



Pictured from Left to Right, MATES students Kate Doherty, Jenna Kwiecinski, MATES advisor Dr. John Wnek, AFS 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Dr. Steve McMullin, Stockton University student Owen Mulvey-McFerron, Chet Tozer, David Brummer, Stockton advisor Dr. Mark Sullivan and Roland Hagan

## **TWO STUDENT SUBUNITS WELCOMED BY THE MID-ATLANTIC CHAPTER of the AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY**

On October 29, 2015 the Mid-Atlantic Chapter (MAC) of the American Fisheries Society (AFS) welcomed two student subunits as they were officially recognized by AFS 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Dr. Steve McMullin at the annual chapter meeting held in Cape May, NJ. Both Marine Academy of Technology and Environmental Science (MATES) and Stockton University students attended with great awareness of the networking possibilities while soaking up the knowledge being disseminated in the daily presentations of in-depth research with an outlook to broaden horizons in fisheries. The advisors, Dr. John Wnek from MATES and Dr. Mark Sullivan from Stockton were on hand for the induction ceremony held during the business meeting. Working together with the freshly installed officers to organize new members was invigorating for the soul of what the future holds in the aquatic sciences. Dr. McMullin also announced that the students from MATES are the first ever High-School level student subunit of the American Fisheries Society. It is hoped that this may be a model for future involvement of those with a passion for the underwater world. The subunits involvement in the upcoming 2018 AFS annual meeting being held locally in Atlantic City will be integral part of their planning strategy.

*Roland Hagan MAC Executive Committee*

Updates from the subunits are as follows:

Students in the Marine Academy of Technology and Environmental Science's (MATES) sub-unit of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the American Fisheries Society are overly excited about being a part of the society. With Marine and Environmental Science as a key aspect of the school's focus, having a sub-unit hosted within its halls is a natural fit for the student body. Our students shall promote all aspects of fisheries, while being within the boundaries of Ocean County, NJ allows for work with many aquatic stakeholders. Our inaugural year has been a good one with a few goals to support the MAC-AFS. First, we are working on surveying local bait and tackle providers to include in a website for public access and promoting recreational fishing; second, we are gathering information to compile for a hand-out for distribution at local festivals to promote sustainable fisheries; and third, there are plans to host a gathering to highlight shark conservation on the 100 year anniversary of an event that focuses on the "New Jersey Man-eater", shark attacks during the summer of 1916 that happened on the beaches of Ocean and Monmouth Counties. The MATES student subunit is off to a good start and looks forward to building momentum as it continues to grow.

*Dr. John Wnek MATES subunit advisor*

Members of the MATES subunit attended the annual MAC-AFS meeting in Cape May to observe research presentations and interact with active members of the American Fisheries Society. After being recognized as the first high-school subunit of the American Fisheries Society, the MATES students, having been hard at work preparing, celebrated and began making plans for spring activities. MATES students plan to connect with local bait shops and collect surveys from local fisherman to map out convenient places to get supplies for recreational fishing experiences.

In the upcoming semester, the MATES subunit has also planned a tribute to the one hundred year anniversary of the 1916 "New Jersey Man Eater" shark attacks. As an outreach initiative, we plan to invite the author of *Twelve Days of Terror* to speak about his research for the book and attract the public's interest in learning about the ecological importance of sharks. Bringing people together will raise awareness for the conservation of sharks, and will contribute to the local knowledge of American Fisheries Society members. Long term goals of the subunit are to conduct research regarding the use of various baits by local fishermen and create maps of bait and tackle shops identifying the type of supplies they offer to help facilitate recreational fishing. The MATES AFS members plan to attend the 2018 American Fisheries Society meeting in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

*Jenna Kwiecinski MATES subunit president*

### ***From Stockton University***

Stockton University's student subunit of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the American Fisheries Society (MAC-AFS) is looking forward to a busy spring with a number of planned events. With the combined strengths of Stockton's Marine Science and Environmental Science programs, it was only a matter of time before AFS came to Stockton's campus. One major sub-unit project beginning shortly is an angler survey of the Stockton "Lake Fred" fish community in conjunction with the annual Stockton Fishing Club

Spring Tournament. The last formal survey in the lake (via electrofishing) occurred in 2005. The subunit is aiming to begin and maintain an annual survey including species ID, length, weight, and a few other metrics that may prove useful in assessing the health of the lake. Additionally, we will be installing fishing line receptacles at popular angling sites around the lake to reduce the impact of discarded line on waterfowl and other wildlife. To round things off, we are in the process of setting up a series of seminars that will showcase student and faculty research projects as well as provide students a forum to hone their presentation skills. It is shaping up to be a great semester, and we'd like to thank MAC-AFS for their guidance and support along the way.

*Owen Mulvey-McFerron, Stockton subunit president*

The Stockton University Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the American Fisheries Society (MAC-AFS) subunit was an active participant in the annual MAC-AFS meeting in Cape May, NJ this past Fall (Oct, 29-30, 2015). Three students were generously supported through a Stockton University School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics travel grant to fully take part in the conference for multiple days - while students from the "Introduction to Ichthyology" course joined for an afternoon session on Thursday. With Stockton's Marine Science Program currently expanding its Oceanography offerings, the subunit students were able to immerse themselves in a joint session with the Mid-Atlantic Bight Physical Oceanography & Meteorology group to better understand how physical parameters influence fish distribution. With a national AFS meeting slated for Atlantic City, NJ in 2018, the student subunit is already gaining momentum to take full advantage of this unique opportunity (a national fisheries conference in Stockton's own backyard).

*Mark Sullivan, Stockton subunit advisor*

As a recent graduate of Stockton University, I see the immense value of having a student subunit of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the American Fisheries Society (MAC-AF) within the school. As a student from the marine science program at Stockton University, I was able to take part in a number of unique research opportunities in both field and laboratory settings. Along with faculty-guided research opportunities, students in the program are offered a number of courses that give valuable, practical field experience as early as their first semester. I was personally able to take part in off-shore side scan SONAR surveys, analyze by-catch from derelict fishing gear, and perform DNA analyses on bay water samples for marine microorganisms. Having these opportunities is great, but being able to present them to an audience of fisheries scientists at the MAC-AFS annual meetings is invaluable. As young scientists, every chance to speak publicly about research is vital. These meetings also give students the opportunity to network with potential future employers or graduate school advisors. The Stockton University MAC-AFS subunit will only prove to help the program and the students within it continue to grow and advance within the field of marine science.

*Maria Berezin, MAC Executive Committee student representative*