

FLORIDA **A&M** UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF THE ENVIRONMENT

2016 ALUMNI RECEPTION

Celebrating the 20th Anniversary
of the founding of the
Environmental Sciences Institute

OCTOBER 21, 2016
FREDERICK S. HUMPHRIES SCIENCE RESEARCH CENTER

Dear Alumni, Students, Faculty, and Colleagues,

Today's 20th anniversary observance and alumni reception marks the celebration of a legacy of continued excellence for the School of the Environment (SOE), which two decades ago started as the Environmental Sciences Institute (ESI). The academic foundation that was laid and built upon over the years continues to provide great opportunities as students pursue undergraduate and graduate degrees that prepare them to address local, national, and global issues.

Since 2001, Florida A&M University, through the School of the Environment, has been awarded funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to the tune of \$30 million to support research areas in ecosystem processes, forecasting and modeling, human dimensions, and ecosystem characterizations. This legacy continues through a newly received \$15.4 million award that positions SOE to lead a new NOAA Center for Coastal and Marine Ecosystem for the next five years.

We are maintaining this legacy of excellence, but also creating new learning environments to address other emerging areas of global, national, and local concern. Through the EnergyWaterFoodNexus, a new science enterprise, SOE is creating a platform to examine the resources and solutions that simultaneously address all three areas of sustainable energy, water, and food security. Talented students will be recruited and trained to advance this new science enterprise. The outcome of these efforts will spur new research innovations and training of students who will be inspired to address national priorities and solve real-world environmental problems in their local communities and beyond.

I welcome each of you to Homecoming 2016 and to this 20th anniversary celebration and alumni reception. SOE has come a long way since its inception. Let us use this celebration as a vehicle to preserve its rich legacy and insure its future viability by the giving of our time, talent, expertise, and resources. Welcome home ESI/SOE alumni and friends! You are indeed members of our SOE family forever.

Sincerely,

Victor M. Ibeanusi

Victor M. Ibeanusi, Ph.D.

Dean, FAMU School of the Environment



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MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Welcome.....Victor Ibeanusi, Ph.D.
Dean, School of the Environment (SOE)

Introduction of President.....Marcia Allen Owens, J.D., Ph.D.
Associate Professor, SOE

The Charge.....Larry Robinson, Ph.D.
Interim President, Florida A&M University

Introduction of Keynote.....Richard Gragg, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, SOE

Keynote Speaker.....Frederick S. Humphries, Ph.D.
8th President, Florida A&M University

Award Presentations

Appeal for Pledges.....Diane Hall
Academic Programs Coordinator, SOE

Tour of the School

Reception.....Second Floor, Dr. Ibeanusi

Closing & Acknowledgments.....Dr. Ibeanusi

Larry Robinson, Ph.D.

Larry Robinson, Ph.D., is the interim president and a distinguished professor and researcher in the School of the Environment at Florida A&M University (FAMU). Previously he served as the interim president at FAMU from July 2012 to April 2014, director of FAMU's Environmental Sciences Institute from 1997 to 2003, provost and vice president for Academic Affairs from 2003 to 2005, interim president in 2007, and vice president for Research in 2009.

From 2001 to 2010, he served as director of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Environmental Cooperative Science Center housed at FAMU. His research interests include environmental chemistry, environmental radiochemistry, and environmental policy and management.

In 2007-2009, Robinson served as senior scientific advisor at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service. In May 2010, Robinson took a leave of absence from FAMU to serve in a U.S. Senate-confirmed position as assistant secretary of Commerce for Conservation and Management at NOAA. While there, he supported and managed NOAA's coastal and marine programs, including marine sanctuaries for preserving areas of special national significance, fisheries management, and preparation of nautical charts. He also supported NOAA's participation in addressing the BP oil spill crisis and served on the Ocean Policy Task Force and Gulf Coast Restoration Task Force.

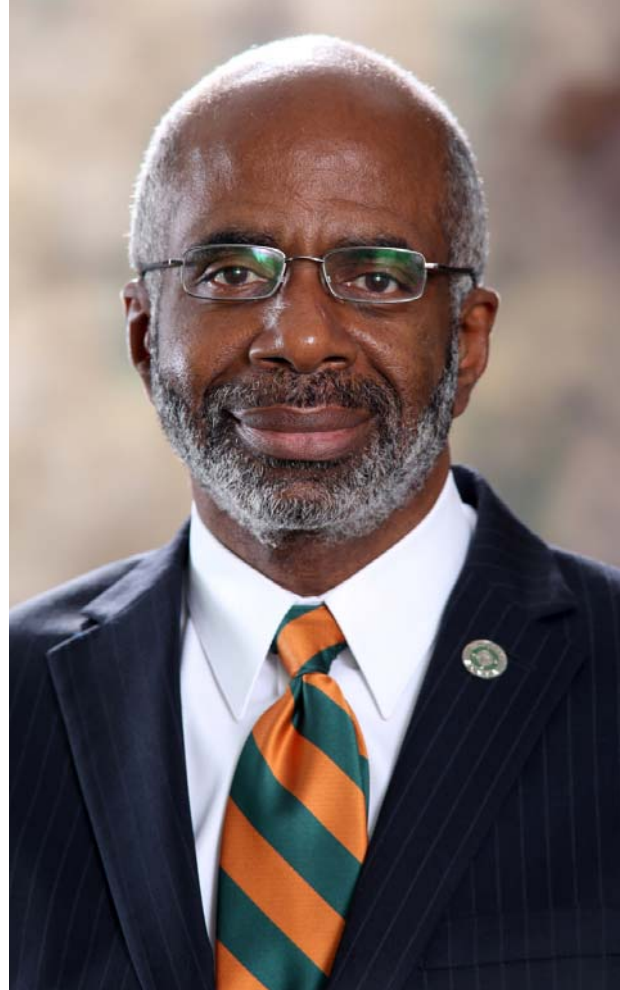
In November 2011, Robinson was asked to return to the University as a special assistant to the president and professor to coordinate administrative and eminent scholar searches and integrate Graduate Studies and Title III Programs within the Division of Sponsored Research. He was later asked to chair the University's Crisis Management Team, which addressed a number of issues, including anti-hazing efforts. He was selected again as provost and vice president for Academic Affairs in March 2012.

From 1984 - 1997, Robinson served as a research scientist and group leader of a neutron activation analysis facility at Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL). His research responsibilities at ORNL included trace element analysis in environmental science, epidemiology, forensics, material science, and paleontology. His expertise also includes environmental radiochemistry, nuclear safeguards, and non-proliferation.

Robinson has also served as a member of the Ocean Research and Resources Advisory Panel (and chair of the Ocean Observing Sub-panel); founding member of the Council of Environmental Deans and Directors; founding member of the National Ecological Observatory Network Science Technology Education Advisory Committee; member of ORNL's Environmental Sciences Division's External Advisory Board; member of the Department of Energy's Oak Ridge Reservation Environmental Management Site Specific Advisory Board; and a member of the Florida Chapter of the Nature Conservancy Board of Trustees.

Additionally, he has served on the National Research Council Committee on Mine Placement of Coal Combustion Wastes, NRC Committee on Restoration of the Greater Everglades Ecosystem, and the NRC Committee to Review the Corps of Engineers Florida Aquifer Storage and Recovery Technical Data Report.

Robinson attended Lemoyne-Owen College, earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry (summa cum laude) from Memphis State University, and a doctorate in nuclear chemistry from Washington University in St. Louis, Mo.



INTERIM PRESIDENT, FAMU

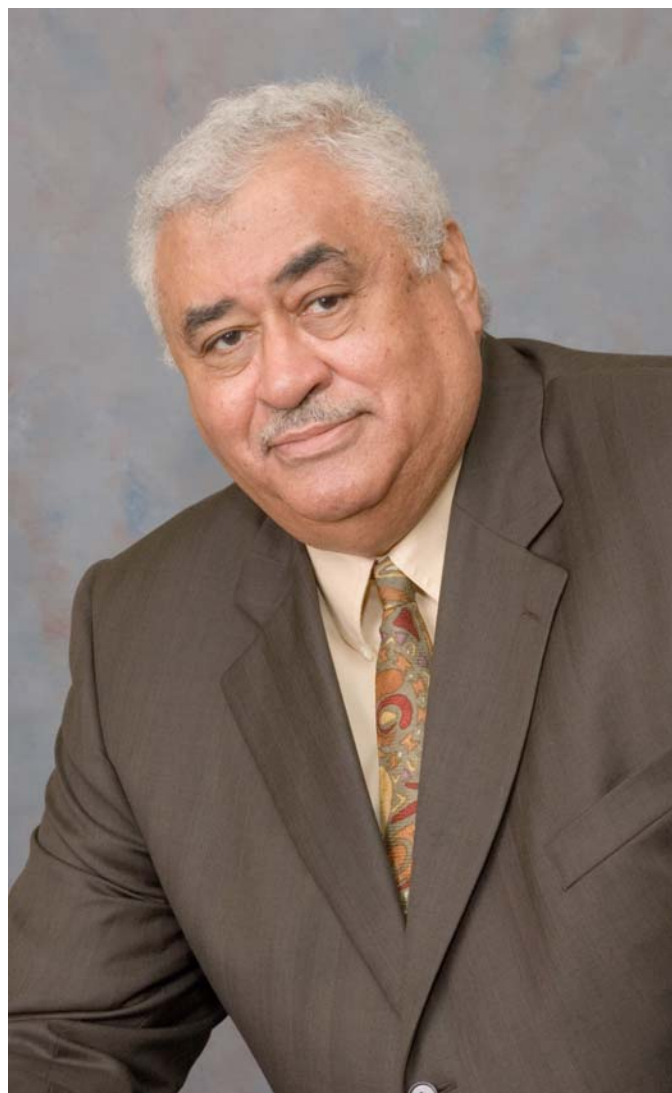
Frederick S. Humphries, Ph.D.

Frederick S. Humphries, Ph.D., a renowned scholar and admired public servant, had a distinguished 30-year career as president of the National Association for Equal Opportunity (NAFEO), Florida A&M and Tennessee State Universities.

During his nearly 17-year tenure at Florida A&M University, where he created the Life-Gets-Better and Graduate School Feeder Programs (GSFB), he more than doubled enrollment while simultaneously raising academic standards. Dr. Humphries increased the number of National Achievement Scholars at the school ranking first in the nation three times, out recruiting Harvard and Stanford, and made FAMU the nation's number one producer of African-Americans with baccalaureate degrees and third in the nation as the baccalaureate institution of origin for African-American doctoral degree recipients. His crowning achievement came when Florida A&M University was selected as the first ever TIME Magazine/Princeton Review "College of the Year" in 1997.

The administration of President Frederick S. Humphries and Provost James H. Ammons formally initiated environmental programs at FAMU with the appointment of Charles Kidd as associate vice president of Environmental Programs. Dr. Kidd founded the Environmental Sciences Institute (ESI) which at that time offered the Master of Science degree in environmental science, and staffed the Florida Commission on Environmental Equity and Justice. The work of the Commission ultimately resulted in the Florida Legislature establishing and funding of the Center for Environmental Equity Justice directed by Marcia Allen Owens, J.D., Ph.D., preceded by the founding director Richard Gragg, Ph.D., who also served as the ESI associate director from 1998 to 2009. Due to Dr. Humphries integral participation in the acquisition of ESI and his life-long commitment to the sciences, the building which currently houses the School of the Environment, formerly known as the Environmental Sciences Institute, was named in his honor in 1998.

An American treasure, Dr. Humphries is respected throughout the United States and internationally for his keen insights on the education of minority students, particularly in math and the hard sciences, and his unique and visionary approaches to producing successful educational outcomes in underrepresented disciplines. He has served as chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges, member of the Board of Trustees of University of Pittsburgh, and member of President Bill Clinton's White House Advisory Committee on Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Corporate America has also sought his expertise as a member of the Board of Directors of Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.; Brinker International; Barnett Bank (Bank of America) Florida, the National Merit Corporation, the Princeton Review, Academy for Educational Development (AED), and as founder and board member of the Thurgood Marshall Fund. Dr. Humphries has a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Florida A&M University (magna cum laude) and a Doctorate in physical chemistry from the University of Pittsburgh, where he was the first African American to obtain a doctorate degree in this discipline.



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES INSTITUTE TO THE SCHOOL OF THE ENVIRONMENT

- 1995** • The Environmental Sciences Institute (ESI) was founded by Dr. Charles C. Kidd, Sr., associate vice president, with funding through a \$4 million grant from the U.S. Department of Energy.
 - The Master of Science degree in Environmental Sciences is approved.
- 1996** • Degree-granting status is conferred on the unit in February by the Florida Board of Regents, now known as the Board of Governors.
 - Associate Vice President for Environmental Programs Dr. Charles C. Kidd, Sr., becomes the first director of ESI.
 - Dr. Richard A. Hogg, after retiring as provost and vice president for Academic Affairs, takes over as interim director of the ESI.
- 1997** • Dr. Larry Robinson becomes Dr. Hogg's successor as director up until 2003.
- 1998** • The Bachelor of Science in Environmental Sciences is approved.
- 1999** • The Doctor of Philosophy in Environmental Sciences is approved.
- 2003** • Dr. Richard Gragg becomes interim director of ESI.
- 2004** • Dr. Henry N. Williams becomes director of ESI.
- 2010** • Dr. Michael Abazinge becomes interim director of ESI.
- 2012** • The Environmental Sciences Institute is elevated to become the School of the Environment (SOE).
 - Interim Director Dr. Michael Abazinge, becomes the interim dean of the SOE.
- 2013** • Dr. Victor Ibeanusi becomes dean of SOE in August.
- 2014** • Florida A&M University Board of Trustees approves the Bachelor of Science, and Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies effective Fall 2014.

The School of the Environment (SOE) houses the Florida A&M Center for Environmental Equity and Justice (CEEJ), the NOAA Environmental Cooperative Science Center (ECSC), and is one of the interdisciplinary team members of the NOAA Center for Coastal and Marine Ecosystems (CCME).

CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EQUITY & JUSTICE

In response to numerous concerns regarding environmental equity and justice issues in Florida, the Legislature created the Florida Environmental Equity and Justice Commission in 1994. The Commission was directed to conduct a study to determine if low-income and minority communities are more at risk from environmental hazards than the general population. The report concluded specific communities were disproportionately impacted by environmental hazards, and recommended that a Center for Environmental Equality and Justice (CEEJ) be created. The CEEJ was later established by the Florida Legislature in 1998.

ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATIVE SCIENCE CENTER

The Environmental Cooperative Science Center (ECSC) was established in 2001 as part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Educational Partnership Program to address ecological and coastal management issues at specific National Estuarine Research Reserves (NERR) and the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. ECSC has received \$38 million dollars in funding from the NOAA Educational Partnership Program over fifteen (15) years.

CENTER FOR COASTAL & MARINE ECOSYSTEMS

SOE is one of the interdisciplinary team members of the NOAA Center for Coastal and Marine Ecosystems (CCME). Florida A&M University is the 2016 recipient of a \$15.4 million award over five years from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Educational Partnership Program (EPP) to establish the Center for Coastal and Marine Ecosystems (CCME). This will allow the FAMU-led partnership to make profound national impacts on coastal and marine ecosystems education, science and policy.

THE CENTERS



"Air quality is important to every human being. For most of us, breathing is an unconscious action; we don't think about what is in the air that we breathe. That's part of my job."



LaToya
Myles,
Ph.D.

LaToya Myles, Ph.D., is Deputy Director of the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Atmospheric Turbulence and Diffusion Division (ATDD) within the Air Resources Laboratory (ARL) in Oak Ridge, Tenn. Her current research explores atmospheric deposition of trace gases and particles to terrestrial ecosystems. At ATDD, she also serves as the coordinator for scientific input to the division's air quality programs. In 2006, she led the division's effort to host the first East Tennessee Ozone Study (ETOS) Science Workshop.

The Mississippi native is a magna cum laude graduate of Alcorn State University with a bachelor's degree in chemistry and a bachelor's degree in biology. She also holds a Doctorate degree in environmental sciences from Florida A&M University (FAMU) where her dissertation focused on atmospheric ammonia measurements using ion mobility spectrometry and relaxed eddy accumulation. Dr. Myles has been recognized for her academic achievement with various scholarships and fellowships, including the U.S. EPA Science to Achieve Results Environmental Sciences Fellowship, and the NOAA Educational Partnership Program Graduate Sciences Program Fellowship. She was the first Graduate Sciences Fellow to earn a research doctorate. She is a member of Sigma Xi, American Chemical Society, National Organization of Black Chemists & Chemical Engineers, American Meteorological Society, and American Geophysical Union.

Dr. Myles has published her research in peer-reviewed literature and often presents findings at conferences across the nation. In addition, she frequently addresses middle school to graduate school students on the significance of academic achievement and environmental stewardship. Dr. Myles is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and several other service organizations, which support active involvement in her community. Most recently, Dr. Myles has been recognized by Leadership Knoxville, and has received the Women of Color STEM Conference Technology All-Star Award.

Dr. Myles' commitment to environmental stewardship and to her community exemplify why she has been selected as the FAMU School of Environment 2016 Distinguished Alumnus Award recipient.

2016

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS

ATANASIO BRITO, PH.D.

Atanasio Brito, Ph.D., received his Master of Science and Doctorate in Environmental Sciences, from Florida A&M University in 2001 and 2011 respectively. His concentration in aquatic and terrestrial ecology has led him to a successful career path in aquatic and fisheries biology, and international relations.

With over 20 years of professional experience, Dr. Brito has authored and published more than 80 reports and peer-reviewed publications in Spanish, Portuguese and English. Furthermore, he has served on several editorial boards of publications related to fisheries biology and marine sciences, as well as in international committees and working groups, such as the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association. Dr. Brito's admirable negotiation skills have also led him to assist with governmental missions to establish bilateral fisheries agreements with EU, Namibia, China, and Japan.

Between 2011 and 2016, Dr. Brito notably served as Mozambique's Deputy National Director and Chief Scientist for the National Fisheries Research Institute. Currently, Dr. Brito is the managing director and founder of GMT Ecologica Consultoria.



RHIANNA M. NEELY-MURPHY, PH.D.

Rhianna Neely-Murphy, Ph.D., received her Bachelor of Science, Master of Science, and Doctorate in Environmental Sciences from Florida A&M University in 2007, 2009, and 2012 respectively. Dr. Neely-Murphy's concentration in environmental policy and risk management have led her to focus on the topic of climate change.

Post-graduation, Dr. Neely-Murphy returned to her native country of the Bahamas where she served as an environmental officer with the Bahamas Environment, Science and Technology Commission, and presently serves as an environmental officer with the Bahamas Ministry of Environment and Housing (BMEH). Since 2013, she has served in numerous capacities with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Her work has also led her to engage various audiences through the years with presentations relating to climate change.

In addition to her role with BMEH, Dr. Neely-Murphy currently serves as an adjunct professor with the College of the Bahamas, serves as director of the Royal Representatives Youth Organization, and is an active member of the Public Education and Outreach Subcommittee of the Bahamas National Climate Change Committee, which she had chaired between 2011 and 2013.

NATASHA D. WHITE, PH.D.

Natasha D. White, Ph.D., received her Master of Science, and Doctorate in Environmental Sciences from Florida A&M University in 2002 and 2008, respectively. She has several research interests, such as the management of programs related to the health and restoration of ecosystems challenged by human activities.

Dr. White has been employed with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), a branch of the U.S. Department of Commerce, since 2007 working in various capacities. Since 2008, Dr. White has been an environmental scientist with the Center for Coastal Environmental Health and Biomolecular Research where she conducts laboratory and field research in microbiology, environmental sciences, and marine science related to pharmaceuticals and emerging contaminants and their effects on marine mammals and fish, and assesses their presence in marine sediments.

Additionally, Dr. White is an adjunct instructor at both Charleston Southern University and Grantham University. Just this year, her research entitled, "Immunotoxic effects of in vitro exposure of dolphin lymphocytes to Louisiana Sweet crude oil and COREXIT" was accepted for publication by the Journal of Applied Toxicology.



OUTSTANDING ALUMNI
RECOGNITION

National security and global competitions are creating new forces in the educational pathway for a well-trained workforce. These pathways require that talented students be properly trained to advance this new science enterprise.

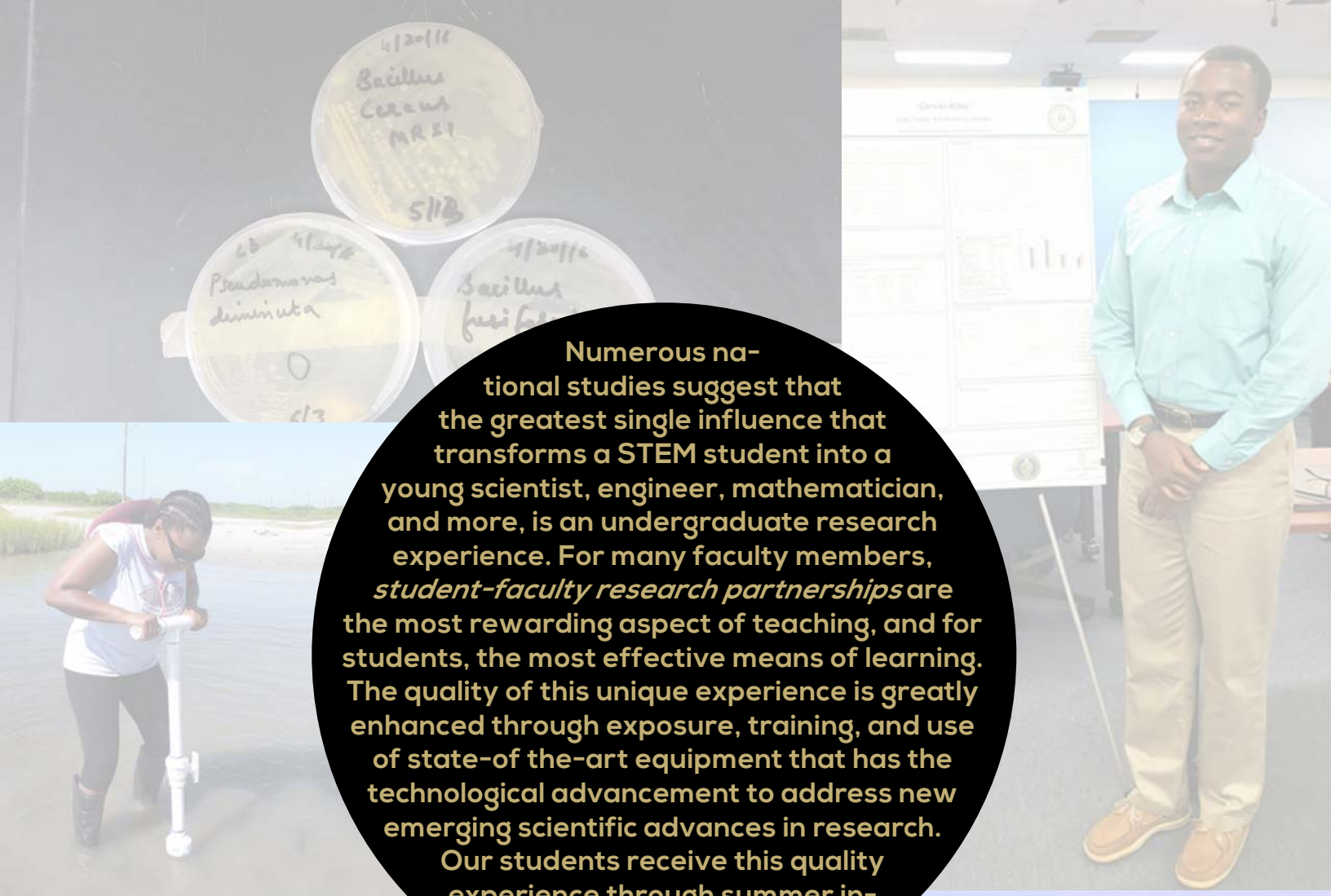
The new workforce and training will make demands on multiple skills, requiring industry participation in order to advance research products through entrepreneurship, and ultimately lead to commercialization and technology transfer.

The School of the Environment has created a platform through the Scholars-in-Residence Program to examine the resources needed to advance and sustain a well-trained workforce in STEM and in Environmental Policy areas.

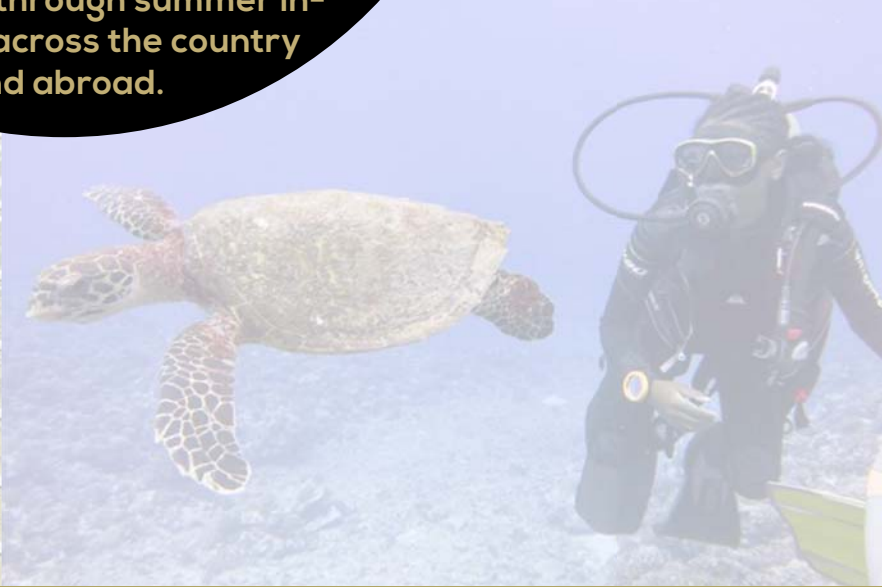
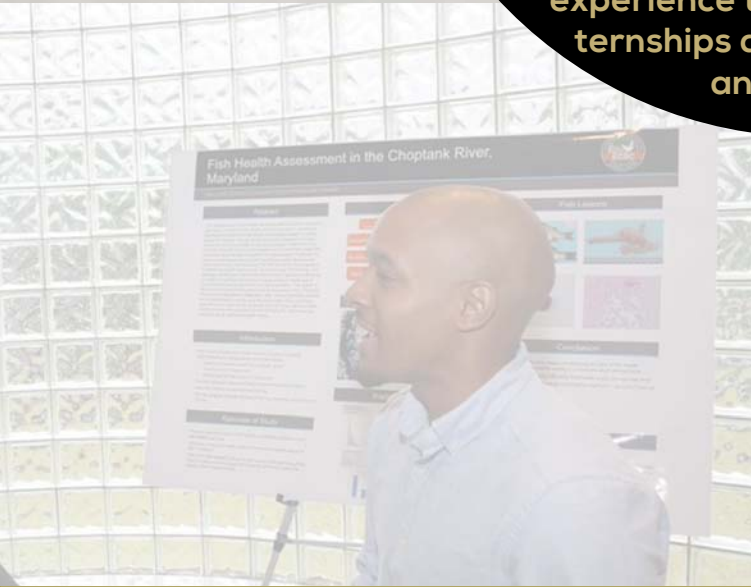
It is mandatory for all first-year students to participate in the program, requiring them to engage in research in coastal and ecosystems, EnergyWaterFoodNexus, and environmental policy. Based on availability of funds, eligible students receive funds to continue their research in their sophomore through senior years, and are encouraged to use the research experience as the basis for internship applications and senior thesis.



SCHOLARS IN RESIDENCE



Numerous national studies suggest that the greatest single influence that transforms a STEM student into a young scientist, engineer, mathematician, and more, is an undergraduate research experience. For many faculty members, *student-faculty research partnerships* are the most rewarding aspect of teaching, and for students, the most effective means of learning. The quality of this unique experience is greatly enhanced through exposure, training, and use of state-of-the-art equipment that has the technological advancement to address new emerging scientific advances in research. Our students receive this quality experience through summer internships across the country and abroad.



STUDENT INTERNSHIPS



FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY
**ENERGY WATER
FOOD NEXUS**
INTERNATIONAL SUMMIT



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