Background

I am from Long Island, New York. Growing up there, I was always surrounded by beaches and the ocean. It has always been something that I am passionate about. Having the chance to work for CCE marine program was such an amazing opportunity. CCE has many different internships that can be applied for on their website.

About Cornell Cooperative Extension

- Many different projects in effect throughout all of New York: food and nutrition, economic vitality, and environmental and social resilience.
- Dedicated to improving lives and the environment throughout New York.
- Uses research from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the College of Human Ecology at Cornell.

On the Job

Horseshoe Crab Counting and Tagging

**GOAL:** Annually monitor spawning horseshoe crabs at various beaches throughout Long Island to gain a better understanding of their abundance and distribution in the New York Marine District.

Data is collected on spawning abundance, size, sex and tag returns around full and new moon events from May to July.

At the peak of the season, we would count around 1,000 horseshoe crabs in total in one night.

Shellfish Hatchery

**Goal:** To ensure that shellfish populations are healthy and sustainable, so that commercial and recreational harvesting may continue and be profitable.

By restoring native shellfish populations to coastal waterways, they will also assist to restore Long Island’s water quality as well as the economics and resilience of coastal towns.

My main tasks in the oyster hatchery were to feed the larvae and maintaining the connicles and other equipment. I also had the opportunity to help with spawns and count the larvae under a microscope.

Seahorse that was found in one of the bays when we were seining. We plot the location they were found to get an estimate on the species.

**Goal:** To restore and monitor the significant local seagrass species, eelgrass. Eelgrass meadows provide critical habitat for numerous finfish and shellfish species at various phases of development.

I worked in a lab testing sediment samples taken from beaches around Long Island. I tested them for organic matter and took their grain size. This helps to know where a good place to plant eel grass would be.

Eelgrass is an essential habitat for seahorses on Long Island. There is population is starting to increase again with the regrowth of the eel grass species.

Eel Grass Restoration

**Reflection**

This was such an amazing opportunity. I am grateful to have had the ability to work with a meaningful organization such as CCE and help with many of their hands on projects. I’m not sure if this is something I would love to do as a career but I am very happy to have had the experience.