OYSTER SOUTH: LESSONS FROM 'THE DIRTY DOZEN'

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GULF STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION New Orleans, LA

Oyster South

In the Beginning ...

• Oyster South began as an informal coalition of oyster farmers, Extension agents, restaurateurs

- Great group, but didn't have a framework to fundraise

 In 2016, we formalized into a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit to support the Southern oyster farming community

 Includes any growers, chefs, shuckers, distributors, gear suppliers, etc. who support that mission

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Oyster South's Two Branches

Industry

- Oyster farmers, chefs, shuckers, seafood dealers, marine extension agents, students, writers, photographers, filmmakers, artists, knifemakers, cookware, gear suppliers, etc.
- This has grown to over 200 members.

General Public

- Oyster loving members of the general public.
- Have not developed this yet.

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What Do We Do?

Fundraising

- LANDLOCKED
- Assist other efforts

Information Exchange

- Annual Symposium
- Newsletter
- Grant-funded efforts
- General Promotion and Storytelling
 - Media coverage



Photo: Bryan Rackley

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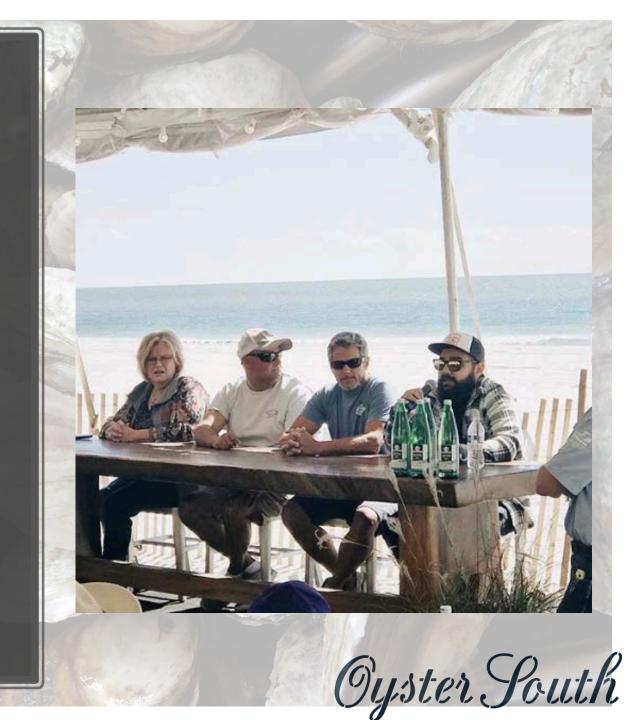
LANDLOCKED

- In October 2017 + 2018, raised over \$20,000 each year
- Over 300 people attended each year
- 18+ oyster farmers and other chefs each year
- Ticketed event for the general public
- First year, all net proceeds donated to UGA to help shellfish farming move forward
- Second year, all net proceeds used for Need for Seed grant program for oyster hatcheries



Supported Other Events

Peat + Pearls Hangout Oyster Festival Shucked + Sauced Panacea Oyster Festival



Donations to Oyster South

Fin and Fino

Parleaux Beer Lab

Panhandle Proud



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Information Exchange

- Annual Symposium
- Quarterly Newsletter
 - If you are a paid
 member, please make
 sure you are getting this!
- Assisting various grantfunded projects
 - Peer to Pier program
 - Turner Foundation hurdles to aquaculture



Peer to Pier Fellowship

- 17 National Sea Grant awards to growers across the south, with trips around the U.S., Thailand, Canada, and Australia
- Promoted by Oyster South, with additional funds provided to the

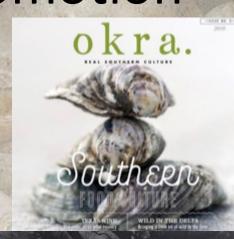
program





Brand Promotion

- Okra Magazine
- Garden & Gun
- Magazines
- Events
- TV Shows
- Chefs
- Oyster South routinely responds to various media inquiries
- Multiply social media impact of members







Financial Structure

- All net proceeds from fundraising goes into grants. None of these funds used for operating expenses.
- Symposium intended to cover costs.
- Operating expenses solely supported by member dues, newsletter advertising, merchandise, and grants.



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Need for Seed Grants

- Throughout the region, the growth of the industry has led to an increased demand for oyster hatchery production.
- This situation has been exacerbated by regulatory restrictions on seed movement coupled with impacts suffered by the industry in 2018 due to Hurricanes Florence and Michael.
- To address this issue, Oyster South has raised funds last year to support commercial oyster hatchery production that will provide seed to commercial oyster farms in the region.

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Need for Seed Recipients 2019

- Lady's Island Oyster
- L3 Hatchery
- Millpoint Aquaculture
 - Pensacola Bay Oyster Co. \$5000
- Triple N Oyster Farm

\$5000 \$5000 \$5000

\$2000

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Symposia



- First symposium in
 Auburn, AL in 2017 with
 over 100 attendees,
 including over 50 oyster
 farmers
- Second symposium in Charleston, SC in 2018 with over 175 attendees (of which almost 100 were oyster farmers)
- This year was in Orange Beach, AL + we topped 235 + maxed out the room! Oyster South

- Ryan Belter
- Ryan Carnegie
- Andre Gallant
- Jennifer Kornegay
- Pete Malinowski
- JT Mckissack

- Diane Murphy
- Erin Byers Murray
- Matt Parker
- Caroline Rosen
- Julia Sullivan
- Becky Wasden
- Joe York

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- Storyteller Panel: Moderated by writers Jennifer
 Kornegay and Erin Byers Murray. GSMFC also funded travel for author Andre Gallant and filmmaker Joe York to participate.
- The Importance (or Not) of Quality Panel Discussion: Moderated by Bill Walton. GSMFC funded travel for grower **Ryan Belter** and wholesaler **J.T. Mckissack**.
- Lessons From The Storms Panel Discussion and Three Minute Tech Talks: GSMFC funded grower Ryan Belter.

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- Rethinking How We Think About Seed Transfers. Ryan Carnegie, Virginia Institute of Marine Science.
- Oyster Farming As Restoration. Pete Malinowski, Billion Oyster Project, New York.
- Research Farm Network. Diane Murphy, Cape Cod Cooperative Extension and Woods Hole Sea Grant.
- Revenge of the Nerds: Effects of Debt Financing on Your Heavy, Sharp Rock Farm. Matt Parker, University of Maryland.

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 Lessons from Tales of the Cocktail. Caroline Rosen, Tales of the Cocktail Foundation, New Orleans, LA.

 An Educated Staff: The Importance of Server Training. Executive Chef Julia Sullivan, Henrietta Red, Nashville, TN.

 Finding Your Tribe. Becky Wasden, Two Girls One Shuck, New Orleans, LA.

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Oyster SouthSymposium 2019 Speaker Support

 Thank you to the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission for the financial support!

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