

UNC-IMS director receives distinguished professorship

BY MIKE SHUTAK
NEWS-TIMES

MOREHEAD CITY — The director of the UNC Institute of Marine Sciences has been recognized for his achievements with a distinguished professorship by the main UNC campus.

Dr. Rick Luettich has been named a new alumni distinguished professor by the faculty and staff at UNC-Chapel Hill. Dr. Luettich was selected in May and his professorship was officially announced June 17, according to UNC Executive Vice Provost Dr. Ron Strauss.

“It was clear that Dr. Luettich was eminently qualified,” Dr. Strauss said, “based on his background and research.”

Dr. Luettich was out of

state and unable to comment by presstime.

According to his profile on the IMS website, Dr. Luettich has published more than 100 scientific papers and reports on modeling and observational studies of physical processes in coastal systems.

He’s one of the principal developers of ADCIRC, a coastal circulation and storm surge computer model, and he’s overseen the use of this model in various studies, as well as in hindcasts and forecasts of tides and storm surge/inundation along the U.S. coast.

“ADIRC has been a cornerstone of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency)

storm surge studies that include forensic studies in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita (both 2005),” the website says, “planning studies for new hurricane protection systems for the northern Gulf of Mexico coastline and coastal flood risk studies along the Gulf of Mexico and U.S. East Coast for the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program. It’s also been used in pilot storm surge forecasting projects.”

Dr. Luettich has also conducted observational studies, including moored and shipboard sampling to characterize physical process in coastal systems. Many of his studies have focused on how these processes affect water quality,

such as algal blooms and dissolved oxygen depletion, and fisheries recruitment.

Dr. Luettich has undergrad and master’s degrees in civil engineering from Georgica Tech and a doctor of science in civil engineering from MIT. In addition to serving as director of IMS, he is director of the UNC Center for Natural Hazards Resilience, lead principle investigator for the Department of Homeland Security Coastal Resilience Center of Excellence and on the U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System’s Coastal and Ocean Modeling Testbed.

UNC offers several different types of distinguished professorships. The one Dr. Luettich



LUETTICH

received is the alumni distinguished professorship. Dr. Strauss said each type of professorship has different requirements.

“Some are limited by a specific field or area of research,” he said. “The

alumni distinguished professorships don’t have a specific criterion.”

According to the official description of the alumni distinguished professorship, the professorships were made possible by unrestricted gifts from UNC alumni.

“Established in 1961, the Alumni Distinguished professorships are designed to supplement the salaries of professors whose outstanding teaching and research activities ameliorate the quality and the stature of the university,” the description says.

Contact Mike Shutak at 252-726-7081 ext. 206, email mike@thenewstimes.com; or follow on Twitter at @mikesccnt.

National video contest selects PKS aquarium as a finalist

STAFF REPORT

PINE KNOLL SHORES — The N.C. Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores is a finalist in a national video contest and could win \$25,000 for state sea turtle conservation.

According to a release, the aquarium’s video was selected as one of 10 for public voting in the Party for the Planet Video Contest, which is sponsored by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums.

The video features the family-friendly volunteer activities held at the aquarium during Earth Day and World Oceans Day,

as well as the community impact of shore restoration in the wake of Hurricane Florence.

“Because Hurricane Florence was such a destructive event last year, it was important for us to reach out to the community and show how we can restore the shore,” aquarium educator Ellie Fallaize said in the release. “We wanted to foster an appreciation for the living shorelines that help protect our homes.”

If the aquarium’s video receives the most votes, the conservation donation will benefit AZA Saving Animals From Extinction

Sea Turtle Conservation Action Plan for North Carolina.

The conservation action plan supports multiple conservation needs and projects for sea turtle species in the state.

AZA asked participants of the video contest to send in a 45- to 60-second video highlighting the story and impact of their volunteer event on the planet and in their community.

Dozens of video entries

from zoos and aquariums across the country were entered.

The first and second place winners of the competition will receive a \$25,000 and \$10,000 conservation donation, respectively, to

designate to a conservation program of their choice.

The public can vote on the aquarium’s video multiple times a day until 11:59 p.m. Wednesday online at aza.org/partyfortheplanet-contest.

BRIEF

CCC plans open house

Carteret Community College will hold an open house for future and current students, as well as the community, from 3 to 7 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 6. The college will hold general information sessions at the bottom of every hour in Joslyn Hall in the McGee Building.

Attendees can receive

help to complete applications and register for classes.

They will also have the opportunity to participate in breakout sessions for information on financial aid, Career & College Promise, campus tours and additional services available to students.

The first day of classes for the fall semester is Wednesday, Aug. 14.

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