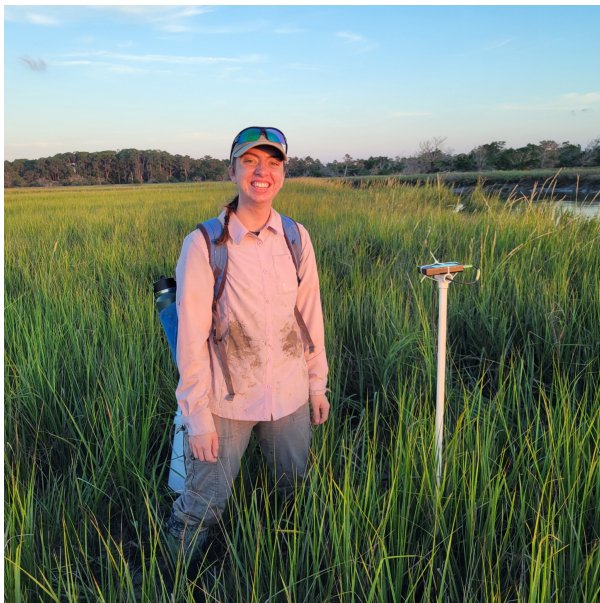


Graduate Student Fellowship in Coastal Sustainability Awarded by Bald Head Island Conservancy

April 10, 2025

The Bald Head Island Conservancy (Bald Head Island, NC) is pleased to announce the awarding of the Johnston Graduate Student Fellowship in Coastal Sustainability for the 2025-26 academic year to Gabrielle (Gabie) Krueger.

Krueger of Georgia Tech University is the third awardee of the third Johnston Fellowship. She is a PhD student graduate student in the Ocean Sciences and Engineering program at Georgia Institute of Technology. Her advisor is Dr. Joel Kostka, who was a member of our first Coastal Sustainability Advisory Panel. Gabie grew up in Scappoose, Oregon, and has a BS in Environmental Science with a concentration in Biology from Ashland University.



Krueger's proposed project, "Beneath the Surface: How Invertebrates Stir Up Microbial Life in Salt Marshes" will investigate the impacts of invertebrate macrofauna (such as ribbed mussels and fiddler crabs) on key microbial processes in salt marshes of Bald Head Island through field sampling and laboratory measurements. Along with her dissertation research, Krueger plans to aid the Conservancy in assessing the resilience and vulnerability of BHI marshes to environmental change. Krueger plans to conduct fieldwork in summer 2025.

“In the future, I would like to work in coastal management or a similar discipline that allows me to focus on the resilience and restoration of coastal ecosystems as well as to engage and help educate the general public on the benefits of coastal ecosystems to people,” says Krueger. The BHI Conservancy is looking forward to working with Krueger on this project, and is grateful for the support of donors **Pat and Dick Johnston** for funding this fellowship as part of the **Center for Coastal Sustainability**.

“These Fellowships provide support for graduate students to pursue research that match priority initiatives for the Conservancy and in collaboration with Conservancy scientific staff,” notes Dr. Chris Shank, Executive Director of Bald Head Island Conservancy. Fellows receive funding of \$20,000 for one year to assist with tuition, living expenses, and project costs. In addition to collaboration with Conservancy staff, Krueger will give a public presentation on the results of her project at the Johnston Coastal Sustainability Symposium on BHI in spring 2026.

Applications for the 2026-27 BHIC Graduate Student Fellowships in Coastal Sustainability and Barrier Island Science will open this fall.

More information:

[Johnston Center for Coastal Sustainability](#)

[Bald Head Island Conservancy Environmental Monitoring](#)

[Bald Head Island Conservancy Research Projects](#)