The Immersive Learning initiative provides a framework for Ball State faculty and students to connect with Indiana businesses and nonprofit organizations through mutually beneficial projects.

Students benefit by gaining experience and expertise beyond the boundaries of the classroom.

Faculty benefit when they adapt traditional teaching into a collaborative applied model, which leads to deeper community connections and possible avenues for scholarly publications.

Community partners benefit when students examine their challenges from a fresh perspective.
Cancer Services of East Central Indiana Little Red Door needed assistance with multiple initiatives/programs. Some programs are focused on promoting healthy living habits and others on developing promotional material for Little Red Door (LRD). Students helped promote and fundraise, researched underserved areas of our community, developed novel educational materials for that population, promoted LRD programs in schools and throughout the community, developed a new agency video, updated existing display materials, and researched utility of an app. Students even presented about the project at the Central States Communication Association Conference in Grand Rapids, MI.

**Faculty Mentor:** Peggy Fisher  
**Department:** Communication Studies  
**Community Partner:** Cancer Services of East Central Indiana-Little Red Door

**Building Better Health: Developing a Community Gold Standard**

**Students:**  
John Anderson Jr., Theresa Barhorst, Lindsey Bryie, Kassie Ehman, Sumer Frain, Jenna McAbee, Chad Ragan, Leslie Thomas, Whitney Morgan
The students in this project developed design ideas and educational materials for the installation of a butterfly garden at The Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory in downtown Fort Wayne. This new garden space, dubbed a “nectar garden,” will bring nature inside, providing a seasonal display for visitors to enjoy. This project united thematic design with education, in order to share with visitors the magic of metamorphosis, the habitat needs of specific species, and the plight of endangered and threatened species.

Faculty Mentor: Martha Hunt
Department: Landscape Architecture
Community Partner: Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory

The Butterfly Project

Students:
Erin Adkins, Alyssa Babb, Bethany Gordon, Carter Gordon, Emily Meer, Kathryn Powell, Payton Smiley, Katee Stone, Thomas Trail, Jasmine Troyer, Maggie Weighner
The Thomas Park/Avondale neighborhood has suffered since the closings of multiple important employers over recent years. To help combat neighborhood decay, ecoREHAB hopes to help stabilize the area by improving the housing stock. To initiate this endeavor, ecoREHAB identified an ideal property located 1 block from the Ross Community Center. In 2014, the house was tagged by Muncie’s Unsafe Building Hearing Authority. Without costly remediation the house cannot be occupied and in its current state it could quickly fall into disrepair and become unsalvageable, leaving a hole in the urban fabric of the neighborhood that may never be mended. Working with Ball State University architecture students, ecoREHAB will rehabilitate this house turning it into a home that is affordable to operate and act as a catalyst for neighborhood improvement.

Faculty Mentor: Jonathan Spodek  
Department: Architecture  
Community Partner: Ball Brother Foundation, ecoREHAB of Muncie, Inc.

Students:
Craig Adams, Allison Berry, Brian Bracht, Hunter Crews, Alex DeKemper, Jordan Duke, Ana Karen Garcia, James Hastings, Jacob Hurt, Molly Schultz, Taylor Sheppard
This immersive project involved partnering with Wee Wisdom Nursery School and Child Care Facility in Muncie. Students enrolled in EDEL 231 worked collaboratively to create, design and launch a new program entitled, Families for Forward Thinking (FFT). Alongside Wee Wisdom staff and families, students distinguished parental needs regarding positive home structures. Participating students explored research proven and practical strategies that parents and families could implement at home to best provide a positive environment. These strategies incorporated within a student-created FFT online source. This dynamic resource was linked to the collaborating partner’s website at the end of the semester. Through the site, parents have access to video vignettes of students/teachers working with children, relevant articles, and pragmatic resources on meaningful topics that enhance their child’s academic and social success. In addition, Ball State students identified specific areas of parental interest and provided two parent education workshops/events. Students also organized and planned an in-service session for Wee Wisdom staff to support their ongoing work with parents.

Families for Forward Thinking: Partnering with Parents in the 21st Century

Students:
Hunter Eineman, Kimmy Ferguson, Shannon Gassman, Christina Koehl, Bridget Millar, Shana Miller, Monique Moore, Daniel Skora, Eva Wehrle, Hannah Wiley

Faculty Mentor: Stacey Allred
Department: Elementary Education
Community Partner: Wee Wisdom Nursery School and Child Care Facility
Students partnered with the George and Frances Ball Foundation to create a series of videos to be used on the foundation’s website. This has been a yearlong project. Videos will focus on a wide array of funding priorities and will include an overview video of the George and Frances Ball Foundation.

Faculty Mentor: Chris Flook
Department: Telecommunication
Community Partner: George & Frances Ball Foundation

George & Frances Ball Website/Video Production

Students:
Ball State currently has nine Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified buildings, with three more anticipating certification. How have they been performing? Are we really seeing the reductions in energy consumption and water usage that we anticipated? It is time to find out. We began this semester by studying the Letterman Communications and Media building to certify it through LEED® Lab™. LEED® Lab™ is a program developed by the U.S. Green Buildings Council that works with a student team as they complete the LEED certification process, from initial decision making until final certification. The entire process for the Letterman Communications and Media building will require three semesters to complete.

**Faculty Mentor:** Janet Fick, Dr. James Jones  
**Department:** Construction Management  
**Community Partner:** Ball State Facilities Planning and Management

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**LEED Lab**

**Students:**  
Tim Ball, Brandon Hill, Nick Kaczorowski, Jessi Lynn, Martin Niemcewski, Maggie Pendergast, Paul Penn, Megan Stenftenagel, Amy Whitehead
Small-holder food producers, urban and rural, are an important and the fastest growing segment of agricultural markets both nationally, and locally. However, since research and government support dollars have disproportionately targeted large commodity agriculturalists, little is known about small-holder food producers and those factors that influence their means of production. This project team used qualitative research methods to better understand the motivations, perceptions, and scientific-agrarian knowledge of these small-scale agriculturalists in the community. The information gathered from this project will be beneficial for a proposed local food hub, existing organic outlets, and other area retail options for food producers.

**Faculty Mentor:** Gerry Waite  
**Department:** Center for Peace and Conflict Studies  
**Community Partner:** Downtown Farmstand, Purdue Ag Extension

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**Local Farmer Ethnography (Sustainability Understanding/Develop Printed Media)**

**Students:**  
Parker Gagliano, Caroline Grad, Mark Hutslar, Maxx Silber, Amanda Waller, Kristin Wuthrich
Ball State University students combined their effort and energy to produce the next iteration of The Facing Project, a local initiative which aims to connect people through stories to strengthen communities. Each iteration reveals people in our community who face certain circumstances and wish to share their stories. The students chose to concentrate on Facing Cancer in East Central Indiana. All stories have been published in a free book and distributed at a community debut as well as to those who may have direct influence toward those who face depression — such as doctors, counselors, therapists, teachers, coaches, parents, and friends. The goal of The Facing Project is to inform and educate about underreported and sometimes misunderstood topics.

Faculty Mentor: Adam Kuban
Department: Journalism
Community Partner: Cancer Services of East Central Indiana-Little Red Door

Louis E. Ingelhart Scholars and Facing Cancer in East Central Indiana

Students:
Tyson Bird, Patrick Calvert, Phylisia Donaldson, Nicole Dowd, Ryan Flanery, Alaina Halsey, Lauren Hansen, Asa McCormick, Kaylie Mckee, Edward Metzger, Trenton Scroggins, Rose Skelly, Jacob Turpin, Dagny Zupin
During this project, BSU Latino students enrolled in SP 305 (Spanish Grammar for Heritage Speakers) formed mentoring partnerships with Latino students enrolled in a Spanish class for heritage speakers at Homestead High School in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The project intended to support the educational endeavors of Latino students by developing culturally relevant mentoring practices. The partnership also resulted in the production of a booklet/mentoring manual on the Latino educational experience, written by both groups of students, that intends to 1) solidify their Spanish language development and 2) create support mechanisms for increasing their access to higher education.

Faculty Mentor: Chin-Sook Pak
Department: Modern Languages and Classics
Community Partner: Homestead High School

Mentoring Partnerships for Heritage Students of Spanish: Addressing the Latino Educational Gap

Students:
This project involved students taking the lead in a research project to learn about how the Muncie SportsPlex could be made to be financially viable and serve the Muncie community better. Students gathered data and wrote a report that gave Mayor Tyler actionable business intelligence to assist in improving the product, services and financial viability of Muncie SportsPlex.

**Faculty Mentor:** Craig Webster  
**Department:** Family and Consumer Sciences  
**Community Partner:** City of Muncie

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**Muncie’s Sports Tourism Potential: Strategies to Make the SportsPlex Serve the Community Better**

**Students:**  
Cheria Averitte, Leah Beebe, Nicole Box, Cade Carter, Jeshua Drown, Alex Hurt, Anna Johnson, Kyle Jones, Bailey Kelley, Colleen Kinninger, Sarah Kniesly, Ed Landreth, Taylor Lipinski, Michael Lorenzano, Maddie McMurray, Mike Melton, Kim Scott, Jessica Stanton, Taylor Stiffler, Katherine Sutton, Brandi Tuzinski, Alexandria Vaden, Sarah Von Raesfield, Ciara Whitaker
Conn-Selmer, the largest manufacturer of musical instruments in the United States is developing a website to provide continuing education for music teachers. This immersive learning project partnered with them to create new content which will feature Ball State’s School of Music faculty and students demonstrating techniques on a variety of instruments. This project team learned to select content, arrange for experts to appear on camera, negotiate intellectual property agreements, develop scripts following pedagogical principles, make audio and video recordings, edit and output finished video files, and get feedback about the results from the Conn-Selmer production staff. In addition, students made their own instructional video on a topic of their choosing.

**Students:**
Daniel Bedell, Ethan Hardwick, Zach Higdon, Dustin Burks, Dylan Humberg, Dara Metcalfe

**Faculty Mentor:** Robert Willey
**Department:** Music Media Production
**Community Partner:** Conn Selmer
The Whitely Community Council would like to create a youth focused TimeBank. This project team obtained data from community youth about the experiences they would like to “withdraw” as well as the assets they could ‘deposit’ as participants in the program. This information would be used to increase students’ awareness of and interest in the ‘Serve to Learn” TimeBank program as well as help them articulate their personal interests and assets. To gather the asset data and foster program engagement, BSU students conducted activity-based focus groups with Muncie area youth. This data gathered will help the committee members design the TimeBank program. In addition to developing research skills, BSU students connected with and increased empathy for the Muncie Community and learned about the principles of TimeBanking.

Serve to Learn Time Bank Focus Groups

Students:
Sonia Brewer, Victoria Foster, Hallie Johns, Grace Kelly, Braderick Morrison, Jessica Oracheff, Keanna Peppers, Danielle Staley, Abigail Stellwagen, Christina Valdez, Brianna Williams
The purpose of the project was for students enrolled in Sect. 2 of SS 397 to become educated about the community benefits of Timebanking and investigate possible models that would be useful for the Whitely community in Muncie, IN.

**Faculty Mentor:** Dorshele Stewart  
**Department:** History  
**Community Partner:** Whitely Community Council

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**Serve to Learn Youth Development Project**

**Students:**

Elyssia Anderson, Lauren Borst, Michelle Caneva, Hayley Eckert, Victoria Fehr, Thomas Harrell, Victoria Harris, Deidre Henderson, Mercedes Hoover, Samantha Maethner, Kirsten Neal, Samantha Reason, Brianna Refner, Nina Richardson, Eleonora Smith, Eric Southerland, Danielle Wellman, Kaylyn West, Justice Williams, Brandon Wyllie
In this project, students worked with the Shafer Leadership Academy to evaluate the potential “product” structure that can be sustainable for them in the future through the use of market research, company financial information, and competitive research. The students analyzed several factors including price structure, target market, leverage, position, and delivery method, and provided a strategic recommendation to Shafer Leadership Academy for the future.

Faculty Mentor: Sue Mantel
Department: Marketing
Community Partner: Shafer Leadership Academy

Shafer Leadership Academy - Marketing Strategy

Students:

Stance is an international academic journal that is edited and produced entirely by undergraduate students. Stance aims to enrich student learning by providing an opportunity for undergraduates from around the world to have their original scholarly work reviewed by a peer-reviewed academic journal. By participating in Stance Ball State University students improve their philosophy, English, advanced technology/digital design, publishing, management, and leadership skills. Over the past nine years the students of Stance have worked with approximately 160 external (500 applications) reviewers and 900 manuscript authors from colleges and universities in thirty-five states and thirty-one nations, while winning three national awards.

Faculty Mentor: Dave Concepción
Department: Philosophy and Religious Studies
Community Partner: The American Philosophical Association

Students:
James Ferguson, Chris Guion, Daniel Klinestiver, Eric Lawler, Cameron McNeely (Editor-in-chief), Kaley Rittichier, Dillon Roberts, Eliza Sandlin, Julian Schock, Quintin Thompson, Julia Voigt, Taylor Wicker, Kayla Williams, Daniel Wills
Education in Sustainability across a range of levels from elementary school through college has never been more important than at this time of climate change, habitat loss and other environmental impacts. Sustainability education is extremely effective when techniques are demonstrated in the field and the learning is hands-on. This project proposes to develop an underutilized Ball State owned parcel as a community resource and national model in sustainability education. The partners and beneficiaries for this project include Ball State students, public school students, and the general public.

**Faculty Mentor:** Dave Ferguson  
**Department:** Landscape Architecture  
**Community Partner:** Red-tail Land Conservancy

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**Sustainability Park at Heath Farm Conceptual Plan**

**Students:**  
Drew Bailey, Denise Blankenberger, Courtney Castleman, Tatiana Cox, Olivia Davis, Zachary Herring, Sammy Iskrzcki, Katlyn Lichtsinn, Payton Smiley, Cassidy Smith, Chelsea Smith
The Thomas Park/Avondale Neighborhood Action Plan (TPANAP) is a citizen-generated policy regarding the future of the neighborhood, containing initiatives that will be developed by the residents of the neighborhood with the assistance of the students. The TPANAP falls under the umbrella of the Muncie Action Plan (MAP), which is a strategic guide for the city to create an action agenda for the future. A partnership has been established with MAP and Ball State University to help with the organization of neighborhoods, to assist with needs assessment/goal setting and to develop collaborative projects that meet the unique needs of each neighborhood. In addition to the Action Plan, a TPANAP Handbook was produced as a document to aid citizen planners when they begin to enact initiatives from the Plan.

Students:
Unai Miguel Andres, Robin Behery, Simran Bhinder, Zane Bishop, Jessie Boshell, Julia Chanen, Tiffany Gehrke, Cody Hedges, Amber Janzen, Paul Jones, Kyeong Hyun Kim, Sravani Mikkilineni, Beth Neville, Ryan Robling, James Sandberg, Joe Starke, Richard Tymczyszyn

Faculty Mentor: Lisa Dunaway
Department: Urban Planning
Community Partner: Thomas Park/Avondale Neighborhood Association
The Tiny House Initiative is focused on sparking the idea of sustainable development and simple living within the Muncie community. Tiny houses can become a solution to the low-income family’s need for cost efficient and sustainable housing. We also believe that Ball State can encourage this movement to create an affordable and efficient off-campus space that one or two student residents can live in in an urban community setting. The Tiny House Initiative is the next big thing in Muncie development, and can ultimately create a better appreciation for sustainability, as well as projecting the movement across the state.

Faculty Mentor: Kevin Kenyon
Department: CERES and the Academy for Sustainability
Community Partner: Muncie Action Plan Energy Committee, Muncie Community Development

Students:
Lidia A-wan, Joseph Beckham, Taylor Blevins, Jason Conn, Ty Gallahan, Kenna Gibson, Niyynnah Jefferson, Ryan Johnston, Melanie Komasinski, Matt Loudermilk, Molly Schultz, Alex Segar, Danielle Taylor
The Indiana Office of Tourism and Development has partnered with Ball State to use high-definition video technology to highlight local and regional tourism in the state of Indiana. This project is part of a three-year grant. The students will produce a series of “profile” videos focusing on tourist destinations and cultural aspects in the state of Indiana. This semester, the teams focused on winter fun in Indiana at such destinations as Pokagon State Park and Perfect North Ski resort.

Faculty Mentor: Chris Flook
Department: Telecommunications
Community Partner: Indiana Office of Tourism and Development

Students:
Bobbie Bennett, Aaron Brehm, Luke Butler, Anthony Campagna, Garrett Finn, Janie Fulling, Brian Gibson, Micah Holtgraves, Sadie Lebo, Nicole Lehrman, Jana Lowery, Sam Noble
The Whitely Community Council Public Safety Committee has been discussing the national dialogue regarding police and community tensions and how those feelings may be reflected in Muncie Delaware County. This project team conducted interviews and focus groups with Muncie Delaware County residents and police about their perceptions of local police-community relations. This data will help the Public Safety Committee design programming with the objective of improving communication, understanding, and safety.

**Faculty Mentor:** Melinda Messineo  
**Department:** Sociology  
**Community Partner:** Whitely Community Safety Committee

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**Whitely Community Safety Committee Focus Groups**

**Students:**
Nathan Ayers, Denasiha Christian, Brett Donley, Asia Flemings, Autumn Huse, Alicia Klingerman, Patrick Kluger, Savanna Paddock, Erin Phelps, Lara Schneider, Matthias Tankersley
Immersive Learning offers students the opportunity to connect with communities, businesses, and government agencies to collaboratively develop solutions to unique challenges.