upcoming training seminar, "Climate Change and the News: Climate Change Planning and Response," May 11–12, in St. Louis, Missouri.

The program includes a field trip to the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center to learn about research on agricultural adaptation and a full day of presentations by regional and national experts in climate change planning regarding transportation, wildlife conservation, water resources, and related policy issues. The seminar was organized in partnership with the National Adaptation Forum and supports participating journalists’ attendance at this pioneering conference.

The Metcalf seminar is funded by a grant from The Grantham Foundation for the Protection of the Environment with significant in-kind support from the National Adaptation Forum and EcoAdapt.

Public Seminar to Examine New England’s Economic Future

Building a Resilient New England Economy: How Will Environmental Policy and Management Decisions Fuel the Future? National and regional experts will explore answers to this question at Metcalf Institute’s Peter B. Lord Seminar on the Environment on June 25 at The Providence Journal. Open to the public, the program will bring together scientists, policy makers and journalists to discuss ways that New England can better prepare for the coming impacts and economic costs of climate change and sea level rise.

3:30 p.m., 75 Fountain Street, 4th Floor Auditorium, Providence, R.I.

Scientists to Experiment with Storytelling Using Video

This summer, scientists in Rhode Island will be invited to learn how to script, shoot and edit videos about their own work in a one-day Metcalf Institute workshop. Participating science faculty, staff researchers and science graduate students and post-doctoral fellows will study the art of filmmaking with experts from the Ocean Media Institute.

The workshop is funded by Rhode Island’s five-year grant from the National Science Foundation Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (Rhode Island NSF EPSCoR). The July program will be the twelfth program yielded by the Metcalf Institute-Rhode Island NSF EPSCoR partnership, designed to help researchers improve their communication skills and confidence in communicating about research with the news media, public audiences, and scientific colleagues.
What Metcalf Fellows Learn from GSO Researchers

Metcalf Institute programs feature scientists from the University of Rhode Island and elsewhere who share their findings with our program participants. In turn, the journalists who attend our workshops and seminars translate this scientific knowledge into news stories, editorials, and documentaries for audiences around the world. During the 2015 Annual Science Immersion Workshop for Journalists, we will showcase the work of researchers at the URI Graduate School of Oceanography who seek to clarify impacts of human activities on marine and coastal environments, using Narragansett Bay as a case study.

By spending off-deadline time with researchers, Metcalf Fellows gain new sources and confidence in their reporting.

Monitoring the environment
Fifty-five years ago, researchers at the University of Rhode Island Graduate School of Oceanography established a survey of Narragansett Bay and Rhode Island Sound fish and invertebrates that continues today. This weekly catch-and-release trawl is one of the longest and most valuable datasets of species abundance and composition in the world. Chronicling changes in the food web, the GSO survey provides scientists and managers with vital information about seasonal and long-term fluctuations in marine populations and a basis for teasing apart natural variability from the influence of human activity.

Applying data to solutions
URI researchers have also been monitoring the ebb and flow of southern Rhode Island beaches for more than fifty years, generating an ongoing analysis of shoreline change that informs coastal management in the state and region. In concert with these researchers, GSO’s Coastal Resources Center and Rhode Island Sea Grant are currently working with Rhode Island environmental agencies to develop a Shoreline Change Special Area Management Plan. This plan will identify new management and policy approaches to make coastal communities more resilient in the face of sea level rise.

Collaborating for better understanding
URI researchers work with local, state, regional, and federal partners to develop water quality monitoring activities that help managers appropriately regulate the release of stormwater and pollutants into Narragansett Bay. Collaborations with the National Park Service to monitor and restore salt marsh habitat aid stakeholders in understanding long-term impacts of warming and sea level rise on these critical coastal ecosystems.

Hands-on experiences give Metcalf Fellows fresh perspectives on topics like fisheries science and management.

Metcalf Institute for Marine & Environmental Reporting is an international leader in providing science training for journalists. Part of the University of Rhode Island’s Graduate School of Oceanography (URI GSO), an esteemed ocean research and education institution, Metcalf is located on URI’s 200-acre Narragansett Bay Campus.

Metcalf Institute’s mission is to expand accurate environmental news coverage through innovative training and resources for journalists, researchers, and other science communicators to build a deeper public understanding of science and the environment.

Metcalf programs and resources are underwritten by public and private foundations, a modest endowment, and private donations managed by the URI Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization.

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