

## SERVICE-LEARNING

## NEWSLETTER

STUDENT PROFILE: MARY REILLY AND  
CATHERINE WEATHERED

Mary Reilly, a senior in Mechanical Engineering, and Catherine Weathered, a PhD candidate in Biomedical Engineering, have been partnering with caretakers at Wolf Park to develop a system that quantifies the locations of the nonprofit's two gray foxes. Although Wolf Park is also home to 11 bison, six wolves, and two red foxes,

Reilly and Weathered narrowed their focus on gray foxes because they are rarely kept in captivity, and little is known about their behavior. Reilly and Weathered installed several trail cameras in the gray foxes' enclosure and collected images for multiple weeks. The images collected by Reilly and Weathered suggest that gray foxes prefer to rest in trees. Using these images, Reilly and Weathered aim to quantify the amount of time the two foxes spend on land and in trees. Reilly and Weathered plan to create an interactive, online module that allows community members to assist in the research by providing them with trail camera images and asking them to identify where foxes or humans are present. They will use this information to train their fox-locating algorithm to precisely quantify where and when the gray foxes are most active.

Weathered says the ongoing project has been rewarding and eye-opening. "It was exciting to work closely with Wolf Park staff to implement new projects, and it's interesting to see how much thought goes into every aspect of animal care," said Weathered. "Since we recently got a new service-learning grant to build mineral sheds for the bison, we have fortunately been able to introduce more Purdue students to the mission and work of Wolf Park."



## FACULTY TO WATCH: SARAH LEBLANC



Dr. Sarah LeBlanc is an Assistant Professor of Communication at Purdue University Fort Wayne. As part of her multi-method program of research in maternal-child health communication, Dr. LeBlanc studies the problem of period poverty. Period poverty reflects the absence of adequate

supplies, education, facilities, and other resources needed to manage menstruation. Although it is a global problem, period poverty remains woefully understudied in the U.S. To address this gap on a local level, Dr. LeBlanc is currently surveying adults in Allen County, Indiana about their experiences with period poverty. Reflecting on her motivation for engaging in this work, Dr. LeBlanc remarked, "We really cannot fight the problem until the problem is defined."

Back in the classroom, Dr. LeBlanc shares her passion for health communication and local community engagement through service-learning with Purdue Fort Wayne undergraduate students. In her COM 313: Health Communication course this semester, Dr. LeBlanc's students have learned about menstruation stigma and its relation to the lack of required health education in Indiana. To combat these issues, the class has partnered with McMillen Health, a non-profit in Fort Wayne that provides health education programming to schools, to revamp McMillen's menstruation education materials. Dr. LeBlanc's students are also organizing menstruation product drives and developing educational booklets for both girls and boys. These efforts will culminate in first menarche kits that will be distributed to local fifth-grade students with the support of a Purdue Service-Learning Student Grant.

If you are an adult resident of Allen County interested in sharing your voice on the issue of period poverty, consider completing Dr. LeBlanc's [survey](#).

## COMMUNITY PARTNER HIGHLIGHT: IMAGINATION STATION



Imagination Station is a local nonprofit organization offering a variety of activities and exhibits designed to teach individuals of all ages about space, science, and technology. Imagination Station first opened its doors to the Greater Lafayette community 22 years ago and has maintained a strong relationship with Purdue ever since. With the help of service-learning courses like EPICS and student volunteers from academic programs like computer engineering and biomedical engineering, Imagination Station hosts a variety of programs and outreach events each year. Although Imagination Station has been closed to the public since March of 2020, facilities manager Matt Bishop says he aims to reopen the organization this spring. Over the past two years, the organization has held small weekend events and online activities to maintain community visibility.

In the near future, Bishop plans to expand the programming offered by Imagination Station. "Imagination Station continues to serve as a hub of the university by offering service opportunities in the form of projects, research, exhibits, and outreach events," Bishop said. "Our future goals include the creation of a science center in the community and the development of several more structured programs throughout the year."

## ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR FALL 2022 SERVICE-LEARNING FELLOWS

The COVID-19 pandemic and nationwide attention to systemic racial injustice continues to shape the nature of service-learning courses and partnerships at Purdue. In the fall 2022 semester, instructors in partnership with service-learning staff and community partners will explore where service-learning fits into this ever-changing narrative and collaboratively develop the skills and tools needed to deliver effective, mutually beneficial service-learning courses.

Faculty (including non-tenure track), continuing lecturers, and graduate student instructors seeking to implement service-learning pedagogy in the 2022-2023 academic year are encouraged to apply. Up to \$2,000 is available per project. Applicants without community partners will be matched with one upon acceptance into the program. **Applications must be submitted [online](#) on or before Friday, April 15, 2022, at 5:00 PM (EDT).** Inquiries may be directed to Lindsey Payne, [paynel@purdue.edu](mailto:paynel@purdue.edu).

## 2021 JOANN MILLER AWARD WINNER

Wolf Park has been awarded the Dr. JoAnn L. Miller Exemplary Community Partner Award for 2021! This award recognizes local nonprofits, schools, or government units that contribute to the educational growth of Purdue students by providing volunteer and service-learning opportunities. According to Wolf Park's application for the award, "The staff at Wolf Park foster a collaborative environment that allows students to pursue their interests, while also firmly guiding them toward projects and practices that will serve the community."

The award carries a \$1,000 cash prize. Wolf Park will be recognized in person at the Office of Engagement's Annual Awards Luncheon on Tuesday, April 19, 2022, 11:30-1:30 PM (EDT), as well as the United Way Annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon on Tuesday, May 3, 2022, 11:30-1:00 PM (EDT).

## STUDENT GRANT APPLICATIONS

The Office of Engagement continues to invite applications for the Student Grant Program for Community Service/Service-Learning Projects.

Application guidelines can be found [HERE](#). We are reviewing applications on a rolling basis.

For more information, please contact Lisa Duncan at [llduncan@purdue.edu](mailto:llduncan@purdue.edu).