DECEMBER SCHOOL WIDE EVENTS

The school wide faculty meeting will be held on December 12 at 1:30 p.m. The school wide staff meeting will be held on December 14 at 1:30 p.m. Both will take place in the auditorium. The Dean’s Holiday luncheon will take place on December 19th from 11:30 until 1:30 p.m. in the Smith Commons. All are invited to the luncheon.

FACULTY RETREAT

The fourth in a series of biannual faculty retreats was held on the weekend of November 9-11, 2001 in the Florida Keys. Seventy-four faculty members attended to discuss the creation of a new 10 year strategic plan for the School. The faculty agreed on a limited number of subject areas (8) to focus on that would provide a foundation for sustaining our current strengths, while facilitating new inter-disciplinary initiatives. The strategy is a combination of new research initiatives, investments, and a broadening of Rosenstiel income sources.

A core set of priorities for Advancement were agreed upon. Priorities include graduate student fellowships, startup and matching funds, capital investment and faculty support. While the details are still being worked out, this mix of priorities suggests a need for approximately $120M in new endowment and $30M for one-time capital investments.

ROSMAS FACULTY/STAFF/STUDENTS ENJOY INAUGURATION

The inauguration of UM’s 5th President occurred with much celebration and grandeur in spite of rain and concerns about Hurricane Michelle.

Newly inaugurated President Donna Shalala pictured here is surrounded by RSMAS faculty Arthur Myrberg (MBF), Fernando Moreno (MAF) and Peter Glynn (MBF), left to right. Peter Glynn (with his Darwin Award gleaming in the sun), represented the Rosenstiel School, served as a grand marshal in the academic procession. Jennifer Hanafin served as the RSMAS student marshal. Jonills Braddock and Mary Bunge were the university-wide and Medical School grand marshals, respectively. Representing the oldest participating university, Cambridge University (founded in 1209), was Christopher Harrison (MGG). Best wishes to President Donna Shalala as she takes over the helm of the University of Miami.

ALUMNI GATHERING SCHEDULED FOR AGU

Will you be in San Francisco on December 13th? If so, you are cordially invited to a special Alumni Reception. The Rosenstiel School is pleased to invite alumni, students, faculty and friends of the school to a West Coast Reunion in conjunction with the American Geophysical Union (AGU) Fall Meeting. Join us at the San Francisco Marriott on December 13, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. for cocktails and hors d’oeuvres. Please RSVP to the Office of Advancement at (305) 361-4629.

PEOPLE AND THE SEA MURAL CONTEST

To celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the University of Miami, the Rosenstiel School hosted a mural contest for local 4th and 5th grade classes. The murals were to depict the connections between people and the sea and were judged based on creativity, style, accuracy and how well they incorporated twelve elements including fish, mangroves, ships, coral reefs, recreation, beach, and conservation. Ten schools participated in the contest. We are proud to present the Winners:

1st Place mural from Mrs. Barbara Ploekin and Meem Ferre’s Succa’s 5th grade class of No. Beach Elementary,

2nd Place mural from Mrs. Barbara Fernandez’s 5th grade class of Olinda Elementary, and

3rd Place mural from Mrs. Gilien Furr and Pat Turtle’s 5th grade class of Devon Aire Elementary.

President Donna Shalala presented the awards along with Dean Otis Brown on Saturday October 27. After the ceremony, our Assistant Dean Ellen Prager gave an interactive talk entitled “Cool Creatures of the Sea” to the contest participants and the general public. Winning murals have been displayed at the Nature Center at Crandon Park, Dadeland Mall and the Lowe Art Museum and are now displayed in the Rosenstiel library until the second week of December.

Submitted by Amy Tantivit
MSGSO NEWS

Things have slowed down on the MSGSO front since the auction, and the reps and officers are busy catching up on their own work! We would like to congratulate the MGG students who have just completed their comps.

October ended with a blast at the Halloween party. Thanks to everyone who attended for making it such a success. There were all sorts of wonderful costumes, and I’m glad to say that just about everyone who attended dressed up! You can check the web site under “What’s New” to see pictures from this and other events.

Now, however, it’s a time for serious business as we approach the end of the semester. Finals are approaching. Good luck to all those who have to take them. However, the end of the semester isn’t all bad. Christmas and Hanukkah are coming and we all know what that means—HOLIDAY PARTIES!!! Yes, for those newcomers, this is the time of year when the faculty, staff, and students come together to eat, drink, and be merry. Find out when your department is holding their party, but be sure to hit the MSGSO holiday party on December 7th in the Smith Commons. It should be a great time, so don’t be the only one missing out!

Finally, don’t forget about the wonderful new addition to the MSC lobby area. The fish tank should be up and running very quickly. Don’t forget to put in your donation to be able to have your name printed on the plaque. You can do this by contacting Mike McGauley, Bob Wolfe, Stacy Reeder, Hollis Pyatt, or Kelly Denit. Be sure to contact MSGSO if you have any questions or concerns. Otherwise, I hope you had a Happy Thanksgiving…ate well and were thankful! We’ll see you next month!

NEW COAST GUARD VESSEL COMMISSIONED

A welcoming ceremony for the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter “Ibis” was held on the Rosenstiel School dock on October 24th. Over 100 people welcomed the “Ibis” including UM President Donna Shalala, Rosenstiel School Dean Otis Brown, Rear Admiral James Carmichael and the UM Cheerleaders with the Ibis mascot himself. Tours of the Coast Guard Cutter “Ibis” were given to all that attended. The vessel will be stationed in Cape May, NJ, and will be used primarily for search and rescue missions.

FIRST WORLD CONFERENCE

Launched in the spring of the new millennium, The Center for Sustainable Fisheries was founded on the principle that the University of Miami Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science possessed the scientific strength to tackle one of the most daunting environmental issues impacting the world—the declining state of global fisheries. The First World Conference on the Scientific and Technical Bases for the Sustainability of Fisheries, was held November 26th-30th, at the Rosenstiel School, was the initial phase of the plan. This conference gathered the top scientific research minds and experts from around the world to formulate the principles and criteria for sustainable fishing. The final outcome will be a major publication containing the case studies as well as the discussions, conclusions and recommendations. The publication will become an invaluable guide for policy organizations, commercial entities and non-governmental institutions to use as a reference on scientific and technical matters regarding the sustainability of fisheries.

RED TIDE BREVETOXINS:

Research Update

The dinoflagellate known as Karenia brevis (previously classified as Gymnodinium breve) is a marine microalga found in the Gulf of Mexico and western North Atlantic; other similar dinoflagellate species are found in many other oceans around the world. Karenia brevis produces a group of potent neurotoxins called brevetoxins. On an almost annual basis, K. brevis forms large toxic blooms, known as Florida Red Tide, particularly along the west coast of Florida.

Fish are acutely sensitive to the brevetoxins produced by K. brevis. An extensive bloom of Florida Red Tide (like the one present in Florida since late in the summer of 2001) can kill tons of fish, which subsequently accumulate in the Gulf of Mexico and wash up on beaches.

Marine mammals (such as the highly endangered Florida Manatee) and birds also succumb to respiratory paralysis and other neurotoxic effects from exposure to the brevetoxins. One recognized human health effect from exposure to K. brevis and its toxins is neurotoxic shellfish poisoning (NSP), which can occur when people eat shellfish that have accumulated these organisms and their toxins through filter-feeding activities. NSP can be effectively prevented by monitoring and rapid closure of shellfish beds when blooms approach; in the US, the only reported cases of NSP recently have been from the consumption of shellfish collected illegally from closed beds. In addition to NSP, people have reported a number of symptoms, including respiratory complaints, after being on or near the beach during a red tide event. Although it has not been scientifically and medically demonstrated, it is believed that these symptoms are caused by exposure to aerosolized brevetoxins and perhaps cellular debris during red tide events.

An interdisciplinary group of scientists from federal and state government, academic and research institutions have just finished the first phase of data collection for a human exposure to aerosolized brevetoxins during Florida red tide events. During a Florida Red Tide that formed at the end of the summer in the Gulf of Mexico along the western Florida coast, they monitored environmental levels of cells and brevetoxin, and the associated human health effects. Specifically, pre- and post-shift information on symptoms were collected, as well as monitoring pulmonary function and inflammatory response, from a group of lifeguards stationed at the affected beaches and from some of the scientists collecting environmental samples.

In the future, scientist collaborators will return to collect similar human health and environmental data on the same individuals during a time when there is no red tide event. The scientists also plan to evaluate the health effects from exposure to red tide in people likely to be particularly sensitive to the effects of brevetoxins (i.e., asthmatics and older people who have chronic respiratory problems). In addition, there are ongoing studies using experimental animals to evaluate both mechanisms and possible prevention of the exposure and health effects of the aerosolized brevetoxins associated with Florida Red Tides.

Submitted by Dr. Lora Fleming, MBF/Medical.