NEERS Business Meeting Minutes (April 29, 2021, virtual NY AERS/NEERS join meeting)

* Meeting called to order by Brett Branco, NEERS President
* Minutes from last meeting (October 20, 2020) approved
* Officer Reports
	+ President (Brett Branco)
		- Relationship between CERF and NEERS
			* There is a desire to better strengthen and define the relationship between the affiliates.
			* CERF has been tracking membership – while it fluctuates based on whether there is a meeting or not, the trend is downward. It is unclear whether the same pattern exists in NEERS. Also, it is unknown how much the memberships of the affiliates (NEERS) overlaps. Since we’re a federation, there should be significant overlap, but if not we’d like to incentivize membership in both.
			* Brett proposes an Open Meeting for NEERS in May or June to discuss these issues based on our charter, but also to determine if we should have a formal MOU and other issues.
		- Rising Tides
			* CERF has received another round of funding for the Rising Tides Program, which provides CERF support and mentoring. They will also receive funding to to attend Affiliate Society meetings (for us that would be Spring 2022). Currently there are 5 applicants from our region (New England and New York). Reviews are due back to CERF by May 19. Brett currently has 2 NEERS officers who have volunteered but if anyone from the membership, please email Brett (NEERS\_Presiden@gmail.com).
			* For the Presidential Initiative, Brett would like to support past and new Rising Tides students within NEERS. He plans to speak with these students to determine how they would like to be supported to be leaders in Science and/or in NEERS. And hopefully how we can promote continued involvement in NEERS. Brett wants to ‘invest in leadership’ to increase diversity in NEERS. While he has no specific proposal yet, he hopes to have one by CERF 2021.
		- Dave Franz has been awarded an Honorary Award:
		“David Franz is a long-time member of NEERS, joining in 1974, and serving as President-elect, President and Past President from 1992 to 1998. Prior to retiring in 2008, David had a long and productive career in the Biology Department at Brooklyn College, part of the City University of New York system. As a coastal ecologist specializing in benthic invertebrates, David devoted his career to studying the ecology of Jamaica Bay, a highly urbanized but ecologically significant “sewage estuary”. David’s research included the ecology and biogeography of northwest Atlantic marine and estuarine invertebrates, particularly nudibranch mollusks and echinoderms; the population biology and demography of the Atlantic Ribbed Mussel Geukensia demissa; and the impact of Ulva spp. blooms on benthic invertebrate abundance and richness. David was one of the first to recognize the rapid erosion and loss of fringing salt marshes in Jamaica Bay, and worked closely with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the National Park Service, and a network of local researchers and community members to identify the causes and potential solutions. As an educator, David was responsible for introducing hundreds of urban college students to the wonders of marine science and estuarine systems surrounding New York City. In retirement, David continues to educate and mentor students and junior faculty and has been a regular fixture at NEERS meetings.”
	+ Past-President (Susan Adamowicz)
		- Sue thanked C.J. Carroll Schlick from AERS for coordinating the student judging using Google forms from Sara.
		- She will work with Sara to complete student awards tomorrow morning
	+ President-Elect (Courtney Schmidt)
		- Courtney wanted to thank the Program Committee: Tay Evans and Autumn Ozkowski (NEERS) and Treda Grayson and LeeAnn Haaf (AERS) for all their work pulling together this meeting
		- The joint meeting took a LOT of work and a lot of it was done by NEERSians; Courtney suggested that we not do a joint meeting anytime soon.
		- The Proposed Schedule for the next meetings is:
			* Spring 2022 – Salem State
			* Fall 2022 – Block Island?
			* Spring 2023 – North (ME or NH) – Andy Robinson? Sue Adamowicz?, Sam?
			* Fall 2023 – CERF in Portland, OR
			* Spring 2024 – NY – Brooklyn – Brett?
		- We need to start planning for the meetings after Spring 2024. It ill come quickly, and we should be planning these meetings 6 months to one year in advance. We should also be trying to recruit some ‘new blood’ to help plan these meetings.
		- Alan suggested that we should have a virtual meeting in Fall 2023 for the people who won’t go to the west coast. There was a verbal and chat discussion about the need to not compete with CERF (and vice-versa). Others pointed out that it is difficult to organize 3 meetings every 2 years, so doing 4 would be hard. Courtney suggested that we do a virtual workshop or much smaller meeting several weeks distant from the CERF meeting. Tristen suggested a 1-day meeting that could be driven to, so people could avoid travel costs (hotel, etc.). We’ll talk more about options at later meetings.
	+ Treasurer (Tristan Taber)
		- The current balances:
			* NEERS Checking: $13,757.14
			* Savings Account: $24,154.37
			* Student Endowment: $4,927.23
			* NEERS CD: $21,015.27
			* Student Endowment CD: $33,589.32
		- Fall 2020 Meeting
			* Registrants- 127: 74 Members , 32 Students, 19 Nonmembers
			* Meeting Income:
				+ Registration: $1,480, Donations: $480
				+ Over 1/3 of income supports students
			* Meeting Expenses:
				+ Meeting: $1,126.31, Awards: $200
				+ A majority paid for Invited Speaker costs and Zoom costs
			* Meeting Total: $633 Profit!
			* Dues collected at Mtg: $1,100, Student Endowment (Donations, Dues, Swag): $1,115; Expenses (CERF Governing Board): $0
		- Spring 2021 Meeting
			* Sponsors
				+ CERF
				+ FlowCam by Yokogawa Fluid Imaging Technologies
				+ YSI: A Xylem Brand
				+ Eastern Carolina University (provided WebEx platform)
				+ Wild Apricot (temporary membership upgrade)
			* Registrants- 223; 90 NEERS members, 45 AERS members; students more equally distributed
			* Meeting Income estimate: Registration: ~$3,650, Donations: ~$2,200
			* Meeting Expenses estimate: Meeting: ~ $3,250, Awards: $400
			* Meeting Total: ~$2,500 Joint Profit so ~$1250 of that will go to NEERS
	+ Secretary (Peg Pelletier)
		- Once again the surveys indicated that the virtual meetings are good for information transmittal but not as good for interpersonal communication
		- Most attended all sessions, but only half were there continuously
		- The meeting was rated well overall, although a few people commented about how a virtual meeting can’t really be compared to an in-person meeting
		- Most respondents attended 2 or more of the social sessions. People really liked the game – thanks Walter! And a few people thanked Sue for informally moderating the chat and keeping it going. People again said that a huge chat with people talking over each other is tough. Another comment noted that Sometimes the chatter during breaks can feel "clique-y" and it's hard for new folks or folks that aren't quite so vocal to feel included, but the games are better for inclusion.
		- Misc comments:
			* One commenter mentioned that they would have liked more information about a specific topic (estuary headwaters). If there are ‘missing’ topics, we will encourage people to try to put together a session for a future NEERS meeting
			* Really loved how students were session chairs, that was a great idea to enhance student experience. And they were all excellent at it!
			* I feel like we need to figure out the networking piece -- chat worked pretty well to reach out to people I knew and even ask questions to those I didn't know so well. We just learned about Wonder.me that might be interesting to try
			* You guys are doing a fantastic job under trying conditions and I applaud you for what you have pulled off. I would still prefer to meet in person, though.
* Committee reports
	+ Webmaster – Jamie Vaudrey & Savannah Judge
		- Jamie wants to make sure that we thank Savannah. She volunteered to help and immediately had to help with the joint meeting, which she picked up quickly and come up with new procedures. Great Job Savannah!
		- We are transitioning our web site to Wild Apricot. When complete, we will change the website from the long wild apricot URL to neers.org. Jamie also has all versions of the web sites – we just need to figure out where to put it
	+ Newsletter – Sara Grady
		- The newsletter this time will focus on the AERS/NEERS Story Corps. Three interviews are pending, and one will be posted tomorrow. Sara encourages everyone to do it – it’s easy and fun!
		- The next newsletter will include brief summaries of their research from the student award winners. This is something that has been done in the past
		- Sara will be connecting with Steve Hale, the CERFs Up editor
* New Business/ Announcements
	+ Thanks to Walter for his great Quiz Night
	+ Tristen commented that it was really great to work with such a dedicated group
* Meeting was adjourned

Awardees (after business meeting):

Honorary Award David Franz

Ketchum Award Christine Bruno

"Exploring the importance of microplastic as a vector of metals to
suspension feeders."

Ketchum Honorary Award Chloe Brownlie

“Effects of a large-scale natural sediment addition event on

macroinvertebrate communities in a New England salt marsh."

Rankin Award Jack Cerra

“Quantifying bluff erosion along the west shoreline of Block
Island, Rhode Island using airborne LiDAR."

Rankin Honorary Award Tyler Chidsey

"N2O emissions from temperate seagrass meadows are highly
variable."

Rankin Honorary Award Amelia Hurst

"Linking human activities to coastal water quality in southern New
England: past and present."