

Scientist Spotlight



Ron Scheuermann

What is your role as a scientist for CWC?

I am currently a research assistant in the biogeochemistry lab at LUMCON. My responsibilities range from field sampling to running assays in the lab. Currently I am running analysis on soils to determine Carbon and Nitrogen concentrations, salt marsh greenhouse gas emissions, and processing collected samples.

Can you summarize your oil spill research and describe any surprising findings you have come across?

Our lab's research for CWC is a multifaceted approach to understanding the effect the oil spill has had on the salt marsh of Terrebonne and Barataria Bay. While comparing oiled and unoiled sites we hope to gain a better understanding of the impact of the spill while creating a baseline to reference for future studies. What I've found surprising is the amount of erosion that is physically visible in such short periods of time. On some southward facing shores, we have seen ~10 meters of land loss in just a year or two. Actually seeing the damage that has been reported is sometimes unbelievable.

The Coastal Waters Consortium's mission is to assess the chemical evolution, biological degradation, and environmental stresses of petroleum and dispersant within Gulf of Mexico coastal and shelf ecosystems.

What is your educational background?

I earned my B.S. in Biology from Our Lady of Holy Cross College in New Orleans (now University of Holy Cross) in 2015.

What inspired you to become a scientist?

I always wanted to be involved in the biological field, but it wasn't until my sophomore year of college that I realized I wanted to concentrate in environmental sciences. I was in a cardiopulmonary physiology class when the idea of career in medicine no longer seemed to hold my interest. Being from Southeast Louisiana, I've always been outdoors enjoying sportsman's paradise, and now I have the opportunity to help ensure it stays a paradise for future generations.

Can you describe what you enjoy the most about conducting scientific research?

I really enjoy numbers and patterns, and there's nothing more exciting than finding a trend in nature. It's really something when after hours upon hours of collection, analysis, and data input you can see your results manifest in a coherent pattern.

