THE COMMONS

For alumni and friends of the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies at the University of Wisconsin–Madison

2021 Earth Day program engages around the globe

1,659 PARTICIPANTS INTERNATIONALLY

46 U.S. STATES

45 WISCONSIN COUNTIES

SOCIAL IMPRESSIONS **123,282**

Thank you to all those who joined us for the Nelson Institute 2021 virtual Earth Day learning event titled "Nature at Work: Inspiring Just Responses for an Unruly World." From April 22-23, more than a thousand people from around the world attended both live and prerecorded sessions that explored a range of topics centered around environmental justice. We are grateful to all of the speakers who shared their expertise with us and to all of our partners who supported this event.

Additionally, on Earth Day Governor **Tony Evers** released a proclamation for Earth Day, noting the role former Wisconsin Governor and Nelson Institute namesake, Gaylord Nelson played in its creation. Governor Evers' proclamation also indicates the importance of environmental justice in moving conservation and sustainability efforts forward.

Chancellor Blank also dedicated her blog to the theme as well. See Blank's Slate: Reflections for Earth Day 2021.

UW-Madison wins federal Green Ribbon Schools Postsecondary Sustainability Award

The U.S. Department of Education has named the University of Wisconsin-Madison a 2021 Green Ribbon Schools Postsecondary Sustainability Awardee, thanks to its "deep legacy of environmental stewardship," which includes more than 50 years of work by the Nelson Institute. The federal education department also noted that UW-Madison remains "a leader in environment- and sustainability-related research, education, and operations," which directly relates to the continued efforts of Nelson Institute partners such as the Office of Sustainability. Read more.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Green Ribbon Schools

Resilience is Real

Ecologists and systems theorists define "resilience," roughly, as the amount of disturbance that a system can withstand without changing its processes and structures. More simply, a resilient thing can regain its shape, its flow, and its function in the face of adversity: disruption, pressure, force. I have long been somewhat skeptical about the vagueness of the term but let me tell you—coming to the end of the 2020-2021 academic year at the Nelson Institute—*Resilience is Real*.

There was the emptiness of campus, the echoes in Science Hall, and the quietness of Bascom Hill. But these all disguised a resilience underneath, an ongoing hum of activity, a remarkable, imaginative perseverance of students, faculty, and staff here. This issue of *The Commons* is dedicated to cataloguing some fraction of that activity. Throughout we share stories of a dynamic community maintaining and recovering shape, flow, and function, in the face of the disruption, pressure, and force of the novel Coronavirus.

Among these are Nelson's efforts to make this campus a model of sustainability. Read how UW-Madison campus' incredible efforts to green its footprint are starting to payoff; our campus just won a well-earned federal green ribbon in sustainability. In the same way, our second Earth Day event under pandemic is also described; our online events are our largest ever.

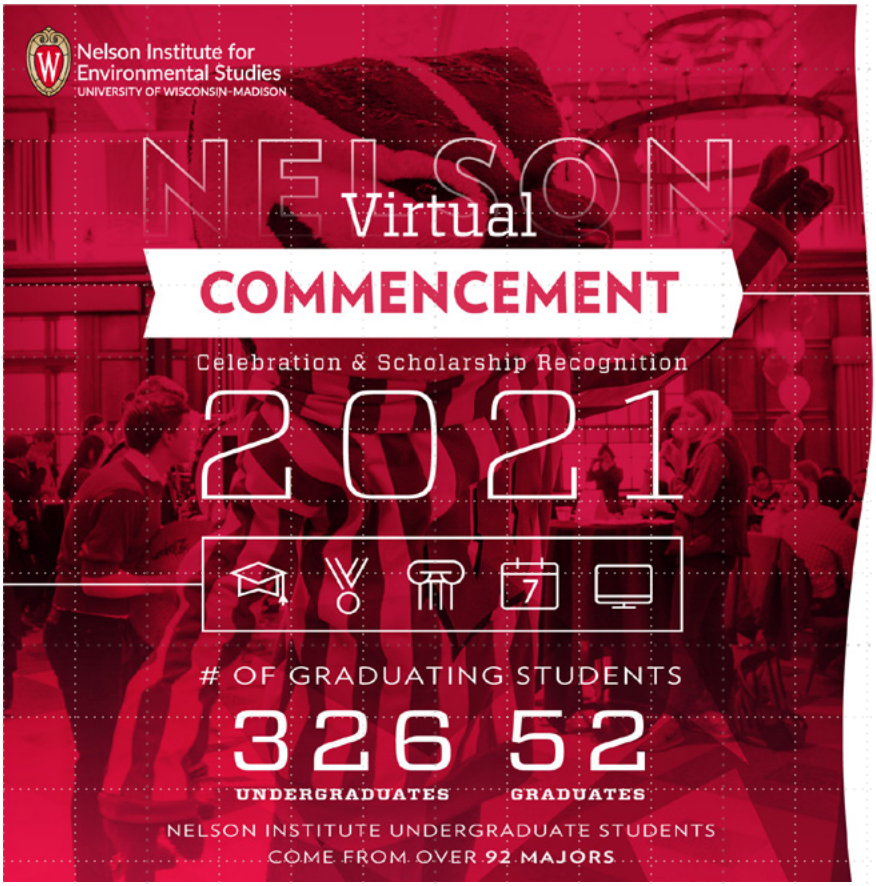
At the same time, this issue records new and innovative programs and projects, including a new Conservation Essentials course being taken by professionals from around the world. It celebrates the work of Dr. Sara Hotchkiss whose research in paleoecology bridges the past with the future and of Dr. Holly Gibbs, a new Romnes Fellowship recipient, who traces the global web of commerce to impacts on tropical forests. You can see the wonderful emergence of our newest Nelson graduates, who persevered through distance learning and unimaginable stress as they finished their degrees. View my message to graduating students.

And resilience goes beyond the lab and the classroom. Distinguished Professor Tracey Holloway is empowering people to take action on climate change through Science Moms, while Nelson student Mariah Antigone, works at an acute care hospital, caring for recovering COVID-19 patients.

Finally, the Water Resources Management Program Professorship was renamed in honor of emeritus professor Ken Potter. Here is a scholar who knows a great deal about how systems do or do not bounce back after inundation and uses that scholarship to protect communities from runaway climate change.

This just scratches the surface, but it is the profile of a resilient system. The year was immeasurably hard on our community, but their ability to do good work for each other and for the planet is remarkable.
It is resilience in action.

Paul Robbins
Dean, Nelson Institute



Nelson Institute celebrates its newest alumni

On May 7, Nelson Institute virtually celebrated its 326 undergraduate and 52 graduate students who became alumni this spring. The Nelson Institute Virtual Commencement Celebration & Scholarship Recognition featured

- a recorded message from Dean Paul Robbins, faculty, and staff
- recorded recognition videos led by advisors Becky Ryan and Jim Miller
- a LIVE discussion board for congratulatory remarks

On May 13 from 4-5 p.m. CDT new alumni will gather on LinkedIn for a New Alumni Welcome Happy Hour. Register here.

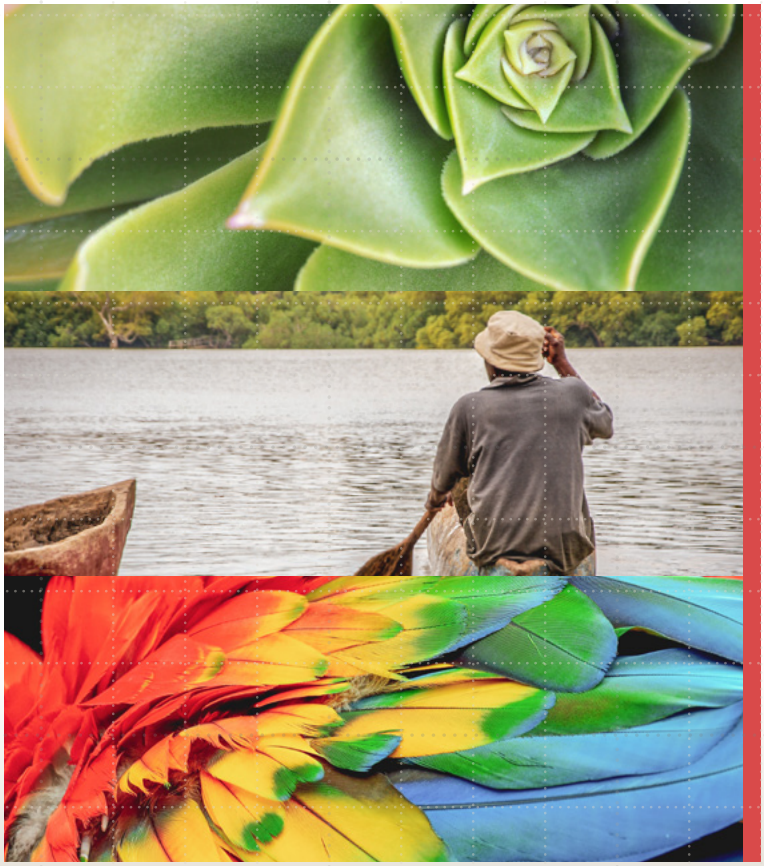
There's still time to help us celebrate! We invite you to visit our celebration page and leave a congratulatory remark.

Registration open for Conservation Essentials course

Conservation Essentials, a one-of-a-kind online course in conservation management being offered by the University of Wisconsin–Madison Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, is now accepting applications for its August 30 cohort.

The 12-week course will be entirely online and available to graduate students, professionals working in the conservation field, or anyone in need of training in conservation project management. Cohort sizes will be small, allowing participants to interact with and learn from one another.

The course is a collaboration with specialists from Foundations of Success (FOS), the Conservation Measures Partnership (CMP), and the Conservation Coaches Network (CCNet) and has received positive feedback from its earliest cohorts. Register here.



Professor Sara Hotchkiss' work in paleoecology bridges the past with the future

By Rebekah McBride

Sara Hotchkiss in Sylvania Wilderness in Michigan. Photo: Jennifer Schmitz

For Sara Hotchkiss, a professor of botany and an associate of the Nelson Institute's Center for Climatic Research, Center for Culture, History, and Environment, and Center for Ecology and the Environment, thinking outside of the box and giving students the space to develop their skills and explore their passions have been the pedestals of her career. With a cross-curricular background, she's found ideal academic homes within the Botany Department and the interdisciplinary Nelson Institute, where she feels supported in her endeavors to ask hard questions and follow the science, even if it leads outside of her core academic discipline.

Hotchkiss, who now studies ecology, vegetation and climate history, ecosystem responses to climate change, disturbance and landscape dynamics, and paleoecology, is interdisciplinary in every sense. In fact, she began her academic career as a cellist.

"I was a cellist, lucky enough to finish high school at Interlochen Arts Academy, and then I went to Oberlin College because I could do both music and science there, in an atmosphere that emphasized social justice. I did a biology major and many of the requirements for an ethnomusicology major," Hotchkiss said. "I kept myself broad through college, I took plenty of humanities, participated in the Oberlin Student Cooperative Association, played in the gamelan orchestra and the steel drum band. My biology professors probably thought I was majoring in steel drums."

While the steel drum band was just for fun, she did meet the leader of a Yale cell biology lab at one of their concerts in Connecticut. After graduation, Hotchkiss joined the lab and spent a year studying skin cancer in the Department of Dermatology.

"It was a blast, the people were amazing and I learned a lot about cell biology, but I just felt the questions closing in around me. I was studying melanoma and throwing away radioactive plastic every day, and I felt uncomfortable that wealthy people could afford to treat advanced melanoma and other people couldn't. I knew my perspective was limited, but something wasn't right for me," Hotchkiss said.

So, the next year, she moved to Minnesota and worked on sustainable agriculture in Dave Andow's insect ecology lab for a few months before spending spring working in a greenhouse and summer mapping a permanent plot in old-growth forest in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan with Margaret Bryan Davis. That fall, she began graduate school having chosen ecology as her core discipline.

"While I chose ecology, it was a very broad ecology, evolution, and behavior graduate program at the University of Minnesota, and ultimately I added an interdisciplinary minor in Quaternary studies," said Hotchkiss, who enjoyed her initial project in population genetics, but said she again felt the questions closing in around her. Unsure of her true calling, she found herself thinking back to that plot of forest in the Upper Peninsula.

"That old-growth forest taught me something. I was lured by perspective, unanswerably complex questions about ecological communities, things that have legacies and trajectories longer than human life spans, and the folks in Margaret Davis's research group had a refreshing sense of humility about their work," Hotchkiss said. "In retrospect, I realized that many of my strongest memories from childhood were of poking around the woods."

Realizing that her true interests lie in complex, interdisciplinary questions that have impacts and implications beyond her

own lifetime, Hotchkiss began studying ecological responses to climate change through the lens of paleoecology, the study of ecosystem history, and Margaret Bryan Davis became her PhD advisor.

"It was the early '90s and although it wasn't yet prominent in the news, scientists were very concerned about climate change. I could see that a lot of people were working on that," Hotchkiss said. "I chose to study the responses of ecosystems to climate because I didn't see as many people thinking very deeply about that yet. I decided to take the slower road, toward depth, because I wanted to do something with my life that few other people were likely to do, that used my particular strengths, and that would be of use beyond my lifetime, whenever enough people began to realize how much we had altered both climate and ecosystems. I was lucky to be in a lab where that kind of long-trajectory thinking was supported. I didn't expect that we would be discussing climate change as a political issue while I was still in my 50s!"

Hotchkiss Lab students collect a sediment in the forest.
Photo: Sara Hotchkiss

After completing her PhD, Hotchkiss and her partner Basil Tikoff moved to Wisconsin, where she was welcomed by then director John Kutzbach into the Center for Climatic Research while she did a postdoc in ecosystem ecology with Peter Vitousek at Stanford. In 2000 she was offered a tenure-track position in the department of Botany, where she is now a full professor. There her students study community and ecosystem ecology, paleoecology, and Quaternary paleoclimatology, but everyone is encouraged to think outside of their academic boxes and given the space to find a project that is novel and will have lasting implications.

"I'm really glad that I have landed professionally in one of the universities that has the longest experience with interdisciplinary research and education because I think that's essential for our most important environmental problems," Hotchkiss said. "I encourage a broad range of projects in my research group. I am not a top-down advisor. We are diverse in terms of humanity and in terms of projects. Our lab is really a research collaboration, and the students finish their degrees knowing they can design, fund, and accomplish research that takes a broad perspective on science and builds on their own strengths."

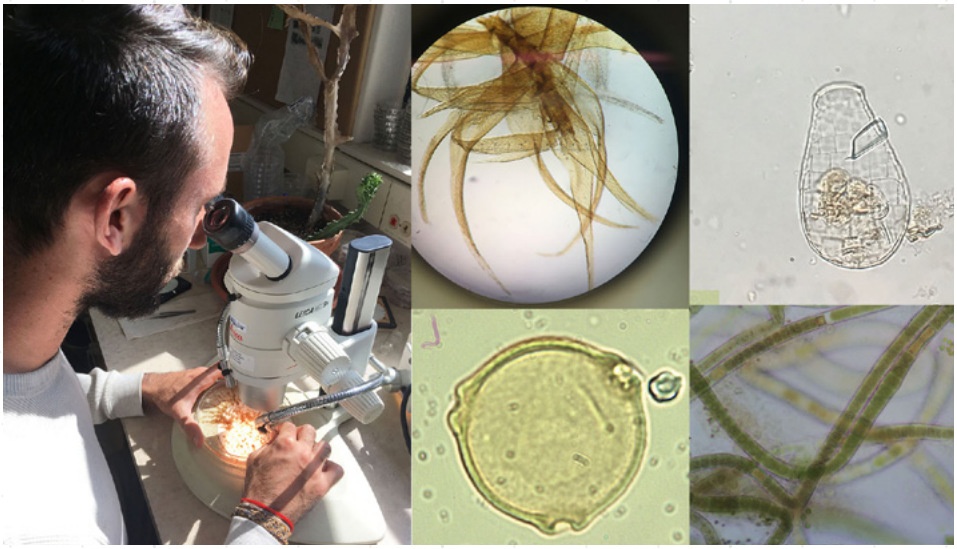
Hotchkiss shared that students who join her lab have generally worked outside of the sciences in varied roles. For example, she has had students who were in publishing, sculpture, community activism, museum work, government and non-profit conservation management, and more. She values this diversity, as it brings new perspectives to the research and she feels that it strengthens all of the students' professional development as well as her own experience.

"I love being able to work with people who are not only scientists; that's healthy for me. And I really benefit from the long history of interdisciplinary at this university. Interdisciplinary research and education have developed here over more than 50 years, and people understand its value," Hotchkiss said of the Nelson Institute. "This is really good for the students, but it's also great for the world because the most challenging kinds of problems the world faces are not contained within disciplines."

While the work within the Hotchkiss Lab is varied, Hotchkiss has maintained continuous research and long-term collaborations in the Hawaiian Islands with Oliver Chadwick and Peter Vitousek and in the Western Great Lakes region with Beth Lynch and Randy Calcote. She seeks perspective on ecosystem responses to changes in climate and cultures using deep study of natural history and two main approaches: reconstructing several histories in a landscape, so that she can perceive local differences in responses of ecosystems to changing climate, and mining ecosystem history for examples of rare events, like extreme multi-decadal droughts and sudden state-shifts in ecosystems.

"Sara is among the Institute's most selfless and thoughtful leaders," said Nelson Institute Dean, Paul Robbins. "Under her watch, we have launched a new Center for Ecology and Environment, explored a new program in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, and put stronger foundations under our Environment and Resources graduate program."

In fact, Hotchkiss was recently named a Vilas Associate by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The Vilas Associate Com-



Left: A Hotchkiss Lab student looks at samples under the microscope. Right: A one-centimeter cube of mud from a lake bottom can have thousands of pollen grains in it, which helps students to learn more about landscape history.

petition "recognizes new and on-going research of the highest quality and significance" and awards recipients salary support and research funding over two fiscal years. Hotchkiss plans to utilize this support to build a tool that will make counting microfossils much faster.

"Paleoecology relies on people counting things, which is incredibly slow work. It requires a tremendous amount of expertise. It takes a year to get any good at counting pollen, and you have to spend that year and then go back and recount your samples," said Hotchkiss. "You need to be able to recognize a huge variety of microfossils. For example, a one-centimeter cube of mud from a lake bottom can have many thousands of pollen grains in it, and that's a lot of information about vegetation. There's not only pollen in there. There are little bits of insects, there are fungal spores, algae and zooplankton, chemicals from breakdown of pigments, DNA, dust, amoebae, all kinds of things. We want to know what they all are. A lot of people go into this field because they love looking at the beautiful tiny things and enumerating them and I like that too, but I really am interested in gaining perspective on ecosystems. If you do it all by hand you can get a lot of information about a spot where some stuff accumulated at some time in the past, but you won't be able to study many places or slices of time in one human career. So the Vilas is about developing a tool that we can use to ask different kinds of questions about landscapes and history, questions that require amounts of data that would take generations of expert humans to produce."

Essentially, they are looking to develop a tool that will use rapid imaging microscopy and image classification tuned to particular microscopic components of ecosystems. Hotchkiss plans to utilize existing technology and develop artificial intelligence-based image classification in collaboration with Alex Wiedenhoeft and Prabu Ravindran for three different purposes. One is to count phytoliths, which will help Hotchkiss to learn what plants used to grow in dry places, especially in the Hawaiian Islands where ecosystem restoration projects need local information. Another purpose is to analyze charcoal, which will help her understand fire histories with greater spatial resolution than current methods allow. This is an area of research in which undergraduates in the Hotchkiss Lab have a leading role. Third, Hotchkiss and her lab will investigate the history and distribution of microplastics in the environment.

Hotchkiss is excited to get started on this work and for her students to take a lead in helping her develop these three areas of the Vilas Award project. She hopes that through this experience, her students will have the space and support needed to maximize their expertise while exploring new ways of thinking and developing new methods of discovery.

"In academia, we are rewarded for expertise and productivity. So, we like to define a box and then maximize our expertise in that area. We really need that approach--for example, I have my box, I know pollen morphology and plant ecology well. But that focus comes sometimes at the cost of perspective and flexibility. I think our students really need to develop their perspective and flexibility, along with expertise," Hotchkiss said. "It's important to ask those humbling questions that are beyond anyone's current expertise, and the Nelson Institute encourages that. Society has really benefited over time by setting aside universities where people can follow questions beyond the limits of our understanding. We need some people thinking deeply and seeking perspective without primarily chasing short-term rewards; when we support that, collectively we all benefit. I give students that space for a few years, and they blossom. Having seen that happen, I really can't do it any other way."

> **"I'm really glad that I have landed professionally in one of the universities that has the longest experience with interdisciplinary research and education because I think that's essential for our most important environmental problems."**

Holly Gibbs is Romnes Fellowship recipient

By Olivia Van Den Heuvel

Holly Gibbs

Nelson Institute Center for Sustainability and the Global Environment (SAGE) associate professor of Geography, **Holly Gibbs** is one of thirty-two members of the University of Wisconsin-Madison faculty to receive a fellowship for the 2020-21 academic year.

Gibbs has been awarded the H.I. Romnes Faculty Fellowship, funded by the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF), a non-profit organization promoting scientific research at UW – Madison.

This fellowship recognizes the leadership of Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF) Trustee President H.I. Romnes and supports selected faculty up to six years past their first promotion to a tenured position. The research award may be used over a period of five years.

Gibbs was nominated for the fellowship by her colleagues in both the Nelson Institute and the Department of Geography. The application process included up to five letters of recommendation from her colleagues and three sample publications of Gibbs' work.

"I was extremely honored to be selected by my colleagues. I take risks in my scholarship as I try to link my academic research to decisions made by policymakers and companies in the US, Brazil, and beyond, and this fellowship affirms my pathway to conduct applied interdisciplinary research," Gibbs said.

Gibbs studies how humans interact with land around the world, with emphasis on climate change, forest conservation, and food security. She oversees the Gibbs Land Use and Environment Lab (GLUE), which focuses on creating partnerships with non-governmental organizations on policy change and informing the public through media outlets.

Over the past decade, Gibbs has been researching deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon, with a focus on understanding the impacts of public policy and company action. Gibbs and her lab create technological solutions for the Brazilian government and various companies relating to conservation efforts in the area. Recently, she has developed tools for supply chain traceability and the monitoring of deforestation that are currently being tested and used by the world's largest meatpacking companies.

> **"The Romnes Award Fellowship solidifies my commitment to engaged scholarship and empowers me to continue taking chances when I see unique spaces where my research team can contribute to making durable change on the ground."**

These companies have a significant impact on the environment because the creation and expansion of cattle pastures has become one of the largest causes of deforestation in the Amazon rainforest.

"With our tools, and renewed commitment by meatpacking companies, I believe we have a chance to reduce deforestation in the Amazon," Gibbs said. "The Romnes Award Fellowship solidifies my commitment to engaged scholarship and empowers me to continue taking chances when I see unique spaces where my research team can contribute to making durable change on the ground."

Additionally, for the Spring 2021 semester Gibbs had the opportunity to teach Geography 309: People, Land and Food, where she was awarded a grant to expand student-to-student engagement and support food sustainability projects. The course helps students understand the societal use of land as a means of food production and its profound impact on the environment. Gibbs encouraged her students to find solutions to real-world problems related to land and food production strategies.

"I have never been more impressed by my students and their project outcomes," she explained.

Student projects included a map of ancestral lands for the Waunakee School District and working with a local nursing home to develop a recipe book related to memories surrounding food.

Nelson Institute Dean Paul Robbins contributes to "Intended Consequences"

Nelson Institute Dean **Paul Robbins** has joined a group of biologists, conservationists, and thought leaders in supporting Intended Consequences, a statement, a special issue of Conservation Science and Practice, and framework for confidently tackling the world's most urgent conservation problems.

Intended Consequences is the culmination of a workshop led by the non-profit organization Revive and Restore, where leaders discussed the need to utilize innovative methods of biotechnology to intentionally restore genetic diversity. Current examples of this successful work include the cloning of the black-footed ferret and genetic work to help the American chestnut fight fungal blight that has killed an estimated four billion American chestnut trees.

"To make this work—to save critically endangered species using the powerful tools we are crafting—means not just that we make the case for proactive and innovative approaches, but that our approach is inclusive, fair, and ethical. This special issue addresses both imperatives, and creates a hopeful vision for conservation," said Dean Robbins, an editor of the special issue.

The Intended Consequences special issue of Conservation Science and Practice includes nearly a dozen scientific articles that explore and explain the need for innovative biotechnology in the fight against biodiversity loss. Additionally, the issue is based around a call to action authored by 46 Intended Consequences Workshop participants who support these emerging tools and technologies. Learn more.

Jay Scholz

Alberto Vargas

UW-Madison honors two Nelson Institute staff with a 2021 Academic Staff Excellence Award

Nelson Institute IT manager, **Jay Scholz** and Nelson Institute faculty affiliate **Alberto Vargas** are the recipients of 2021 Academic Staff Excellence Awards.

Vargas is the recipient of the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Service to the University which honors his leadership within the Latin American, Caribbean, and Iberian Studies program. As the associate director for more than 16 years, Vargas has grown the program and developed working relationships with educational institutions in Native American nations.

Scholz received the Martha Casey Award for Dedication to Excellence in recognition of his commitment to providing IT and building management support to hundreds of students, staff, and faculty throughout Science Hall and the Nelson Institute. Read more.

Distinguished Professor Tracey Holloway empowers mothers to take action on climate change through Science Moms

By Rebekah McBride

Tracey Holloway

As a climate scientist and the mother of two boys, **Tracey Holloway** has a lot of reasons to care about the future of the planet.

In her role as the Gaylord Nelson Distinguished Professor of Environmental Studies & Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences, Holloway teaches classes, leads research activities, and speaks publicly on the links between climate change, energy, and air quality. She has witnessed the power that outreach and increased public understanding can have on moving environmental solutions forward, and she wants to be part of the solution on climate change.

Solving problems is also something Holloway does in her role as a mother. Like parents everywhere, she works to take care of her kids, prepares them for the future, and thinks about the world they are inheriting. That's why she is teaming up with Science Moms to provide moms with the resources they need to need to take action on climate change.

Launched in partnership with the Potential Energy Coalition, Science Moms is a nonpartisan group of eight climate scientists and mothers, including Holloway, who are working together to share climate change information and educational resources with moms.

"I'm excited to be a part of this effort because it highlights the parts of science that everyone can relate to, including how it impacts our families and the future," Holloway said.

Holloway shared that the program is aimed at providing resources for moms who want to learn more about climate change, talk with their friends and family about it, and perhaps even get involved in forwarding climate change solutions. Educational materials range from social media posts and short summaries of climate science, to humorous videos, to recommendations on climate science books for kids. "Our mission is to reach moms as they are powerful voices in our society and we want to empower them with the knowledge and the community they need to take action," Holloway said. "This is a nonpartisan organization and we are not advocating for any one specific outcome, but we just want to give parents the information they need to have a voice on this matter." As a part of Science Moms, Holloway volunteers her time and expertise, including serving as a spokesperson and advising on content.

As a mother to sons Peter (11) and Henry (1), Holloway shared that she can relate to the challenge of learning about new topics while juggling the day-to-day demands of parenthood and career. "I have to say that as a mom, reading books to my kids has been a huge way that I have learned about new topics - just ask me about dinosaurs! So, providing a list of

kid's books that deal with climate change – like the Magic School Bus –offers a great way to engage moms on this complex topic. Rather than adding homework to a mom's to-do list, we try to offer options she can choose from."

> "I'm excited to be a part of this effort because it highlights the parts of science that everyone can relate to, including how it impacts our families and the future."

A busy mom herself, Holloway is not only a volunteer with the Science Moms program, but she is also involved in several other research and outreach related projects. For example, Holloway is the Team Lead for the NASA Health and Air Quality Applied Sciences Team (HAQAST), which is made up of 14 lab groups and over 70 researchers across the U.S. The team uses NASA satellite data to improve understanding of air quality and public health. Holloway is also a leader in the Energy Analysis and Policy (EAP) graduate certificate program in the Nelson Institute, helping graduate students from across the university link their training with energy and climate challenges.

Tracey Holloway enjoys reading books and talking about science with her son Peter (pictured here). Photo: Tracey Holloway

"It's been exciting for me to build a research program at the Nelson Institute, since there is a culture here that really supports outreach and engagement, as well as the interdisciplinary approaches needed to solve real-world challenges." Holloway hopes her work with Science Moms can help people to see that there are solutions and reasons to be positive about the future of the planet.

"We have so many energy solutions on the shelf, ready to go. There are cost-effective solutions that will help us move away from fossil-fuel burning, toward cleaner energy, and these things are often win-win for the economy, public health, and our day-to-day lives. It's tempting to say that this is a big problem for the next generation, but I don't think that's fair. We can take action now, rather than leaving climate as a problem for our kids to fix."

Two Nelson Institute researchers honored with Postdoc Excellence Awards

Two Nelson Institute researchers have received University of Wisconsin-Madison Postdoc Excellence Awards in recognition of their teaching, service, and mentoring.

Nelson Institute postdoctoral research associate in Ecological Studies, **Cooper Rosin** is being recognized with the Postdoc Excellence Award in Teaching with the nominator stating that Rosin "puts in the extra effort to ensure the success of all of his students, with genuine care for student participation, enjoyment, and growth."

Cooper Rosin

Paul Stoy

Paul Stoy, an associate professor of biological systems engineering and a Nelson Institute affiliate is being recognized with the Distinguished Faculty Postdoc Mentoring Award. One of his nominators shared that Stoy "motivates me to find my voice in situations where it was initially repressed, which also inspires me to become a similar role model for other people whose voices may be muted or individuals who may not yet believe in their own abilities. He has always encouraged me to be my best and to reach for larger goals."

Congratulations to both Rosin and Stoy!
Read more

Dean Robbins featured in Consumer Reports magazine

Nelson Institute Dean, **Paul Robbins**' research was recently featured in the *Consumer Reports* article, "A Lush Lawn Without Pesticides." The article outlines the potential environmental and health risks of lawn care products, particularly those that contain the weed killer, 2,4-dichlorophenoxyacetic acid (2,4-D). The article utilizes information from Robbins' book, Lawn People: How Grasses, Weeds, and Chemicals Make Us Who We Are, which includes an investigation into the ecological, economic, and social context that drives lawn care in the United States. In addition to leading national studies of consumer chemical risk behavior, Robbins' research also addresses conservation conflicts, urban ecology, and environment and health interactions. Read more.

CCR Director Dan Vimont featured in L&S Magazine


Dan Vimont

Director of the Nelson Institute Center for Climatic Research (CCR) and the co-director if the Wisconsin initiative on Climate Change Impacts (WICCI), **Dan Vimont** was featured in *L&S Magazine*. In the article, he discusses his concerns surrounding climate change and the work he is doing to better understand it and mitigate its harmful impacts. He also outlines the ways in which his research has evolved to meet the challenges of climate change and the outreach he is doing to help local leaders and lawmakers understand climate science.

"I evolved from being a pure climate scientist into recognizing how climate science interacts with other fields in order to ask new questions," he says. "Back in the early 2000s, there was a sense that climate scientists are going to tell you what the climate is going to be, and others will use that information to make good decisions. It doesn't work that way."

Read more on page 22 of *L&S Magazine*.

UW grad combines research, tribal traditions in wolf relationship plan

By Mary Magnuson

Abi Fergus, Nelson Institute Environment and Resources MS graduate in December 2020, dreamed of working with wolves from age 11, a dream that became an opportunity to help a Wisconsin tribe shape a future shared with the animal they call *Ma'iingan*.

While working on a graduate degree with the University of Wisconsin–Madison's Carnivore Coexistence Laboratory, Fergus went to work for the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa as the tribe's wildlife specialist.

"It was a dream job," says Fergus, who had interned with the tribe before graduate school. "I kind of took the gamble that I could handle full-time school on top of the work, and my advisor Adrian Treves, my supervisor Naomi Tillison, and tribal leadership have helped me balance both."

Fergus worked with tribal members on the Bad River Reservation — nearly 200 square miles in northern Wisconsin just west of Michigan's upper peninsula — to update the tribe's Ma'iingan Relationship Plan, or wolf relationship plan, originally written by her mentor and predecessor as wildlife specialist, Lacey Hill-Kastern.

Abi Fergus says understanding tribal citizens' attitudes toward wolves helped her stay in touch with the human dimension of her research. Photo: Abi Fergus

The project drew on research she'd conducted for both her senior thesis as an undergrad at Alma College in Michigan and her UW–Madison graduate degree completed in 2020. As an Alma student, Fergus talked with farmers to understand the needs and concerns that influenced their relationships with predators, conversations that helped her foster connections with Wisconsin farmers.

With UW–Madison wildlife biologist Adrian Treves, Fergus studied non-lethal predator deterrents — methods like flags, lights and noisemakers deployed on six farms to protect pets and farm animals from wolves or other predators. While the study was small, results indicated that lights and flagging could have reduced coyote visits to livestock pasture.

"It was really beneficial for me to have done that field work, and then in the fall, finish writing my updated Ma'iingan plan, because at that point, I had a lot of on-the-ground experience," says Fergus. "I wouldn't have been able to really write a meaningful plan if I hadn't already been doing that work and experiencing those relationships with farmers and learning from them what they know, based on living on the landscape with predators."

Both Fergus and Treves say collaborative projects with tribes help uphold the core values of coexistence, and understanding the tribal citizens' attitudes toward wolves can help the lab stay in touch with the human dimension of their research, and figure out how their findings might work in different settings.

"Anishinaabeg (Ojibwe people) have the most positive attitude towards wolves we've ever seen," Treves says. "That's helpful to understand how coexistence would be different in a socio-cultural setting where there's a lot of tolerance for wolves and a very low inclination to kill them illegally, which we found as a major cause of death across Wisconsin."

The tribe's plan includes survey data from a former Carnivore Coexistence graduate student, Victoria Shelley, who polled both tribal and non-tribal respondents about wolf relationship practices in years before the 2021 wolf hunt in Wisconsin. Overwhelmingly, tribal respondents favored protecting wolves. A large majority of tribal respondents said they believe wolves are essential to maintain the balance of nature. And while a majority of non-tribal respondents said they believe there should be a public hunting or trapping season allowed for wolves immediately or in a sustainable fashion, only a minority of tribal respondents said the same.

According to Treves, collaborating with tribes allows them to draw from not just their own Western scientific knowledge, but also from the Anishinaabeg traditional knowledge. Fergus enjoys working with both traditions and learning how the Bad River Tribe lives regeneratively and coexists with local species.

"When you get familiar with the work that tribes do, you see that they're really leading the way and employing excellent science, but also valuing what has been passed down for generations," Fergus says. "That is a really holistic way to learn. And I've been really grateful to be learning from the tribe."

Fergus and the tribe determined that instead of setting a specific quota for wolf numbers on the reservation, they will work with tribe members on maintaining a sustainable coexistence.

Gimiwan, the last radio-collared wolf on the Bad River Reservation, and his breeding partner are part of the Mashkiiziibii Pack on the nearly 200 square-mile reservation in northern Wisconsin. Photo: Abi Fergus

According to the plan, the goal is to have three wolf packs on the reservation, but not to set a hard upper limit to how many wolves they can have. The tribe uses non-lethal deterrents and outreach to continue their history of coexistence with wolves and assist neighboring farmers to coexist as well.

While Fergus found her field research interesting, and its implications valuable in several spheres, the work doesn't end after writing the thesis, Treves says. The next step is communicating research with the public, to better inform policy. Fergus has spoken to dozens of nongovernmental organizations about predator policy and, with Treves, to media in the hope that their research will find ears that can listen, learn and make a change.

Adrian Treves

"We reach out to all kinds of broadcast media and post things online and on forums," Treves says. "We're hoping to influence public policy and public opinion directly because predators are so widely misunderstood and public policy, currently in the U.S., is quite regressive, in my opinion."

In January 2020, Fergus and the tribe hosted a Ma'iingan Symposium at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center in Ashland to bring together conversations and knowledge about the wolf between community members and tribal, state and federal wildlife agencies. People of all walks of life came away from the symposium with something new, from a farmer who benefited from sharing her story in a breakout session and brainstorming with the group on new ways to coexist with carnivores, to a federal agency employee who said the symposium helped him understand that when he lost his bird-hunting dog in an unusual encounter with a wolf, the wolf had just been doing its job and defending its own family.

In January 2021, the Trump administration delisted gray wolves from the Endangered Species Act, removing many protections afforded wolves. Fergus, Ojibwe tribal interests and Treves' lab spent several weeks preparing to petition against a hunt. In February, a judge ordered the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to hold a three-day wolf hunt in which hunters in several parts of northern Wisconsin could shoot wolves without having to cite a threat to their property. Non-tribal hunters killed

As part of their wolf management plan, Bad River Tribe workers install deterrents like flags, lights and noisemakers that have kept predators apart from farms in UW-Madison research. Photo: Abi Fergus

more than 200 wolves, beyond DNR quotas for the harvest. Fergus says her research has helped her better understand how to focus the tribe's plan. Anishinaabeg have taught her to respect the different roles and values of every living being. She wants to help federal and state agencies understand that killing predators doesn't have to be the answer, that science supports alternative coexistence routes.

"It's a lot more meaningful to be able to empower farmers and teach state and federal agencies this different path from our history of nearly eradicating carnivore species and acting like our only tool is killing carnivores, which is not supported by science or by Anishinaabe knowledge," Fergus says. "I plan to continue having coexistence of carnivores be a huge focus in the wildlife program for the Bad River Tribe, because I see so many issues tying back to a broken relationship humans have with all the other members of our ecosystem."

Nelson Institute dissertator to receive an A.W. Mellon Public Humanities Fellowship

By Rebekah McBride

Nelson Institute and Department of Anthropology dissertator **Pearly Wong** has been named a Public Humanities Fellow through the A.W. Mellon Public Humanities Fellowship program. As a part of this fellowship, Wong will spend nine months working with Odyssey Beyond Bars (OBB), a University of Wisconsin-Madison program that teaches credit and non-credit courses to incarcerated individuals in Wisconsin.

"I was really excited when I found out about this opportunity, and I was really happy to get accepted," Wong said. "I knew about the Odyssey Project because it's somewhat similar to the educational work I was doing before coming to the university. So, when I saw this fellowship with OBB, I was really excited."

Wong's current PhD research focuses on community development in semi-rural Kathmandu Valley, Nepal. She remains interested in opportunities that connect her academic research with social justice programs such as the OBB.

"My research interests include looking at how people in Nepal mobilize resources using a variety of means for community development. In a way, I am studying how they talk about development and sustainability and how that impacts the ways they mobilize," Wong said. "While I'm very interested in teaching and research in this area, I'm also interested in service positions in a higher education setting. Before my graduate career with UW-Madison, I was a program manager with UNESCO in Nepal and that's how I came to know the community I am working with. At the time, I was working to provide non-formal education through pilot programs and policy work. Now, I want to do a bit of both worlds. I want to be able to make actual change and support people on the ground, but I also want to be critical and aware of the larger structure and study this."

Pearly Wong

Wong, who was also named a 2020 University of Wisconsin-Madison Planetary Health Scholar, hopes that this Mellon fellowship will help her to fulfil this goal of combining her passion for helping people with her interest in academics.

"I was studying biology and working in labs during my undergraduate years, but then I had the opportunity to travel to many places and learned that I'm really into discovering and understanding people's lives. I like learning the ways we are different but also similar," Wong said. "So, it's great that the university is doing something like this. Doing academic work is exciting, but doing this gives me a different kind of excitement because it allows me to make tangible progress in terms of impacting other people's lives."

In addition to the opportunities provided by this fellowship, Wong is also grateful for the opportunities she has received as a graduate student within the Nelson Institute.

"My background makes it difficult to go into a traditional discipline, but Nelson seems to be a perfect place for people like me," Wong said. "Nelson is giving me the freedom to focus on any topic I want so long as it is related to using resources and the impacts around it. The interdisciplinary aspects of Nelson and having so many different people on my committee is great as they are the different audiences that I want to be addressing. Nelson keeps me with one foot in the real world where problem-solving requires interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary insights."

> "Nelson keeps me with one foot in the real world where problem-solving requires interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary insights."

Wong is particularly thankful for her Nelson Institute advisor, Department of Community and Environmental Sociology professor, **Michael Bell**.

"He's just so supportive and he really embodies student-centered supervision," Wong said, "I think he really fits into Nelson and allows you to do what fits your interests. He has also been really important in terms of emotional support and paying attention to what I want and what I need."

Bell shared that he is equally thrilled to work with Wong.

"Pearly is a scholar about whom I have great expectations. She is – no exaggeration – extraordinary," Bell said. "Since she arrived here at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the fall of 2017 I've been utterly delighted to serve as her advisor for the environmental studies side of her joint degree with anthropology. I'm especially taken with her passion and insight for issues of environment development and community well-being for the global poor."

THE ANDREW W. MELLON FOUNDATION

Wong, who is in the fourth year of her PhD program, is looking forward to working with Bell and her advisor from the Department of Anthropology, Maria Lepowsky to finalize her dissertation as well as discuss next steps for her future. She is hopeful that through their mentorship and the work with OBB, she will find new ways to bridge her interest in community outreach and academic research.

"I'm really looking forward to this position with OBB," Wong said, "And, I would imagine that if I could have something like this in the future, that would be a perfect career for me."

Heavy rains in the Midwest causing field erosion and nitrogen runoff. Photo: iStock

Graduate student Theresa Vander Woude co-authors report on nitrate contamination

A new report from the University of Wisconsin–Madison summarizes the ways in which Pepin County farmers are working to address nitrate contamination of ground water. The report was co-authored by **Theresa Vander Woude**, a Nelson Institute Environment and Resources and Department of Life Sciences Communication graduate student and **Bret Shaw**, a Nelson Institute affiliate, associate professor in the UW–Madison Department of Life Sciences Communication, and environmental communication specialist with the UW–Madison Division of Extension.

The goal of this report, which was generated as a part of the UniverCity Year program and funded in part by the Office of Sustainability, is to provide insight into how farming communities can work together to adopt practices that limit nitrate contamination of ground water. Read more.

UNIVERCITY YEAR
BETTER • PLACES • TOGETHER

Mariah Antigone. Photo: Mariah Antigone

Nelson undergrad cares for recovering COVID-19 patients while pursuing a diverse, interdisciplinary education

By Janel Hutchison

It is not every day that you meet a college student who is already working in the field, putting what was learned in the classroom to practice in a real-world, applied setting. But **Mariah Antigone**, an undergraduate student at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, is not like most students. In addition to pursuing double majors in environmental studies and nursing, Mariah is also a registered nurse, and currently working full-time at a long-term acute care hospital, caring for recovering COVID-19 patients.

"When the [COVID-19] surge started happening over the holidays, I just had a feeling it wasn't going to end well," said Mariah. "And so, I thought... I feel like I need to do more to help out."

Mariah is working with "post-COVID patients," who she said have recovered enough to leave the hospital, but who need therapy and are far too sick to go home. At the same time, Mariah is taking 10 credits at UW–Madison this semester. Her schedule is rigorous and challenging. Yet, Mariah embraces the opportunity to practice nursing while also advancing her education.

Mariah receiving her first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine shortly after shots were made available to Wisconsin's frontline health care workers.

"I feel lucky to be at UW–Madison every single day," said Mariah. "It was never a given that I would even attempt college, much less the University of Wisconsin–Madison, and so I am extremely grateful to be here and very happy with how the Nelson Institute in particular has treated me throughout my journey."

Mariah grew up in a rural town outside of Stevens Point, Wisconsin. Neither her parents nor grandparents received a college degree and she said there was always a skepticism of higher education in her family. Growing up, she never felt that college was something "for her."

After graduating from high school, Mariah studied at a local technical college to become a paramedic. She went on to work as a paramedic for several years, which she loved, but she knew there was something missing. Witnessing medical emergencies day in and day out revealed health inequities that she could no longer ignore.

In response, Mariah shifted her focus to preventative care. She enrolled in a two-year nursing program, and upon completion, she became certified as a registered nurse.

"Nursing allowed me to really explore social factors related to health — healthcare through the entire spectrum, from birth to death... in the

"I feel lucky to be at UW-Madison every single day," said Mariah. "It was never a given that I would even attempt college, much less the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and so I am extremely grateful to be here and very happy with how the Nelson Institute in particular has treated me throughout my journey."

home-based setting and in the psychological setting," said Mariah. "I loved that. It helped me start out on that path towards ending up at UW–Madison studying environmental [studies], as well as nursing."

In 2017, when Mariah was 28 years old, she decided to return to school to study nursing at a four-year university. But she also desired to broaden her educational insights and study subjects beyond just nursing. When she was admitted to UW–Madison, Mariah said the Nelson Institute's environmental studies major provided exactly what she was looking for.

"Once I found the Nelson Institute, I realized 'this was it' because it addressed those interdisciplinary questions that had been rolling around in my head for 10 years," said Mariah. "What is it that makes health? How does the health of the environment interplay with the people that live in that environment? How can we prevent problems before they happen? And how can we deal with those problems after they occur without just focusing in on one aspect?"

Pursuing two majors is not the "fast-tract" option, but for Mariah, it is worth taking the extra time to build a meaningful and multifaceted education. In addition to expanding the breadth of her knowledge, she said her environmental studies courses are also often directly relevant to her work as a nurse.

"What I learned within the Nelson Institute immediately, within my first semester, made me a better practitioner," said Mariah.

Within the first two weeks of her Nelson Institute education, Mariah said she was already applying what she learned in the classroom to her work as a nurse. She was enrolled in *Environmental Studies 315: Limnology-Conservation of Aquatic Resources* and the course began with a lesson on how lakes stratify depending on the temperature and density of the water. Just a few days later, Mariah was applying this knowledge when giving a patient a plasma infusion that had backed up into an IV bag.

"I looked at what could have been a really big problem and I was able to say — Oh, I actually know the physics behind how this fluid is going to respond... I know how to get it there more efficiently because I'm studying environmental studies and not just nursing," said Mariah. "I think that's a great example of no matter how obscure the environmental studies course, I have learned something that applies to my day-to-day life."

In addition to her two majors, Mariah is also pursuing certificates in food systems and global health, which have allowed her to explore health through a lens of food, culture, and public health systems. She has especially enjoyed taking courses from Monica White, professor of Environmental Justice with a joint appointment in the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies and the Department of Community & Environmental Sociology.

"My classes with Professor White have been extremely helpful," said Mariah. "The whole focus of her research is food systems, and how it effects underprivileged communities. It fit in so well with everything I've been wondering about since I first started in healthcare. I really loved learning from her."

Mariah is also a member of the Nelson Institute's Community Environmental Scholars Program (CESP), a program that provides students with the opportunity to work with community-based environmental organizations and apply their environmental education in ways that have a positive local impact.

Mariah receiving her first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine shortly after shots were made available to Wisconsin's frontline health care workers. Photo: Mariah Antigone

Diversity is a core value of CESP. The program aims to support and unite students of different perspectives, cultures, ethnicities, economics, and backgrounds, in part by providing personalized instruction and commu-

nity-based learning, but also through the financial support of CESP scholarships. As a nontraditional student from a rural upbringing, Mariah is just one of many underrepresented students that the program serves. Now in her third semester in CESP, Mariah said participating in CESP has been her "most positive" Nelson Institute experience.

"I have loved CESP," said Mariah. "CESP embodies what the Nelson Institute stands for, because it is so diverse and you have people from so many different backgrounds, but it manages to bring everything together into a cohesive story about who we are as students and as humans, and what our place in the world is and how we can affect the world."

Fostering connection and a sense of community is central to the CESP mission and something that Mariah values most about the program. She expressed great appreciation for the CESP staff, who she said are "amazing teachers" who have the "special gift" of being able to teach while at the same time encouraging students to grow and take ownership of their work.

Rob Beattie, the CESP director, said that student-led teaching and community service are central features of the program. Each semester CESP recruits a new cohort of students to form a team that is responsible for teaching several sessions, something that Beattie said helps CESP students "build a sense of belonging" and reflects their commitment to public service.

"This idea — that you learn and grow as a community by teaching yourself and your peers, is central to [CESP's] philosophy," said Beattie. "It also embodies some of the best practices of effective community engagement. We put trust in our community — the CESP students — to create an effective and supportive environment, to communicate transparently with us and their fellow students, and to share networking resources and ideas with one another. It has been a challenge to make this model of student-centered learning work with online classes and remote community service projects, but our amazing students like Mariah have kept the program strong."

Mariah said that these opportunities to connect with other students in the program has been one of her greatest joys. CESP attracts a diverse mix of students who are pursuing a wide range of different majors. This diversity provides an opportunity for Nelson Institute students to foster unique relationships, learn from each other, and expand their understanding of environmental studies.

"My fellow students at CESP are just fantastic. I think they really embody what it means to be a UW–Madison student," said Mariah. "[They have] the passion for social justice and for the environment, and the dedication to take the knowledge that they learn and bring it into whatever their field of practice is — and we have really diverse fields of practice in our students at the Nelson Institute! I have been trying to recommend the CESP program to everyone I can. It's just been so great for me."

Looking to the future, Mariah said that she is "open to whatever comes her way." She is considering going to graduate school for public health and agroecology, which may keep her in Madison for a while longer if she pursues UW–Madison programs.

But for now, Mariah feels comfortable not knowing exactly where her path may lead.

"I've moved around a lot and I've had a lot of different experiences, and I think that's taught me that I don't need to set my plans in stone. So, we'll see. We will see."

This open approach is something that has defined Mariah's academic journey. As a returning adult student who is also working full-time, her journey diverges from the traditional academic route. But Mariah likes it that way. In fact, she recommends it. When given the opportunity to offer a bit of advice, Mariah encouraged students to not be afraid to forge their own path — to make decisions that break away from people's preconceived expectations.

"Don't hold yourself to somebody else's arbitrary schedule," said Mariah. "There's no need to be in a hurry. My advice is do what you want to do when you want to do it... When you break out of the mold of someone else's arbitrary schedule, you find that you benefit in ways that you really don't expect."

Learn how you can support the CESP program.

Water Resources Management Program Professorship renamed in honor of Ken Potter

By Rebekah McBride

The Nelson Institute Water Resources Management program (WRM) Professorship has been renamed in honor of Ken Potter, a longtime WRM affiliate and University of Wisconsin-Madison Professor Emeritus of civil and environmental engineering. This professorship supports the work of the WRM graduate program which integrates the biological and physical sciences with engineering, law, and the social sciences.

The donors who graciously support the WRM Professorship elected to rename the professorship in recognition of the academic support Potter contributed to the WRM program as well as the strong legacy he left within the field of water resources management. Potter, who retired in 2016, is well-known for his contributions to the field, specifically his research related to stormwater runoff and urban water pollution. Among his many national activities was his membership on numerous National Research Council committees on topics such as Everglades Restoration, the National Flood Insurance Program, New Orleans Regional Hurricane Protection, and Inland Aquatic Ecosystems.

Ken Potter

"Ken Potter is a legendary leader in water resource research that reaches communities, improves water quality, and addresses the urgent problem of climate change," said Nelson Institute Dean, Paul Robbins. "Putting his name on this professorship, after decades of leadership in the field is a no brainier."

Likewise, Anita Thompson, a Department of Biological Systems Engineering professor and the current Water Resources Management Chair shared how deserving Potter is of this honor and how much he has meant to the program over the years.

"Renaming this professorship is a wonderful tribute to Ken who, throughout his career, did so much for the WRM program, its students, and the field," Thompson said.

Potter stated that he is honored to have his name so closely tied to the WRM Professorship as he has fond memories of working with the program and remains supportive of the WRM program goals and its contributions to the campus and beyond.

"The cornerstone of the WRM program was the practicum, during which a cohort of students worked to help remedy water resource challenges for communities throughout the state, and occasionally the country. Every year the WRM Chair, with help from colleagues, would look for community challenges," Potter shared. "Often community representatives would approach the program with thorny water issues. A cohort of students would then spend a year or so exploring the issue and identifying potential solutions. It was real pleasure to watch the students fully engage with community members, learn about the issues, collect critical data, formulate potential solutions, and present their findings to the communities. It was also gratifying to subsequently hear about implementation of many of the students' recommendations. And, I always challenged the students to discover something new about the water resource they were studying, and they usually did. What a great example of the Wisconsin Idea! I can't think of a better and more enjoyable way to prepare students for careers in water management."

We invite you to learn more about the Water Resource Management program or support its work and educational programs through a gift.

WRM PROFESSORSHIP WAS AMONG THREE ESTABLISHED IN 2014

In fall 2014, UW alumni John and Tashia Morgridge (class of 1955) made an inspirational $100 million gift to the University of Wisconsin-Madison that provided a dollar-for-dollar match to any new professorship fund established at a level of $500,000 or more. The Nelson Institute Professorship in Water Resources was among three professorships established as part of the Morgridge Match Program.

Established by John and Linda Nelson and supported generously by Sal and Judy Troia, Jeff Rudd and Jeanne Bissell, and several WRM alumni, the professorship guaranteed the continued success and expansion of the Nelson Institute's Water Resources Management (WRM) program, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2015. It has also provided dedicated, endowed faculty salary support and discretionary funds to advance research, problem solving and stakeholder engagement on issues related to lakes, watersheds, groundwater, and streams.

RED ENVELOPE
CAMPAIGN

Each semester, aligned with graduation, the Nelson Institute holds its semi-annual student fundraising campaign: The Red Envelope Campaign.

One hundred percent of donations received are used to support fun, community-building experiences for Nelson students, such as ice cream socials, movie nights, Spooky Science Hall nights, study brunches, and much more!

In honor of our Spring 2021 graduates, please consider making a gift that will benefit future generations of Nelson students and honor the strong tradition of community-building on which the Nelson Institute prides itself. Gifts in any amount are needed and appreciated!

Support Nelson

Interested in supporting the Nelson Institute? There are many ways to contribute to the Nelson Institute – participating in our events, mentoring our students, providing connections to your personal networks, and making financial gifts. All of these are necessary and important to us and we invite you to invest in our community in the way that makes the most sense to you. Learn more about all of the great academic programs, research centers, and public programs we offer.

Gifts in any amount are needed and appreciated!

Nominations open for 2021 Alumni Awards

The Nelson Institute is now accepting applications for our 2021 Alumni Awards, which shine a spotlight on alumni who are making a difference in the world. We welcome nominations and self-nominations in two award categories:

The Rising Star Alumni Award is for individuals under 35 years of age OR 10 years or less from date of graduation.

The Distinguished Alumni Award is for individuals over the age of 35 OR more than 10 years from date of graduation.

Please review the criteria for both categories on the Alumni Awards page.

SUBMIT A NOMINATION

SUBMIT A SELF NOMINATION

The deadline to submit a nomination is Monday, May 31, 2021. For more information, please visit the Alumni Awards page or contact Emily Reynolds.

Awards are presented at the Nelson Institute's annual Rendezvous on the Terrace gathering for alumni and friends. The 2021 Rendezvous on the Terrace will be held Friday, September 17, 2021. More details coming soon.

Nelson alumna awarded Distinguished Service Award by the North American Regional Association of the International Association for Landscape Ecology

By Rebekah McBride

Nelson Institute alumna **Jessica Price** will be awarded the 2021 Distinguished Service Award by the North American Regional Association of the International Association for Landscape Ecology (IALE-NA). Price, who graduated from the Nelson Institute with a MS in Conservation Biology and Sustainable Development in 2010 and a PhD in Environment and Resources in 2016, is being recognized for her exceptional contributions to IALE-NA "in terms of time, energy and dedication" and advancement of the IALE-NA mission.

Jessica Price

"Since joining the organization in 2010, I have felt lucky to work with this welcoming intellectual community," Price said. "And, I am happy to have helped the organization broaden its geographic scope to be more inclusive of and facilitate knowledge exchange across the whole North America Region."

In addition to her work with IALE-NA, Price is also the Renewable Energy Strategy Lead at The Nature Conservancy, New York. As a part of her work there she helped to complete the Long Island Solar Roadmap Project, which located low-impact sites for solar energy installations on Long Island.

Price has also continued to support the Nelson Institute by mentoring Environmental Observation and Informatics (EOI) program students during their final professional project, including August Schultz, who assisted with the Long Island Solar Roadmap Project. Read more.

We invite you to stay connected by updating your contact information by joining Badger Bridge or making simple updates here.

CEE spring symposium is a success

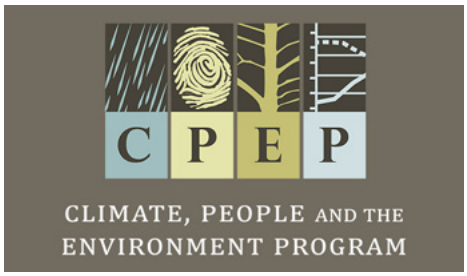
Center for Ecology and the Environment
NELSON INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

The Center for Ecology and the Environment (CEE; formerly Wisconsin Ecology) held its annual Spring Symposium over Zoom April 27-28, 2021. The event was historic in two ways as it was the first symposium as a center and the first held virtually! Reflecting CEE's mission to foster a sense of connectedness within the large community of campus ecologists, the 135 registrants hailed from at least a dozen departments.

The symposium featured a keynote talk from Dr. Elena Bennet, research chair in Sustainability Science at McGill University who is internationally recognized for her contributions to ecosystem services science. Bennett is a University of Wisconsin-Madison and Nelson Institute alumna, having graduated in with a MS in land resources in 1999 and a PhD in limnology and marine sciences in 2002. Bennet presented her work on quantifying ecosystem services and gave a clear nod to the ecological traditions of UW-Madison by connecting her work to the Wisconsin Idea and Aldo Leopold's Land Ethic. Dr. Bennet also graciously attended an interactive session with two dozen graduate students to discuss optimism in ecology and interdisciplinary research. The symposium also featured talks from eight early-career researchers (graduate students and postdocs) representing five departments at UW-Madison. If you missed the opportunity to attend, please watch for updates for the CEE fall symposium, which takes place in October every year.

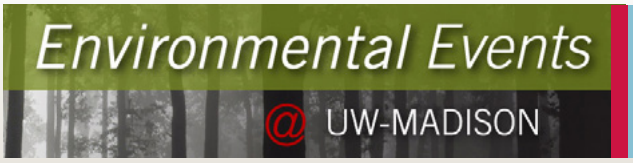
Weston series

The Weston Roundtable Series is designed to promote a robust understanding of sustainability science, engineering, and policy through weekly lectures co-sponsored by the Center for Sustainability and the Global Environment (SAGE), the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, and the Office of Sustainability. The spring series is complete, but past lecture recordings are available for viewing.



CPEP seminars

Each semester the Climate, People, and the Environment Program (CPEP) hosts a weekly seminar featuring lectures by visiting speakers as well as presentations by CPEP faculty, scientists, and students. CPEP seminar presentations are held in conjunction with the Department of Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences (AOS) and are open to the public. The spring series is complete, but past lecture recordings are available for viewing.



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