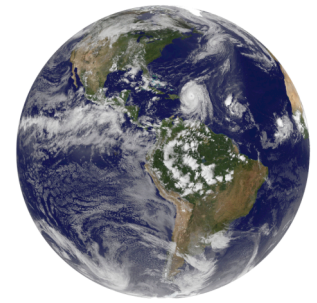


Hurricane Science and Education Symposium

Monday, October 25, 2010

Tulane University, Center for Bioenvironmental Research
New Orleans, LA



Speaker Biographies

Leslie Chapman-Henderson, Federal Alliance for Safe Homes, Inc. (FLASH)

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Leslie Chapman-Henderson is President/CEO of the Federal Alliance for Safe Homes, Inc. FLASH, an award-winning national, non-profit corporation founded in 1998 by a collaborative of organizations dedicated to strengthening homes and safeguarding families from disaster. Today, FLASH is the fastest growing disaster safety education organization in the United States with more than 100 partners, including FEMA, Georgia Pacific, Institute for Business & Home Safety, International Code Council, Mercedes Homes, NeighborWorks, NOAA, RenaissanceRe, South Carolina Insurance Department, State Farm Insurance Companies, Texas Department of Insurance, Texas Tech Wind Science & Engineering, The Home Depot, University of Florida, USAA and WeatherPredict Consulting, Inc.

Ms. Chapman-Henderson and FLASH have championed the cause of disaster-resilient construction methods through the creation of groundbreaking consumer awareness programs like the recently-launched StormStruck: A Tale of Two Homes at INNOVENTIONS at Epcot at the Walt Disney World Resort and Blueprint for Safety, an educational program on disaster-resistant construction techniques for homebuilders, homeowners and design professionals.

Among Ms. Chapman-Henderson's civic, community and professional awards are the 2008 National Hurricane Conference Outstanding Achievement in Mitigation Award, 2008 Governor's Hurricane Conference Corporate Award, 2006 Texas Silver Spur Award for Public Education Excellence, 2006 Governor's Hurricane Conference Public Information/Education Award, 2005 National Hurricane Conference Outstanding Achievement in Public Awareness Award, 2005 National Weather Association Walter J. Bennett Public Service Award, 2005 NOAA Environmental Hero Award, 2002 National Hurricane Conference Outstanding Achievement in Mitigation Award, 2002 FEMA Special Recognition Award, 2002 Florida Fire Chiefs Association Excellence in Community and Public Education Award, 2002 Florida Emergency Preparedness Association Corporate Award, and 2001 Governors Hurricane Conference Public Education Award.

Ms. Chapman-Henderson currently serves as co-chair of the legislatively-created My Safe Florida Home Advisory Council, as a board trustee for Florida International University -International Hurricane Research Center, as advisory council member for the newly-created Florida State University Catastrophic Storm Risk Management Center and as managing consultant for the International Code Council Foundation. Her past service includes consumer representative and chair for the Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund Advisory Council under Governor Charlie Crist and former Governor Jeb Bush, guest lecturer at the University of Florida - School of Construction and as a Florida representative to the Federal Communications Commission WARN Committee.

David Conley, Museum of Science & Industry (MOSI)

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David Conley is the Vice President of Exhibits at MOSI in Tampa, FL. He has been with MOSI for 11 years and has spent his entire 38-year career in science centers, planetariums and museums. Mr. Conley leads a team of talented exhibit designers and fabricators to create engaging hands-on science learning experiences for the general public. In 2006 MOSI opened 'Disasterville,' a science exhibition aimed at lessening risk against natural disasters.

Mr. Conley has played a key role in raising millions of dollars in funding for exhibits, in designing hundreds of interactive experiences on various science topics, and in managing exhibit production. He has also had a key role in establishing and maintaining partnerships and science content advice by involving scientists, researchers, specialists and other experts in exhibition projects. Mr. Conley has a bachelor's of science degree in physics and math but his interest in art and design since his childhood blends with it in designing science experiences as 'the perfect job.' Dave takes great delight in watching a child's eyes light up as they have the enlightening "a ha" moment. "And we're all children when it comes to having fun learning!"

Mark DeMaria, NOAA/NESDIS Regional and Mesoscale Meteorology Branch
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Dr. Mark DeMaria is the chief of the NESDIS Center for Satellite Applications and Research (StAR) Regional and Mesoscale Meteorology Branch. The emphasis of this branch, which is co-located with Colorado State University in Fort Collins, CO, is to develop satellite applications for severe weather and tropical cyclones. He has held this position since December of 1998. Before that time, he spent 3 ½ years as the chief of the Technical Support Branch at the National Hurricane Center in Miami, and eight years as a research meteorologist at the NOAA Hurricane Research Division. During most of his career he has worked on research and development related to tropical cyclone forecasting and numerical weather prediction. Since 1981, he has published more than 50 articles on tropical cyclones, numerical weather prediction, and mesoscale meteorology in the peer-reviewed literature. Dr DeMaria has received the Banner Miller Award from the American Meteorological Society three times (1987, 1989, and 2002) for his work on tropical cyclone forecasting.

Kerry Emanuel, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
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Dr. Kerry Emanuel is a professor of atmospheric science at MIT, where he has been on the faculty since 1981, after spending three years as a faculty member at UCLA. Professor Emanuel's research interests focus on tropical meteorology and climate, with a specialty in hurricane physics. His interests also include cumulus convection, and advanced methods of sampling the atmosphere in aid of numerical weather prediction. He is the author or co-author of over 100 peer-reviewed scientific papers, and two books, including *Divine Wind: The History and Science of Hurricanes*, recently released by Oxford University Press, and *What We Know about Climate Change*, published by the MIT Press. Dr. Emanuel is the recipient of Carl-Gustaf Rossby Research Medal, the highest award for atmospheric science of the American Meteorological Society. In 2007, he was elected as a member of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences.

Isaac Ginis, University of Rhode Island
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Dr. Isaac Ginis is a professor of oceanography at URI's Graduate School of Oceanography. He has been leading the effort toward improvements of the GFDL/URI coupled hurricane model for NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS). This work involves collaboration between his research group at URI and scientists at the National Centers for Environmental Prediction (NCEP) and Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory (GFDL). His group has made a successful conversion of a research coupled hurricane-ocean research model to a fully automated real-time prediction system. This significant technological and computer programming effort has resulted in implementation of the GFDL/URI coupled hurricane model to operational forecasting at NCEP in 2001. Dr. Ginis is currently involved in the development of next generation tropical cyclone prediction models at NOAA and U.S. Navy.

Dr. Ginis is actively involved in U.S. and international tropical cyclone research and forecast communities. He has published over 70 papers in scientific journals and books. His groundbreaking work in developing a coupled hurricane-ocean interaction model has led to significant improvements in hurricane forecasting. Dr. Ginis is a recipient of several national awards, including the 2001 NOAA Outstanding Scientific Paper Award, the 2002 National Oceanographic Partnership Program Excellence Award. He has also been named the "2002 Environmental Hero" by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

John B. Grieshaber, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Hurricane Protection Office
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Dr. John Grieshaber became the Chief for Execution Support in the New Orleans District Hurricane Protection Office of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in March 2007. In this position he serves as one of two deputies to the commander of the HPO. The division has responsibility for design over site, program management and acquisition management for the portions of the hurricane protection system in the New Orleans District budgeted for more than 3 billion dollars.

Dr. Grieshaber has been with the Corps for over 30 years, and all of those years have been with the New Orleans District, with the majority of them in the Geotechnical Branch in Engineering Division. He has extensive foundation design experience in civil works and environmental work. Other positions he has held include Assistant Chief Planning, Programs and Project Management Division, Assistant Chief of Engineering Division, Chief Civil Branch, and Section Chief Geotechnical Branch.

Dr. Grieshaber is recognized as a construction dewatering expert by the Federal Claims Court and has assisted the Justice Department in this area. He also serves as an ad hoc professor and a member of the facility advisory board for the University of New Orleans. He has taught graduate level course for the University of New Orleans in geotechnical engineering. Dr. Grieshaber is a registered engineer in the state of Louisiana in both civil and environmental engineering. He received the New Orleans District Engineer of the Year award in 2001 and the Commanders Award for Civilian Service 2004 and 2006. He is a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers and the Society of American Military Engineers. He has written several published articles and made numerous presentations at technical meetings.

Tom Knutson, NOAA/Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Lab (GFDL)

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Tom Knutson is a Research Meteorologist at the Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory (GFDL) in Princeton, New Jersey. GFDL, a research laboratory of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), is one of the world's leading climate modeling centers. Mr. Knutson has authored several studies in leading scientific journals on the potential impact of climate change on tropical cyclones. He and his colleagues at GFDL have been seeking a better scientific understanding of this problem using dynamical models and by assessing past tropical cyclone data. Currently, Mr. Knutson serves as Co-Chair of a World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Expert Team on Climate Impacts on Tropical Cyclones, which recently published the updated assessment report: "Tropical Cyclones and Climate Change" in *Nature Geoscience*. He was also a lead author on the U.S. Climate Change Science Program (CCSP) assessment report 3.3 on "Weather and Climate Extremes in a Changing Climate" and serves as an Associate Editor of the *Journal of Climate*.

Chris Landsea, NOAA/NWS/National Hurricane Center (NHC)

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Dr. Chris Landsea is the science and operations officer at the National Hurricane Center (NHC) in Miami. Dr. Landsea's main expertise is in seasonal forecasting of hurricanes, in hurricane climate variability and change, and in testing applied research projects for possible use in weather forecasting. In addition to forecasting and training duties, he is responsible for administration and evaluation of Joint Hurricane Test bed projects, which may be implemented operationally to assist in the monitoring and forecasting of hurricanes. He is also leading a current re-analysis of the Atlantic hurricane database.

Dr. Landsea is a member of the American Meteorological Society (AMS), the National Weather Association, and the American Geophysical Union. He has published more than 35 peer-reviewed articles in the journals *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society*, *Climatic Change*, *EOS*, *Geophysical Research Letters*, *Journal of Climate*, *Journal of Insurance Regulation*, *Meteorology and Atmospheric Physics*, *Monthly Weather Review*, *Nature*, *Science*, *Tellus*, *Weather*, and *Weather and Forecasting*, as well as several book chapters. Additionally, he is currently serving on the editorial board for the *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society* as the subject matter editor in tropical meteorology. Dr. Landsea is the recipient of American Meteorological Society's Banner I. Miller Award for the "best contribution to the science of hurricane and tropical weather forecasting published during the years 1990 – 1992."

Karen Leathem, Louisiana State Museum (LSM)

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Karen Leathem is the lead historian for the upcoming Louisiana State Museum exhibition *Living with Hurricanes: Katrina and Beyond*. She has helped develop and produce a broad range of exhibitions on Louisiana history and culture, including *Unsung Heroes: The Secret History of Louisiana Rock 'n' Roll* and *Mardi Gras: It's Carnival Time in Louisiana*. Her recent publications include essays in *New Orleans Cuisine: Fourteen Signature Dishes and Their Histories* (2009) and *Louisiana Women: Their Lives and Times* (2009). A native of coastal Louisiana, Karen has been "living with hurricanes" her entire life.

Jean May-Brett, Louisiana Department of Education

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Jean May-Brett is the Math Science Partnership (MSP) Program Manager and STEM Partnership Coordinator for the Louisiana Department of Education. Currently there are 24 MSP projects in Louisiana delivering professional development in math and science to teachers. Jean is one of the three member Core Committee for the STEM Alliance effort in Louisiana. She serves as the State Coordinator for the Science Matters communication network.

During her 25-years of classroom teaching, Jean taught earth science, environmental science, and mathematics to students in New York and Louisiana at the middle and high school levels. Her honors and awards include being a Tandy Scholars Champion of the Classroom, receiving the Outstanding Leadership in Science Education award from the National Science Education Leadership Association and been recognized as the Outstanding High School Science Teacher in Louisiana. Jean served as the Assistant Director of Educational Television Technology at Louisiana Public Broadcasting in Baton Rouge from 1998-2003 and was the Curriculum Director and Producer for the award winning Enviro-Tacklebox video series. Jean was also the content producer for Literacy and Learning, another award winning program, which provided professional development videos on teaching strategies. She has worked on several curriculum projects locally and nationally.

Ms. May-Brett is also an officer in both the Louisiana Science Teachers Association and the Louisiana Association of Teachers of Mathematics. She is a past-president of the Louisiana Science Teachers Association (LSTA) and the Louisiana Environmental Educators Association. She is also a past-president of the Southern Association of Marine Educators (SAME) and the National Marine Educators Association (NMEA), and has served on the COSEE Central Gulf of Mexico Management Council.

Douglas Meffert, Tulane/Xavier Center for Bioenvironmental Research (CBR)
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Dr. Douglas Meffert is the Eugenie Schwartz Professor of River & Coastal Studies and Deputy Director for Policy at the Tulane/Xavier Center for Bioenvironmental Research (CBR). He is also Executive Director of Tulane's RiverSphere – a new initiative fostering green jobs in renewable energy through testing and development of hydrokinetic energy systems in the Mississippi River. Dr. Meffert has faculty appointments in Tulane's School of Public Health's Environmental Health Sciences Department and the Tulane Law School's Payson Center for International Development and Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy. He is also co-principal of Meffert + Etheridge Environmental Projects, LLC. Prior appointments include the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; the Southern California Regional Water Quality Control Board; environmental consulting at Technical Legal Information Systems in Reston, Virginia; and the U.S. Department of Energy in Washington, DC. Recent awards include a 2007 joint Loeb Fellowship at Harvard's Graduate School of Design and the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy in Cambridge, MA where he currently serves as a faculty associate and, in 2009, an award of excellence from the American Society of Landscape Architects.

Dr. Meffert has more than 20 years of service promoting sustainability of coastal communities and coastal restoration and protection policies. From 1994-1997, he served as chair of the interagency committee that produced the first report to Congress on the cumulative progress of Louisiana's coastal restoration efforts through the Coastal Wetlands, Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act. From 1998-present, Dr. Meffert has served as the Director of the CBR's Long-term Estuary Group (LEAG) and as Tulane's technical representative on the Coastal Restoration, Enhancement through Science & Technology (CREST) and Gulf Coast Ocean Observation System (GCOOS) consortiums. From 2005-2006, he served as Chair of the Sustainability Subcommittee of the Bring New Orleans Back Commission. He currently serves as the New Orleans coordinator for the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization's Urban Biosphere program, which is dedicated to intellectual exchange and research to promote resilience and sustainability of urban ecosystems worldwide. His most recent contributions include serving on executive and technical committees including the Coastal Sustainability Consortium, Senator Mary Landrieu's Coalition for Louisiana's Coastal Restoration and Protection, New Orleans Office of Environmental Affairs' Coastal Advisory Committee, and on the Sustainability Systems Working Group for New Orleans's Master Plan and Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance process. With regard to the Deepwater Horizon spill, he is serving as the chair of Tulane University's Oil Spill Response Committee.

Earthea Nance, University of New Orleans
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Earthea Nance has worked for 19 years restoring and protecting the environment, mitigating ecological and technological hazards, and examining the social and environmental dimensions of engineering projects. Her areas of work include environmental engineering and planning, hazard mitigation, floodplain management, sustainable urban development, water and wastewater treatment, water resources, hazardous and nuclear waste, alternative energy, environmental remediation, community participation, and international water and sanitation. With B.S. and M.S. degrees in civil and environmental engineering from the University of California-Davis, she completed her doctoral degree in civil and environmental engineering from Stanford University.

Dr. Nance is currently an assistant professor of environmental planning and hazard mitigation at the University of New Orleans. Her current research program includes studies on the social impacts of the BP Oil Spill (funded by the National Science Foundation), policy adaptation to future hurricane risk under climate change (funded by NOAA/Rand Gulf States Policy Institute), the impact of disasters on social and ecological diversity (funded by the National Science Foundation), executive training in storm risk management (funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency), and community-based environmental monitoring in Gulf Coast communities (funded by the Greater New Orleans Foundation).

Megan O'Neill, Fairhope High School, Alabama
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Megan O'Neill is in her eighth year of teaching science at Fairhope High School and currently teaches aquascience and environmental science to grades 10-12. Her students raise native plant and fish species in recirculating aquaculture systems. This past year she secured a Toyota Tapestry large grant for a program, "Saving Our Shores and Seas (SOS2)," in which students will work with local officials to conduct habitat restorations along Mobile Bay using species grown in class.

Ms. O'Neill graduated from Auburn University in 1998 with a degree in environmental science from the School of Engineering. After graduation, she worked as environmental consultant. In 2002, Ms. O'Neill began her Master's in secondary education at the University of South Alabama and graduated with Summa Cum Laude honors. Ms. O'Neill attained National Board Certification for Science Education in 2006 and was selected as an ARMADA Teacher through the University of Rhode Island's Office of Marine Programs (www.armadaproject.org) in 2007. This program, sponsored by the National Science Foundation, connects teachers with scientists in the field to bring real science back to the classroom. Ms. O'Neill studied with scientists in the Arctic in 2007 conducting seafloor mapping and studying icefish and tagging humpback whales with scientists in Antarctica in 2009. This past year she was distinguished with the Presidential Award for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching (www.paemst.org) for her contribution to her classroom and profession. In November, she will be traveling to the Galapagos Islands to study and share with her students as a Toyota International Teacher (www.toyota4education.com).

Mark Powell, NOAA/AOML/Hurricane Research Division
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Dr. Mark Powell is an atmospheric scientist for NOAA's Hurricane Research Division (HRD), located at the Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory (AOML) in Miami. He began his NOAA career in 1978 with the National Hurricane Research Laboratory, which was renamed HRD and absorbed into AOML in 1982. He is now stationed at the Florida State University Center for Ocean-Atmospheric Prediction Studies (COAPS) in Tallahassee, Florida (COAPS is a NOAA Applied Research Center).

Dr. Powell has flown into 13 hurricanes and served as lead project scientist on NOAA P-3 hurricane research flights, the Genesis of Atlantic Lows Experiment (GALE) in 1986, and the Tropical Experiment in Mexico (TEXMEX) in 1991. He has chaired or served several committees including: Chairman of the Research Committee of the 1990 Interdepartmental Hurricane Conference, Meteorologist for the National Research Council Disaster Study Team on Hurricane Hugo's landfall in the mainland U.S., Chairman of the Meteorology Subcommittee for the American Society of Civil Engineers Task Committee on Wind Damage Investigation, the U.S.-Japan Natural Disaster Task Committee on Wind hazards, the FEMA HAZUS Wind Committee, the U. S. Weather Research Project's Prospectus Development Teams for Hurricanes and for Coastal Meteorology, and the National Research Council's Committee to review the need for a large-scale test facility for research on the effects of extreme winds on structures. Dr. Powell has also served on the board of the American Association for Wind Engineering, and is a member of the American Meteorological Society, and the American Geophysical Union. In 1992 he was awarded the Department of Commerce Gold Medal (a group award presented for performance during Hurricane Andrew). For performance during and following Hurricane Katrina he was awarded Department of Commerce Bronze medals (in 2007 and 2008) and an award for Patriotic Civilian Service as a member of the Interagency Performance Evaluation Task Force. His H*Wind project development team won the "Best JAVA Implementation" and "Best Technology Transfer" awards from the NOAA Tech Conference in 2000 and 2002.

Dr. Powell has served as principal investigator on numerous competitive research projects funded by government agencies and corporate entities. In 2006 he was ranked by Thomas as #10 author in the world for cited research on tropical storms from 1996-2006. He has published in several journals including *Nature*, *Journal of Geophysical Research*, *Monthly Weather Review*, *Weather and Forecasting*, *Journal of Wind Engineering and Industrial Aerodynamics*, *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society*, *Journal of Physical Oceanography*, and *Shore and Beach*.

Bill Read, National Hurricane Center (NHC)

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Since 2008, Bill Read has been the Director of the National Hurricane Center (NHC) in Miami. He is responsible for the operational tropical weather forecasts for the Atlantic, Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico and Eastern Pacific Ocean. Additionally, he leads the national effort on hurricane awareness. Bill was the Meteorologist in Charge of the Houston-Galveston Area National Weather Service (NWS) Weather Forecasting Office (WFO) from 1992 to 2007. In this capacity, he led the office through technology modernization and the added responsibilities associated with restructuring of the field operations of the NWS. In 2005, he led the office through a first in the nation relocation to a hurricane resistant facility collocated with Galveston County Emergency Management. Significant weather events during his tenure included the November 1992 tornado outbreak, the October 1994 floods, Tropical Storm Frances, the October 1998 floods, the September 2000 heat wave, unprecedented urban flooding caused by Tropical Storm Allison, Hurricane Claudette, and Hurricane Rita. Bill served with the FEMA/NWS Hurricane Liaison Team, augmenting the staff at the National Hurricane Center for Hurricanes Isabel (2003), Charley (2004) and Katrina (2005).

Bill's background in the NWS includes six years as a forecaster in Fort Worth, TX, and six years as a forecaster in San Antonio, TX. He started his NWS career in 1977 with the Test and Evaluation Division in Sterling, VA. Bill also spent more than four years on active duty as an officer in the U. S. Navy, where he had a variety of unique assignments, including serving with the Navy Hurricane Hunters in 1972-1973. He was president of the National Weather Association in 2003, and president of the Houston chapter of the American Meteorological Society in 2006. His most significant awards include the Special Award for Public Education from the National Hurricane Conference, 2004, and Member of the Year Award from the National Weather Association, 1996.

Ann Roberson, South Carolina Department of Insurance

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Ann Roberson, a graduate of The University of South Carolina, has been employed with the SC Department of Insurance for more than 11 years. She serves as the Executive Assistant to the Director for External Affairs and Public Information Officer. Among her responsibilities, she serves as the Liaison to the South Carolina Building Codes Council and the State Emergency Management Division. She also serves as the agency representative for the Interagency Coordinating Council for the State Hazard Mitigation Plan. Ann also developed and manages the SC Safe Home Mitigation Grant Program, which was created by the Omnibus Coastal Property Insurance Act in 2007. She is a 2003 graduate of the SC Executive Institute. The statewide outreach program she developed for the Department entitled Held in Trust, A Child Safety Seat Awareness Program, received the Governor's Year of the Child Community Hero Award in 2001.

Prior to working for the Department, Ann worked for The Town of Hilton Head Island, The Lowcountry Council of Governments, and The National Trust for Historic Preservation as a grants and special projects coordinator and public information officer.

Jeanne M. Salvatore, Insurance Information Institute (I.I.I.)

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As senior vice president for Public Affairs at the Insurance Information Institute (I.I.I.), Jeanne Salvatore plays a highly public role in representing the Institute and the insurance industry. Ms. Salvatore works closely with national and local media, appearing often on radio, TV and in print as a spokesperson for insurance-related issues that directly affect the consumer, both individual and commercial. She also serves as the industry liaison to numerous consumer, education, safety and community-based organizations, including the Consumer Federation of America, the National Consumers League and Neighborhood Housing Services of New York City and the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation.

Ms. Salvatore has fulfilled a variety of roles since joining I.I.I. in 1988. Among her earlier achievements, she became an expert on the issue of insurance fraud and was instrumental in the development of a national agenda to combat it, and co-authored *Fighting the Hidden Crime: A National Agenda to Combat Insurance Fraud*. She also has served as I.I.I.'s director of crisis communications, and produced a series of state-specific auto-safety conferences that culminated in a national conference. She also directed communications programs on insurance topics such as claim filing, disaster preparedness and home safety.

Ms. Salvatore is an active member of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) and served as president of the New York chapter in 2000. She has created a series of seminars on media relations for PRSA-NY, and is an adjunct professor in the graduate school of Mass Communications at Iona College and Columbia University.

Gail Scowcroft, University of Rhode Island (URI)

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Gail Scowcroft is a marine geologist with expertise in paleoclimate reconstruction and global climate change. After 18 years of engaging in scientific research, she has administered ocean science education and outreach programs since 1994. Scowcroft is the Associate Director of the Office of Marine Programs at the University of Rhode Island Graduate School of Oceanography and is also the Executive Director of the National Centers for Ocean Sciences Education Excellence (COSEE) Network. She is the principle investigator for several federally funded projects, including *Hurricanes: Science and Society*. Scowcroft also lectures internationally on integrating ocean science and climate change issues into K-16 curricula.

Peter Sheng, University of Florida

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Dr. Y. Peter Sheng is a leader in coastal hazard and coastal ecosystem dynamics. He is a Professor and Leader of the Coastal and Oceanographic Engineering Program at the University of Florida where he has been since 1986. Dr. Sheng is also the Chair of the Florida Coastal Ocean Observing System (FLCOOS) consortium, a Director and Science Committee Co-Chair of the South Eastern Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association (SECOORA), a representative on the Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System (GCOOS), and a member of the Technical Advisory Committee on four National Estuary Programs. Dr. Sheng's research is focused on coastal hazard (hurricane, storm surge, and coastal inundation) and coastal ecosystem modeling and observing. He is the leader of the NOAA-funded Southeastern Regional Storm Surge and Coastal Inundation Model Testbed. He has developed an integrated storm surge modeling system for various parts of the Gulf and Atlantic coasts, and has published many papers on storm surge and inundation. His research has been funded by NOAA, USEPA, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Service, NSF, ONR, National Park Service, Sea Grant Program, Florida Water Management Districts, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and Florida Department of Emergency Management. After the catastrophic damages caused by Hurricane Katrina, Dr. Sheng served on the National Academies Committee on New Orleans Hurricane Protection System as well as the National Academies Committee on FEMA Flood Mapping Accuracy Improvement. Dr. Sheng is currently serving on Florida's Academic Task Force on Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill Response, and the Council of Florida Institute of Oceanography.

Christina Simoniello, Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System (GCOOS)

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Christina Simoniello received a Bachelor's degree in biological sciences and certificate in marine science from Florida International University in 1988. While in Miami, she worked as research diver, field technician monitoring alligators in Everglades National Park, and analytical chemist at the Drinking Water Research Center. Following the Exxon Valdez oil spill, she worked for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conducting seabird, marine mammal, and brown bear research along the Alaska Peninsula. In 1994, she returned to Alaska to determine energy budgets of sea otters in Prince William Sound.

Chris was awarded her Ph.D. from the University of South Florida College of Marine Science in 2003. During her graduate tenure, she participated in research activities in the oceanic Gulf of Mexico, the Florida Keys, the Exumas, and the Southern Ocean. She also contributed more than 2500 hours to educational outreach programs, primarily mentoring girls and young women in science. Most recently, she has been working as the Education and Outreach Coordinator for the Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System, a Regional Association of the U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System. She has served as U.S. liaison to numerous E/O programs around the globe, including the Indonesia Sea Partnership Program and Gulf of Mexico Large Marine Ecosystem Collaboration with Mexico.

Craig Tillman, WeatherPredict Consulting Inc.

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Mr. Tillman serves as President of WeatherPredict Consulting Inc., a RenaissanceRe affiliate that focuses on modeling atmospheric phenomena as well as quantifying the effect of severe wind and rain on the range of exposures that are at risk. WeatherPredict Consulting Inc., provides intelligence on atmospheric perils to a range of entities, such as the insurance/reinsurance industry, energy interests, and entities managing agricultural risk. Mr. Tillman leads a dedicated team of scientists with specialties ranging across oceanography, meteorology, wind engineering, aerodynamics and computer simulation. He has been a key participant in the development both of the StormStruck exhibit at INNOVENTIONS at Epcot at the Walt Disney World® Resort and the RenaissanceRe Wall of Wind, as well as a series of forums bringing scientists, emergency managers, and policy makers together to examine the role of mitigation in natural catastrophe risk management.

Mr. Tillman has been associated with the RenaissanceRe organization since 1996. Prior to his current role, he was Chief Underwriting Officer for Glencoe Insurance Ltd. He previously led the risk modeling group at RenaissanceRe, focusing on catastrophe models and developing analytical staff to support underwriting operations. Prior to joining RenaissanceRe, Mr. Tillman's experience spanned 12 years as a consultant in catastrophe risk for clients in the insurance, government, equity management, and municipal bond insurance industries. Mr. Tillman has also played a key role in developing software tools and risk analysis methods for use in analyzing a wide range of commercial and residential exposures.

Mr. Tillman also serves on the Executive Committee and Board of the Institute for Business and Home Safety. He also serves as Chairman of the Research Advisory Council for the newly built IBHS Research Center.