Bruce Barber

My career in marine science began in the former Department of Marine Science (a.k.a. the good old days). My graduate research (completed in 1984) focused on the reproductive physiology of bay scallops. My advisor, Norm Blake, and committee members Jose Torres, Ted VanVleet, Gabe Vargo and John Lawrence all provided valuable input. I left St. Pete to start a postdoctoral position at the Rutgers University Shellfish Laboratory, where I transitioned into research on disease physiology, primarily on oysters affected by Haplosporidium nelsoni. From there I moved to the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, where I continued research on oysters, oyster diseases (H. nelson and Perkinsus marinus), triploidy and non-native species. A few years later, I accepted an offer at the University of Maine to lead their aquaculture program. While there, I was involved in the creation of the School of Marine Sciences and was PI on NFS grants to improve research capacity in the marine sciences. We were able to hire additional faculty and develop three separate facilities for conducting research related to cold water, marine aquaculture. As a result of these efforts, the USDA established its own research facility in Maine. I was tenured in 1998 and promoted to professor in 2002.

While at UMaine, my research expanded to include microcell disease (Bonamia ostrea) of European oysters and both gonadal neoplasia and disseminated sarcoma of soft-shell clams. However, after 10 long, cold winters, my wife, Susan and I decided to move back to Florida to be closer to family. I began teaching at Eckerd College in 2003, but took a hiatus to work for another marine science alum, Steve Walker, to establish a marine consulting firm in St. Petersburg. Unfortunately, the recession took its toll; I have been back at Eckerd College since 2012. I have recently taken on the role of Executive Director of the newly formed Gulf Shellfish Institute, located at Port Manatee. Our mission is to conduct applied research on shellfish aquaculture for both economic and ecological benefit.

Kara Doran

Kara Doran is an Oceanographer with the U.S. Geological Survey Coastal and Marine Science Center in St. Petersburg, FL. She received her B.S. in Physics and Secondary Education from Grove City College and her M.S. in Marine Science from the University of South Florida College of Marine Science. Her major professor at CMS was Gary Mitchum.

For the 9 past years, she has worked as a scientist with the USGS National Assessment of Coastal Change Hazards project, investigating the impacts of hurricanes on barrier islands with the goal of understanding processes that drive coastal change and predicting how beaches will respond to future storms.

Merrie Beth Neely

A phytoplankton ecologist, currently serving as a private environmental consultant, I graduated USFCMS in 1996 with a MS examining minor light reduction impacts to Shoalgrass in Tampa Bay, and earned my PhD in 2008 investigating benthic nutrient flux to benthic microalgae in Florida Bay. I enjoy organizing the monthly Tampa Bay Marine Science Networking Happy Hours.