



## Speaker Biographies

for

### **Priority Issues in Coastal North Carolina**

*A Forum by The Coastal Society*

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*Hosted by UNCW Center for Marine Science  
in partnership with North Carolina Sea Grant*



**Dr. Braxton Davis** has served as Director of the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management since 2011. The Division is headquartered in Morehead City, N.C. and oversees the State's planning, regulatory, and conservation programs for the twenty coastal counties. From 2016-18, he also served as director of the NC Division of Marine Fisheries. He is a past chair of the Coastal States Organization in Washington D.C. and currently chairs a multi-state work group on coastal erosion policy. Previously, Braxton served as Director of Policy and Planning for the South Carolina coastal management program in Charleston, and as a Research Assistant Professor at the University of South Carolina. He lives with his wife, Jen, daughter, Allison, and son, Cole, in Morehead City. Dr. Davis can be reached at [Braxton.Davis@deq.nc.gov](mailto:Braxton.Davis@deq.nc.gov).



**Dr. Greer Arthur** serves as Research Director for the North Carolina Collaboratory, which was established by the North Carolina General Assembly in 2016 and is headquartered at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Here, she works with the Collaboratory team and strategic partners in public and private sectors to fulfill the organization's mission of transforming academic research into practical information for use by State and local governments and the communities they serve. Greer joined the Collaboratory in 2022. Throughout her career, she has been committed to advancing research to achieve tangible, real-world impact through a variety of communication, administration and management roles both within and outside academia. Originally from the UK, Greer is a molecular biologist by training, with a bachelor's degree from Sheffield Hallam University and doctoral degree from the University of Leicester. Dr. Arthur can be reached at [gkarthur@unc.edu](mailto:gkarthur@unc.edu).

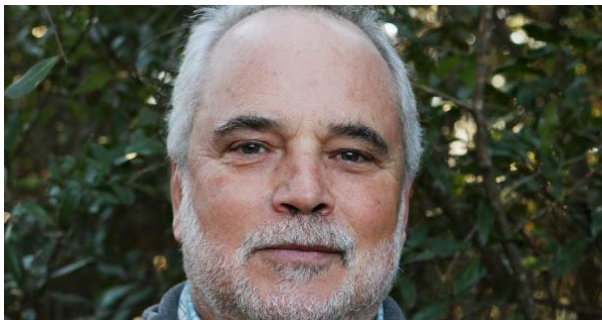


**Mackenzie Todd** is the Coastal Resiliency Coordinator for the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management, located in Morehead City. Her primary responsibility is to manage the North Carolina Resilient Coastal Communities Program (RCCP). She has a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science and a Master of Science in Coastal and Ocean Policy from the University of North Carolina Wilmington. Mackenzie previously worked as the Town Planner for Morehead City, where she served as the Community Rating System Coordinator. She currently serves on the steering committee for the South Atlantic Salt Marsh Initiative (SASMI) and the Hazard

Identification Technical Advisory Group for the North Carolina Flood Resiliency Blueprint. Mackenzie can be reached at [Mackenzie.Todd@deq.nc.gov](mailto:Mackenzie.Todd@deq.nc.gov).



**Ryan Davenport** is the Shore Protection Manager for Carteret County, North Carolina. Mr. Davenport has more than 20 years of local, state and federal coastal management experience. For 14 years prior to coming to the County, he had been employed by the N.C. Department of Environmental Quality as senior environmental specialist of the Division of Coastal Management. His experience also includes work as environmental planner for the Department of Land and Natural Resources for the state of Hawaii and field representative for the N.C. Division of Coastal Management. His expertise includes leadership, resource regulation, project management, strategic planning, and community outreach. Mr. Davenport is a 1999 graduate of N.C. State University with a bachelor's degree in environmental science. Ryan can be reached at [Ryan.Davenport@carteretcountync.gov](mailto:Ryan.Davenport@carteretcountync.gov).



**Todd Miller** is the founder and executive director of the North Carolina Coastal Federation, a nonprofit with over 16,000 supporters working for a healthier North Carolina coast. A coastal North Carolina native from the community of Ocean in Carteret County, Miller grew the organization from a one-man (and a dog) venture in a back room of his house to three offices covering the North Carolina coast. With 40 staffers and a multi-million-dollar budget targeted for educating the public, advocating for a clean coast and restoring fisheries habitats and water quality and

shorelines, the Federation takes on projects, and partners with others in hundreds of endeavors that influence these priorities. A graduate of University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, from which he holds undergraduate and master's degrees, Miller was selected as a distinguished alumnus by the university in 2013 and honored with a 2015 "Hero of the Seas" award by the Peter Benchley Ocean Awards. Along with numerous other awards and recognitions, Miller is a founding board member and still serves on the board of Restore America's Estuaries and currently serves on the Board of Visitors for the UNC Institute for the Environment and as a board member on the Leadership Committee for the Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Partnership. Todd can be reached at [toddm@nccoast.org](mailto:toddm@nccoast.org).



**Rachylle Hart** is the Program Coordinator for UNCW's PFAS Testing Network. Rachylle is enthusiastic about her role maintaining communication and operations for the PFAS Testing Network. Prior to joining the Network last June, she worked at a contract research organization doing organic synthesis. She received her Bachelors of Sciences in Chemistry and Environmental Science from UNCW in 2021. Rachylle can be reached at [hartr@uncw.edu](mailto:hartr@uncw.edu).



**Dr. Pingping Meng** obtained her Ph.D. in Environmental Engineering from Tsinghua University in 2019, with one year visiting research experience at Stockholm University supervised by Dr. Ian Cousins. Following her PhD, Pingping finished a four-year postdoctoral research training at North Carolina State University, working with Dr. Detlef Knappe. Her research experience focuses on the occurrence, transport, human exposure, and remediation of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in the environment. Dr. Meng can be reached at [mengp22@ecu.edu](mailto:mengp22@ecu.edu).



**Riley Lewis** is the White Oak Waterkeeper with Coastal Carolina Riverwatch. Riley spends her time researching and advocating for local water quality. She received her BS in Marine Science from the University of South Carolina and her MS in Coastal and Ocean Policy from UNCW. During her time at UNCW she re-established the TCS student chapter and today she continues to connect students with coastal professionals. Riley can be reached at [rileyl@coastalcarolinariverwatch.org](mailto:rileyl@coastalcarolinariverwatch.org).





**Dana Sargent** is the Executive Director of Cape Fear Riverwatch. Dana earned a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism from San Diego State University, and a Master of Science in Environmental Sciences & Policy from The Johns Hopkins University. She worked in communications for a large nonprofit out of D.C. for 13 years and moved to Wilmington in 2013 with the intention of transforming her career to align with her passion for the environment. She volunteered and worked freelance at CFRW and other local groups for 5 years while working remotely for the DC nonprofit and is honored to have been hired in January 2019 to serve as the executive director of this small but mighty organization. She loves music and her two magnificent daughters. Dan can be reached at [dana@cfw.us](mailto:dana@cfw.us).



**Emily Donovan** is the co-founder of Clean Cape Fear, a grassroots community group that formed in 2017 after learning DuPont/Chemours contaminated North Carolina's drinking water supply for over 40 years with toxic PFAS. Emily testified before Congress twice and helped secure reverse osmosis filling stations at 49 public schools impacted by PFAS contamination in Brunswick and

New Hanover counties. Recently, her group filed a complaint with the United Nations seeking redress for human rights violations due to excessive PFAS exposures from Chemours. Emily sits on the planning team for the National PFAS Conference series and is a leadership team member for the National PFAS Contamination Coalition. She frequents Washington, DC, and Raleigh, NC pressuring lawmakers and regulators for quicker responses to our growing PFAS public health crisis. Emily can be reached at [esdonovan@gmail.com](mailto:esdonovan@gmail.com).



**Karly Lohan** is the NC Program & Outreach Manager for the Southeastern Wind Coalition (SEWC), which she joined in January 2022. She graduated from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington in 2021 with an MS in Coastal and Ocean Policy, completing a capstone on the economic and environmental impacts of hazardous waste trade on developing nations. Karly is also a graduate of Salisbury University in Salisbury, MD, and holds a BS in Biology. Karly joined the Southeastern Wind Coalition in January of 2022. In her role, Karly leads SEWC's work to reduce barriers for offshore and land based wind development in North Carolina through grassroots and grasstop outreach. Through this work, Karly coordinates coalition building efforts for Offshore Wind for North Carolina (OSW4NC), which provides a platform for stakeholder groups to get involved in offshore wind policy and regulatory issues. Karly also coordinates the communications strategy for SEWC's 11-state footprint, which includes message development, advocacy, and social media management to provide credible resources, educate stakeholders, and garner support for wind. Prior to joining SEWC, Karly collaborated with environmental grassroots organizations on various issues including water quality, plastic pollution, and coastal restoration, and more. Karly lives in Jacksonville, NC, and volunteers on the board of directors for a local natural food co-op that works to foster and nourish the health of the individual, community and planet by offering natural, sustainable, and local products. In her free time, Karly is at the beach or in the garden with her yellow lab, Dudley. Karly can be reached at [karlyl@sewind.org](mailto:karlyl@sewind.org).



**Daniel Govoni** is the Federal Consistency Coordinator and Policy Analyst with the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management (DCM). In this role he coordinates state reviews of federal activities in accordance with the federal Coastal Zone Management Act and provides support to the Coastal Resources Commission, Coastal Resources Advisory Committee, and DCM on a variety of coastal policy issues and projects. He has been with DCM for 16 years and previously worked for the North Carolina Division of Water Quality and Duke University Marine Laboratory. He grew up in “Down East” Carteret County and still resides there with his family. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Studies from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. Daniel can be reached at [daniel.govoni@deq.nc.gov](mailto:daniel.govoni@deq.nc.gov).



**Dr. Martin Posey** is currently a Professor in the Department of Biology and Marine Biology at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. He has been at UNC Wilmington since 1989, serving ~18 years in various administrative roles including Chair of the Department of Biology and Marine Biology, UNCW’s Accreditation Coordinator, Associate Vice Chancellor and Dean for



Undergraduate Studies, and Director of the Center for Marine Science. Before coming to UNCW, he served as Visiting Scientist / Postdoctoral Fellow at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center. His research interests include community and trophic dynamics; benthic ecology; crustacean and oyster fisheries and ecology; aspects of shellfish aquaculture; reef habitat structure and function; impacts of disturbance, long-term trends in benthic community structure as related to variations in weather and climatic factors; faunal utilization of varying marsh vegetation, and anthropogenic impacts on coastal communities including sediment removal, beach renourishment, water quality and development impacts, shoreline stabilization, and effects of dredging. He has conducted research along the Atlantic, Gulf and Pacific coasts in a variety of temperate and tropical habitats. He has been an author on 69 peer-reviewed scientific publications and PI or co-PI on greater than \$13 million in external funding. He has mentored 47 graduate projects and 44 honors theses since 1995. Dr. Posey has been involved with numerous management-related groups at the national and state level, including state fisheries and coastal management committees/commissions. Among the professional activities he has been involved with are service on the editorial staff for 3 journals, reviewer for 18 funding agencies and 23 journals, external reviewer for doctoral dissertations, adjunct or advisory board member for 5 colleges/universities, and participation in various national and state resource development and management organizations. Dr. Posey can be reached at [poseym@uncw.edu](mailto:poseym@uncw.edu).

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