MEET THE PEER COUNSELORS
Marine and Atmospheric Science Program

Welcome all incoming and prospective students! As the Peer Counselors, we would like to introduce you to both life as a student at the University of Miami and the Rosenstiel School for Marine and Atmospheric Science (RSMAS). Incoming students are placed with a Peer Counselor who will help them make the transition to college as smooth and enjoyable as possible, both academically and socially. We are here as guides for incoming and prospective students who are interested in studying marine and atmospheric science. If you have any questions about the program, the campus, life at the university, or anything else, please email any one of us, and we will do our very best to help you find an answer to your questions.

Abigail Wisnet – Class of 2013
Co-Head of Peer Counseling Program
Majors: Marine Science, Biology (Pre-veterinary track)
Minor: Chemistry
Email: a.wisnet@umiami.edu

Welcome everyone!! My name is Abby Wisnet, and I am currently a senior on the pre-veterinary track majoring in marine science and biology with a minor in chemistry. I grew up in Wisconsin surrounded by lake sturgeon and cows but decided to head toward Miami for college to study marine animals instead (best decision ever)! I am helping with research on the Gulf Toadfish on the RSMAS campus as well as doing my senior thesis at a marine mammal facility in the keys. This summer, I am a NOAA Hollings Scholar researching heavy metal concentrations in dolphin tissue in San Diego. After I graduate from UM, I hope to attend vet school and work toward becoming a marine veterinarian. Last semester, I was able to be a part of the outstanding UGalapagos program! I am part of Pre-veterinary Society, Marine Mammal Stranding Team, Ocean Kids, Rho Rho Rho, and Scuba Club. In my free time, I love to play tennis, dive, and play with my dog. Feel free to contact me with any questions you have about anything!

Rachel Pausch – Class of 2014
Co-Head of Peer Counseling Program
Majors: Marine Science, Geology, Biology
Minors: Chemistry & Math
Email: r.pausch@umiami.edu

Hey everyone! I’m Rachel Pausch, a junior from just outside Los Angeles. I absolutely love UM, and it’s mainly because of our awesome marine science program. Outside of class I spend my time interning with the NOAA coral team, studying reef ecology and coral health, and am involved with our student research diving group. Since coming to UM, I’ve worked on projects with corals and climate change, spent time on the R/V Walton Smith, and studied field geology in Canada. Last summer I was in Washington studying orcas. Eventually, I hope to pursue a career that combines my interests in marine biology and geology. When I’m not in the lab I love to dive in the Keys, and on campus I work in the marine science office. If you have any questions about anything, feel free to drop by!
Nick Danger – Class of 2014
Major: Marine Science, Geology
Email: n.danger@umaimi.edu

Amazing classes, great weather, warm water, captivating ocean, awesome teachers, and an unbeatable social scene, what more could a college student ask for? These compelling characteristics are all part of why I decided to attend the Rosenstiel School at the University of Miami. I spent my childhood in a suburban town about 15 minutes outside of Boston, Massachusetts. Growing up, I had big dreams to be a vet. When I was 14 years old, my family and I decided to get a dog. After two days with the dog, I began to notice I had some type of allergy. I went to the allergist, and was tested for almost every major land animal; turns out I am allergic to almost every major land animal. That is when I began interning at the New England Aquarium, where I worked throughout high school until I began attending the University of Miami. I am now a Junior and am growing an interest in ocean topography, renewable energy, petroleum geology, and ocean sedimentology. The University of Miami is a place where I can be intellectually stimulated, have a great social life, and enjoy the benefits of Division 1 sports. Congratulations on your admission into the best marine school in the world, and do not hesitate to contact me throughout the year. Remember, it’s all about the [___]

Kate Dale – Class of 2015
Major: Marine Science, Biology
Minor: Chemistry
Email: kale.kelp@gmail.com

Hiya! My name's Kat Dale and I originally hail from Nowheresville Pennsylvania -- but my heart lies with the sea! I'm currently a sophomore majoring in Marine Science-Biology. I love all things marine science but I'm most interested (right now, anyway) in marine worms, seagrass/estuarine/coastal ecosystems, sustainability, and how we can form a bridge between the scientific community, the public, and the government using education. I'm the Public Relations officer for the UM Scuba Club and am involved with Rho Rho Rho, Sustainable U, UM Rock Climbing, and UM Aquarium Club. I've also volunteered with Ocean Kids Day and Art by the Sea, two events geared towards the education of children in the Miami metro area (both were a blast!). I'm also an artist and love to draw, paint, sculpt, and photograph in my limited spare time.... I am also an avid outdoorswoman and like nothing more than camping, hiking, diving, and generally going adventuring (road trips are my thing)! Can't wait to meet you all, and feel free to bombard me with questions!

Jessie Harshbarger - Class of 2014
Majors: Marine Science, Biology
Minors: Chemistry, Math
Email: j.harshbarger@umiami.edu

Hi everyone! My name is Jessie Harshbarger, and I'm from Denver, Colorado. I am a Junior studying Marine Science Biology here at UM, with minors in Chemistry and Math. Last year, I decided to transfer to UM from Humboldt State University in California (best decision I ever made)! Outside of my classes, I am an active member in the UM Aquarium Club, the UM SCUBA club (just got my Rescue Diving certification!), Rho Rho Rho and the Marine Mammal Stranding Team. In the future I plan on going to graduate school and finding a job that meshes my love for marine life, SCUBA diving and travelling!
Kathryn Doering -- Class of 2014
Majors: Marine Science, Biology
Minors: Chemistry, Mathematics, Modern Languages
Email: k.doering@umiami.edu

Hi all, I’m Kathryn Doering! I’m a junior studying Marine Science & Biology. Being a native South Floridian, I spent a lot of time near the ocean growing up, but I didn’t realize that studying marine science was a possibility until I came to UM! I’ve become fascinated with bony fish after volunteering in Dr. Su Sponaugle’s larval reef fish ecology lab for the past year; I will continue to volunteer in her lab this fall. This summer, I interned at Oregon State University through an REU program and completed my own research project on the effects of hypoxia on larval and juvenile flatfish. I spend my free time scuba diving through UM Scuba Club, playing sports for fun (I especially love volleyball), and going to club meetings and events. This year, I am the PR officer for UMAC (Aquarium Club) and a general member of Rho Rho Rho. In addition to being a huge science nerd, I love learning new languages and have studied French and Spanish in college - I hope to become fluent in at least one of them. I’ve tried a lot of new activities since I’ve been at UM, including salsa, muggle quidditch, and scuba diving- I suggest taking advantage of all the opportunities you have here! After graduation, I hope to work in a field related to fisheries in order to combat overfishing, through either research or management. This is my first year as a peer counselor, and I couldn’t be more excited!

Kat Munley- Class of 2013
Majors: Marine Science, Biology, Creative Writing
Minor: Chemistry
E-mail: k.munley@umiami.edu

Hi everyone, and welcome to the Undergraduate Marine Science Program here at UM! My name is Kat Munley and I’m a Senior studying Marine Science, Biology and Creative Writing with a concentration in Poetry. I am originally from Mount Airy, Maryland, a small rural town about an hour from the lovely Appalachian Mountains. I am currently an undergraduate intern in Dr. Martin Grosell’s lab over at RSMAS, which focuses on the toxicology and physiology of both invertebrates and fish. Recently, I conducted a study in which I analyzed the effects of prolonged lead exposure on the growth and reproduction of the pond snail, Lymnaea stagnalis; currently, I am looking at the acute effects of oil on silversides. In addition to conducting research, I am the President of UM’s ballroom and Latin dance organization, Miami Ballroom, and am a student instructor and team member. When I am not studying, researching, or ballroom dancing, I enjoy picking up a good book, playing beach volleyball with my friends, or taking a nice long run along Key Biscayne. Although this is my first year as a peer counselor, I am flooding with knowledge and eager to share what I know. So, feel free to pick my brain! I’d love to answer any questions you have about the program and college life in general. Drop me an e-mail anytime!
Skip McClinton – Class of 2015
Majors: Marine Affairs, Economics, International Studies
Email: s.mcclinton@umiami.edu

My name is Skip McClinton, and I’m a sophomore student here at the University. Being a Foote Fellow and triple majoring in Marine Affairs, Economics, and International Studies, the last year has certainly been a busy one, but I am looking forward to an excellent one to come. Throughout the past year I have been lucky enough to be a part of the Model United Nations team and competing with them, touring as a President’s 100, participating as part of the SG’s Supreme Court, and attending the majority of Hurricane athletic events as an ardent and loud fan. Growing up in and around Florida, I love the water, sun, and sand, and being able to learn and live in Miami with all of those at hand has been a blast!

Julie Sanders – Class of 2013
Majors: Chemistry, Marine Science
Minors: Mathematics
Email: j.sanders9@umiami.edu

Hello all! My name is Julie Sanders and I’m a proud native of Cleveland, Ohio. I will be entering my senior year here at The U, as a chemistry and marine science double major with a minor in mathematics. In past years I have worked in the field in atmospheric chemistry, in the lab studying biogeochemistry as a RSMAS undergraduate fellow, and this summer I will intern with NOAA as a Hollings Scholar. Though not yet sure what exactly I want to study in graduate school and beyond, I love chemistry (periodic table of the elements shower curtain, anyone?) and math, and hope to use these skills to contribute to society. This year I will also serve as the Vice President of Rho Rho Rho. In my free time I enjoy reading, playing the guitar and flute, and spending time with friends. I am looking forward to another year here and my second as a Peer Counselor. Please don’t hesitate to contact me with ANY questions you may have!

Charlotte Pechtl – Class of 2014
Majors: Marine Affairs, Psychology
Email: c.pechtl@umiami.edu

Hi! My name is Charlotte Pechtl. I am a junior from Franklin, Massachusetts majoring in marine affairs and psychology. I am the current Treasurer of Rho Rho Rho, the Marine and Atmospheric Honors Society, and I’m part of the SCUBA Club, Marine Mammal Stranding Team and Surfrider Club. I hope to do internships focusing on conservation and I absolutely love turtles, sharks, and rays. I enjoy playing pick-up beach volleyball and Ultimate Frisbee and hitting around on the tennis courts whenever I get the chance. I would like to help protect the oceans’ marine life for a career in the future as well as learn how to wakeboard and perfect my surfing. I used to play Club Volleyball (which I would recommend trying if you play!) and I used to be a marine science and biology major. If you have any questions feel free to email me any time!
Hannah Peck – Class of 2013
Majors: Marine Science, Biology
Minor: Chemistry
Email: hannahep91@gmail.com

Hi! My name is Hannah and I am a senior majoring in marine science and biology with a minor in chemistry. I grew up in Connecticut, but came to Miami for the warm weather and year-round access to the ocean. During my sophomore year, I was able to study abroad through the UGalapagos program. There I had the opportunity to do hands-on research with many RSMAS professors, study in Darwin’s living laboratory, and snorkel with beautiful fish, sea lions, stingrays, turtles, octopi, and sharks on a daily basis! I have also studied the evolutionary and behavioral biology of Ibiza Wall Lizards in Formentera Spain. For the past year I have worked for Lynne Fieber studying the neurobiology of *Aplysia californica*, and will be writing my senior thesis this fall. I am a member of Rho Rho Rho, Marine Mammal Stranding Team, and Kappa Kappa Gamma. I am an avid runner and enjoy being outdoors. I love terrestrial biology as much as I love marine science and in the future I hope to continue loving nature through hiking, snorkeling, kayaking, and exploring.

Joshua Lonthair – Class of 2013
Majors: Marine Science and Biology
Minors: Chemistry, Classics, and Pre-Med
E-mail: j.lonthair@gmail.com

Hey! My name is Joshua Lonthair, and sadly this upcoming year will be my last at the glorious University of Miami. I came to Miami with a passion for the ocean. And upon leaving I know that not only will I still have that passion, but I will also have the knowledge to educate others about the importance of the ocean in our daily lives. Unlike most people my dream is not to become a world-class researcher, instead I aspire to help humanity through medicine as an Oncologist. So even though this may be my last year of undergraduate education at the University of Miami, I plan on being school for a little bit longer. I have learned a great deal while at the university. This comes from not only taking many courses, but also from doing independent research with professors. This previous year I worked in Dr. Schmale’s lab doing research about cancer in a species of damselfish. This past summer I spent my time doing research at the University of Mississippi Medical Center on cochlear implants. And this upcoming year I will be working on my senior thesis with Dr. McDonald on the factors that control pulsatile urea excretion in toadfish. Beyond spending time in the lab, I also dedicate myself to a number of extracurricular activities. This upcoming year, I will be hard at work as a member of the Homecoming Executive Committee, a member of the Student Activity Fee Allocation Committee, and as the Public Relations Chair of Rho Rho Rho: The Marine and Atmospheric Honor Society. I cannot wait to meet the new freshman, and help them on their way to becoming Canes for Life! If you have any questions that you would like to ask me please e-mail me, I would be glad to answer them.
Emily Estes – Class of 2013
Majors: Marine Science, Biology
Minor: Chemistry
Email: e.estes@umiami.edu

Hey, I’m Emily Estes and I am a senior majoring in Marine Science Biology! This is my second year as an MSC Peer Counselor and I am so pumped to meet everyone! I am originally from Houston, Texas, but I also spent a year after high school studying and volunteering all over Israel. I am completely and utterly fascinated with marine mammals and after I graduate, I aspire to train dolphins and work at an interaction and research facility. Instead of going back to Houston this summer, I spent my time interning at Marineland, which is a Dolphin Interaction Facility in St. Augustine, Florida. I also LOVE snorkeling, swimming, and pretty much anything having to do with water! When I am not in class, I’m almost always in Hecht Residential College, since I am RA on Pentland 2! I am also a member of Rho Rho Rho, am involved with Ocean Awareness week and Ocean Kids, and love helping out with campus events like Hurricanes Help the Hometown and other traditions like Homecoming and Sportsfest! I’m so excited to be a peer counselor this year, so if you have any questions, don’t hesitate to ask!

Jorie Heilman – Class of 2015
Majors: Marine Affairs, Sociology
Minor: Ecosystem Science and Policy
Email: j.heilman@umiami.edu

Hi, my name is Jorie. I’m going to be a sophomore and I am majoring in Marine Affairs and Sociology. In between classes and studying, I work in a biology lab that does DNA research on Alpheus a type of marine shrimp. Also, I am part of the Scuba club, Rho Rho Rho and a Jewish youth group called Maimonides. I have pursued my love of the oceans by volunteering for four years in the Education department of the New England Aquarium, studying marine reserves in the Caribbean and sailing to the Gulf Stream on a tall ship while conducting ocean research. This summer, I am interning with a nature center designing and running educational programs for families. I am so excited to be a peer counselor in the fall and am happy to answers any questions.

Ally Levy – Class of 2014
Majors: Marine Science, Biology, Broadcast Journalism/Motion Pictures
Minor: Chemistry, Psychology
Email: alcyone@umail.miami.edu

Hey guys! I’m Ally Levy from Houston, Texas. I’m currently a junior with many majors and a few ideas of what I want to do when I graduate. I plan to get my masters in Marine Mammal Studies at the University of Miami and either work at Sea World or make documentaries. I am currently Captain of the Hurrcanettes dance team, Vice Chair of Quantum Entertainment, and member of Kappa Kappa Gamma, the Marine Mammal Stranding Team and Rho Rho Rho. I’m so excited to help out and can't wait to get to know everyone!
Megan Piechowski – Class of 2013
Major: Marine Science, Biology
Minor: Chemistry
Email: m.piechowski@umiami.edu

Hi! My name is Megan Piechowski. I am a senior majoring in marine science and biology, with a minor in chemistry. Although I love my hometown of Austin, Texas, I moved to Miami because of my love for the ocean, and everything that lives in it. My real passion lies in cephalopods and sharks, and I love learning new things about them! The past two years at UM have been amazing! I’m met life-long friends through my semester studying abroad last spring in the Galapagos Islands with 14 other amazing UM students (including several other Peer counselors). I also love the time I spend in several UM organizations, like the UM Women’s Lacrosse team, the SCUBA club (where I earned my Advanced certification), Rho Rho Rho, and being part of this peer counseling group. I absolutely love traveling and every water sport imaginable in the ocean, so when I’m not in class I’m always down for an adventure with my friends! In the future I plan on attending graduate school to earn my Ph.D. so I can continue learning through field work and research!

Rhea Berg – Class of 2015
Majors: Marine Science, Geology
Minors: Mathematics
Email: r.berg3@umiami.edu

Hey! My name is Rheanne Berg, but everyone calls me Rhea 😊. I was born in San Diego, California, but lived in many different areas. During my childhood I mainly grew up in Bozeman, Montana. As for my teens years I lived in Chicago, Illinois, but now our family moved back to Montana to be closer to family. I am currently a sophomore, majoring in Marine Science and Geology and minoring in Mathematics. My father influenced the decision of my major. He was an avid scuba diver, and convinced me when I was around twelve years old to try it. Now I am a dive master and I love everything about the ocean. My next goal is to receive my instructor’s license and become certified in cave diving. I want to be able to study the geology of caves, but also still admire my passion for scuba diving and the water by continuing to be a part of the UM scuba club and learn about the fascinating marine life. My interest for the oceans and the geological characteristics behind it go way beyond a textbook or lectures. I love being out in the field and working hands on with my major, and the University of Miami is a college that makes that happen (even your freshman year!!). I also work as a Laboratory Assistant at RSMAS measuring the biomass of zooplankton, and identifying copepods. I have accomplished so much for just one year of college, and that’s because UM supplies the students with an abundance of opportunities that suits everyone’s interest. When I am not concentrating on school I love to watch football (GO Bears and the Hurricanes!), continue my passion in photography (underwater and on land), scuba dive, experience new places with my friends, and go dancing! I look forward to meeting all of you. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have 😊!
Jeremy Berman—Class of 2013  
Majors: Meteorology, Mathematics  
Minor: Physics  
Email: j.berman10@umiami.edu

Hi there! My name is Jeremy Berman, and I am a senior at the University of Miami from the “Windy City” a.k.a. Chicago, Illinois. Living in Chicago exposed me to many wonderful atmospheric phenomena, from freezing snowstorms to spectacular severe storms. Naturally, when deciding where to go to college to study the weather, I looked at the University of Miami. Where better to learn about the weather than the capital of the world for hurricanes and severe storms? Here I have the amazing opportunity to visit world-renowned meteorology centers such as the National Hurricane Center and work alongside experts in my field at RSMAS. I have chosen to major in Meteorology and Mathematics, with a minor in Physics. I have also immersed myself in an array of fun clubs such as the Chi Epsilon Pi Meteorological Honor Society and the Atmospheric Science club. In my free time, I enjoy other hobbies by being a member of the UM Bowling club, as well as the co-founder and president of the UM Chess club. After graduating from the U, I plan on attending graduate school and pursuing a PhD in meteorology. I am always very involved on campus, so feel free to stop by and say hi or shoot me an email. I look forward to working with you all and helping you start your college career!

Jon Labriola – Class of 2012  
Majors: Meteorology, Mathematics  
Minor: Education  
Email: j.labrida@umiami.edu

Hello, my name is Jon Labriola, and I am a senior this upcoming year! This semester I will be part of our School’s Triathlon Team, Atmospheric Club, Tutor at the Academic Research Center, and Treasurer of Chi Epsilon Pi Meteorological Honors fraternity. Outside of school I make sure to go to all the football games, compete in triathlons, and stop by the beach. As a meteorology student, Miami has helped me to become involved in the field. I am currently researching the prediction on tropical disturbances with my professor, Dr. Majumdar. I also just finished spending the summer in Oklahoma where I chased and researched tornados. In the future I plan to go to graduate school, and eventually be part of the education and community outreach sector of this field. Please email me with any questions, I look forward to meeting all of you, and welcome to the []_[]! - Jon