



**August 4, 2023 TCS-Sea Grant Fellows Coastal Career Workshop
Combined Speaker Bios, Headshots, & Contact Information**



Julie Palakovich Carr is serving her second term in the Maryland House of Delegates. She has championed legislation to ease barriers to voting, make roads safer for pedestrians and bicyclists, and to close corporate tax loopholes. Julie is one of the most productive Delegates, having sponsored 26 bills that passed the General Assembly. Julie chairs the Montgomery County House Delegation and the Early Childhood Subcommittee and serves as Secretary of the Transit Caucus. She previously served two terms on the Rockville City Council (2013-2019) and led municipal groups on environmental protection and planning for Rockville's future. A scientist by training, Julie has a master's degree in biology from the University of Minnesota and a bachelor's degree in biology from Boston University. She worked for a decade in science policy, first as a Knauss Fellow in Senator Maria Cantwell's office and then for the American Institute of Biological Sciences. Julie can be reached at julie@juliepalakovichcarr.com.



Dr. April Croxton is a Program Analyst with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in Silver Spring, MD. During her nearly 20 years with NOAA, April has served as a Research Fisheries Biologist, Program Coordinator for the NOAA RESTORE Act Science Program and Aquaculture Lead for the National Sea Grant Program Office. Although no longer conducting research, April's research interests include shellfish physiology and improving the flow of communication between researchers and decision-makers. April holds a B.S. in Biology from Virginia Union University, in Richmond, VA, and a Ph.D. in

Environmental Sciences from Florida A&M University, in Tallahassee, Florida. Throughout her research career, April has received numerous awards and recognitions, including being acknowledged as a US Science and Engineering Nifty Fifty X (times) 2 Scientist and a Richmond Public Schools Living Legacies honoree. During her time as an American Fisheries Society member, April has served in several leadership roles, including her current role as President of the Society. April can be reached at april.croxton@noaa.gov.



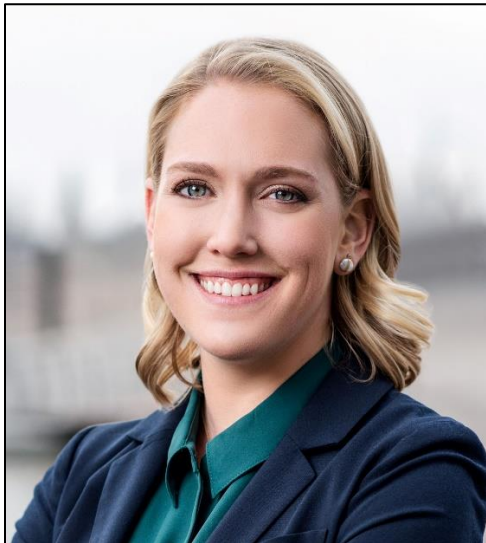
Dr. Bryan Oles is Deputy Vice President of the Science and IT Business Unit at ERT. Bryan has over 15 years of federal Program Management experience working with a variety of clients. He has hired hundreds of contract employees to support professional services contracts with the federal government. Prior to his role in Program Management, he worked as a Senior Social Scientist on a professional services contract with NOAA. He holds a PhD in Cultural Anthropology and has over 25 years of technical experience supporting interdisciplinary projects in fisheries management and environmental science and policy.



Curtis Bennett is currently the *Director of Equity & Community at the National Aquarium in Baltimore, Maryland* where he is responsible for developing long-lasting relationships with local residents and stakeholders, collaborating with them to develop environmental programs and projects that meet the needs of the community. He also makes sure that the organization integrates and applies principles of diversity, equity, inclusion and justice within its conservation mission. He began his career in environmental education and community engagement in 2003 as a naturalist at the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission. Curtis worked at the Delaware Nature Society before joining the Aquarium in August 2014. He is a member of several diversity, equity, inclusion and justice-focused committees and workgroups, including with the Association of Zoo and Aquariums, the Environmental Protection Agency Chesapeake Bay Program and the Choose Clean Water Coalition. He is a current board member for the Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake, serves on the Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education Advisory Council, and was recognized with their Robert Finton Outdoor Educator of the Year Award in 2018. Curtis received a Young, Gifted & Green 40Under 40 Awardee in 2021, on behalf of Black Millennials 4 Flint, the Congressional Black Caucus Sponsoring Member Rep. Donald McEachin, Climate Action Campaign, Black Women's Health Imperative, Environmental Defense Fund and Climate Power. Most recently in 2022, he received the [Blooploop 50 Award](#) as a top influencer within zoo and aquarium organizations. He has a Bachelor of Science in environmental science and policy with a concentration in wildlife ecology and management from the University of Maryland, College Park, and a Master of Science in wildlife conservation from the University of Delaware. Curtis can be reached at Cbennett@aqua.org.



Dr. Elizabeth (Liz) Cerny-Chipman is a Senior Policy Analyst in Fish Conservation at Ocean Conservancy, where she works to advance climate-ready fisheries and advocate for sustainability in the management of federal fisheries in the U.S. Prior to joining Ocean Conservancy, she was a Knauss Fellow at NOAA’s Office for Coastal Management, where she was part of the policy team supporting activities related to the coastal management, estuarine reserves, and Digital Coast. Her background is as a marine community ecologist studying rocky intertidal systems and response to environmental stress. She received a Ph.D. from Oregon State University in Integrative Biology and a B.A. in Biology from Pomona College. Liz hails from landlocked Santa Fe, New Mexico but now resides in Silver Spring, MD. Liz can be reached at ecerny-chipman@oceanconservancy.org.



Recognizing the need for sophisticated government and public affairs services in the community she holds dear, **Emily Patroli** founded ESP Advisors in 2020 with a mission to elevate ocean and environmental priorities. Utilizing her advocacy experience and deep understanding of environmental science, Emily leads the firm in all its endeavors. Most recently, Emily was Director of Sustainability at Invariant Government Relations, helping Fortune 500 companies lead on environmental issues and influencing U.S. policy through advocacy, partnerships, and data-driven solutions. She advised clients on food, agriculture, trade, and environmental and ocean policy. Before that, at Paul G. Allen’s Vulcan Inc., Emily helped lead

technology programming to improve maritime security and ocean health globally, while using strategic policy and storytelling to garner public and political support on key ocean and climate issues in the U.S. and internationally. While working in Congress, Emily served as staff on the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation where she spearheaded legislation and guided priorities at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the U.S. Coast Guard, among others. Previously, she worked for Senator Whitehouse as a marine policy fellow in his Providence, RI office. Emily received her Master's in Marine Affairs from the University of Rhode Island and her Bachelor's from the University of Delaware. Emily can be reached at emily@epadvisor.com.



As Coastal Training Program Coordinator with Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in Virginia (CBNERR-VA), **Cirse Gonzalez** works to inform and empower coastal decision makers and foster science-based and community-supported resource management and socio-ecological system resilience. Cirse brings experience in communications and outreach, natural resource management, responsible recreation and marine ecology from her work and research with a variety of agencies and organizations, including the U.S. Federal Recreation Council, where she served as Executive Director, and NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries. While navigating her career, Cirse has lived and worked in geographies from Glacier Bay National Park in Alaska, to Fiji's outer islands. Cirse has a B.S. in Biology from Duke University and a Master of Marine Affairs from the University of Washington. Cirse is animate about empowering and cultivating resource stewards through access, education and engagement in participatory processes. Cirse can be reached at cagonzalez@vims.edu.