



April 2024

2023 Annual Report of *The Coastal Society*

<https://thecoastalsociety.org/>

Greetings:

I am pleased and honored to present to you *The Coastal Society's* 2023 Annual Report. Next year TCS will celebrate its 50th anniversary as a national leader in bringing coastal professionals together by actively addressing emerging coastal issues, forging partnerships and promoting communications and education --- a remarkable achievement only made possible by the very hard work and dedication of its leaders and the strong support of its members and affiliates. Our mission has always been ambitious and far-reaching, striving to serve its members and the greater field of coastal and ocean management with integrity, rigor and vision; all while maintaining a collegial atmosphere where every voice is heard, the sharing of knowledge paramount, and principled debate encouraged.

We also continue our strong focus on aiding students and young professionals to learn and advance through networking programs, mentoring relationships, and leadership positions within the organization. Our public forums, workshops, communications efforts, and social media platforms offer those beginning their careers excellent opportunities to meet and learn from other coastal practitioners while advancing in the field. TCS is privileged to serve this role.

Similar to many other similar-sized non-profit organizations there have been many challenges for TCS to face over the past few years. The impacts of the COVID epidemic, economic downturns, competition from other organizations, and other factors have affected TCS in some ways, but not in pursuing and fulfilling our many missions. We embrace the present and look forward to the future. We hope that you'll continue to join us on this journey.

Paul C. Ticco, PhD
TCS President

I. 2023 By The Numbers

Members: 89

Closing 2023 Revenue: \$15,782

Event Sponsorships \$3,220

Annual Giving Campaign: \$3,365

Student Chapters: 5 – University of Rhode Island, East Carolina University, UNC-Wilmington, Duke University, Eckerd College

Coastal Career Workshops: 2

Coastal Forums: 1 – Wilmington, NC

Coastal Connections Webinar Sessions: 3

Episodes of the *All Swell?* Podcast: 12

Subscriptions to Peer-Reviewed *Coastal Management* Journal: 60

Issues of Coastal Jobs List: 24

II. 2023 Leadership Team

Executive Committee

President: Tricia Hooper and Paul C. Ticco

Past President: Steve MacLeod

Treasurer: Chris Katalinas and Jeff Benoit

Secretary: Emily Vuxton

Executive Director: Judy Tucker

Board of Directors

Larry Cahoon, Kelly Dobroski, Jeff Flood, Ashley Gordon, Adrian Laufer,

Alexis Maxwell, Sabrina Pereira, Lisa Schiavinato, Andrew Wilson

III. Committee and Workgroup Chairs and Co-Chairs

- Chapters Committee: Lisa Kim and Kara Nunnally; Andrew Wilson and Kyra Hagge
- Coastal Connections Committee: *Trending Topics (open to all)* and *Professional Spotlights (for members)*: Ashley Gordon, Steve MacLeod, and Melanie Perello
- Communications Committee: Alexis Maxwell
- Development (Fundraising) Committee: Tom Bigford and Jeff Flood
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Working Group: Kim Corcoran and Gib Hartley
- Margaret A. Davidson Coastal Career Development Committee: Tom Bigford and Jeff Flood

For more information on the TCS Committees please see <https://thecoastalsociety.org/committees/>.

IV. Leadership Actions

In 2023, Paul Ticco was appointed by the Board to fill the vacant position of President-Elect. Following Tricia Hooper's resignation from the position of TCS President due to family health reasons, the Board approved Paul Ticco to succeed Tricia as TCS President, while Steve MacLeod graciously continued his position as Past President. No President-Elect has yet been nominated or voted upon.

Emily Vuxton was elected to Secretary for 2023–2024. Chris Katalinas continued as Treasurer for the start of a fourth year until Jeff Benoit was appointed to the position in May.

Directors elected for 2023 included Larry Cahoon and Sabrina Pereira. Lisa Schiavinato was appointed to fill the term of Kelly Dobroski who resigned due to new job responsibilities.

Further background and contact information for current Executive Committee leaders, board members, and committee chairs can be found on the [TCS website](#).

V. Student Chapters

The Coastal Society is continuing to foster the next generation of coastal leaders through student chapters that are committed to furthering the mission of TCS while also learning valuable career skills. Student chapters are run entirely by students, seeking to fulfill a mission of stewardship of their local coastal areas through education, communication, and fund-raising.

Student Chapters

- East Carolina University, Greenville, NC
Chapter President: Genevieve Guerry
- University of North Carolina Wilmington, Wilmington, NC
Chapter President: Bryan Dadson
- University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI
Chapter President: Katie Urbanski
- Duke University (dormant), Durham and Beaufort, NC
Chapter President: Kathryn Lienhard
- Eckerd College (dormant), St. Petersburg, FL
Chapter President: Allana Crawford

For more information on the TCS Chapters, including documents that detail the steps to develop a new TCS Chapter, please see <https://thecoastalsociety.org/chapters/>.

VI. Annual Membership Meeting

The Coastal Society hosted its 2023 Annual Meeting via Zoom on April 20, 2023, bringing together the leadership board, professionals, and student members to highlight the state of the *Society*, acknowledge challenges, celebrate successes, and recognize outstanding contributors. The virtual platform allowed members from three different time zones to join from the comfort and safety of their offices or homes. During the meeting, TCS honored several leaders in the field with the following awards:

- Outstanding Service Award: **Tony MacDonald**, Urban Coast Institute at Monmouth University; and **Geno Olmi**, Coordinator, NOAA Southeast and Caribbean Regional Collaboration Team
- Distinguished Service Award: **Steve MacLeod**, Environmental Scientist, WSP
- Robert W. Knecht Award for Professional Promise: **Sabrina Pereira**, Marine Habitat Resource Specialist, NOAA Fisheries' Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office; and **Ashley Gordon**, Dewberry
- President's Award: **Communications Committee**, led by Alexis Maxwell, NOAA National Ocean Service Program Coordination Officer; and **Judy Tucker**, Executive Director, *The Coastal Society*

Many congratulations to all of these outstanding individuals! For more information on the awards themselves please see <https://thecoastalsociety.org/about/the-coastal-society-awards/>.

Please mark your calendars for the 2024 Annual Membership Meeting on **April 17, 2024, from 12 pm – 1 pm EDT** via Zoom. Register at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2024-tcs-annual-meeting-tickets-865756138917>.

VII. Programmatic Accomplishments

1. TCS Strategic Plan and Committee Workplans

In late 2023 and into 2024, TCS developed a comprehensive, organizational-focused Strategic Plan that describes the vision and goals for TCS over the next two years. Each goal is divided into several detailed Objectives and Action Items, each designed to meet and exceed the mandates of TCS, and to facilitate both current function and growth.

Further, each TCS Committee (with guidance from the Executive Committee) was charged with developing a workplan that integrates its efforts into the overall Strategic Plan, and lists distinct activities that correspond to each Committee's directives.

The four primary TCS goals are:

GOAL ONE: Foster Dialogue

GOAL TWO: Forge and Maintain Partnerships

GOAL THREE: Promote Communication and Education

GOAL FOUR: Maintain a Robust and Sustainable Organization

For your perusal, the TCS Strategic Plan and Committee Workplans are available upon request, and will soon be published on the TCS website. Please let us know what you think!

2. TCS Coastal Forum: November 6, 2023, Wilmington, NC

The Coastal Society, in partnership with the North Carolina Sea Grant (NCSG) and the University of North Carolina-Wilmington (UNCW), held an in-person event *Priority Issues in Coastal North Carolina: A Forum by The Coastal Society* at UNCW's Center for Marine Science. There were 78 attendees.

Panelists representing universities, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations shared insights into their roles in addressing critical topics shaping the future of North Carolina's coastal region, such as:

- Planning and Implementing Coastal Resilience Strategies
- Research and Control of Toxins/PFAS
- Marine Spatial Planning: Offshore Wind Planning and Permitting, Sand Mining

During breakout sessions, coastal experts, managers, advocates, and students introduced themselves, and dove into the challenges of understanding and addressing these issues. Participants had the opportunity to learn more by interacting with student poster presenters. The networking continued afterwards at a local brewery. Materials from the meeting are on the TCS website here: <https://thecoastalsociety.org/tcs-forum/>. TCS is deeply grateful to its partners, UNCW and NCSG, and our sponsors, Lynker, Inc., North Carolina Division of Coastal Management, North Carolina Coastal Federation, Duke University Marine Laboratory, and East Carolina University's Coastal Studies Institute, for their invaluable support in making this event possible.

3. Margaret A. Davidson Coastal Career Development Program

In 2023, TCS continued to honor former TCS President Margaret A. Davidson (M.A.D.), a luminary, mentor, and friend, by hosting another 2 career workshops in her name:

- Duke University Student Chapter, January 26, 2023: This workshop was held virtually because the Duke University is a split campus allowing students at the main campus and those at the marine lab to participate, as well as professionals from their offices in several states. A total of 29 people participated.
- NOAA Sea Grant Knauss Fellows Program, August 4, 2023: Held in the NOAA offices in Silver Spring, MD, 40 people participated including the Knauss Fellows, speakers from diverse fields and perspectives, and the workshop team.

These workshops are designed to foster the next generation of coastal practitioners and stewards by helping students and early career professionals learn which skills, tools, and industry knowledge are in demand, and how to apply this knowledge in their career or job search. Each event is designed to meet the needs of expected participants and reflects the creative thinking of the M.A.D. Coastal Career Development Committee and valued partners. TCS continued to refine its processes for planning and conducting virtual sessions, and in 2023 experimented with "hybrid" events that allowed for both in-person and online participation. TCS also broadened its approach to include more speakers from varied backgrounds, and tailored workshop topics to the interests and regional characteristics of the partnering institutions. A hearty thank you to the generous 2023 workshop sponsors and partners, including: ERT Corp., Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve-Virginia, Lynker, Inc., Duke University, and NOAA Sea Grant.

In 2024, TCS plans to host several more virtual and in person career workshops. TCS members are eligible for free or discounted registration rates. For more information on the M.A.D. Career Development Program please see <https://thecoastalsociety.org/margaret-a-davidson-coastal-career-development-program/>.

4. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives

The Coastal Society advanced our commitment to fostering a culture of advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion by implementing a 2022-2027 Diversity Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Strategic Plan. The DEI workgroup, which grew by another four members in 2022, led the charge, and is continually working towards complete integration of these initiatives throughout TCS as an organization and all of its efforts. For more information on the myriad of ways that TCS is addressing and championing DEI initiatives please see <https://thecoastalsociety.org/about/diversity-equity-and-inclusion/>.

5. *The Coastal Society* Coastal Connections Web Conferencing Series

Coastal Connections is a web conferencing series launched in 2020 to engage TCS members and the broader coastal community through virtual web presentations and discussions. The series consists of two session types: Trending Topics and Professional Spotlight. Trending Topics sessions feature expert panelists who present on new or pressing coastal issues, followed by an opportunity for members and guests to ask questions of the panelists and offer their own insights on the topic. Professional Spotlight sessions are designed as a members-only opportunity to learn about the career paths of seasoned TCS coastal professionals, with a short presentation followed by open dialogue between the guest speaker and all participants. Learn more about these past and future sessions at the TCS Coastal Connections web page at: <https://thecoastalsociety.org/coastal-connections-web-series/>, including links to recordings of several previous Trending Topics events posted on the TCS YouTube channel. Past recordings of Professional Spotlight sessions are available to TCS members at private YouTube channel links; members may also send a request for these session links to TCSCConnections@thecoastalsociety.org.

➤ NOAA National Marine Sanctuaries Program

On February 23, 2023, this session focused on NOAA's National Marine Sanctuaries program, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2022. Topics covered included the history of the program, the value of the program in achieving its conservation goals, the challenges and rewards of working with local and regional stakeholders, and the diversity of sanctuaries as reflected in a few of the currently proposed sanctuary sites.

Featured speakers from NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries were:

- Ellen Brody, Regional Coordinator, Eastern Region
- LeAnn Hogan, Regional Operations Coordinator, Eastern Region
- Paul Michel, Regional Policy Coordinator, West Coast Region

YouTube video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bB6IH2Cvmo4>

➤ Blue Carbon Planning

On October 11, 2023, this session focused on how states can address the climate crisis by setting greenhouse gas reduction targets and developing related policies, including strategies to reduce emissions and enhance carbon storage in their natural and working lands. Due to their ability to sequester and store carbon, coastal blue carbon ecosystems such as tidal marshes, seagrasses, and mangroves are increasingly being incorporated into policy discussions around climate mitigation. However, the inclusion of blue carbon into state climate strategies can be challenging, and progress is dependent on a variety of factors, including data availability, funding resources, and effective governance arrangements. In this Coastal Connections session, The Pew Charitable Trusts and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources shared existing strategies and resources that states have utilized to overcome some of these challenges and incorporate blue carbon into state climate planning.

Featured speakers included:

- Alex Moya, Officer, U.S. Conservation, The Pew Charitable Trusts ([presentation](#))
- Dylan Taillie, Coastal Analyst, Maryland Department of Natural Resources ([presentation](#))
- Elliott Campbell, Ecological Economist, Maryland Department of Natural Resources ([presentation](#))
- Elizabeth Ruther, Officer, U.S. Conservation, Pew Charitable Trusts ([presentation](#))

YouTube video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0SbQaE9Hd2Q>

➤ Professional Spotlight

April 11, 2023 – Professional Spotlight Session

Featured Speaker: Dr. Larry Cahoon, Professor of Biology and Marine Biology at UNC-Wilmington and a member of the TCS Board of Directors

Dr. Cahoon provided an overview of his career, including his research on aquatic biodiversity and water quality, and his experiences in coastal policy. A copy of his presentation is available [here](#), and a recording of the session is available for TCS members by contacting admin@thecoastalsociety.org.

➤ July 6, 2023 – Professional Spotlight Session

Featured Speaker: Jill Meyer, Senior Vice President, Lynker. Inc.

Ms. Meyer shared her educational background and professional experience in coastal management and consulting. A copy of her presentation is available [here](#), and a

recording of the session is available for TCS members by contacting admin@thecoastalsociety.org.

6. Communications

In 2023, the TCS Communications Committee continued to craft posts on multiple social media platforms to amplify TCS news and events to a broad audience. Please consider growing your coastal network by following our Facebook page, LinkedIn page, Twitter, and Instagram. If you have ideas for future posts, please submit them to the Committee.

The TCS blog, hosted on the website, includes event summaries for Coastal Connection sessions, professional spotlight sessions, and additional TCS events and workshops; and highlights relevant coastal and ocean news and research. All members are encouraged to submit posts for the blog. If you would like to contribute please find guidance at <https://thecoastalsociety.org/blog/>, and email Alexis Maxwell, alexismax95@gmail.com with ideas!

7. Student Chapters

The student chapters of *The Coastal Society* serve as a nexus for undergraduate and graduate students who are helping to advance the Society's mission by providing learning opportunities and supporting career development for aspiring coastal professionals. Each chapter is empowered to design and host local activities focused on coastal issues, such as organized beach clean-ups. TCS recognizes the continued leadership of members of Duke University and East Carolina University to continue production of the **All Swell?** Podcast, in coordination with the American Shoreline Podcast Network. Now in its second year, the show explores relevant topics and showcases creative thinkers who are developing solutions to coastal issues. The podcast series can be found here:

<https://www.coastalnewstoday.com/curator/genevieve-gg-guerry-kyra-hagge-nora-ives-eva-may-and-kara-nunnally>.

TCS is exploring options for establishing new chapters at other colleges and universities, with an emphasis on engaging with schools whose geography and student identities are currently underrepresented by our existing chapters. There is also a particular interest in establishing chapters at minority serving institutions.

8. *Coastal Management* Journal

Regular and New Professional members of *The Coastal Society* receive free online access to *Coastal Management* as part of their membership benefits (a \$700+/year value!). *Coastal Management* is a premier peer-reviewed journal dedicated to exploring the technical, applied ecological, legal, political, social, and policy issues relating to the use of coastal and ocean resources. Student members are encouraged to access the

journal through their college/university libraries, and to consider publishing their work in the journal. More information on the Journal can be found at <https://www.tandfonline.com/journals/ucmg20>.

9. Annual Giving Campaign

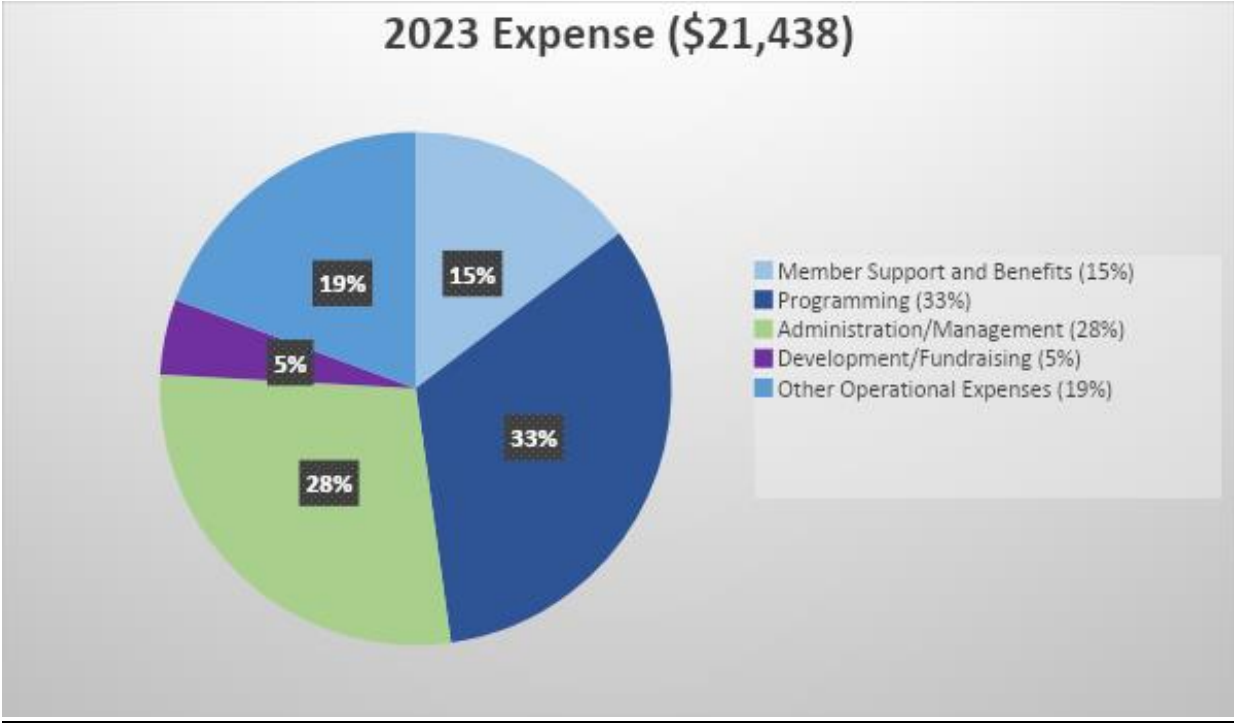
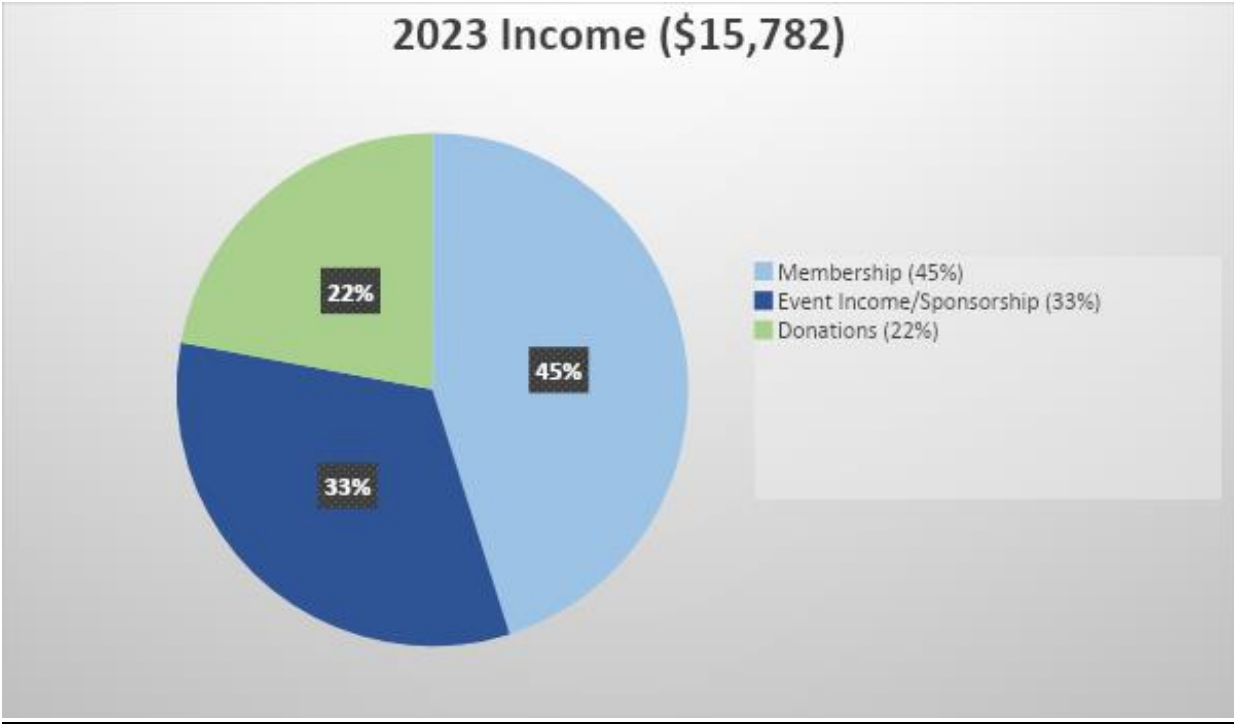
The 2023 Annual Giving Campaign kicked off on December 1, 2023. The Board is very grateful to all who contributed during the campaign, recognizing that several members were especially generous in donating \$300 or more. A total of \$3,365 in donations were received throughout 2023.

Donations provide essential financial support for TCS to continue our programming for students and professionals. Donations can be made at any time of year and are tax deductible. Please consider donating in 2024 at any level, and ask if your employer offers matching gifts for donations to non-profit (501(c)(3)) groups.

10. Financial Reports

- Cash In-Hand on January 1, 2023: \$10,387
- Cash In-Hand on December 31, 2023: \$4,731
- Net Annual Income for 2023: (\$5,656)

Income/Expense Graphs 2023



11. Opportunities in 2024

In 2023, *The Coastal Society* facilitated our outstanding programs and events thanks to the efforts of dedicated volunteers. Additional member support is essential to continue our initiatives and fulfill the TCS missions. Please consider what volunteer efforts you can join to strengthen both our organization and your individual growth.

TCS Volunteers:

- **Are you a natural connector?** Encourage one or more colleagues to join TCS, or coordinate a regional member gathering (virtual or in-person).
- **Looking for a creative writing outlet?** Write a story for the TCS blog, or join the Communications Committee to help manage our social media pages, MailChimp announcements, and website.
- **Love cool merch?** Help design new merchandise options for purchase on Zazzle.
- **Is social media your thing?** Share posts from our social media accounts for coastal-related conferences, webinars, and other news.
- **Enthusiastic about mentoring students?** Join the Chapters Committee to keep TCS professional members and student members better connected.
- **Interested in career development?** Volunteer with the M.A.D. Coastal Career Development Committee and help plan a workshop. Or join the Coastal Connections team and plan a webinar session.
- **Passionate about advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion?** Join our DEI Working Group to help us enact our strategic plan and connect with a minority serving institutions and other organizations.
- **Intrigued about fundraising?** Sign-up for the Development Committee, or identify a potential sponsor for a TCS event and help draft a request letter.

Our volunteers directly benefit from their service by expanding their professional networks, improving their leadership and communication skills, and feeling a renewed sense of purpose and connection to the coastal field.

Membership:

A TCS membership can help your career, keep you networked with other professionals, offer you opportunities to help shape the field of coastal management, and so much more. For a full description of these benefits, and more information regarding TCS membership please see <https://thecoastalsociety.org/home/membership/>.

TCS Office Contact Information

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Annual Report Acknowledgments

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