Department of
BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES
Clemson® University

Saara J. DeWalt, Chair

Note from the Chair

Greetings from Biological Sciences at Clemson! We hope you are enjoying the spring and new life coming forth.

The last year has been interesting and challenging for everyone. Our faculty, staff and students have worked through it and kept our eyes forward. We made time to finalize a departmental strategic plan called BioSci*Forward* and are proud to share examples of how we're fulfilling our **LIFE** strategic goals.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement with our department and with Clemson. Many of you are investing in our vision to be a top-ranked department of biological sciences and produce graduates who are prepared to excel in their future careers. We appreciate all you do. As Give Day approaches later this month, if you have not already made your gift this year, I encourage you to consider investing in our students and programs. Click the orange button below for more information.

Thank you and take care.

Best regards,
Saara

Please visit our Facebook page or follow us on Twitter or Instagram for weekly news about our students, alumni, faculty and staff. Email us with any questions/comments/suggestions at BiolSci@clemson.edu.

Give to Biological Sciences

Faculty: Lisa Bain, Christopher Parkinson, Sharon Bewick, Lesly Temesvari, Yanzhang (Charlie) Wei, Tzuen-Rong (Jeremy) Tzeng
Ph.D. students in biological sciences: Cierra Sullivan, Laary Cushman, Amanda Palecek McClung, Leah DeLorenzo, Tokea (Kea) Payton

LIFE Goal #1: Lead integrative biological discoveries of the 21st century and achieve nationally and internationally recognized excellence in research and scholarship.

Recent grants and publications by faculty and students are testament to our efforts to achieve this goal.

Lisa Bain received an NIEHS grant to study the effects of arsenic on intestinal stem cells.

Christopher Parkinson and former postdoc Mark Margraves published a paper examining the genetics of the highly venomous Tiger Rattlesnake.

Sharon Bewick, Lesly Temesvari and Yanzhang (Charlie) Wei received Clemson-sponsored funding to start new research projects. Bewick will study lizard microbiota, and Temesvari and Wei will study immunotherapy for *Entamoeba histolytica* infections.

Tzuen-Rong (Jeremy) Tzeng became part of a collaboration of Clemson scientists and Prisma Health clinicians to develop a topical disinfectant to better slow the spread of COVID-19.

Ph.D. student Cierra Sullivan in Matthew Koski's lab showed how flower colors change in response to fluctuations in temperature and aridity and was interviewed on Science Friday.

Ph.D. student Laary Cushman in Vincent Richards' lab found a new plant that's unique to Upstate South Carolina.

Ph.D. student Amanda Palecek McClung in Richard Blob's lab won the Karel Liem Award for Best Student Poster presentation in Vertebrate Morphology at the Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology national meeting.

Ph.D. student Leah DeLorenzo in Kara Powder's lab won Best Student Poster presentation in Evolutionary Developmental Biology at the Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology national meeting.

Ph.D. student Tokea (Kea) Payton in Michael Childress' lab received the Instructor Advanced Education Training Grant from the Women Divers Hall of Fame (WDHOF). She hopes to share the dive training she receives with her Creative Inquiry students and promote dive safety practices during her field research in the Florida Keys.

Stephanie LaPlaca, Ph.D. student in environmental toxicology; Felicia Sanders, Zoology M '00; Libby Baxley, Zoology ’80

LIFE Goal #2: Inspire and prepare the next generation to solve tomorrow’s biological challenges through innovative teaching, mentoring and signature experiences.

We provided a number of opportunities to achieve this goal and several of our alumni were highlighted for their successes.

Each fall, our Biological Sciences Professional Development course teaches grant writing skills and awards funding for graduate student research.

New graduate fellowship in honor of the late environmental toxicologist Stephen Klaine awarded to first recipient, Ph.D. student Stephanie LaPlaca.

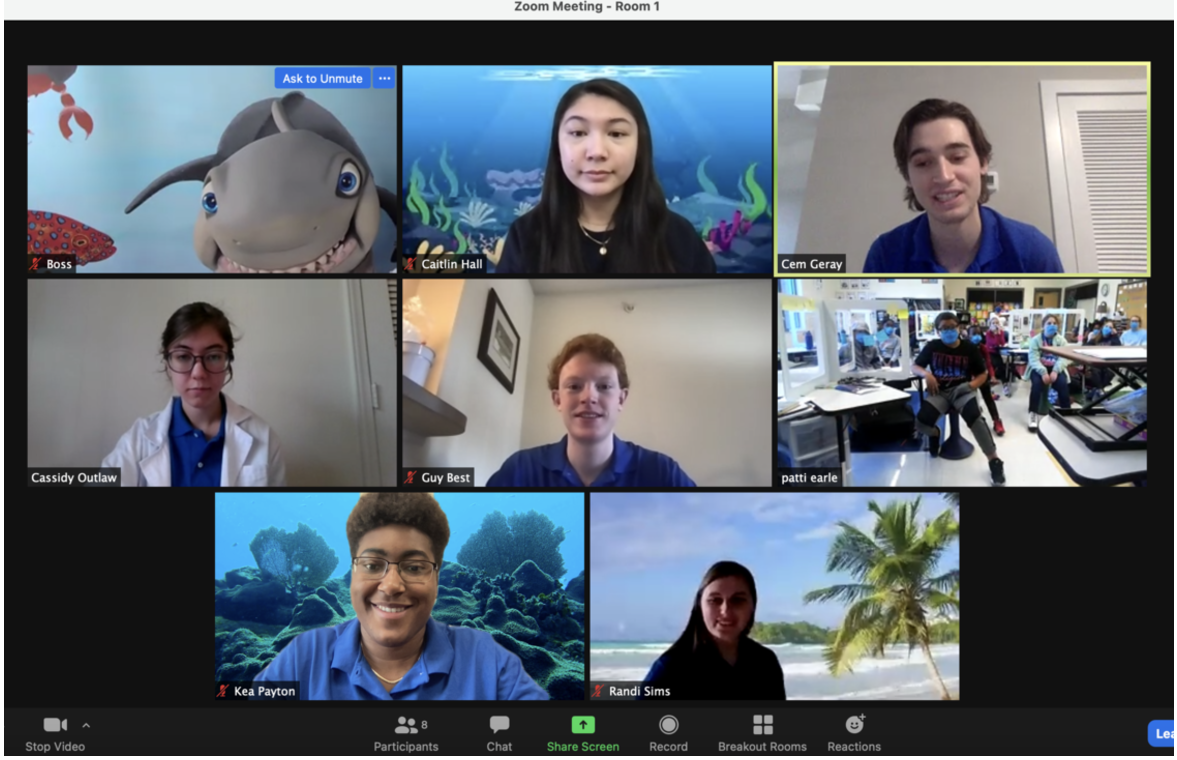
Libby Baxley, Zoology '80, was featured in the stories of six Clemson science and mathematics alumni.

Felicia Sanders, Zoology M '00, was named the 2020 Biologist of the Year by the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

Jim Belthoff, Zoology Ph.D. '92, was recently honored with the Raptor Research Foundation 2020 Fran and Frederick Hamerstrom Award.

Dr. Ted Swann, Biological Sciences '97, has been spearheading Clemson community COVID-19 testing

David M. Southerland, Zoology '77, has been named chief executive officer and president of Regional Medical Center.



Undergraduate and graduate student docents and Boss the Shark present the Something Very Fishy Online Coral Nursery Exhibit. Elementary school students from all over South Carolina were excited to be part of a virtual adventure to the Florida Keys.

LIFE Goal #3: Foster biological science literacy through education and outreach to students, teachers and members of our community and broader society.

Michael Childress and his Creative Inquiry team delivered the message of marine conservation in the third year of the 'Something Very Fishy' musical theater.

➡ **READ MORE**

More than 60 undergraduate and graduate students, postdocs and faculty attended the Clemson Biological Sciences Annual Student Symposium (CBASS) on March 27. CBASS provides an opportunity for students to present research posters and talks.

LIFE Goal #4: Encourage individual growth, achieve equity and promote a climate of inclusive excellence.

As we approach Give Day, will you join me in giving back to our department to help us achieve these *LIFE* goals and particularly to prepare our students for the challenges to come?

Give to Biological Sciences

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