Disaster in the Gulf

The oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico continues to make front page news worldwide. And, USF’s College of Marine Science researchers continue to receive media inquiries internationally as their expertise is sought out to aid authorities and the public in understanding the ramifications of the oil spill. Because the USF College of Marine Science in serving such an integral role with research efforts, these scientists have been cited in more than 1,900 stories in the past week from various TV, print and radio outlets including TIME magazine, The Washington Post and Yahoo News, CBS News, The Los Angeles Times and The New York Times.

The previous week’s Executive News Summary focused entirely on the worldwide media coverage this story has received. To see more of these stories view the May 19, 2010 edition.

Shark research

A new study indicates several species of small hammerhead sharks living today stemmed from one large ancestor living some 20 million years ago, evolving twice at different times and places. A paper on the subject was published in the May issue of Molecular Phylogenetics and Evolution - USF researchers Philip Motta and Kyle Mara were co-authors. The scientists focused on the DNA of eight species of hammerhead sharks to build family “gene trees” going back thousands to millions of generations. In addition to showing that small hammerheads evolved from a large ancestor, the team showed that the “signature” cephalofoils of hammerheads underwent divergent evolution in different lineages over time, likely due to selective environmental pressures. The team used both mitochondrial DNA passed from mother to offspring and nuclear DNA to track gene mutations. The National Science Foundation funded the study. The story was covered by PhysOrg, News Guide, e! Science News and Science Daily.

In addition to this research, Phil Motta was also recently tapped to participate in a National Geographic show about bull and tiger sharks. Motta and other professors were flown to Bimini in the western Bahamas for a five-day trip consisting of research and filming. The show will air later this summer.

USF students earn national recognition for BlackBerry app

Students from the USF College of Business recently placed second in a national competition to create an app for the BlackBerry Storm. The students’ prototype is designed for capturing and harvesting data, and summarizing performance metrics on a digital screen with a red, yellow, and green alert system. They used Java to create the application which they named “CA Quickshot.” The three-person team was comprised of students from USF’s Information Systems Decision Sciences department - Sohail Bhola, Jeremy Fisher and Naresh Kumar Kalla. The USF team beat out students from Carnegie-Mellon, Kettering University, Millersville University, Queen’s University, Texas A&M, University of Victoria and University of Waterloo. The story was covered by the Tampa Bay Business Journal.

USF Health grant will create PaperFree Florida

Recently, USF Health was awarded a $6 million stimulus grant for PaperFree Florida, an initiative to create electronic health records. The new program will help doctors in 20 Florida counties transform how they care for patients - not only improving health care delivery, but also helping the Tampa Bay region’s economy as well. USF is one of the first regional initiatives in the nation to invest recovery dollars in a whole new professional work force combining health and information technology. USF Health will use the grant to hire and train 100 “e-ambassadors” to visit the Tampa Bay region’s economy as well. USF Health will use the grant to hire and train 100 “e-ambassadors” to visit the Tampa Bay region’s economy as well. USF Health will use the grant to hire and train 100 “e-ambassadors” to visit the Tampa Bay region’s economy as well. USF Health will use the grant to hire and train 100 “e-ambassadors” to visit the Tampa Bay region’s economy as well. USF Health will use the grant to hire and train 100 “e-ambassadors” to visit the Tampa Bay region’s economy as well. USF Health will use the grant to hire and train 100 “e-ambassadors” to visit the Tampa Bay region’s economy as well. USF Health will use the grant to hire and train 100 “e-ambassadors” to visit the Tampa Bay region’s economy as well. The story was covered by more than 14 media outlets including FOX Business, Red Orbit and Stock House.

U.S. Agriculture Secretary visits USF

Last week, USF hosted U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack on the Tampa campus as he chaired a roundtable discussion with elected officials and agriculture leaders. In addition to USF, the event was hosted by Congresswoman Kathy Castor and Congressman Allen Boyd. The discussion covered various topics including the issues, interests and concerns of leaders representing a cross-section of Florida’s crucial agricultural economy. The story was covered by more than 16 news outlets including The Miami Herald, The Washington Examiner, The Tampa Tribune, The Bradenton Herald, The Sarasota Herald-Tribune and The Lakeland Ledger.