

## SunTrust gift supports VIMS graduate student

(September 9, 2010) The Virginia Institute of Marine Science Foundation announced today that graduate student Emily Jayne has been awarded the SunTrust Fellowship for the 2010-2011 academic year. The fellowship, from the SunTrust Mid-Atlantic Foundation, will support climate-change research by Jayne, a graduate student in the lab of professor Rebecca Dickhut at VIMS.

Jayne plans to use the fellowship to conduct field studies of volatile organic compounds and their role in the global and ocean carbon cycle. These compounds, produced mostly by land plants but also by human activities, include terpenes, substances released by pine trees that lead to the hazy skies of a typical summer day along the East Coast.

Jayne says that despite the huge volume of volatile organic compounds that land plants release each year—estimates range up to 3.3 trillion pounds—their role in the ocean carbon cycle remains poorly known. Of particular interest is the role they play in the marine food web—Jayne and other researchers have begun to suspect that the presence of these compounds might help explain why particular ocean areas appear to release more carbon dioxide to the atmosphere through animal respiration than they take up from the atmosphere through photosynthesis.

Jayne plans to conduct her fieldwork in Chesapeake Bay and the waters off Bermuda.

Bernard Ngo, President of SunTrust Bank, Williamsburg/Gloucester, says “We’re extremely pleased to be able to help provide fellowship support to Emily and other students at VIMS. The training they receive, and the work they do, helps us all by leading to a better understanding of the many serious issues facing Chesapeake Bay and the ocean. We’re fortunate to have this internationally recognized institution in our midst.”

The 104 students currently enrolled in the graduate program at VIMS are engaged in cutting-edge research on topics as diverse as climate change, oyster genetics, seagrass restoration, nutrient pollution,



*From L: VIMS Dean and Director John Wells, SunTrust Senior Vice President David Burris; Bill Hudgins, owner and president of Bill Hudgins Pontiac, GMC; VIMS graduate student Emily Jayne; and Bernie Ngo, City President SunTrust Bank Gloucester.*

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beach erosion, and the population biology of blue crabs. VIMS graduates occupy leading positions in industry, academia, and government agencies at the local, state, federal, and international levels. The School of Marine Science at VIMS has produced more than 700 Master's and PhD graduates since it awarded its first degree in 1943.

SunTrust made the gift to the Virginia Institute of Marine Science Foundation, a nonprofit 501 (c) (3) organization that supports the education and research missions of VIMS. The total value of the gift is \$100,000. It will provide \$17,500 per year from 2008 to 2012 to build a SunTrust Fellowship Endowment Fund, and \$2,500 in expendable funds each year during that span to support a current student.

By 2012, SunTrust will have supported a student for 5 years, and the VIMS Foundation will have a permanent SunTrust Fellowship Endowment Fund whose income stream will support one or more students far into the future. The SunTrust fellowship endowment marks the eighth such fund received by the VIMS Foundation.

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VIMS is an independent state agency with a mandate to provide research, education, and advisory service to the Commonwealth. The School of Marine Science at VIMS is a graduate school of the College of William and Mary.