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Oceans and Human Health Center Celebrates Five Years of Research

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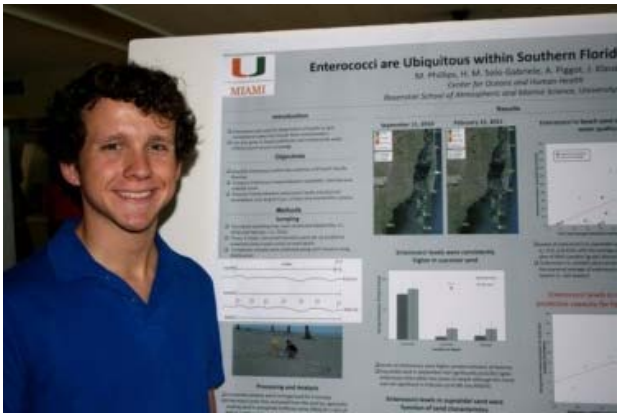

The Oceans and Human Health Center at UM's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science recently celebrated the first five years of its National Science Foundation grant, hosting a poster session at which students in the Research Experiences for Undergraduates program showcased the diversity of research programs at the University.

Matthew Phillips, above, a marine science and biology major, displayed his research poster on *Enterococci*, a form of bacteria commonly associated with sewage and found in South Florida beach sediment. Phillips studied eight beaches, finding significantly higher levels of the bacteria in the sand above high tide, which would indicate an onshore source of contamination.

Phillips compared the bacteria levels in the sand with bacteria-contaminated water data recorded by the Florida Department of Health, and discovered that the two are linked.

"The take home message from the study is that beaches with clean sand will have clean water," explained Phillips, who will enroll in the Miller School of Medicine's M.D./Ph.D. Program and would like to start an Oceans and Human Health Center in Southern California.

"Matt is not only bright and a joy to work with, but he's truly engaged in our research and interested in what we do," said Julie Hollenbeck, program and outreach manager for the Oceans and Human Health Center. "He and several of the other students volunteered in our field studies, benefitting from their hands-on experience, while providing our OHH Center with valuable research and data."

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