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July 27, 2021

**GLOBAL CHANGE CENTER**  
AT VIRGINIA TECH



**ANNOUNCEMENTS**





## Meet the New IG3C Members and Thank You to our Departing Faculty and Fellows

Meet the newest members of the Interfaces of Global Change Curriculum Committee (IG3C): Global Change Center faculty members **Jennifer Russell** and **Holly Kindsvater**, and Interfaces of Global Change Fellows **Amanda Hensley** and **Tyler Weiglein**. Several IG3C members have recently completed terms on the committee. We extend sincere gratitude to IGC Fellows **Sarah Kuchinsky**, and **Melissa Burt** for their service this past year and Professors **Bruce Hull**, **Jeff Walters** for their continued dedication to the development of the GCC and IGC Fellowship since its inception.

[Read more](#)

*Save the Date!*

**The Global Change Center at Virginia Tech**  
invites you to join us for a



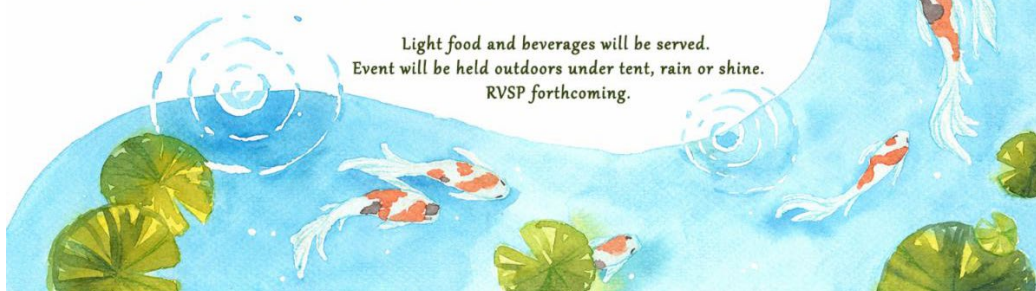
## Meet & Greet Reception

*to celebrate the GCC and IGC community  
and the start of a new academic year*

**Friday, August 20 from 4-6 pm**

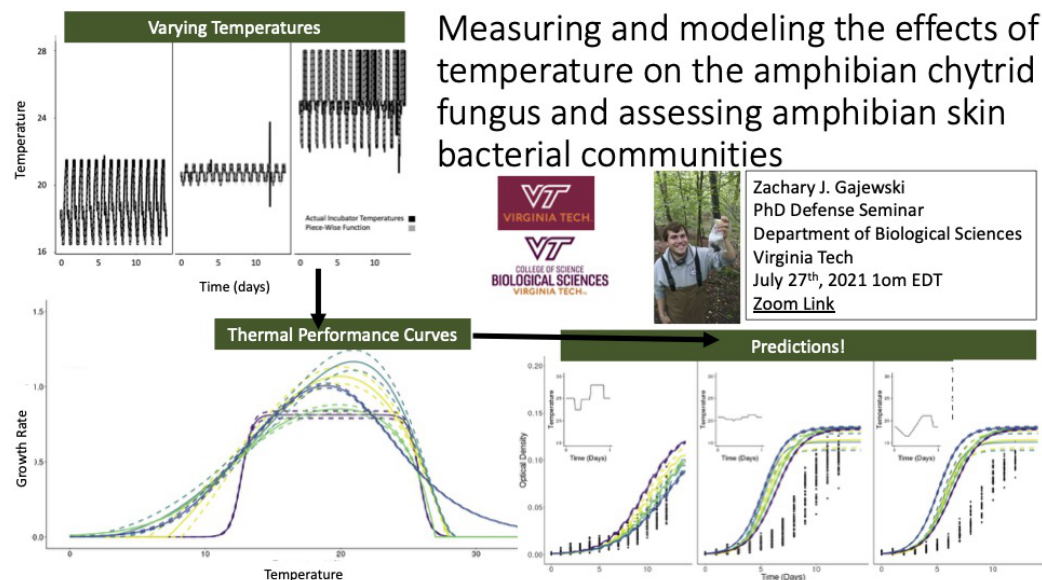
*on the lawn of the Peggy Lee Hahn Horticulture Garden  
200 Garden Lane, Virginia Tech*

Light food and beverages will be served.  
Event will be held outdoors under tent, rain or shine.  
RVSP forthcoming.



**Save the Date!**

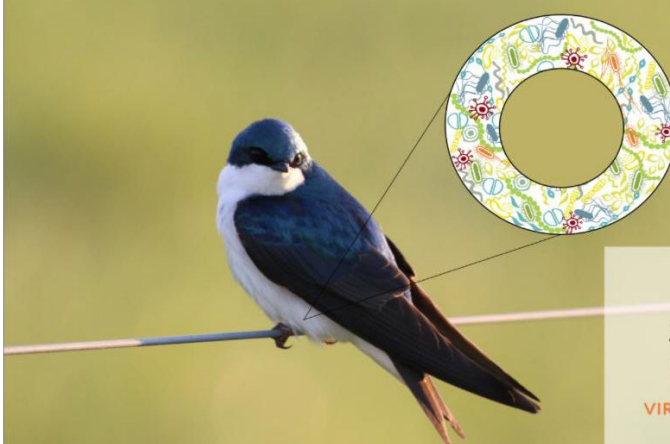
Read the July 16th letter from the Director regarding COVID-19 and social gatherings [here](#).






**TODAY! IGC Fellow Zach Gajewski's PhD Defense Seminar  
Scheduled for Tuesday, July 27 at 1:00 PM EST.**

Please join us in support of **Zach Gajewski** for his defense seminar, titled "Measuring and modeling the effects of temperature on the amphibian chytrid fungus and assessing amphibian skin bacterial communities." Zach has been studying with GCC affiliate **Dr. Leah Johnson** in the Department of Biological Sciences.

The causes and consequences of variation in the reproductive microbiome of tree swallows



**Jessica Hernandez**  
Dissertation Defense  
30 July 2021 | 1 PM EST

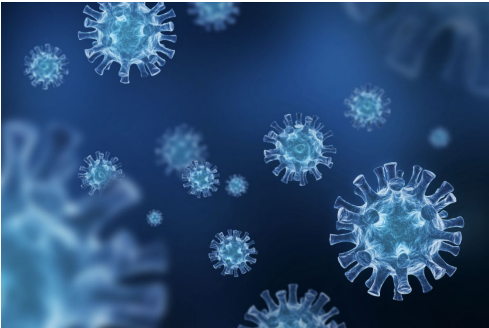


**FRIDAY! IGC Fellow Jessica Hernandez's PhD Defense Seminar Scheduled for Friday, July 30 at 1:00 PM EST.**

Please join us in support of **Jessica Hernandez** for his defense seminar, titled "The causes and consequences of variation in the reproductive microbiome of tree swallows." Jessica has been studying with GCC affiliate **Dr. Ignacio Moore** in the Department of Biological Sciences.

**Graduate Teaching Assistant Opening for New Course: The Science of COVID-19**

This fall, the Department of Biological Sciences is offering a new course, The Science of COVID-19, and is looking for a Graduate Teaching Assistant. There is a lot of flexibility in this position depending on the experience and interest of the person. The goal of this course is to educate undergraduate students on many of the core aspects of Covid-19 from a scientific perspective.



Details about the course and GTA can be found [here](#).

Questions? Contact [Ignacio Moore](#)

**FACULTY AND FELLOW SPOTLIGHT**

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### **Dr. Leighton Reid - School of Plant and Environmental Sciences**

GCC affiliate **Leighton Reid** is an Assistant Professor in the [School of Plant and Environmental Sciences](#) at Virginia Tech. Leighton has written extensively on ecological restoration and biodiversity conservation. His current research focuses on improving the outcomes of ecological restoration in temperate and tropical terrestrial ecosystems. Leighton advises restoration projects in Virginia and internationally and is a research associate at the [Missouri Botanical Garden](#). As part of the Virginia Tech community, Leighton's [research group](#) is composed of interdisciplinary scientists and students who value strong ecological curiosity, tenacity in pursuit of knowledge, clear and honest communication, compassion and mutual support. When not in the field, lab, or classroom, Leighton manages the educational blog, [Natural History of Ecological Restoration](#). The blog is a joint project of the Restoration Ecology Lab in the School of Plant and Environmental Sciences at Virginia Tech, the [EcoHealth Network](#), and Missouri Botanical Garden, a center for botanical research and science education in St. Louis, Missouri.



### **Paul Risteca - Department of Biological Sciences**

Paul began his Ph.D. in Department of Biological Biological Sciences at Virginia Tech under the advisement of **Dr. Jeb Barrett**. Paul is a graduate of Loyola University Chicago, where he received a B.S. in Bioinformatics and Molecular Biology followed an M.S. in Bioinformatics. At Loyola, he focused on characterizing the bacterial communities of the microplastic microbiome and assessing the interactions between microplastic, pharmaceutical contaminants, and microbial assemblages. Paul's current research is focused on the effects of climate change and the resulting changes in hydrological connectivity on soil community dynamics and nutrient cycling in polar soil ecosystems. Born and raised in the Northwest suburbs of Chicago, Paul was brought up living on the cusp of the population growth of suburbia, urbanization of a great metropolis, and the vast ecosystems in sprawling prairies of the American Midwest. He believes that his main role as an ecosystem scientist is to use his expertise to ignite a sense of passion for science in the public, and to equip policy makers with the information they need to make informed decisions.

[Read more](#)

## **AROUND CAMPUS**

### **Two GCC Undergraduate Research Grant Awardees to Present at the 2021 Summer Research Symposium!**

Virginia Tech's [Office of Undergraduate Research](#) (OUR) is hosting the annual VT Summer Research Symposium. This conference is aimed at offering participants

in organized summer research programs and undergraduate researchers at large the opportunity to gain experience communicating their research. This virtual conference will host 5-minute video presentations with live discussion threads to enable attendees to interaction with the presenters.



This year, two undergraduate students who were rewarded with a 2021 GCC Undergraduate Research Grant will present! Natalie Murphy, under the advisement of Erin Hotchkiss, and Tal Tomlinson, under the advisement of Emmanuel Frimpong, will both present during the 3-4PM EDT time slot. Please join us in showing our support of their work!

**Conference will take place Thursday, July 29, 2021 from 10am to 4pm EDT.**

Details about the conference can be found [here](#).

## New \$25,000 Award Program for Women in Science Working on Water Crisis

The Story Exchange, an award-winning nonprofit media organization dedicated to elevating women's voices, is celebrating its 10th anniversary by launching the annual Women In Science Incentive Prize. The cash prize will support U.S.-based women working to find innovative, solutions in the area of climate change mitigation and adaptation. This year, the focus is on women leading efforts in **water**

The Story Exchange will award \$5,000 incentive prizes and potential media coverage via The Story Exchange to 5 female scientists addressing climate change.

**Application deadline: July 31.**

Application and details about the program can be found [here](#).



## Fralin Undergraduate Research Fellowship Accepting Applications!

The Fralin Undergraduate Research Fellowship is a competitive award program that is open to all Virginia Tech undergraduates with a goal of increasing diversity in research. Fifteen (15) fellowships of \$1,000 will be awarded annually to students demonstrating academic capability and a strong interest in undergraduate research, enabling them to conduct research with a faculty mentor over the course of one academic year.



**Student Application Deadline: August 2, 2021 at 5pm EST.**

**Faculty Endorsement Deadline: August 5, 2021 at 5pm EST.**

Application and details about the fellowship can be found [here](#).

Questions? Contact [Keri Swaby](#), Director of the [Office of Undergraduate Research at Virginia Tech](#)

## Funding opportunities: iTHRIV Pilot Grant RFP

The integrated Translational Health Research Institute of Virginia (iTHRIV) is a National Institutes of Health (NIH)-funded Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) Program Hub. iTHRIV is a cross-Commonwealth collaboration between University of Virginia, Virginia Tech, Carilion Clinic, and the Inova Health System.



**iTHRIV has two new funding opportunities!**

### **Pilot Translational and Clinical Studies Program**

The goal of the iTHRIV Pilot Studies Program is to support innovative approaches to clinical and translational research to foster collaborative research across the iTHRIV partner institutions.

### **Community Organization & Research Institution Partnership**

This funding opportunity is specifically interested in applications that seek to reduce health disparities and improve health among communities that experience poorer health outcomes and have historically been excluded from opportunities to engage in research (e.g. racial/ethnic minorities, rural communities, women, low-income families).

**Application Deadline: Monday, August 30 at 5pm EDT.**

Applications and details can be found [here](#).

Questions? Contact iTHRIV at [iTHRIVAdmin@hscmail.mcc.virginia.edu](mailto:iTHRIVAdmin@hscmail.mcc.virginia.edu)



## Faculty Teaching Group Grant Accepting Proposals!

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning's Faculty Teaching Group Grant program is designed for faculty members who would like to explore a topic related to higher education teaching and learning in a small and interactive learning community. The primary goals of this grant program are to encourage faculty members to form collaborative support networks within or outside of their home departments and colleges, and to encourage exploration and discovery related to teaching and learning in higher education.

The program supports the exploration of a range of topics related to teaching and learning and groups will receive a \$2,000 grant toward their proposed goals. Approximately five grants will be funded each year.



**Application Deadline: Wednesday, September 1, 2021.**

Applications and details can be found [here](#).

Questions? Contact the grant program at [teaching@vt.edu](mailto:teaching@vt.edu)

## COMMUNITY



### **Science on Tap New River Valley Returns with GCC Affiliate Emmanuel Frimpong and VT Artist Hiromi Okumura**

**Join fish ecologist Emmanuel Frimpong and Virginia artist Hiromi Okumura to explore Blacksburg's stream ecology, through science and art!**

The Science on Tap New River Valley will host its first in-person event since the pandemic began, join fish ecologist and GCC Affiliate **Emmanuel Frimpong** and his collaborators on an exploration of Blacksburg's stream ecology that unites biology and art! See some of our local fish up close, make some art with Hiromi Okumura, Instructor of Studio Arts at VT School of Visual Arts, and learn more about the amazing aquatic biodiversity that abides among us.

**The event will take place at the Meadowbrook Picnic Shelter in Heritage Park on Wednesday, July 28, 2021 5:30 PM – 7:00 PM EDT.**

Registration and details about the event can be found [here](#).

If you have any questions about accessibility, please get in touch via [Facebook message](#) or email [scienceontapnrv@gmail.com](mailto:scienceontapnrv@gmail.com).





### **Gobblerfest is Returning to the Drillfield this Fall!**

Gobblerfest is an annual involvement fair to promote opportunities with student organizations, departments, and the broader community to kick start students' journey to [ExperienceVT](#). This free event was conceived in the fall of 2008 as a festival welcoming people to the Blacksburg community and has quickly become a highlight of the start of the academic year.

We encourage students planning to attend to browse our student organizations on [GobblerConnect](#) and come ready to experience over 700 booths, live performances, and rides - rain or shine!

**The event will take place at the the Drillfield from 2-5 pm EDT on Saturday, September 4, 2021.**

**Student organizations, VT departments, local businesses, and sponsors must sign up to participate in the event by August 1st.**

Registration and details about the event can be found [here](#).

If you have any questions, please contact with the Gobblerfest Planning Committee at [gobblerfest@vt.edu](mailto:gobblerfest@vt.edu) or 540-231-5431.



## Student-Proposed Campus Sustainability upgrades to be Implemented this Year

Electric vehicle charging stations, a monarch butterfly habitat in the [Hahn Horticulture Garden](#), and a compostable utensils pilot program are among the 27 student-proposed sustainability projects heading toward implementation in the coming academic year.

Through the [Green RFP program](#), students are able to play a key role in fostering a more sustainable university for future generations of Hokies. At the start of each academic year, the [Office of Sustainability](#) seeks proposals from student groups for campus sustainability projects that support [Virginia Tech's Climate Action Commitment](#) with a strong focus on energy conservation and efficiency.

[Read more](#)

## NEWSWORTHY



## **GCC Affiliate Kate Langwig Featured in National Geographic Article on White-Nose Syndrome in Bats**

White-nose syndrome (WNS) is a disease caused by the fungus *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* (*Pd*) that has killed over 6 million North American bats in less than two decades. Recently, researchers found some little brown bats, a species threatened by the disease, have genetic variations that may protect them from dying of WNS—a hopeful sign for the future of the species. In a recent National Geographic article, GCC affiliate and Assistant Professor in the [Department of Biological Sciences](#) **Kate Langwig** speaks extensively on the growing WNS pandemic and what the future may hold for brown bat populations unless more resources are dedicated to understanding pathogenicity and disease resistance. Further information on Kate's research can be found [here](#).

[Read more](#)





## **\$2.7 Million Awarded to Mosquito Research Group Co-Led by GCC Affiliate Chloé Lahondère**

The mosquito is a primary vector for disease-causing pathogens such as Zika, dengue, and yellow fever. With more urbanized environments and a changing climate, the ranges of disease-laden mosquitoes could expand across the United States, representing an imminent threat to human health. With the help of a \$2.7 million grant from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), researchers at Virginia Tech are now investigating how mosquitoes adjust their behaviors in response to changes in our own daily activity. As part of this team, GCC Affiliate and Assistant Professor in the Department of Biochemistry **Chloé Lahondère** aims to study how mosquitos process information at different times of the day to better understand how mosquitoes adapt their biological rhythms in accordance with their hosts .

[Read more](#)





## **GCC affiliate Paul Angermeier's Work with Federal Agencies makes Strides in Conservation Science**

GCC affiliate and Professor in the Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation **Paul Angermeier** was recently featured in an article highlighting the collaborative efforts between Virginia Tech researchers and federal agencies. For federal scientists, having a connection to Virginia Tech means that they can utilize laboratory resources and cutting-edge technologies as well as collaborate with colleagues in natural resources and environmental conservation. As a unit leader of the Virginia Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, Paul guides research covering an array of diverse subjects, from the efficacy of best land management practices in the upper Tennessee River basin to support aquatic health, to tracking the success of reintroduced elk in the coalfields of Southwest Virginia. For further reading, Paul and GCC affiliate **Leigh Anne Krometis** recently published an article developed through efforts by the Cooperative Research unit.

[Read more](#)



### Is it Safe to Return to the Office? GCC Affiliate Linsey Marr Speaks on the Safety of the shared Workplace.

As COVID cases drop in the U.S. and vaccinations increase, many companies and institutes are bringing their employees back to workplaces. However, many of these workers remain worried about the safety of the office as restrictions are lifted and viral variants spread. Recently, Scientific American asked multiple consultants, including GCC affiliate and expert in infectious disease and air-flow engineering [Linsey Marr](#), to explain the office designs and policies that will most improve coronavirus safety. Read more on the indoor spread of respiratory infections and Linsey's research in this recently published review article in [Science](#).

[Read more](#)

Do you have an opportunity or announcement you'd like to share with the GCC community? [Send us an email!](#)



FRALIN LIFE SCIENCES INSTITUTE  
**GLOBAL CHANGE CENTER**  
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The Global Change Center is a strategic initiative of the [Fralin Life Sciences Institute](#)

Global Change Center | Virginia Tech | 540-231-5400 | [www.globalchange.vt.edu](http://www.globalchange.vt.edu)

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