

**RETIREMENT OF MICHAEL A. UNGER
SCHOOL OF MARINE SCIENCE**

Michael A. Unger joined the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) faculty of William & Mary in 1990 as an Assistant Research Scientist and Head of Analytical Chemistry Section. In 1993 he became an Associate Faculty member in the Division of Chemistry and Toxicology, now the Department of Aquatic Health Sciences. He was awarded Research Assistant Professor status in 1993 and was promoted to Research Associate Professor in 1999. He advanced to Associate Professor in 2009 and Professor in 2019.

Professor Unger received his B.S. in Zoology in 1976 from Michigan State University, and his M.S. in Chemistry in 1982 and Ph.D. in Marine Science in 1988, both from William & Mary. He served as an environmental chemist at the Applied Physics Laboratory at Johns Hopkins University before returning to VIMS in 1990.

For over 32 years Professor Unger has contributed to the university as an impactful and highly respected scientific researcher, a supremely engaged advisor to the Commonwealth and beyond on issues involving environmental pollution, and as an insightful and conscientious educator in the field of environmental chemistry and marine science. He also has served as a valued colleague and active participant in institutional governance.

While at VIMS, he mentored three Ph.D. and three Masters students, a William & Mary undergraduate (highest honors), two high school students and an international post-doctoral research associate. He also served on 30 graduate student committees. His advisees have gone on to accomplished careers in academia, government and private industry.

Over his long career, Professor Unger taught many courses including his highly rated Environmental Chemistry course and served as an instructor for the Fundamentals in Environmental Toxicology and Pathology, a VIMS core course that has been extremely well received by students. Students often remarked on his interdisciplinary knowledge and his approachable and coherent teaching style, as well as his ability to see and convey the “big picture.”

Professor Unger’s breadth of knowledge in both the biological and chemical sciences has afforded him impressive perspectives on the impacts of pollution on both environmental and human health. He has an international reputation in marine antifoulants, especially tributyltin. Early in his career he perfected analytical methods to detect the toxicant in parts per trillion levels in the environment, a feat unheard of at the time. He is also a global authority on the analysis, environmental fate and effects of the toxic and persistent pesticide Kepone, which was released into the James River during the 1970s. His advisory work on these toxicants was a substantial and critical component to the remediation of Virginia’s waters. Further, he is a recognized authority on polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, toxic pollutants widely distributed in our environment.

While at VIMS, Professor Unger has been awarded several million dollars in extramural competitive grants. He has contributed to the advancement of science with the goal of environmental protection as both a leader and as a valued collaborator, and has given over 20 invited and 80 contributed scientific presentations at scientific gatherings. He has published over 50 scientific articles and book chapters, and his work is well cited and referenced by his colleagues in the field of environmental chemistry. Due to his recognized expertise, he has frequently been sought out to review scientific manuscripts and proposals, as well as speak to governmental bodies at the local, state, national and international levels.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Visitors acknowledges the retirement of Michael A. Unger and expresses its appreciation to him for the many contributions he has made to William & Mary and VIMS during his 32 years of service. The Board hereby approves the change in status for him from Professor of Marine Science to Professor of Marine Science, Emeritus.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be spread upon the minutes of the Board and a copy of the same be delivered to Professor Unger with best wishes from a grateful Board for his years of dedicated service to William & Mary.