

SERVICE-LEARNING

NEWSLETTER

STUDENT PROFILE



Last spring, students from ANTH 641: Discovery and Design partnered with the West Lafayette Parks and Recreation Department to develop an innovative applied research project. Building on the work of students from the previous class, the

ANTH 641 team used visually-engaging, QR-enabled signage along park trails to conduct a survey of park visitors. Their main goal was to better understand how the experiences of local park visitors changed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Visitors scanned the codes with their mobile devices to learn about community resources and share their own park experiences. The project elicited over 200 engagements with the signs and generated social media posts from visitors and residents. The city is currently planning future QR projects with Purdue anthropology students.

"This project provided an important opportunity for us to develop engaged research skills with a municipal partner while making meaningful change for the surrounding community. We greatly benefited from working closely with faculty member Dr. Zoe Nyssa and community partners Bryce Patz and Heather Wiltse."



Amanda Waller, Adam Kotanko, Killian Kelly, Alejandra Duran Trinidad, Zoe Nyssa (Not pictured: Rebecca Martinez, Rebecca Eli-Long)

INSTRUCTOR TO WATCH: MEGAN GUNN



Megan Gunn's journey with Purdue began years ago, when she attended the West Lafayette campus as a student. She earned her B.S. in Ecology, Evolution and Environmental Science in 2012 and was later hired by the Purdue Department of Forestry and Natural Resources as a manager for the Aquatic Ecology research lab. In this role, she noticed

that not many other people in the field looked like her. Realizing that other youth from underrepresented minorities might not see natural resources as a viable career field, she was inspired to do something about it. Out of this passion, [The Familiar Faces Project](#) was born. Now, Megan works to support underrepresented minorities in the sciences and serves as a role model for other youth who are considering their future career paths.

In her role, Megan works with children and young adults of all ages by bringing them from the classroom to the rivers and forests in which she works. Together, they gather samples, conduct research, and even learn how to present their own data. Megan loves to spend her time out in the community and in the field with students, all while highlighting minority scientists on The Familiar Faces Project's social media pages, website, and through videos and blogs.

Megan also serves as the advisor to the Purdue SCEE. This group of Purdue students works with Megan to organize community nature and education days, plant trees, go into classrooms and create workshops for the public. Every day, Megan lives her motto of educating the students so they can educate others through service-learning. Through her hard work, Megan has built a network creating a continuous cycle of education and outreach for the community, which inspires others far beyond her reach.



COMMUNITY PARTNER HIGHLIGHT: LARA

For over 40 years LARA (Lafayette Adult Resource Academy) has been serving the Greater Lafayette community by providing education services for adult learners, including ESL courses, high school credentialing, workforce certifications, and college and career readiness. The mission that guides LARA is to “empower, encourage, and elevate adult learners through education and training, enriching lives and our community.”

One way LARA does this is by partnering with Purdue students through service-learning programs, allowing both Purdue students and the public to learn through the mutually beneficial educational experiences that LARA provides.



Over the years, LARA has partnered with Purdue University on numerous projects and many more are currently in the works. This semester, LARA is hosting undergraduate students taking Purdue's EDCI 350 course, a component of which is to complete a 20-hour field experience with LARA. During this experience, Purdue students will provide free tutoring services for adult learners at LARA. Later this fall, Purdue graduate students will be learning about grant-writing under the leadership of our campus Grant Writer and Post-Doc Director, Lisa R. Nielsen. In this service-learning initiative, our graduate students will write grants for LARA in the hopes that they will secure funding for the organization's many educational endeavors. Additionally, LARA has partnered with graduate student Anita Amiaya, who is building a curriculum to teach computer skills to ESL students. Once this program is complete, Anita will provide it free for learners at LARA while also taking the polished product back to her home country to help others there.

Amy Wood, Executive Director of LARA, says, “We are so fortunate to have such great resources from Purdue. We value every opportunity we can connect, and service-learning is one of our favorite ways of collaborating. LARA is an educational organization, so when we have a chance to help a student learn and receive such valuable knowledge and time, it is a win-win for everyone.” As always, we at Purdue are so grateful for everything that LARA does for our community, and for the opportunity to allow our students to partner with them in so many enriching and educational ways!

STUDENT GRANT PROGRAM FOR SERVICE PROJECTS

The Office of Engagement invites applications for the Student Grant Program for Community Service/Service-Learning Projects seeking to expand the involvement of Purdue students in partnership with communities, nonprofit agencies, schools, and governmental bodies. Program application and guidelines can be found [HERE](#). Fall 2021 deadline is Tuesday, October 5, and applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis thereafter.

LET US KNOW ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY EVENT!



Do you have a service-learning program or other community event planned with students? If so, we would love to hear about it! Please reach out to us at overbey@purdue.edu with details so we can highlight your event. If possible, we will attend and take photos to share on our website and social media accounts! We welcome you to contact us with more information!

SERVICE-LEARNING RESOURCES

Brightspace Site for Instructors: Request to be added [HERE](#)

Have a feature for our newsletter? Contact: [Lindsey Payne](#), Director of Service-Learning

NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED

Did you know the Office of Engagement has a new website? Click [HERE](#) to learn more about what we do and