

MASTERS OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY STUDIES

EVSS FACULTY HIGHLIGHT: ELIZABETH VERNON (E.V.) BELL

Marine Education Specialist at South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium

Photographed by Roger Drain, SC Sea Grant Consortium

by Amanda Namsinh, EVSS Office Graduate Assistant
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Elizabeth Vernon (E.V.) Bell
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Elizabeth Vernon (E.V.) Bell is an alum of the Environmental and Sustainability Studies Program. Since her graduation, she serves as the Marine Education Specialist at the SC Sea Grant Consortium (SCSGC) and an adjunct faculty member for our program!

Growing up in SC and spending summers at the beach led EV to her current career fueled by her captivation and love for the marine environment. At SCSGC, she collaborates with a robust network of researchers, classroom teachers, and nonformal educators.

EV has served as a research advisor for EVSS students. Currently, she advises Amanda Namsinh (EVSS/MPA student). Amanda's project aims to study citizen science programs to investigate best practices to engage communities to ensure long-term sustainability and effective outcomes of these outreach programs. This research can provide recommendations and guidance for other community-based environmental science projects.

EV leads educational outreach programs like [From Seeds To Shoreline® \(S2S\)](#) and the [Palmetto Environmental Education Certification \(PEEC\) Program](#).

S2S engages K-12 students with salt marsh restoration through cultivation and planting of salt marsh grass, *Spartina alterniflora*, to foster stewardship and promote environmental awareness in SC youth. Classroom teachers receive training on how to integrate *Spartina's* life cycle into the curriculum. Students get hands-on experience growing the plants in a greenhouse and plant their cultivated *Spartina* plants into salt marsh restoration sites.

The PEEC Program is the first environmental education certification in the state for formal and informal educators. After five years of development from educational partners that represent organizations and schools across the state, the PEEC Program launched in 2018. Educators enroll into a two-year program, which includes attending workshops, exploring the different geographic regions of the state, completing online module assignments, and the creating a capstone project. PEEC strives to enhance the skills within each educator's toolbox for effective environmental education.

EV serves as a leader in environmental education in South Carolina and engages with curious minds of all ages, in and outside of the classroom!



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