

Tessa Nyhan

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Education

Duke University, Durham, NC; **B.S.** Biology; Marine Science & Conservation Minor; Class of 2026

- **GPA:** 3.85
 - **Honors and Awards:** Rachel Carson Scholar, Dean's List with Distinction (Fall 2023 & Spring 2025)
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Relevant Experience

Oyster Physiology Study

Bonaventura Fellow

Beaufort, NC

March 2025-July 2025

- Designed and conducted a controlled lab experiment to assess how pea crab presence affects oyster respiration under hypersaline conditions; Advised by Dr. Juliet Wong

Queen Conch Shell Habitat Study

Primary Investigator

South Water Caye, Belize

January 2025

- Investigated the ecological role of discarded queen conch shells in structuring juvenile fish communities near seagrass habitats
- Conducted field surveys and implemented experimental shell habitat treatments across seagrass and sand flat

Maritime Gloucester

Summer Intern

Gloucester, MA

May 2024-August 2024

- **Facilitated** marine science lessons to elementary school students and **developed** and maintained **aquarium** exhibits.

Island Creek Oysters

Tour Guide

Duxbury, MA

May 2024-Present

- **Led** educational public tours, **educating** visitors about the environmental and economic benefits of aquaculture & the inner workings of a shellfish hatchery.
- **Communicated** complex marine biology concepts in an engaging and accessible manner.

Whale and Dolphin Conservation (WDC)

Rescue and Response Intern

Plymouth, MA

January 2022-June 2022

- **Responded** to seal and whale strandings, providing **on-site support** for rescue, rehabilitation, and data collection efforts.
- **Designed** educational outreach materials for the community, **raising public awareness** about marine mammal conservation.
- **Assisted** with necropsies, documenting findings to support research on causes of mortality and health trends.

Island Creek Oysters

Hatchery Technician

Duxbury, MA

January 2018-Present

- Conducted **shellfish spawning procedures**, ensuring optimal conditions for larvae development and survival.
- **Cultivated** and maintained diverse algal cultures as a primary food source for shellfish larvae, adhering to sterile **lab practices**.

Awards & Fellowships

Bonaventura Fellowship (\$2000) 2025

[Pulitzer Center Grant](#) 2025

Rachel Carson Scholar (\$5500) 2024

Skills

PADI Open Water Diver, R programming language, FIJI (Image J), Microsoft Excel, Cell Counting, PCR, Gel Electrophoresis, General Lab Safety and Procedures

Outreach & Involvement

Duke Sustainable Ocean Alliance (SOA)

Summit for Ocean Fellows Committee Lead

Spring 2025-Present

- Spearheaded the organization of SOA's largest annual conference-style event. Planned logistics, contacted panelists, and raised funding.

Duke Marine Scholars Executive Board

Pod Program Committee

Spring 2025-Present

- Organized student groups and planned community-building events to foster engagement in marine science at Duke University.

Duke Environmental Alliance

Earth Fest Planning Committee

Fall 2022-Spring 2023

- Coordinated logistics and programming to organize a campus-wide sustainability celebration and engage the Duke community in environmental awareness.