



Centre ValBio Newsletter

June 2025

CVB News

Dr. Wright Receives Champion of Biodiversity Award

Dr. Patricia C. Wright has been awarded the Champion of Biodiversity Award by the Ministry of the Environment in Madagascar. The Mayor, two members of the Ministry of the Environment, the assistant to the Depute, and the Director Regional of Environment and Sustainable Development as well as our collaborators, including Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and PIVOT, all attended the ceremony at Centre ValBio. “It was amazing,” Dr. Wright said. “I am very honored.”



Photo credit: Dr. Patricia C. Wright

Lazasoa Rehodo Soloniaina Attends South Africa Training

Lazasoa Rehodo Soloniaina of the Education Department was selected by The Society for Conservation GIS (SCGIS) to participate in the 2025 SCGIS Global Scholarship Program to receive GIS training in ArcGIS Pro and the ArcGIS Platform at the South African Wildlife College in South Africa.



Twenty scholars from Africa, South America, Asia, Australia, Madagascar were in attendance. Lazasoa now has certifications in ArcGIS Pro training and Web Mapping/ArcGIS online training.

"I want to use my GIS skills within CVB, getting GIS information and showing our GIS results to local communities and partners because it is easy for visualization, explanation and results," said Lazasoa.

"Thank you again Dr. Pat Wright, the Stony Brook University team, MICET, and the CVB team for helping me to attend this training."

Photo credit: Lazasoa Rehodo Soloniaina

Stony Brook University Summer 2025 Study Abroad

Stony Brook University's Summer 2025 Study Abroad program has come to a close.

A generous grant from the Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation made it possible for the full participation of four Malagasy students in Stony Brook



University's 6-week Summer 2025 Study Abroad program. The Malagasy students were joined by nine students from the United States, creating a valuable opportunity for cross-cultural understanding, collaboration, and lasting friendships.

"Before, studying abroad seemed like a distant dream. But thanks to your generosity, I lived something truly unforgettable," said Shirley Jaojo, a Malagasy student and English language learner who participated in the program. "I met amazing people, discovered places I had never seen before, even though I live in Madagascar, and I learned so much about biodiversity and conservation."

The Maxwell/Hanrahan grant also assisted in covering the station fees for two U.S. students undertaking field study projects in preparation for future application to PhD programs.

Students from across the U.S. can apply to any of Stony Brook University's three Madagascar Study Abroad programs: Summer, Fall and Winter. Follow this [link](#) to learn more. Malagasy students should contact Centre ValBio at ask@valb.io for information on how to participate.

Photo credit: Dr. Amanda Rowe

World Environment Day Celebration

The Education Department celebrated World Environment Day with students from various local schools. The theme of this year's event was "One Island for a Plastic-Free Future."

Throughout the day, students participated in educational sessions on environmental conservation and the consequences of plastic pollution. They also had the opportunity to engage in an art workshop led by professional artists Sandratra, Christian Menabe, and F. Tre Lawrence who generously shared their expertise. We also thank the Stony Brook University Summer 2025 Study Abroad students for helping with this workshop.



There were many impressive art pieces, and a few outstanding ones were recognized with special awards. To support their continued learning and creativity, all participants were provided with painting supplies to encourage practice and development of their skills beyond today's event.

Photo credit: Odon Fabrice Rasolomampionona

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