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**RUTGERS RARITAN RIVER CONSORTIUM FUNDS TEN MINI-GRANTS TO
ADVANCE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION FOCUSED ON THE RARITAN RIVER,
BASIN AND BAY**

(New Brunswick, N.J.) The Rutgers Raritan River Consortium (R3C) has awarded ten mini-grants to support research by Rutgers faculty, staff and post-doctoral researchers on Raritan River, basin and bay resource issues. The recipients, award amounts and project titles are:

- Michele Bakacs (Dept. Agriculture and Natural Resources, School of Environmental and Biological Sciences (SEBS)), Richard G. Lathrop (Dept. Ecology, Evolution & Natural Resources, SEBS), Heather Fenyk (Lower Raritan Watershed Partnership), Jessica Bonamusa (Interstate Environmental Commission), Robert Buchanan (New York City Water Trail Association), and Jesse Stratowski (Rutgers Dept. Recreation), \$8,000 award for “Citizen Science Monitoring for Pathogen Indicators on the Lower Raritan River”
- Robert Chant, Travis Miles, Nicholas Beard (all of Dept. Marine & Coastal Sciences, SEBS), and Ruo-Qian Want (Dept. Civil and Environmental Engineering, School of Engineering (SOE)), \$8,000 award for “Synthesizing bathymetric and topographic data in the Raritan River basin towards development of hydrodynamic model ”
- Keith R. Cooper (Dept. Biochemistry and Microbiology, SEBS) and Gina Moreno (Dept. Environmental Sciences, SEBS), \$7,950 award for “Quantifying the presence and abundance of freshwater and euryhaline bivalves in the Raritan River”
- Katherine Dawson (Dept. Environmental Sciences, SEBS) and Philip Sontag (Rutgers Center for Advanced Infrastructure and Technology), \$8,000 award for “Influence of biogeochemistry on toxic metal availability in iron-replete New Jersey sediment: Development of point-of-use trace metal sensor with integrated sediment microbial community and geochemical measurements”

- Nicole Fahrenfeld (Dept. Civil & Environmental Engineering, SOE) and Christopher Vinnard (Public Health Research Institute, NJ Medical School), \$7,850 award for “Opportunistic pathogens in the Raritan and the homes of people drinking the river”
- Thomas Grothues (Dept. Marine & Coastal Sciences, SEBS) and Isabelle Stinnette (NY-NJ Harbor & Estuary Program), \$8,000 award for “Aquatic Connectivity and Climate-Ready Streams Assessment”
- Julie Lockwood (Dept. Evolution and Natural Resources, SEBS) and Olaf Jensen (Dept. Marine & Coastal Sciences, SEBS), \$8,000 award for “Development of an environmental DNA (eDNA) assay for monitoring the recovery of river herring in the Raritan River watershed”
- Dario Pompili and Mehdi Rahmati (both of Dept. Electrical and Computer Engineering, SOE), \$8,000 award for “Near-real-time water quality monitoring in the Raritan River using hybrid vehicular-static stations”
- Laura Reynolds (Rutgers Institute of Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Sciences), Julie Blum (Dept. Ecology, Evolution and Natural Resources, SEBS), Kristen Joyse (Dept. Earth and Planetary Sciences, School of Arts and Sciences), Richard Lathrop (Dept. Ecology, Evolution and Natural Resources, SEBS), and Margaret Christie (Dept. Marine & Coastal Sciences, SEBS) \$7,700 award for “Determining accretion rates and carbon content of tidal marsh sediments along the Raritan River and Bay: implications for tidal marsh resilience to future sea level rise”
- David Tullock (Dept. Landscape Architecture, SEBS) and Colin Marx (Dept. Environmental Science, SEBS), \$7,975 award for “#lookfortheriver: finding historic streams of the Lower Raritan Watershed”

Rutgers faculty, staff and post-doctoral researchers (with faculty advisor) were eligible to apply. Proposals that included a strong education component or that demonstrated collaboration with external Raritan stakeholders or collaboration between Rutgers schools and programs were given preferential consideration. The award related work is to be conducted between May, 2019 and December 31, 2019.

More information about the recipients and their Raritan mini-grant proposals can be found at <http://raritan.rutgers.edu/r3c-mini-grant-and-internship-program/>.

The R3C Mini-grant program encourages collaboration between Rutgers affiliates and stakeholders throughout the Raritan basin to address research, public information, and planning needs and to promote best management practices for a more sustainable Raritan River, basin and bay. For calendar year 2019, the program is made possible with support from Chancellor Christopher Molloy (Rutgers-New Brunswick/Piscataway), Dean Piyushimita (Vonu) Thakuriah (Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy), Executive Dean Robert Goodman (School of Environmental & Biological Sciences) and the Johnson Family Chair in Water Resources and Watershed Ecology.

This is the third year of the R3C's program to support work by Rutgers affiliates in the Raritan region. Over the past two years, the R3C awarded sixteen mini-grants that addressed a broad range of work including research in microplastics, fate of personal care products in sediments, bioaccumulation of mercury and other heavy metals in river sediments; assessing protection strategies for estuarine beaches; monitoring fish migration and assessing impacts of discards on summer flounder fisheries; as well as grants to train students on water quality sampling. More information on prior year's projects and recipients can be found at <http://raritan.rutgers.edu/r3c-mini-grant-and-internship-program/>.

The Rutgers Raritan River Consortium (R3C) is a collaborative effort of Rutgers New Brunswick-Piscataway schools, programs, and departments that have joined together to advance Rutgers' mission to be a better steward of the Raritan River and its environs. The Consortium has two primary goals: to utilize the Raritan River and its environs to inform university-based education, research and scholarship; and to apply Rutgers' efforts, research and programs to collaborate with other Raritan partners to advance improvements in regional planning, policy and decision-making that positively affect the Raritan region and resources. By facilitating collaboration among Rutgers faculty, staff and students and engaging the greater Raritan community of businesses, municipalities, NGOs and other Raritan stakeholders, the Rutgers Raritan River Consortium will bring the university's resources to bear to address concerns for the Raritan.

To learn more about the Rutgers Raritan River Consortium, the mini-grants and internship pool, or the other Rutgers Raritan River Initiatives, visit www.raritan.rutgers.edu or contact Sara Malone at sjmalone@ejb.rutgers.edu.

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