

## Young Professional Spotlight

Young Professional members of AIFRB represent the next generation of leaders in fisheries science and management. Through *Briefs* and our social media platforms we will be highlighting our Young Professionals as a way to introduce them to the full membership and create opportunities for collaborations. AIFRB's Young Professional Representative, Connor Capizzano ([connor.capizzano001@umb.edu](mailto:connor.capizzano001@umb.edu)), will be showcasing new Young Professionals throughout the year using a series of biographical interviews. This month's Young Professional Spotlight features **Dr. Kady Lyons, Georgia District and Research Scientist at Georgia Aquarium in Atlanta, GA.**

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### *Dr. Kady Lyons – Georgia District*



***What is your current position, with what company/organization, and what is the focus of your research/work?***

I am a research scientist at the Georgia Aquarium, starting in February of 2019. The broad focus of my work spans the fields of ecology to physiology with an emphasis on toxicology generally utilizing elasmobranch species.

***Where did you receive your education, and what helped pave your way to your current position?***

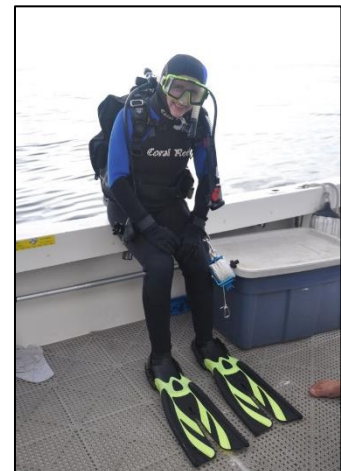
I recently completed my PhD at the University of Calgary in 2018 where I used a model elasmobranch species to investigate the implications of contaminants for population health. Being engaged in the field and working with a variety of folks exposed me to multiple disciplines and opened my eyes to unique ways of tackling problems.

***How does your work apply to, or influence, fishery management (e.g., stock assessments, sportfishing, commercial regulations, habitat protection, etc.)?***

I am interested in the potential consequences anthropogenic contaminants have for short and long-term health implications of individuals and populations. This is multi-faceted from how contaminant exposure may affect stress physiology (and thus capture-release survivability) to reproductive output and success that may have larger population-level implications.

***What is your professional outlook for fisheries management? In other words, what will the future of fisheries management look like 10-20 years from now. What are we doing correctly, what needs to be improved (e.g., in research, policy, education)?***

Having primarily utilized non-salmonid species in my work, I would like to see more focus on out-of-the-box research to inform management of non-traditional species. I believe education across the board is important so that people understand exactly where their seafood comes from and the holistic costs it took for it to get there. Emphasizing the success stories of fisheries management in the US can serve as a beacon for other countries to the benefits when proper, science-based management is enacted. As we grapple with the effects of climate change and the repercussions that has for fisheries



resources, it is critical to take holistic views when considering how our food arrived on our dinner plates.

***What is the importance of young fishery professionals today and for the future of fishery management?***

Running the risk of being cliché, young professionals are the ones who will be taking up the mantle of future fisheries management. With the advances in computing and development of novel electronic tools, young fisheries professionals have varied and unique resources available to them that weren't available or easily accessible even a decade ago. This will empower them with new tools to tackle challenges in new ways, which is much in the Anthropocene era.

***What drew you to AIFRB, and what does AIFRB do for you and what can it do for other young professionals in this field?***

I joined AIFRB early in my graduate career at the encouragement of my local chapter members, many of whom were former lab brothers and sisters from my Master's. I think it is important for people from different fields to have a place to come together to share new perspectives and different views to address management issues and considerations, as is provided by AIFRB. While I am not a traditional fisheries biologist, it is important to remember that biology is critical to inform proper management and both groups are needed to draft appropriate policies.



**Please contact Kady ([kady.lyons@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kady.lyons@sbcglobal.net)) to continue the conversation!**