

## UNC LAUNCHES FIELD SITE, SUMMER PROGRAM IN ECUADOR'S GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS

NEW PROGRAMS OFFER CAROLINA UNDERGRADS UNIQUE VIEW OF BIOLOGICALLY AND HISTORICALLY DIVERSE REGION

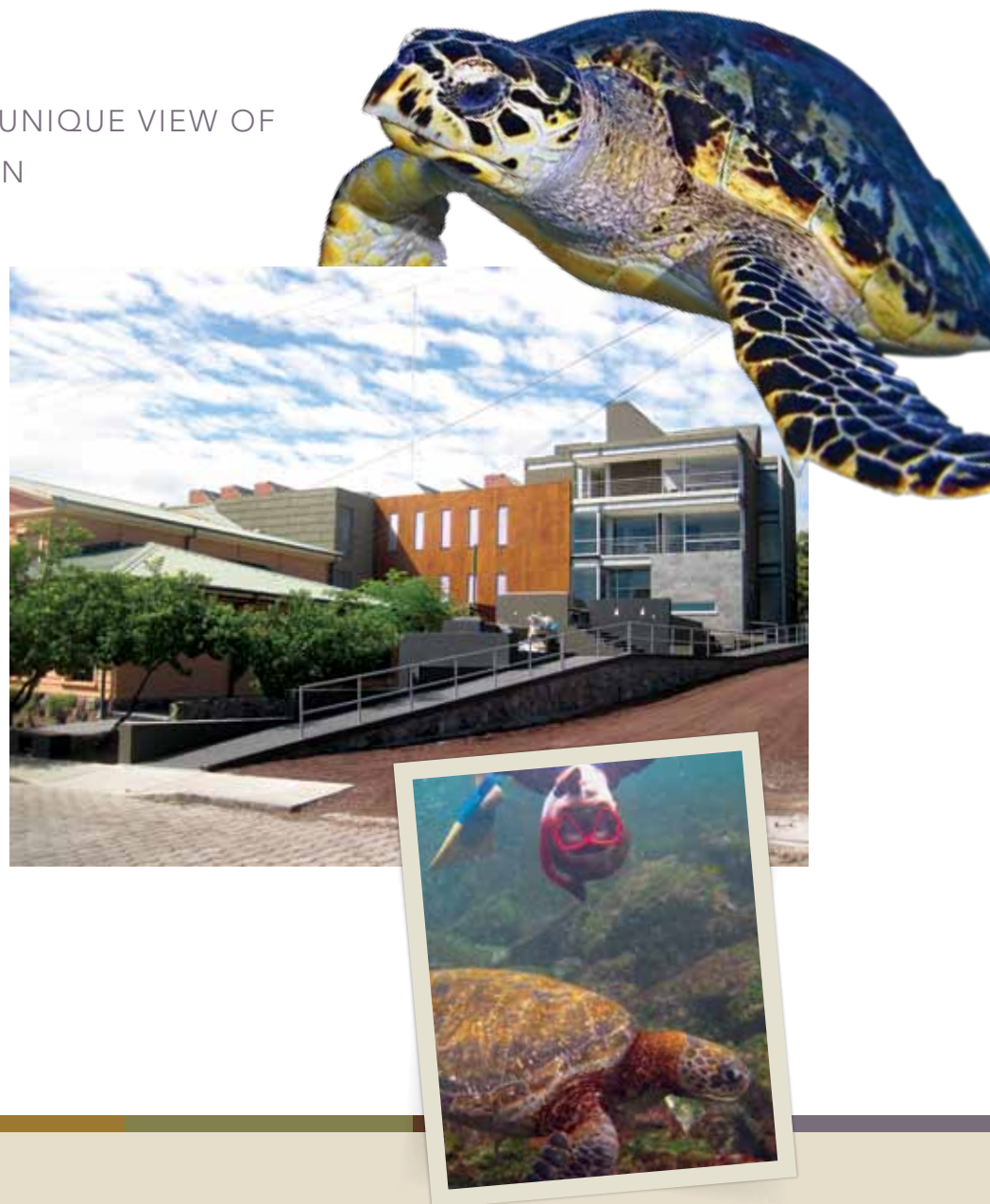
This spring, 12 Carolina undergraduates will take part in the UNC Galápagos/Ecuador Field Site program, the newest field study opportunity offered by the Institute for the Environment. The semester-long program, created through a partnership between the IE, UNC's Center for Galápagos Studies and the Study Abroad Office, follows on the heels of a new Galápagos Summer Program, held for the first time in summer 2011. Both programs have been made possible by a unique partnership between UNC and the Universidad San Francisco de Quito (USFQ), Ecuador's premier private, nonprofit liberal arts university.

The Galápagos/Ecuador Field Site gives Carolina students an unparalleled opportunity to explore the wonders of the diverse ecosystems of the Galápagos Islands and the Ecuadorian mainland.

"The Galápagos region is very fascinating from an evolutionary biology perspective, with its connection to Charles Darwin and his *The Origin of Species*," said Greg Gangi, IE associate director for education and director of the new field site. "As they spend time on the islands and around Ecuador, our students will begin to understand some of the environmental and conservation issues faced by developing countries, such as the potential conflicts between addressing poverty and protecting natural areas."

Free of humans and predators for most of their history, the Galápagos Islands have developed some of the most unique life forms on the planet, highly adapted to their surroundings and originally living in ecological isolation.

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## INSTITUTE BOARD'S NEW LEADERS SHARE THEIR VISION

The UNC Institute for the Environment is fortunate to have two seasoned environmental advocates and professionals as the newest leaders of our Board of Visitors.

Christopher Glenn Sawyer, the new board chair, is a partner in the Atlanta office of the law firm Alston & Bird. A national leader with regard to environmental issues, he has served as national chairman of the board of directors of The Trust for Public Land, where he helped acquire billions of dollars worth of parklands, and on the boards of several other prominent organizations, including the Land Trust Alliance, The Nature Conservancy, the Rocky Mountain Institute and Sustainable Atlanta. Sawyer, who earned his undergraduate degree at Carolina, has served on the IE's Board of Visitors since 2006.

Reginald Holley, the new vice-chair, is principal and founder of The Longmire Group, a govern-



Christopher Glenn Sawyer

mental relations firm based in Raleigh. He previously served as deputy state director of the Raleigh office for Senator Elizabeth Dole, and was deputy campaign manager for her 2002 campaign. A lobbyist in North Carolina, he advises on matters of policy, legislation and public services at the local, state and federal levels. Holley is also a Carolina graduate and has served on the IE's board since 2007.

As they began their leadership terms at the IE's fall 2011 Board of Visitors meeting, Sawyer and Holley shared their thoughts on the Institute for the Environment and the role the board can play in moving the IE forward. Below are some excerpts from our conversation.

**On the value of the IE for North Carolina:**  
**CS:** The Institute's leadership is superb, and the faculty has an excellent reputation broadly held in

*continued on page 2*

*Institute, continued from page 1*

areas of real environmental need and importance. And, in many ways, the Institute is just the tip of the iceberg, because it also serves to connect and leverage all of Carolina's tremendous resources for the benefit of our environment.

**RH:** The Institute is an incredibly valuable resource for the citizens of North Carolina. It advances scholarly, integrity-based research that the leadership of our State can call upon any time they wish.

**On the Board's role:**

**CS:** As Board members, we bring knowledge from the outside the university, so we can provide guidance to the IE's leaders on environmental challenges that need to be addressed, inform the Institute about work being done elsewhere, and help make connections to other resources and researchers.

We also spread the word about the IE around the state, so that communities across North Carolina can be aware of the resources available to them. We can let community leaders know that, whether they

are facing issues related to water, coastal management, energy, or thoughtful development, we can link them to research at Carolina that can help.

And of course, helping the IE with development resources is also a very important job of the Board of Visitors, particularly in these difficult budgetary times. We hope that the confidence we as board members show in the IE will assure potential funders that their resources will be put to good use.

**RH:** As Board leaders, another role that Chris and I take seriously is to keep the Institute on the university leaders' radar. Recently, we had the opportunity to spend some time with Vice Chancellor for Research Barbara Entwisle, and we know that she and Chancellor Thorp are very aware of the Institute and its important work.

**On Board priorities:**

**CS:** Job one is to continue to evolve the membership of the board, which is already superb, to add

more people who are experienced and passionate about environmental issues, and who see ways that the university can bring its immense resources to respond to the challenges our society faces. If we can continue to attract people who have that profile, there is no limit to what we can accomplish for the Institute and for Carolina.

**RH:** This board will certainly remain very active in the growth of the Institute. We intend to be a strong advocate in getting the IE into its new building on the Carolina North campus, which is exciting because it will consolidate the Institute in one primary place. And, of course, we will continue to celebrate the achievements of the Institute in its research, education and outreach endeavors.

**CS:** As we continue to build the IE, I am confident that we will produce not only new resources and opportunities for the UNC Institute for the Environment, but that that success will further enhance UNC's already outstanding reputation for excellence.

## IE BRINGS FUNDING TO NORTH CAROLINA

*The UNC Institute for the Environment is grateful for several recent gifts and grants that enable our faculty, staff and students to continue to pursue important research and outreach efforts, particularly during these difficult economic times.*

- The McKnight Foundation provided a grant for the IE to work in partnership with the Environmental Law Institute (ELI) to facilitate collaboration between state and local conservation and environmental organizations. With this grant, UNC will work with ELI to develop and convene a workshop for Wisconsin's state and local conservation and environmental organizations to catalyze their collaboration. Workshop attendees include Wisconsin water quality and wetland managers, hazard mitigation and emergency managers, and staff from several conservation organizations. The UNC team also will help ELI create a guidebook for state and local planners and managers to work together to improve water quality and wetland conservation. David Salvesen, deputy director for the IE's Center for Sustainable Community Design, leads the UNC team, which also includes the Center for Urban and Regional Studies' research associate, Peter Zambito.

- IE Director Larry Band has been awarded a \$42,000 grant from the Cary Institute for Ecosystem Studies to study the Baltimore Socio-Ecological System as part of a larger, long-term ecological study funded by the National Science Foundation. This project will provide insight on how urban socio-ecological systems including Baltimore, MD are impacted by biological, physical and social changes such as economic and commercial strategies, human migration and neighborhood revitalization, water management and global climate. It will also explore how these factors must be addressed as Baltimore and other cities endeavor to move to more sustainable models of planning and management. Integrating the research with interested communities and agencies is a major feature of the project.

- Phil Berke, IE deputy director and director of the Center for Sustainable Community Design, received a \$50,000 contract from the U.S. Department of Defense to initiate the development of a visualization model of land use impacts to help local governments in Eastern North Carolina undertake long-range land use planning. The grant will allow Berke, David Salvesen from the IE, and Nikhil Kaza, Todd BenDor and Yan Song from the Department of City and Regional Planning to collect geospatial data in Eastern North Carolina and develop, test and refine a decision support tool to help counties and municipalities cope with impacts from military base expansion and underlying growth that extends beyond military expansion. Once developed, this tool will be used as a platform to expand future work in the region to build local capacity to plan.

- Jennifer Horney, deputy director of the UNC Center for Public Health Preparedness and a research assistant professor in Epidemiology and the IE, received a \$147,770 grant from the National Science Foundation to examine the links between the quality of local governments' disaster recovery plans and the resilience of socially vulnerable coastal populations. Horney and Phil Berke, David Salvesen, Gavin Smith (from the Center of Excellence for the Study of Natural Disasters, Coastal Infrastructure and Emergency Management) and Mai Nyugen (from the Department of City and Regional Planning) will complete a survey of pre-disaster recovery planning in eight southeastern states, including evaluation of local plans, a study comparing disaster recovery outcomes in communities with and without recovery plans, and a survey of households in these areas to determine the effect of recovery plans on the knowledge, attitudes and beliefs of community members.

- Thanks to the generosity of a number of donors, the IE has been able to move forward with several fundraising activities to advance the Institute's mission. Details to come in the spring 2012 newsletter.

“Thanks to the generosity of a number of donors, the IE has been able to move forward with several fundraising activities to advance the Institute's mission.”

# HELPING N.C. COMMUNITIES BOUNCE BACK

UNC RESEARCHER AND HER COLLEAGUES ARE FINDING WAYS TO HELP RURAL COMMUNITIES BECOME MORE RESILIENT IN THE FACE OF NATURAL DISASTERS



Dr. Jennifer Horney with students and staff

While working on her dissertation in epidemiology with IE Deputy Director Phil Berke a few years ago, Jennifer Horney discovered that the more social capital (non-monetary assets like having more friends, nearby family, or help from a church group) a person had in their community, the less likely they were to have evacuated when Hurricane Isabel made landfall in North Carolina.

Intrigued by this finding, Horney decided to investigate what could be done to make tight-knit communities more resilient in the face of natural disasters.

“Rural communities are particularly vulnerable because their populations tend to be shrinking, aging and poorer,” noted Horney, who earned her Ph.D. and master’s degrees in epidemiology and public health at UNC. “We often think of small rural communities as being very strong, and say they can get through anything. Certainly many in North Carolina have been through a lot, including hurricanes, tornadoes and flooding. But these communities may not be as resilient as we tend to assume. I want to challenge this notion of rural resiliency, and see what role other factors, like planning and social capital, play in these communities.”

Horney, now a research assistant professor of epidemiology at the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health and in the Institute for the Environment, and a member of the Institute for the Environment’s Faculty Advisory Committee, is deputy director of the UNC Center for Public Health Preparedness. In this role, she helps train state, regional and local officials and public health professionals to plan for, and respond to, both natural disasters and crises such as pandemic influenza. Horney conducts research to better understand the needs of vulnerable populations during disasters.

She also leads the Spatial Health Assessment Research Program, which provides technical assistance for public health programs interested in using geographic information systems (GIS). She served on a team of public health practitioners who responded to Hurricanes Isabel, Charley, Katrina, Wilma and Irene, where she used GIS to conduct rapid assessments of disaster impact on the public health of individuals and communities. Horney has shared her expertise internationally, providing technical assistance to public health agencies in Southeast Asia and Central America dealing with infectious disease outbreaks and pandemic influenza planning and response.

For her research, Horney continues to work with her former mentor, Phil Berke, who directs the IE’s Center for Sustainable Community Design (CSCD), as well as CSCD Deputy Director David Salvesen, and Mai Nguyen, assistant professor of city and regional planning. Recently, this team was awarded \$750,000 in research grants to further their work on the resiliency of rural communities, as well as on recovery planning in coastal areas.

Grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture are funding a project, led by Horney and Berke, aimed at improving disaster resiliency in rural communities in the southeastern United States. The UNC team is assessing the quality of communities’ plans for handling a natural disaster in 96 rural counties and gauging the involvement of community members and local organizations in developing these plans. A second grant from the National Science Foundation focuses on recovery planning in coastal communities, where few currently have recovery plans. (See “IE Brings Funding to North Carolina” article on page 2 for details about the recent NSF grant.) UNC investigators are evaluating the differences in how a community deals with natural disaster when they have a good plan, a poor plan, or no plan at all, as well as the difference that the quality of the plan has on individuals in a community after a disaster. UNC is partnering with MDC Inc., a nonprofit organization based in Durham, N.C., that does community development work, on both studies.

“Through these studies, I hope that we will be able to at least partly unravel the paradox that rural communities are more resilient, so that we can begin to find ways to assist these communities in developing effective recovery plans to help our fellow citizens get back on their feet after a disaster,” Horney said. “As part of that, we’d like to identify groups and local organizations that can leverage social capital to rebuild their communities.”

Berke appreciates the perspective Horney brings to the UNC team’s research. “Jen brings a fresh look and new energy to tackling complex problems associated with the growing risk that communities face from natural disasters and the growing specter of climate change,” he said. “Her ability to ask the right questions and then apply advanced data collection and statistical modeling techniques to derive answers is extraordinary.”

# UNC INSTITUTE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT: HONOR ROLL 2010/2011

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*(These individuals were honored or memorialized by gifts to the Institute from others)*

Bill Easterling

# HAIL TO CAROLINA'S 2011 ENVIRONMENTAL GRADUATES

Noah Kittner, having earned a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science, celebrates with his family.



William Combs, Caroline Hampton, Trudie Henninger, Nikki Liles, and Gabe Hobson celebrate their graduation.



Madelyn Vital receives her diploma from Dr. Greg Gangi, the IE's Associate Director for Education, and Dave Moreau, Chair of the Curriculum in Environment and Ecology.



IE's Associate Director for Education and Chair of the Department of Environment and Ecology congratulate William Combs on earning his Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies.



Karla Capacetti, who graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies and a Minor in Geography, enjoys the IE graduation ceremony with her family.

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*Galápagos, continued from page 1*

Darwin's famous visit in 1835 and his subsequent development of the theory of natural selection brought international attention to the islands. Today, the Galápagos Islands and the rain forest and highland regions of Ecuador are facing rapid changes and growing crises as increases in tourist and residential populations place new strain on the environment.

Students at the field site can choose from study tracks in evolution, ecology and conservation; people, politics and environment; or marine ecology. They will take part in field trips that bring them face-to-face with local resource managers, scientists and members of indigenous communities involved in local conservation and ecological management issues.

Classes will be based at USFQ's Galápagos Academic Institute for the Arts and Sciences (GAIAS) on Isla San Cristobal, one of the Galápagos Islands. GAIAS is the site of a new Galápagos Science Center jointly constructed by Carolina and USFQ. Students will also spend time at USFQ's Tiputini Biodiversity Station, located in the pristine Ecuadorian Amazon rainforests and recognized as one of the best places in the world to study biodiversity, and USFQ's Paluguillo Paramo campus on the eastern slopes of the Andes, a remote area with a wide range of flora and fauna, where growing environmental pressures threaten the ecosystem as well as the water supply of nearby Quito. Following their coursework, each field site student will engage in a six-week research project at one of the three USFQ campuses.

The semester won't be solely about studying, as Carolina students are in for an unforgettable living and learning experience. Classes at GAIAS will be held right on the water, and students can study on the beach among the sea lions and marine iguanas. On San Cristobal, students will be housed with host families. Spectacular hiking, swimming, snorkeling and other recreational activities abound, as well as ample opportunities to enjoy the culture and cuisine of this historically and ecologically extraordinary region. (See sidebars to hear about the experiences of UNC students in the inaugural Galápagos Summer Program.)

The Galápagos/Ecuador Field Site is the sixth residential field site program offered by the UNC Institute for the Environment, in partnership with UNC Study Abroad, joining programs in Highlands, Manteo, and Morehead City, NC, Thailand, the United Kingdom, and a campus-based field site in Chapel Hill.

During the Galápagos Summer Program, students take two courses related to public health, marine sciences, human ecology and evolutionary biology, and enjoy field trips and visits with people involved in local conservation and ecology.

The two new programs developed out of a longstanding relationship between UNC Professor of Geography Steve Walsh and faculty at USFQ, including one of his former students. Walsh, who started and leads UNC's Center for Galápagos Studies, came to the IE with the idea for a joint educational program.

"We knew it was a wonderful opportunity for our students, and we've spent the last two years developing these programs," said Gangi.

IE Director Larry Band calls these new programs "a terrific example of collaboration among several groups at UNC that has enabled us to provide a unique and extraordinary learning experience for our students. This partnership with USFQ will also enable Ecuadorian graduate students to study at UNC, and will hopefully spur a life-long interest in pursuing research in Ecuador among some of our American students and faculty."

*For more information about the Galápagos/Ecuador Field Site and the Galápagos Summer Program, visit [www.ie.unc.edu/Galápagos](http://www.ie.unc.edu/Galápagos) or contact IE Associate Director for Education Greg Gangi, at [ggangi@unc.edu](mailto:ggangi@unc.edu).*

## GETTING INTO THE GALÁPAGOS

*Two Carolina students who took part in the inaugural UNC Galápagos Summer Program share their experiences*

### Travis Courtney

*Environmental Science major, Class of 2013*

"I had a fantastic experience in the Galápagos Islands and really gained a lot from my time abroad. I learned a great deal about the islands and the people who live there, and improved my Spanish along the way. During a guided tour of the islands, we were constantly exposed to mini-lectures on everything from the evolutionary design of blue-footed boobies to social issues among shark-fin smugglers. The oceanography of the islands further engaged my interest in marine geology, including how rock structures influence life patterns or ocean circulation. The emphasis of climate change and its effects on the islands also furthered my desire to study the issue more thoroughly.

"The most surprising part of my visit was the degree to which sea lions would swim up to me while snorkeling. After a few somersaults or swims to the ocean floor, the sea lions would start swimming circles around me pretending to bite or trying to chase me. It was an incredible experience I won't forget!"



### Stephanie Tolar

*Environmental Science major, Class of 2014*

"The Galápagos is such a wonderful, biologically diverse place, like nowhere else in the world. As an environmental scientist and nature lover, I found the opportunity to venture to such a place and participate in this program fascinating. The classes (Conservation and Poverty, and Marine Ecology) sounded interesting, and where could you find a better location to talk about environmental issues? This was my first trip abroad, and it gave me a chance to experience so many things that I would not have been able to experience otherwise, including snorkeling with sea turtles, swimming with sharks, learning a new language, climbing a volcano, and stargazing on the equator.

"During the summer program, I got to experience firsthand what we were talking about in class: to talk to the natives about environmental sustainability and how it affects them; to count sea urchins and measure algae consumed by them; to see the poverty in Quito that many people around the world face every day, and realize that sometimes environmental exploitation only occurs because people have to feed their families. Being immersed in these social and environmental issues gave me a totally different perspective on conservation and how we should go about creating environmental change.

"This trip has assured me that environmental science is my destined career. I now plan to pursue a minor in marine science, and explore more topics in marine ecology."



## IE WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBERS

*The IE welcomes two new members to our Board of Visitors:*

**North Carolina Representative Ruth Samuelson** has devoted her career to public service and philanthropy for the citizens of North Carolina. She is currently in her third term as the State Representative for N.C. District 104. Samuelson has made both economic and environmental sustainability a priority throughout her public service career, which has included service as a Mecklenburg County Commissioner from 2000 to 2004. She has been active on numerous philanthropic boards such as Philanthropy in Motion, where she has served as president from 2004 to the present. She resides in Charlotte with her husband, Ken, and their children, Bobby, David, Joy and Alex.

**Nancy Hanes White**, a noted community leader in the environmental arena and in support of other causes, is a resident of Raleigh and a 1970 graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill. An active community volunteer, she has served on the boards of a wide variety of organizations, including the Southern Environmental Law Center, The Nature Conservancy (North Carolina Chapter), the Arts & Sciences Foundation (UNC-Chapel Hill), the North Carolina Veterinary Medical Foundation (NC State University), the North Carolina Zoo, the UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center, and on campaign steering committees for the Triangle Land Conservancy and the NC Museum of Natural Sciences. She and her husband, Monty, live just outside of Raleigh where they can enjoy nature on their farm.

# OUTREACH PROGRAMS BENEFIT N.C. SCHOOLS, COMMUNITIES

To study water quality along the Neuse, Tar and Pamlico Rivers, UNC researchers must collect frequent water samples. Seizing an opportunity to engage North Carolina educators and students in this important work, the IE's Environmental Resource Program (ERP) worked with the Department of Marine Sciences to pilot a program to train science teachers along these rivers to collect samples, and to translate this research into classroom lessons and field activities that the teachers can use with their students. Four local educators helped develop the program.

In July, 24 8th to 12th grade science teachers and environmental educators attended the Neuse-Tar-Pamlico Rivers Water Quality Research Institute, a free, two-day workshop at UNC and the Falls Lake Visitor Assistance Center. Participants learned about the latest water quality research from UNC faculty and graduate students, and took part in hands-on experiences on the river and in the lab. They returned home with a portfolio of activities to help them promote scientific inquiry to more than 2,000 students in their classrooms and environmental education programs, and the skills to contribute to authentic water quality research by collecting water samples and measurements in their own communities.

"These passionate educators can now take their lesson plans to a new level," said Michele Drostin, ERP project coordinator. "As a result, we hope that their students will be inspired to take action to improve local water quality."

The institute was funded by a grant from the Wallace Genetic Foundation. Additional funding is being sought to extend participation to more North Carolina schools.

After elevated levels of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs, which potentially cause cancer, acne-like skin conditions and liver damage) were found in catfish and largemouth bass in Badin Lake in North Carolina's Stanly and Montgomery Counties, the N.C. Division of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) issued a fish advisory, held a community meeting, and posted signs around the lake. These communications warned people not to eat more than one meal a week of catfish or largemouth bass from Badin Lake, and recom-

mended that women of child-bearing age and children not eat any of these fish.

The NCDHHS enlisted the help of the UNC Superfund Research Program's Research Translation Core, which is managed by the ERP, for assistance in evaluating the effectiveness of their outreach efforts. The UNC team conducted a study of more than a hundred local anglers to determine whether the signs increased awareness of the fish advisory and whether they changed fish-eating behavior.

"We found that the signs increased awareness of the advisory significantly, but that a majority of those who knew about the advisory said they would not change their fish-eating habits," said ERP Director Kathleen Gray. "Our findings indicate that we need to find more effective ways to ensure that all anglers understand the potential health impacts of eating fish from the lake, especially on women and children."

Gray and her team will continue to work with the NCDHHS to assist in communicating emerging science and potential health impacts of hazardous wastes in North Carolina communities such as those around Badin Lake.



## PEOPLE NEWS

**Neil Davis** has left the IE to attend Riso DTU, the National Laboratory for Sustainable Energy at the Technical University of Denmark, where he received a doctorate scholarship. He has been a research associate and meteorological modeler in the IE's Center for Environmental Modeling for Policy Development since 2008.

**Martin Doyle** has left UNC to work at Duke University's Nicholas School of the Environment as a professor of river science and policy in the Division of Environmental Sciences and Policy. He was formerly an associate professor in the geography department since 2002.

**Ken Galluppi**, a senior researcher in the field of disaster studies, has re-joined the IE. His work on the need for the National Weather Service to collaborate closely with emergency management to make more effective use of weather and climate information in emergency decision-making is funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

**Dr. Jennifer Horney** is newly appointed as a research assistant professor at IE, with a primary appointment as such in the epidemiology department of the Gillings School of Global Public Health. She leads two projects at the IE: a project aimed at improving disaster resiliency in rural communities in the Southeast and a project studying recovery planning in coastal counties. (See article on page 3.) She hopes to link information collected from planners and emergency managers to individual and household perceptions about the effectiveness of hazard mitigation and recovery planning.

**Ken Hudnell** is a newly named research fellow who works with harmful algal blooms in the Department of Environmental Sciences and Engineering, where he is an adjunct associate professor.

**Lindsay Leonard** has moved to UNC's Department of Marine Sciences. There, she will serve as administrative manager working with faculty and staff. She was formerly an administrative assistant with the IE, where she worked closely with undergraduates.

**Jessica Losego**, a senior database researcher in software development, has joined the IE as a research associate working with Ken Galluppi on the NOAA-funded project.

The IE's Center for Environmental Modeling for Policy Development added **Alejandro Valencia** as an air quality modeler in April. He provides project support for development and applications of air quality modeling systems, including dispersion and chemistry-transport models to address air pollution and climate change problems at the local and regional scales.

**Dongmei Yang** has been with the IE since 2007 and recently joined as a full-time staff member in April. She is a research associate and an air quality modeler.

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## RECENT EVENTS

**On October 3-7, the Institute for the Environment, in partnership with The Water Institute at UNC,** hosted their annual conference, Water and Health: Where Science Meets Policy. More than 450 international participants from academia, industry, NGOs, government and foundations came to UNC's Friday Center in Chapel Hill for workshops, presentations, and keynote addresses that illuminated critical water concerns and advances relevant to both the developing and developed worlds. The 2011 conference built on the success of the 2010 conference, this time addressing critical concerns facing drinking water, sanitation, hygiene and water resources from an interdisciplinary perspective spanning human rights, water resources, policy, practice and financing. Representatives from the United Nations, the World Bank's Water and Sanitation Program, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation were among the keynote speakers.

**On October 24-26, the UNC Institute for the Environment's Center for Environmental Modeling for Policy Development (CEMPD)** hosted the 10th Annual CMAS Conference at the Friday Center. CEMPD, home to the US EPA's Community Modeling and Analysis System Center, holds this conference as part of its partnership with the EPA. This year's event drew together more than 250 members of the global air quality modeling community to share their experiences with air quality models and model development, with a focus on the pertinent issues of the day. This year's program included a special session on air quality forecasting, in memory of Dr. Daewon Byun.