The Texas Chapter of the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association (ASBPA) held its 2nd Annual Symposium over two days on March 31st and April 1st, 2016 at the University of Texas Marine Science Institute (UTMSI) located in beautiful Port Aransas. The Symposium began with an afternoon field trip on the 31st that was well attended and required two 15 passenger vans to transport all of the participants. Derek Brockbank ASBPA’s National Executive Director traveled from Washington DC to be a part of both the field trip and proceedings during the Symposium. Students also traveled from around the state to attend including a group from Texas Christian University in Fort Worth.

In keeping with the Symposium’s theme of “Texas Shorelines – Bays to Beaches,” with stops around the Port Aransas area, and on North Padre Island the field trip provided participants an excellent opportunity (in a short period of time) to experience the diversity of the Texas coast. The field trip was developed and lead by Dr. Skip Davis and Dr. Jim Gibeaut, both well-known and greatly respected for their many academic contributions. Their involvement with the Texas Chapter has helped validate and enhance the Chapter’s efforts to increase student and academic participation.

Prior to the Symposium, the Texas Chapter Board of Directors voted to fund the cost of ASBPA memberships for all students presenting at the Symposium. Ultimately, two students were included in the Symposium program: Ms. Shelby Bessette University of Texas Rio Grande Valley and Mr. Phillipe Wernette Texas A & M University. The Chapter welcomes both students as new members into ASBPA and the Texas Chapter.

The Symposium began on Friday morning with a welcome from the UTMSI director to the more than 70 attendees. Twenty-one (21) presentations throughout the day covered a wide range of topics including the chemistry of oil spills, nearshore currents, beach visitation benefit calculations, and a presentation by Derek Brockbank, just to name a few. Following the final presentation, a poster session with 4 participants was conducted. Symposium activities concluded with closing remarks from Cris Weber Symposium Program Chair at 5:45 p.m.

Funding for the Symposium was generously provided by five corporate sponsors: Atkins Global Engineering, Freese and Nichols Engineering, Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Company, HDR Engineering, and Naismith Marine Services. As a result of their generosity there has not been any cost to Chapter members for either of the two Chapter Symposums, field trips, or lunches.

It was a great program and the Texas Chapter would like to thank all of those who worked so hard to make it such a success. Mr. Jace Tunnel and Ms. Dana Sjostrom at UTMSI were indispensable in the operation and success of the program. In the very near future the Chapter intends to upload all 21 of the Symposium presentations to the Chapter website. Please be looking for the notification email when the presentations have been uploaded.

Thank you again to all who attended and we are looking forward to next year’s symposium.

John Lee
Vice President
Texas ASBPA Chapter