



CELEBRATING

25 years

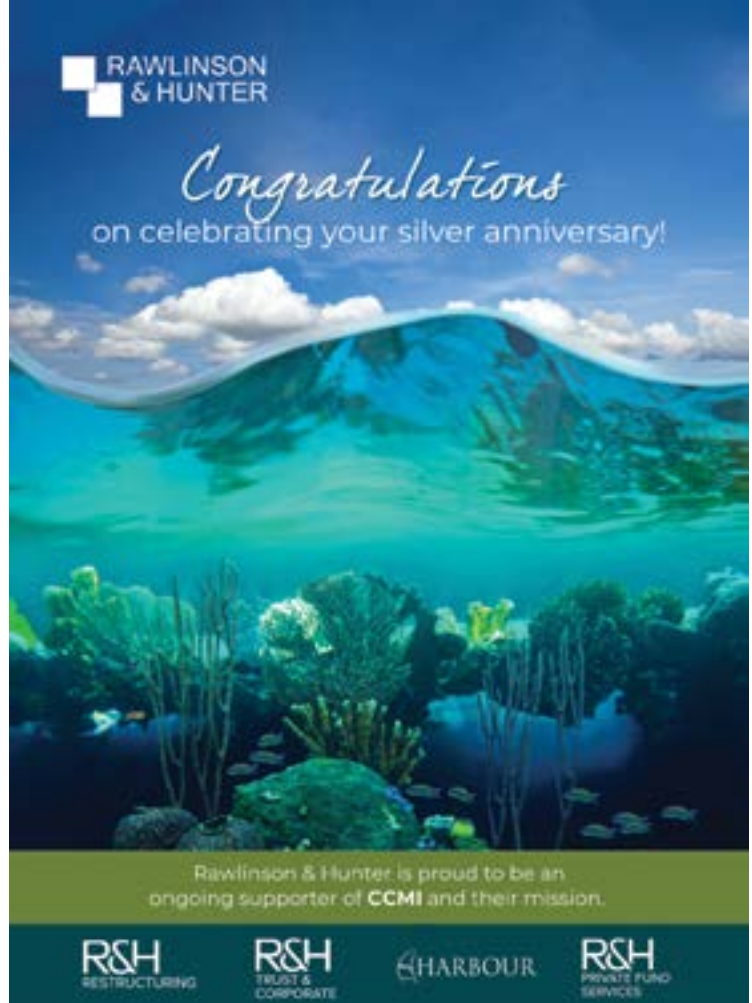
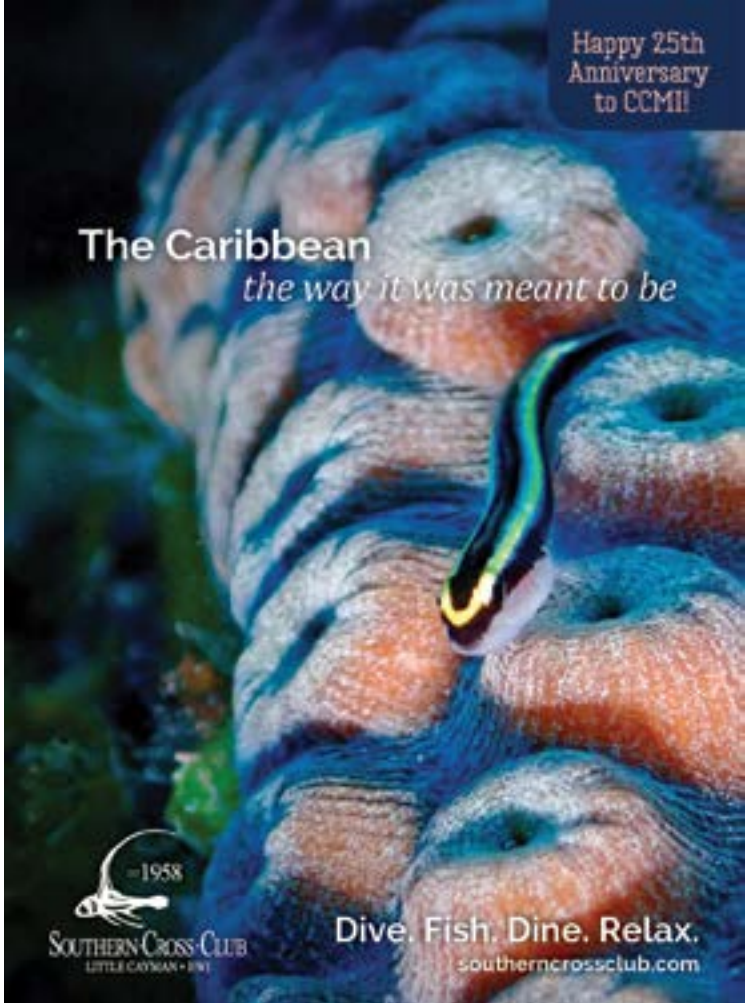
OF CCMI

REEFRESEARCH.ORG

WELCOME TO THE 2023 Festival of Seas

We are celebrating our 25th anniversary this year. Your support is so important – we couldn't do it without you! The gala running order will include:

- Keynote speech from Tanya Streeter
- Short film from CCMI
- Live auction (we promise to be quick)
- Silent auction – sign up to bid online using the QR code (see right)
- Raffle
- Live music and dancing!



LETTER FROM THE CCMI Team

Dear CCMI Supporter,

Thank you – 25 years is a significant milestone and we could not have developed into who we are today without the significant support from our stakeholders. Many of you have been with us for the entire journey, creating a sustainable network of advisors, volunteers, and friends.

We are now beginning to see the fruits of our labour as the CCMI ocean literacy programme engages so many of our local students, from primary to tertiary level. We have provided over 1500 local scholarships, deliver a robust internship programme that supports local and international students, and we continue to invest in our research capabilities, facility, people and programmes. Our long-

term monitoring and research programmes contribute to critical international and local knowledge on how to protect coral reef ecosystems. Our plans to expand our facility will underpin our capacity to create more education and research opportunities, taking CCMI to the next step on our journey.

This 25 year update covers some of our successes and most important impacts. We have tried to include as many people as possible, to thank you and recognise you all as incredible, important CCMI stakeholders. We hope you enjoy reading about CCMI and what we have achieved, we hope you are proud of what we do – and cannot thank you enough for your support.

The CCMI Team



- Management Team**
 Dr Gretchen Goodbody
 Rob Hedges
 Kate Holden
- Cayman & US Board of Directors**
 Tim Kary (Chair)
 Sydney Coleman
 Dr Steve Gittings
 Peter Hillenbrand
 Chris Humphries

ABOUT CCMI

WHO IS CCMI?

CCMI was founded in 1998, by Dr Carrie Manfrino. Since building the Little Cayman Research Centre in 2003, we have flourished into a team of scientists, educators and communicators, who recognise that coral reefs are critically important yet threatened ecosystems, that require immediate protection. We are committed to understanding the impacts of natural and human-caused threats to biodiversity, including climate change, in order to create a meaningful pathway towards marine sustainability for the future.

HOW IS CCMI IMPACTFUL?

CCMI has a three-pronged approach to creating meaningful impact via: research, conservation, and education. This approach means our research connects to outreach and education efforts, effectively and immediately, having greater impact and living beyond the academic sphere. This mandate is at the centre of what we do, ensuring we work to sustain healthy oceans for the future by understanding how to protect coral reefs now.



RESEARCH

CCMI has a mission to be a leading research facility in the Caribbean, focusing on the adaptation and resilience of coral reefs. Our research team, directed by Dr Gretchen Goodbody, conducts state-of-the-art experimental research, combining large-scale in situ ecological surveys with small-scale laboratory experiments, and molecular ecology, examining population structure, reproductive ecology, and genetic connectivity on tropical coral reef ecosystems, ranging from shallow inshore reefs to the mesophotic zone. In addition, CCMI has conducted 25 years of monitoring and observational studies to understand how coral ecosystems respond and evolve in the face of climate change.

CONSERVATION

Using our understanding of coral biology, CCMI maintains one of longest running coral restoration research programmes in the region. We develop empirically verified methods to ensure successful, complex restoration can boost wild coral populations and promote biodiversity on coral reef ecosystems, helping to restore populations of threatened coral species across the Cayman Islands.

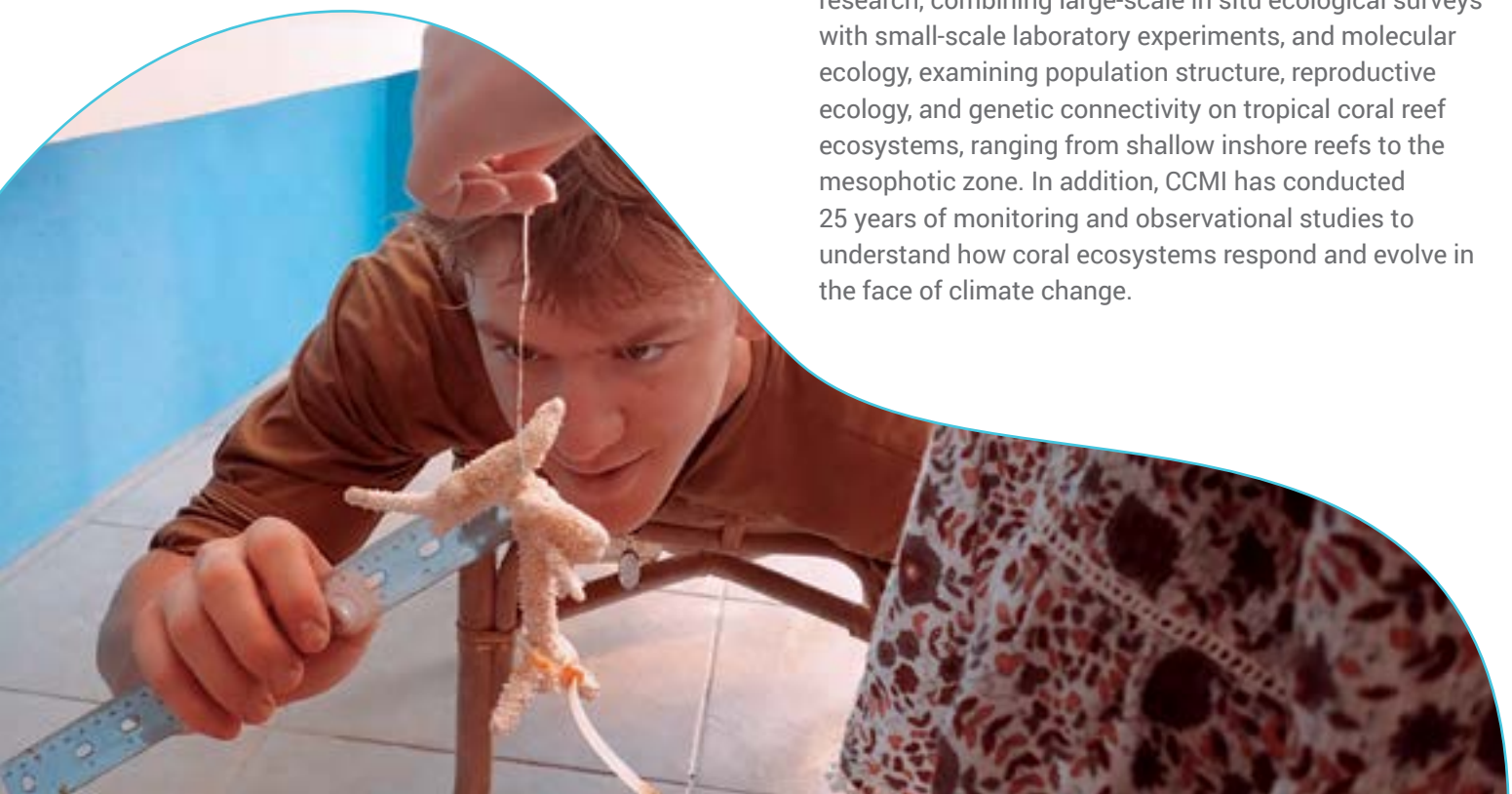
EDUCATION & OUTREACH

CCMI takes current research findings and pairs it with immersive and engaging education and outreach initiatives, bridging the gap between research and education. We provide a range of learning and training opportunities for local and international students, including a scholarship programme that supports students from primary to tertiary level. We are inclusive, diverse, cutting-edge, and ocean loving people who want to create a brighter future for oceans via partnerships, collaborations, and communication.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LITTLE CAYMAN

CCMI's research centre is situated in Little Cayman, which has limited local anthropogenic impacts, so we can research the impacts of (and solutions to) climate in a focused, uninterrupted way. Few coastal locations offer this opportunity to understand corals and the marine ecosystem in a nearly pristine state, as stress caused by human development is increasing.

Our 25 year data monitoring indicates that although the reefs here have degraded over time, they remain 'healthy'. Our 2022 data set indicated that coral cover remained stable and macro algae has declined significantly. Coral surface area has declined – as we see a shift from larger corals to smaller ones. Yet fish density, biomass, and species richness have increased since 2015. Local protections and low human impact have undoubtedly shielded Little Cayman from the extremity of global pressures that are heavily impacting reefs around the globe; however, changes are still occurring that put the reefs increasingly at risk. Understanding how reefs can be resilient is a crucial question for humanity, and Little Cayman offers a unique location to study global stressors and coral reef ecosystem response mechanisms.



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS – CCMI'S IMPACT

Highlights

25 years of coral reef monitoring - Since 1998, CCMI has conducted surveys using Atlantic and Gulf Rapid Reef Assessment (AGRRA) methodology. Results from this work helps generate an understanding of the mechanisms that are driving reef resilience in a changing environment. Little Cayman's reefs remain 'healthy', underscoring the importance of CCMI's location and research remit.

Supporting young Caymanians – CCMI has provided over 1500 scholarships since our first big grant in 2007 from the Edmund F. and Virginia B. Ball Foundation. We invest USD \$150k per annum in scholarships for local students via residential programmes. Our Young Environmentalist Leadership Course provides dive training, education, and job skills to students (ages 16-22), and introduces them to the basics of marine ecology and the importance of coral conservation. Our Marine Ecology Courses support students from ages 10-18, who learn about the marine environment while staying at the Little Cayman Research Centre.

Investing in research – CCMI now invests circa USD \$1million per year in our research programme. We are supported by international governments (US National Science Foundation, UK Darwin Plus Initiative, and the EU Resembid programme), as well as a number of international and local foundations, private trusts, and private donors.

Expanding our reach – CCMI reaches over 300,000 people annually on social media platforms. We value this space as an educational podium, a place to share knowledge on important ocean-related topics, and place of interaction. We would love to bring everyone to Little Cayman to engage with our reefs first hand – but this won't ever be possible, so connecting digitally is a crucial tool in our communications and outreach armoury.



International science – CCMI collaborates with specialists from around the world, sharing knowledge and skills to create greater impact. We have hosted over 200 visiting scientists, and our list of collaborators continues to grow. We also host 250+ college students per annum, expanding our future science leaders as well as our alumni and a growing professional network.

Supporting early career scientists – CCMI supports early career scientists through internships and entry-level research positions, providing lab and fieldwork experience opportunities to develop skills in analysis, presentation, and writing. We provide a minimum of 10 paid internships a year, plus support researchers via post-doctoral positions and the Women in Ocean Science Award programme.



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS *Testimonials*

“Amazing experience! I wish I could stay I’ve learned so much and it was so fun, also I can now help the environment more. This was the best 3 days of my life! I hope to come again when I’m 13 and I wanna work here when I grow up.”

*Charlotte, Edna Moyle Primary School,
BODA MEC Student 2022*



“CCMI’s MEC programme is absolutely amazing. The instructors are professional, engaging, and proactive in promoting and educating groups about the conservation of our ecosystem. All aspects of the 3-day programme gave our children life-long memories and appreciation for what we have in the Caribbean. Thank you!”

*Adrian Falcon, West End Primary School,
BODA MEC Chaperone 2022*

“Best summer camp ever! This is an opportunity more Caymanians should experience. I want to attend next year because I want to experience it with my cousin.”

Adrian Tibbetts, CMEC Ocean Science Scholar 2023



“This 2023 YELC programme was an amazing experience that I would love for other young Caymanians to experience it. The beautiful dives and interesting lectures was very fun and interesting to experience. Overall the trip was amazing and I would love to go again.”

Lani Ebanks, YELC 2023



“CCMI’s Ocean Scholar Marine Education Internship has been such an incredible experience for me. I have learned a great deal including completing my first aid training, boat skills, and many guided snorkel trips. This role has also provided me with a lot of personal growth experience, such as improving my public speaking, taking the lead and being part of an incredible team. It has been a real privilege working with the CCMI team and getting to know the local community. Not every day was easy but even on the most challenging days there were many high points, I have loved the challenge that each new day and each new group has brought. I have learned so much over the last 3 months and am certain this experience will benefit my future career. The only thing I don’t want to do is leave.”

Liv Barnett, OSS Intern Summer 2023

FESTIVAL OF SEAS

Past Projects

The Festival of Seas has been raising important operating funds since 2008. To date, we have raised over \$1,000,000 in net revenue from the event. Here is a summary of the projects that have been supported by the Festival, every one of which is still operating.



2009

OCEAN LITERACY & MARINE ECOLOGY COURSES (MEC)

In 2009, we launched our ocean literacy programme and MEC courses, supported from the pledge at FOS. Now, we support a minimum of 50 scholarships for government school students to attend residential courses at CCMI every year. We also support more than 10 visiting local schools as part of Year 5 and 6 activities.



2012

CORAL NURSERY – SEED PROJECT

In 2012, the Festival of Seas supported the first ever coral restoration project in the Cayman Islands. We started with four fragments and have now grown more than 1km (in linear extension) of staghorn coral (*Acropora cervicornis*). Our project has grown to be a region-leading study on coral resiliency to disease, stress, and which corals are more robust.



2013

YOUNG ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP COURSE (YELC)

CCMI, in partnership with Go Pro Cayman, runs YELC annually with 8-10 students per year. Participants experience transformative training, including becoming rescue divers and spending a week in Little Cayman with CCMI's team. Continued support from Foster's for this programme has created untold career opportunities for local students.



2017

INTERNSHIPS

While CCMI has always provided internships, in 2017, we developed a more robust internship schedule and currently aim to support 10 students per year in research, education, and operations positions. We have also launched Ocean Science Scholarships and the Reefs Go Live Internships, and all internships provide valuable opportunities to work in the field with CCMI's team. We believe we offer a unique experience, especially for local students, to come and learn, work, and enjoy researching in situ.

Timeline

1998 – CCMI was founded by Dr Carrie Manfrino as a US non-profit. CCMI began our coral reef monitoring programme that tracks changes in coral reef and fish health.

2002 – CCMI was incorporated as a registered Cayman Islands Charity (#NP-3)

2003 – CCMI was determined as a US 501(c)(3) (#22-3609293)

2004 – CCMI was incorporated as a UK registered charity (#1104009)

2005 – HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, CCMI's Royal Patron, breaks ground on the Little Cayman Research Centre.

2007 – CCMI launches international programming, including visiting scientists and groups from Dartmouth, University of Florida, Wellesley College, Rutgers University, Keane University, University of North Carolina etc. CCMI was awarded our first \$500k multi-year grant.

2009 – CCMI partnered with the United States National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to launch the Coral Reef Early Warning System (CREWS) as part of the Integrated Coral Observation Network (ICON). CCMI launched our Ocean Literacy programme.

2012 – CCMI was awarded a US National Science Foundation (NSF) facilities grant to develop the climate change labs. CCMI also established the first ever coral nursery and coral restoration research programme in the Cayman Islands in partnership with the Cayman Islands Department of Environment.

2016 – CCMI held the “Can we Save Coral Reefs” International Symposium in London, convened by HRH The Earl of Wessex, hosting scientists, policy makers and advocates from all over the world. HRH The Earl of Wessex also visited the Little Cayman Research Centre.

2017 – CCMI attended the Fourth International Workshop on Bridging the Gap between Ocean Acidification Impacts and Economic Valuation, in Monaco, hosted by Prince Albert II of Monaco. CCMI also held a Navigator event, hosted by our Royal Patron, HRH The Earl of Wessex, at Windsor Castle.

2018 – CCMI launched Reefs Go Live programme, which reaches over 100,000 students per year (by 2022). 2018 also saw a 20-year coral reef monitoring follow up study across all three of the Cayman Islands. We celebrated the International Year of the Reef via a range of public outreach events, including a Royal hosted event at St James's Palace, London.

2019 – CCMI hosted HRH The Prince of Wales at the Little Cayman Research Centre, including a Reefs Go Live broadcast. CCMI also launched the Women in Ocean Science Award (WIOSA) to support early-career professionals.

2020 – CCMI hired new Research Director, Dr Gretchen Goodbody-Gringley, who was awarded a NSF grant, CCMI's first as lead PI/Institution. CCMI championed Little Cayman as a Mission Blue Hope Spot, as well as seeing 89% success with a new coral restoration outplanting concept.

2021 – CCMI provides the most local scholarships in one year since our inception and expands the Reef Ecology and Evolution Lab (REEL). CCMI is awarded a RESEMBID grant to support coral restoration and a Covid-19 Adaptation Grant. CCMI presents Quiet Oceans for the UN.

2022 – CCMI awarded a NSF grant to expand our wet labs. CCMI also awarded a Darwin Plus Initiative Grant to explore offshore sea mounts. CCMI presented at the ICRI and Reef Futures Conferences.

2023 – The Duke of Edinburgh launched the Coral Fund, to support CCMI's expansion plans. The CCMI Board, HRH the Duke of Edinburgh and His Excellency the Governor of the Cayman Islands broke ground on the new site.



THANK YOU FOR 25 YEARS *of Support*

Thank you to all our stakeholders. Over 25 years we have had so many valued and important supporters. We have named as many people as we can here! Thank you for your contribution, to CCMI, to the reefs of the Cayman Islands and the young people we support via marine education.

Supporters

SPECIAL THANK YOU

Dr Carrie Manfrino
Nancy Siebens Binz
Henry & Eliza Harford
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The Hillenbrand Family
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THANK YOU

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Thank You

To those who have made Festival of Seas 2023: Silver Seas such a memorable celebration of our 25th anniversary!

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CCMI is grateful to all the members of the planning committee, event volunteers, vendors, and donors for their support of this year's Festival of Seas.