



California Ocean Science Trust Announces Inaugural SeaChange Scholars Awards for Graduate Ocean Research

California Ocean Science Trust awards first awards from its SeaChange Scholars Fund to two California State University COAST graduate students.

SACRAMENTO, CA, UNITED STATES, July 14, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [California Ocean Science Trust \(OST\)](#) announced the inaugural recipients of its SeaChange Scholars awards, providing two California graduate students with \$10,000 each to advance research that will inform the future management of California's ocean and coastal resources.

The awards, made in partnership with [CSU Council on Ocean Affairs, Science & Technology \(COAST\)](#), will support graduate students conducting applied research that addresses pressing science needs identified by California resource managers through COAST's State Science Information Needs Program (SSINP). The inaugural SeaChange Scholars are Victoria Gronwald of California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, and Elena Bernier of California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt. Their research focuses on aspects of California's emerging floating offshore wind industry, examining potential effects on marine fish communities and harbor seal populations in the state's federally designated offshore Wind Energy Areas.

"California's future depends on a diverse, highly trained ocean science workforce prepared to tackle complex management challenges," said Krista Kamer, Executive Director of CSU COAST. "The SeaChange Scholars awards from California Ocean Science Trust help remove financial barriers so these emerging scientists can focus on conducting research that directly informs ocean and coastal management."

In 2026, OST established the [SeaChange Scholars Fund](#) to support graduate students whose work directly addresses California's ocean and coastal management challenges and research gaps. By helping offset tuition and living expenses, this round of awards allows students to focus on research that will contribute to California's understanding of how offshore renewable energy development may interact with marine ecosystems, marine mammals, and commercial fisheries.

"The SeaChange Scholars Fund represents an investment in California's future scientific leadership," said Liz Whiteman, Executive Director of California Ocean Science Trust. "These students are conducting the kind of applied, policy-relevant research that helps ensure public

decisions are informed by the best available science. We're excited to support these students as they develop expertise and relationships that will position them as the next generation of science leaders serving California for years to come."

About California Ocean Science Trust

California Ocean Science Trust strengthens the bridge between scientific research and sound ocean management. Created by state legislation, OST supports and brings world-class science and innovation together with state and federal policymakers to accelerate progress toward a healthy and resilient coast and ocean.

About the CSU Council on Ocean Affairs, Science & Technology (CSU COAST)

COAST is the CSU's systemwide consortium for ocean and coastal research, education and workforce development. Established in 2008, COAST integrates systemwide expertise and resources and promotes research that advances our knowledge of ocean and coastal systems.

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