



March 21, 2024 TCS-AERS

Margaret A. Davidson Coastal Career Workshop

Combined Speaker Bios, Headshots, & Contact Information



Dr. Treda Grayson (she/her) is the Supervisor for the Targeted Community and Compliance Assistance Branch within the Drinking Water Capacity and Compliance Assistance Division in the US EPA's Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water. Prior to this she was the Program Manager for the Deepwater Horizon (DWH) National Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) Program, which supports and carries out EPA's Trustee responsibilities for restoration in the Gulf of Mexico following the 2010 Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. Other roles at EPA included leading the review of pesticide registration labels, supporting tribes in developing environmental capacity through the administration of the Indian Environmental General Assistance (GAP) in the American Indian Environmental Office (AIEO), leading the National Coastal Condition Assessment (NCCA), and providing technical support to states, tribes, and other entities to develop and adopt biological, nutrient and aquatic life criteria for water quality standards development. Treda holds a Ph.D. in Environmental Science and Policy from George Mason University, where her dissertation focused on the characterization of stressor response patterns of benthic macroinvertebrates in Chesapeake Bay. She also holds a M.S. degree in Environmental Sciences and Policy from Johns Hopkins University, and a B.S. degree in Marine Science with Biology and German minors from Coastal Carolina University. In her spare time, she loves spending time with family, traveling (especially to locations near water!), engaging in community activities and outreach with her sorority, addressing DEIJ issues in coastal and marine sciences through the Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation (CERF), and mentoring the next generation of marine scientists. She lives in MD with her husband and son. Dr. Grayson can be reached at Grayson.Treda@epa.gov.



Curt Smith serves as the Deputy Director of the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission (MPPDC), which is the regional government organization for the rural coastal communities of Virginia's Middle Peninsula. He has 15 years of experience in regional planning working predominantly with rural, coastal localities to overcome challenges related to coastal resilience, transportation and natural resource planning, economic and community development, land use, and housing. Mr. Smith has a master's degree in Coastal Geology from East Carolina University and a bachelor's degree in Geology and Environmental Science from James Madison University. He has served in an advisory capacity on numerous state committees related to coastal resilience and natural resource management and worked to develop the MPPDC's innovative Fight The Flood resilience implementation program, launched in 2020. Curt can be reached at csmith@mppdc.com.



During her time as the Coastal Planner for the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission (Eastern Shore of Virginia), **Jessica Steelman** gained experience and accomplished great milestones managing many local, state, and federal grant programs and projects. In addition to project management, Jessica has participated on state-regulated committees. She has been a member on the [Virginia Coastal Resilience Technical Advisory Committee \(TAC\)](#) (codified by the General Assembly in 2022, providing coordination to assist with developing, updating, and implementing the Virginia Coastal Resilience Master

Plan), and the Eastern Shore Groundwater Management Area (ESGWMA) Surficial Groundwater General Permit Regulatory Advisory Panel (resulting in §9VAC-25-910). Additional experience includes participation in various project teams, such as for the [Stabilizing Barrier Islands & Enhancing Resilience of Virginia's Underserved Eastern Shore through Marsh Habitat Construction Project](#), and the [Eastern Shore Climate Equity Project](#), where Jessica also serves on the Community Advisory Committee. It is in Jessica's assertive and yet light-hearted nature to think out of the box, challenge common practices, and work towards efficient, sustainable, and inspirational completion of tasks and projects. In her eagerness to try innovative approaches, she aims to always "take a stab" at new initiatives and projects, seeking insight from experts in any given field to develop the most comprehensive solution possible. Jessica's belief that by continuing to self-teach and learn from other experts, in addition to engaging in relevant workshops and conferences, she will continue to grow with the times, address the challenges, and even perhaps be a few steps ahead! Jessican can be reached at jessica@steelmancoastal.com.



Mary-Carson Stiff is the Executive Director of Wetlands Watch, an environmental non-profit started in 1999 as a backyard group of Norfolk, Virginia citizens concerned about dredging and wetlands destruction. Today, they are the only statewide organization in the eastern United States working at the grassroots level with a singular focus on saving wetlands. Mary-Carson joined Wetlands Watch to help her hometown region navigate the complex issue of sea level rise. Wetlands and shoreline losses in the wake of increased flooding could dramatically alter the landscape of coastal Virginia, changing the economic and emotional assets that define our way of life. Growing up in Suffolk, Mary-Carson quickly learned the value of undeveloped land and undisturbed wetlands as she witnessed an expanding City's impacts on these resources. Local governments make important development decisions along the shoreline and as ours begin to disappear, these decisions become more critical. Her expertise in floodplain management, land use policy, land conservation, and local government law help her to identify ways to discourage development and incentivize conservation to ultimately promote nature based solutions to sea level rise adaptation. Mary-Carson is a 2013 graduate of William & Mary Law School, where she was in the first graduating class of the Virginia Coastal Policy Center. She graduated from Bates College in 2008 with a B.A. in English Literature and a concentration in Environmental Policy. Her past work experience includes the VA Coastal Policy Center, Virginia Outdoors Foundation, Land Trust Alliance, Virginia Sea Grant, and Episcopal High School. Mary-Carson also serves on the Boards of the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation, the Virginia Coastal Resilience Technical Advisory Committee, and the Coastal Virginia Conservancy. Mary-Carson can be reached at mc.stiff@wetlandswatch.org.



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.



Erin Reilly is the Conservation and Restoration Coordinator for the Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in Virginia (CBNERR-VA) at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. She's been working in Coastal Systems for the last 18 years and been involved with many restoration projects from Non Tidal to Tidal habitats. Her current focus is on planning and coordinating restoration projects at the CBNERR-VA Reserves. Erin's work focuses on long term monitoring, restoration implementation, and volunteer science. Erin has a B.S. in Marine Science and Biology from the University of Miami and a M.S. in Sustainable Environmental Resource Management from the University of Malta. Erin can be reached at emreilly@vims.edu.



Jeff Flood is a Coastal Planner with the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program (Virginia CZM) in Richmond, Virginia. In this capacity, he works with several state agencies as well as regional and local governments to administer enforceable policies that protect coastal resources and foster sustainable development in the coastal areas of the Commonwealth. His principal duties include program review, policy formulation, grant proposal writing and administration, and providing technical assistance to local governments. More recently, Jeff has been assigned to leading or closely supporting stakeholder groups related to abandoned and derelict vessels (ADVs), ocean planning, and shoreline management and has been tasked with writing proposals for nationally competitive NOAA funding under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). Jeff also provides subject matter expertise on shellfish aquaculture and coastal habitat restoration, acquired from undergraduate internships, graduate research, and his previous position with Wetland Studies & Solutions, an environmental consulting firm in Virginia Beach. Jeff holds a master's degree in marine policy from the University of Delaware and a Bachelor's of Science in marine biology from the University of North Carolina-Wilmington. Collectively, Jeff uses his interdisciplinary educational and professional background on a daily basis to work with both Federal and local government partners, bringing a unique perspective to TCS on how policy success stories at the local level can help inform state-wide and national initiatives. Jeff began his involvement in TCS as a senior in high school when he attended the 2006 conference in St. Pete Beach, Florida – the first of many TCS conferences he would go on to participate in. At that conference, Jeff administered a career survey which he had developed with the help of current Board member Tom Bigford, then working for NOAA. The survey results and advice from numerous mentors over the years have been instrumental in directing Jeff's coastal career path and he hopes to guide the development of the next generation of coastal professionals by helping to organize and participate in Margaret A. Davidson (MAD) career development workshops. Jeff served on the TCS Board of Directors from 2019 to 2023 and has served as co-chair of both the MAD Coastal Career Development Committee and the Development (Fundraising) Committee from 2021 to

January 2024. He is currently Chair of both the MAD Committee and the Development Committee. Jeff can be reached at jflood@udel.edu.



Carolyn Iwicki has always had a keen interest in fish and fisheries. After many years of keeping aquaria and recreationally fishing, she decided to turn her passion into a life-long career. She obtained her Bachelors of Science in Environmental Biology cum laude from Christopher Newport University in 2015. Along the way, she also developed an interest in the social and policy dimensions of fisheries, and decided to pursue her Masters of Public Policy at the College of William & Mary, graduating in 2017. She is now completing her PhD in Ecology and Evolution at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. Her research has focused on the socio-ecological dimensions of fisheries, ranging from creel surveys of recreational anglers in northern Wisconsin to the potential impacts of sand dredging on marine communities in the New York Bight. Additionally, she is also a member of Rutgers' Coastal Climate Risk and Resilience (C2R2) traineeship program, which seeks to train the next generation of climate change problem solvers in the region. Carolyn looks forward to beginning the next phase of her career in the public service in the near future. Carolyn can be reached at cmiwicki@marine.rutgers.edu.



Cameron (Cam) Bruce is the Environmental Program Manager for the Nansemond Indian Nation, a federally-recognized Native American Tribe headquartered in Suffolk, Virginia. In his role with the Tribe, Cam oversees all environmental programming, including oyster aquaculture, invasive plant species removal, native plant restoration, shoreline stabilization, solid waste management, and climate adaptation. He also helps coordinate cultural resources management, land acquisition, consultation on major development projects, and emergency management. He is the Tribe's appointed representative on the VA Coastal Resilience Technical Advisory Committee and EPA Region 3 Tribal Operations Committee, and he also serves in an advisory capacity on the Indigenous Conservation Council of the Chesapeake Bay alongside the other VA Tribal environmental department heads. He has a B.S. in Meteorology and a B.A. in Spanish from Virginia Tech and a Master of Public Policy from William & Mary. He is an avid tennis player, and also enjoys jogging and reading in his spare time. Cam can be reached at cameron.bruce@nansemond.gov.



Ashley Gordon, CFM is a resilience planner with Dewberry, specializing in coastal climate change resilience and floodplain management. She supports comprehensive resilience planning efforts, including flooding vulnerability assessments, policy analysis, and community engagement at the local and state level. Prior to joining Dewberry, Ashley spent four years in regional government at the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) where she provided technical assistance to localities for flooding and sea level rise planning. Ashley obtained her master's degree in Environmental Management with a coastal focus from Duke University and a Bachelor of Science from Miami University (Ohio), where she majored in Zoology and Environmental Science. Ashley can be reached at amgordon017@gmail.com.