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Students win cash prizes at conference on Louisiana’s coastal restoration

Awards were sponsored by Fugro and judged by Louisiana Sea Grant

The organizers of [State of the Coast](#) conference, an interdisciplinary forum to exchange timely and relevant information on the dynamic conditions of Louisiana’s coastal communities, environment and economy, have awarded cash prizes to five students who presented at the virtual conference last week. The Student Competition was made possible by [Louisiana Sea Grant](#), which managed the judging process and sponsored student attendance at the conference, and [Fugro](#), which sponsored the prizes of \$500 each.

The award winners were Madelyn McFarland, Nathan Geldner, Hoang Tao, Allison Scates and Rubayet Bin Mostafiz.

Madelyn McFarland’s presentation was titled “An Evaluation of Avian Use of Marsh Terrace in Gulf Coastal Wetlands”; Nathan Geldner’s presentation was “2023 Coastal Master Plan – Risk Assessment: Social Vulnerability and Other Metrics”; Hoang Tao’s was “Freeboard Incentives & Barriers”; Allison Scates’ was “Geomorphic and Shallow Subsurface Expression of Growth Faults in Mississippi River Delta Quaternary Sediment; Golden Meadow, Louisiana”; and Rubayet Bin Mostafiz’s was “Reduction in Housing Cost through Freeboard: A Flood Risk Webtool for Homeowners.”

“My congratulations to all the winning students. They have done an outstanding job of presenting their research,” said Robert Twilley, Louisiana Sea Grant’s executive director. “Poster competitions are an opportunity for students not only to demonstrate the importance of their work, but also network with other researchers and industry leaders – even when the competition is in the virtual world.”

[The Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana](#), [the Water Institute of the Gulf](#), [the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority](#) of Louisiana and Louisiana Sea Grant partnered to produce State of the Coast, which usually is an in-person event. Presentations and other content from the conference are available through Hubb, the virtual platform used this year. The conference theme was *Time for Action. Together*. More than 950 people attended the conference, including more than 100 students.

Speakers at the conference included Gov. John Bel Edwards, CPRA Board Chairman Chip Kline and National Academy of Sciences President Marcia McNutt. EPA Deputy Administrator Janet McCabe;

Richard Campanella, a geographer and writer at Tulane University; and Colette Pichon Battle, the founder and leader of the Gulf Coast Center for Law & Policy, also spoke at the event.

The 2023 State of the Coast conference will return to New Orleans as an in-person event.

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About the conference partners:

The Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to drive bold, science-based action to rebuild coastal Louisiana through outreach, restoration and advocacy. The Water Institute of the Gulf is an institution that connects academic, public and private researchers and conducts applied research to serve communities and industry. The Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority is a state agency that directs Louisiana's coastal priorities and implements restoration projects large and small. Louisiana Sea Grant is a college program based at LSU that promotes stewardship of the state's coastal resources through a combination of research, education and outreach.