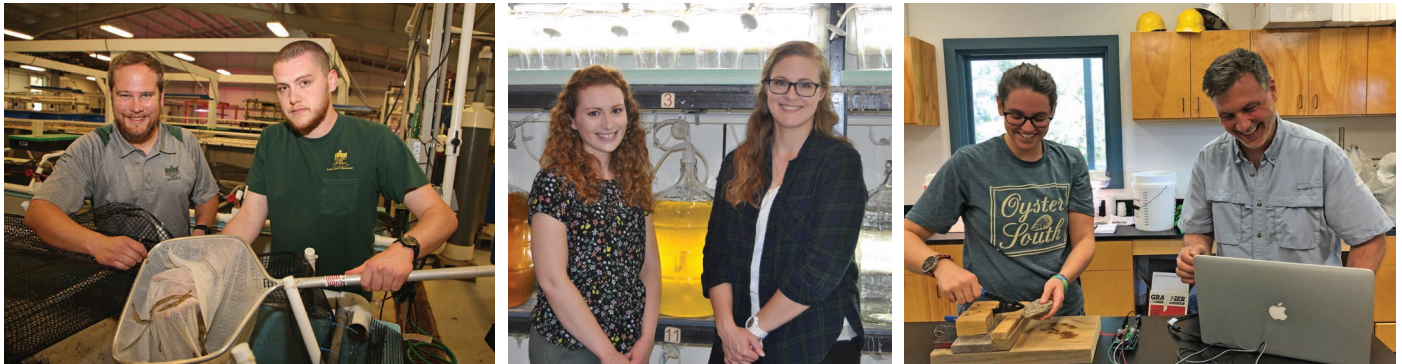




LEFT TO RIGHT: *Laura Spencer, Michael Acquafredda, Harsha Galkanda-Arachchige, Diplina Paul (right) with advisor Dr. Steve Hall.*



LEFT TO RIGHT: *Nathan Kring (right) with advisor Dr. Andrew Ray, DaNelle Ellington (left) with advisor Casey Murray, Sarah Bodenstein (left) with advisor Dr. Bill Walton.*



LEFT TO RIGHT: *Katie McCann (center) with advisors Drs. Steve Rawles and Rebecca Lochmann, Kelsey Bisker (left) with advisor Dr. Bill Walton, Sarah Hensey (right) with advisor Dr. Bill Walton, Erin Gaglias (right) with advisor Joseph Szczebak.*

WAS AND USAS STUDENT AWARDS AT AQUACULTURE 2019

WAS STUDENT SPOTLIGHT COMPETITION

A special session was held at Aquaculture 2019 that highlighted student scholars from each of the aquaculture professional societies represented at the conference. Prior to the conference, each society evaluated student research submissions to determine the top student researchers. In all, eleven student scholars were invited to present at the Student Spotlight Seminar, which consisted of an abbreviated (three-minute) version of their presentation. A panel of judges was formed from EXCOM members of the different societies at the meeting. The reduction in presentation time and number of slides challenged the students to present their work in novel ways. The

winner of the Spotlight Competition received \$500 with the second and third place winners both receiving \$200 each.

The winner of the Student Spotlight Competition was **Laura Spencer** from the School of Aquatic and Fisheries Sciences at the University of Washington for her presentation on “Parental low pH exposure affects reproduction and larval gene expression in the Olympia oyster.” The two runner-up winners were **Michael Acquafredda** from Rutgers University for his presentation on “Possible niche partitioning among four ecologically and economically important filter-feeding bivalves: A case study of

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 18)

bivalve polyculture” and **Harsha Galkanda-Ararchige** from Auburn University for “Efficacy of alternative salt mixture to grow Pacific white shrimp (*Litopenaeus vannamei*)”.

WAS ORAL PRESENTATION AND POSTER AWARDS

Diplina Paul won first place (\$600) of the oral presentation competition for “A study of newspaper as an alternative media for biofiltration of aquaculture effluents.” Diplina is from the small town of Silchar in India. She received a B.S. degree in Agricultural Engineering from Assam University and completed a Masters in Aquaculture Engineering from Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur, West Bengal, India. Currently, she is working toward her Ph.D. with Dr. Steven Hall in the Biological and Agricultural Engineering Department at North Carolina State University. Diplina plans to pursue a career in academia. The second-place oral presentation honor (\$400) went to **Nathan Kring**, who is currently a graduate student at Kentucky State University, advised by Dr. Andrew Ray. Nathan’s oral presentation was titled “The effects of stocking density and artificial substrate on Pacific white shrimp *Litopenaeus vannamei* production and water quality dynamics in greenhouse-based biofloc systems.” While in the Aquaculture and Aquatic Sciences Program, his thesis project was determining the effects of artificial substrates and stocking densities on production of Pacific white shrimp, water quality, and stable isotope dynamics of greenhouse-based biofloc systems. This project was performed in Frankfort, KY and yielded roughly 2,000 pounds of shrimp in 100 days. The first-place poster (\$600) by **DaNelle Ellington** was titled “Determining the efficacy of single cell bacteria as an alternative protein source in aquaculture feeds for rainbow trout *Oncorhynchus mykiss*.” DaNelle recently graduated from Roger Williams University (RWU) with a B.S. in Marine Biology. During her time at RWU, she helped develop aquaculture technologies for popular marine aquarium fish and invertebrates to help reduce wild capture. Additionally, she assisted with a data project tracking illegal shipments within the aquarium trade. DaNelle has been a research assistant on a series of diet experiments using single-cell bacteria as an alternative protein source in aquafeeds. She hopes to attend graduate school in the future. **Sarah Bodenstein** was awarded second place (\$400) for her poster titled “Comparison of shell-closing strength for triploid and diploid Eastern oysters *Crassostrea virginica*.” Sarah received a B.S. degree in Marine Science and Biology from the University of Miami, Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science. Currently she is a M.S. student at Auburn University in the Auburn Shellfish Lab with Dr. Bill Walton. Sarah’s research explores two potential causes of triploid Eastern oyster summer mortality: desiccation and tumbling. Through field and lab experiments oysters were subjected to these stressors and their growth rate, mortality, and shell-closing strength responses were assessed. The goal of this research was to inform farmers on the best management practices for growing triploids and avoiding mortality. After graduation, Sarah will continue her education at LSU with Dr. Terrence Tiersch and Dr. Jerome La Peyre studying oyster physiology and gamete cryopreservation.

USAS AWARDS

Katie McCann is pursuing an M.S. degree in Aquaculture and Fisheries at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff (UAPB)

and received the first place oral presentation award (\$1000) for “Minimizing fishmeal use in hybrid striped bass *Morone chrysops* × *Morone saxatilis* diets using commercial protein concentrates for aquafeeds.” Her M.S. research is being conducted with her advisor, Dr. Rebecca Lochmann as a collaborative project with Dr. Steve Rawles at the USDA/ARS H.K. Dupree Stuttgart National Aquaculture Research Center in Stuttgart, Arkansas. Katie plans to seek employment in the aquaculture nutrition industry, either in the public or private sectors, while continuing to work with food fish species of economic importance

The second-place oral presentation winner (\$800) was **Kelsey Bisker** for “Effects of larval growth differences upon the field performance of cultured Eastern oysters *Crassostrea virginica*.” She is currently a M.S. student at the Auburn University Shellfish Laboratory, working with Dr. Bill Walton. Her research focuses on how larval development affects the field performance of the Eastern oyster. Kelly is from the Eastern Shore of Virginia and has been interested in oyster rearing and hatchery management with that species for several years. After graduation, she hopes to be an oyster hatchery manager.

The first-place poster winner (\$1000) was **Sarah Hensey** for “Improving the (off) bottom line: Assessing the costs and benefits of different culture methods on an Alabama commercial oyster farm.” Sarah is currently a master’s student at Auburn University. While working on her bachelor’s degree in Wildlife Science at the University of Georgia, her love of applied science began when she discovered how oysters can be used as ‘living shorelines’. This led her to the Auburn University Shellfish Laboratory, where she works alongside an experimental oyster farm run by local high school students. After graduation, she hopes to continue to use applied science to help promote positive relationships between the community and its natural resources.

Erin Gaglias was awarded second place (\$800) for her poster titled “The effect of three different live feeds on the survival and growth of larval fire shrimp *Lysmata debelius*.” Erin recently graduated with a B.S. in Marine Biology and Aquaculture and Aquarium Science from Roger Williams University in Bristol, Rhode Island, advised by Joseph Szczebak. Erin’s current research project for her senior year is directed towards the development of a microphotographic reference for the identification of ornamental cleaner shrimp larval stages. After graduation, Erin will be working at a sustainable shellfish aquaculture farm in southern Massachusetts and intends to pursue graduate studies in the near future.

OTHER STUDENT AWARDS

- Tyson Best Abstract Award (\$1500) – Gagan Kolimadu
- Pentair Award (\$1500) – Clement de Cruz
- Soy Aquaculture Alliance (\$1000) – Kasondra Miller
- Yellow Book Undergraduate Award (\$700) – Nolan Schott
- Yellow Book Undergraduate Award (\$700) – Taylor Zenobia
- Best WAS Abstract Travel Award (\$600) – Fernando Yamamoto
- Best WAS Abstract Travel Award (\$600) – Arun Venugopalan
- Best WAS Abstract Travel Award (\$600) – Eric Gigli
- Best USAS Abstract Travel Award (\$600) – Michael Acquafredda
- Best USAS Abstract Travel Award (\$600) – Emma Taccardi
- Best USAS Abstract Travel Award (\$600) – Harsha Galkanda Ararchige
- Joint USAS-FCS Best Abstract (\$500) – Brittany Chesser