NREM Student Awards Presented

Last week, students, faculty, and alumni gathered to celebrate another successful year and to recognize the achievements of the NREM department.

Dr. James Eflin brought lighthearted humor as the event host and introduced several faculty members to help announce this year's awardees. The event awarded scholarships, acknowledged outgoing students, and honored those who have made exceptional contributions to NREM.

Congratulations to the following awardees who were recognized for their achievements!

- Clyde W. Hibbs Memorial Scholarship: Anderson Smith, Irene Liu
- Alex and Anna I. Nicoloff Scholarship: Samantha Harsh, Caty Wilson
- Farmland Conservation Club Scholarship: Cathy Janiczak, Keegan Waggener
- Air & Waste Management Association (IN Chapter) Award: Alec Buscetto
- Cooper Science Award: Ricky Bennett
- Udall Scholarship: Kevin Williams
- Udall Honorable Mention: Alyssa Hartman
- Outstanding Student Service: Kerry Nielsen
- Outstanding Senior: Gary Parks, Kelsey Bonhivert
- Outstanding Graduate Thesis: Kerry Nielsen, Samantha Grover
- Outstanding Dissertation: Navid Asbaghi
- Outstanding Graduate Student: Samantha Grover
- Outstanding Community Service Award: Richard Zeller & Steve Lengerich (IDEM Dept. of Air Quality)
- Outstanding Service to NREM Award: Sue Taylor, Laura Waldron
- Outgoing Graduate Assistants: Jenni Curry, Samantha Grover, Amanda Johnson, Kerry Nielsen, Jenny Sunday, Kristi Todd, Jessica Trensey
- Returning and Incoming Graduate Assistants: Michael Cooper, Jeremy Ferguson, Cathy Janiczak, Matt Litten, Amy Rhodes, Jason Sprung

(continued on page 2)

Dean’s Honors List

Congratulations to the following NREM students for making the Dean’s List for Academic

- Amy Clerget
- Pete DePaolo
- Kyle Fender
- Abby Fink
- David Hancock
- Ethan Hill
- Daniel Kauffman
- Nimisha Krishna
- Erica Kudyba
- Ryan Mendenhall
- Matthew Pritchett
- Taylor Robinett
- Chelsea Smith
- George Turpin
- Keegan Waggener
- Kevin Williams
- Caty Wilson

Annual Plant Sale Fundraiser—April 27, 2013

Mark your calendars for April 27 (9am-1pm) for the annual plant sale fundraiser at Christy Woods. The sale will feature orchids and tropical plants from the orchid and teaching greenhouses, native Indiana flowers and shrubs, and garden vegetable seedlings such as peppers and tomatoes.

Prices are suggested donation amounts, with most ranging from $3-5. Proceeds from the fundraiser will benefit the orchid collection, as well as teaching/research greenhouses. The event is also sponsored by the NR Club, the Association of Landscape Architects, and Students for Responsible Consumerism.

For more details, please contact Cheryl Le Blanc at cleblanc@bsu.edu.
Amanda Smith (NREM ’98) is using her natural resource skills to reach out and give back to the community. Smith works as the superintendent of natural resources and education for the Hamilton County Parks and Recreation Department.

In January, she began a once-a-month program in collaboration with the Education and Juvenile Services departments in Hamilton County to provide environmental education to at-risk youth housed in the county’s detention center. Smith said the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in December reminded her of other shootings such as Columbine and Virginia Tech and inspired her to start the program.

“I just felt like I had to do something,” said Smith. “I feel compelled to do more as a county parks department to help prevent events like that.” Smith believes that nature-based education is a good way for kids to connect with the environment, and with each other.

“Nature’s a great equalizer in that it helps you understand your place in the world. If someone has an opportunity to be empathic toward another creature, it seemed to me that they could be far less likely to commit crimes against others. If what we’re doing can give them some sort of understanding, maybe it can help them cope with their own issues.”

Smith’s feelings in regard to teaching the program have evolved as she has become more involved. She said the department used to offer a similar program at the detention center, but only once a year.

“I used to dread going there,” Smith remembers. “You go in, and they just cross their arms and stare at you.” Smith said it was extremely nerve-racking entering a room full of students with rough backgrounds, and who have committed a variety of offenses. She recalled a particular program where she was having a difficult time engaging a few of the students.

“We tried to bring in animals and as many tangible things as we could to engage them and help them connect with nature – animals can be a portal to draw out interactions and emotions. While I was teaching the class, I let our box turtle roam around the room, and it started nudging up to one of the students who was being particularly difficult, and he kind of had to open up. It’s hard to act tough when there’s a turtle crawling up on your foot.”

Smith said that while she still gets a bit nervous for the programs, it has become one of her favorite outreach activities.

“I’m really glad we have been able to get the programs going. As I leave the center, I really feel like I’m making a difference.”

NREM Alumni and Awards Event (continued)

Drs. Paul Chandler and Brian Lepore were also recognized for their achievements and contributions to NREM. Chandler was congratulated on his retirement, and Lepore received warm regards for moving on to other endeavors.

The evening would not have been possible without the dedicated members of the NREM Alumni Society and the department faculty and staff. Thank you all for a fun event and another great year in NREM!

Featured Undergraduate: Kelsey Bonhivert

Kelsey Bonhivert (NREM ’13) is an NREM major with a concentration in environmental management and a minor in chemistry. Since May 2012, she has been using her skills and knowledge learned in NREM to work as an intern with the Bureau of Water Quality at the Muncie Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Bonhivert had previous lab experience from a job at an ink plant in Virginia, working in the BSU biochemistry lab, and from working with Dr. John Pichtel over the summer on remediation research at the Muncie Car Doctors site. An internship at the treatment plant, then, was a good fit for her. Her work mainly consists of collecting water samples from all stages of the treatment process and testing those samples in a laboratory setting for various water quality parameters.

Bonhivert also used her work at the treatment plant to collect research data to fulfill requirements for NREM 369 and her honors thesis. She used historical data collected at the Muncie plant to examine seasonal fluctuations in a little-studied water quality parameter, called the Sludge Volume Index (SVI). Essentially, SVI measures how well waste binds together and settles out of wastewater during the treatment process. Bonhivert’s work found that at the Muncie plant, SVI was somewhat lower in the summer and somewhat higher in the winter. She presented her case study of the Muncie plant at the Indiana Academy of Science conference in March, and is interested in seeing how the treatment plant may apply her study of SVI to their management plan.

Alumni in Action: Amanda Smith Reaches Out to At-Risk Youth

Amanda Smith (NREM ’98) is using her natural resource skills to reach out and give back to the community. Smith works as the superintendent of natural resources and education for the Hamilton County Parks and Recreation Department.

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“I’m really glad we have been able to get the programs going. As I leave the center, I really feel like I’m making a difference.”
NREM Internship and Career Fair Draws Record Attendees

This year’s NREM Internship and Career Fair hosted a record 170 attendees. With over 37 representatives from a range of diverse organizations, there was something for everyone. It seems that both organization reps and student attendees had a positive experience at the event in January.

Michael Schutz and Natalie Hartman were at the fair recruiting for August Mack, an environmental health and safety consulting firm.

“We’ve met some really strong students that seemed to know what they want to do,” said Hartman during the fair. “We appreciate that – there are some inquisitive, bright students here.”

Schutz said the fair was enlightening for him from a recruitment standpoint. “We learned that the [NREM] curriculum might feed into a career at August Mack a little better than we had thought before. I like supporting the university and we’ve had good employees from Ball State over the years.” Schutz graduated from the Ball State geology department in 1981.

Jane Runge Darlage, representing the Indiana State Museum, also described her positive experience at the fair.

“This is a great place for us because we have so many things that apply to the NREM department. There are really engaged students here that are active and interested and motivated to find the right opportunity.”

“This is my third or fourth year attending, and the staff always invites us back— it seems to be a good relationship,” Darlage continued. “They always work with us outside of the event to follow up. I made some really good contacts today with other areas, too - with other schools, even. So it’s kind of cool that we can use that opportunity here to have a conversation.”

Zach Weber (NREM ’10) is an alumni who has been on both sides of the table at the fair. As a student, Weber found an internship through Ritchey Woods Nature Preserve in Fischers, and was later hired on as a staff member. He returned to the fair this year recruiting for camp counselors and summer interns.

“I like to be here to let people know that you can get a job - it does happen,” said Weber.

Above: Students discuss careers in environmental management with representatives from August Mack.

“You don’t just graduate and face the world. You’re fine - you can get a job.”

Student attendees also seemed pleased with their experience at the fair. Anastasia Bliznoff (NREM’13) is interested in a career in youth environmental education and was able to discuss opportunities with Girl Scouts, Hamilton County Parks, and the Indianapolis Zoo, among others.

“I was super intimidated going in at first because I felt like everyone knew where they were going, and this was my first time at a fair, so I was really nervous,” admitted Bliznoff. “But then the first person I went to was really nice. Some of the stations got really involved - they started talking to you and asking questions, and they got you interested. I dropped off 2 resumes, and I’m applying online to a couple, so it really helped.”

John Monger (BSU ’14) is an anthropology major with a minor in NREM who also found the fair to be helpful.

“I was pretty surprised about the amount of programs being offered,” Monger said at the fair. “I thought it was going to be very small. It was a really diverse group.” John hopes to work for the park service in the future as an archaeologist.

“There are really engaged students here that are active and interested and motivated to find the right opportunity.”

-Jane Runge Darlage, Internship Coordinator, Indiana State Museum
Spotlight on Alumni

What are NREM Alumni up to? All sorts of things! We recently heard back from two Alumni, Amy Sperback and Lina (Rosengren) Gordy. They shared with us some of their experiences following graduation from Ball State University.

Amy Sperback

Amy Sperback graduated from the NREM department in 2011. She also completed minors in energy, environmental policy, sustainable land systems, and was accredited with a minor in sustainability.

Since graduation, Amy has been working as an Environmental Generalist for Verallia, a glass container manufacturing company. In her current position, she assists in the implementation of the international operating standard for Environmental systems. She travels to each of her company’s 15 facilities across North America to help environmental health and safety managers implement and communicate awareness and environmental responsibilities to all members of the facility, including plant managers to hourly employees.

“What attracted me to my current job is that I get to make an instant impact on the Earth,” says Sperback. “This position allows me to come in contact with thousands of people that I’m educating daily on how to recognize and handle potential environmental hazards like they never did before.”

“I really like seeing people feel empowered by every decision they make to keep the environment clean,” she continues. “I have people ask me advice on how they can better handle a chemical or waste now and then. It is always thrilling to see people take the knowledge and transfer that into their own philosophy.”

Sperback also offered some words of advice for current students seeking positions working in the environmental field.

“With increasing regulation comes an increasing need for people to monitor, measure, and analyze company performances. Find the tasks you like to do first, be it reporting, permitting, testing, analyzing, training or calibrating. You can always apply your knowledge to different areas. Try new positions early so you don’t get stuck in something you. Also, don’t cancel out corporate America and manufacturing. You can infiltrate from the inside and do more impact! It goes to show that there is no knowing where a degree in NREM will take you!”

Lina (Rosengren) Gordy

Lina (Rosengren) Gordy (pictured above in scrubs) is about to become a medical doctor. Gordy completed her master’s degree in NREM in 2002, with her work exploring criteria for eco-labels and the green claims that corporations make on their products.

Following graduation, Gordy worked for a variety of environmental non-profits, including the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy in Minnesota, the Sierra Club Hoosier Chapter in Indianapolis, and the Cope Environmental Center in Richmond, IN.

“I have always had a passion for biology and the environment. NREM was an easy choice for me when I started college, and I loved my career after graduating,” says Gordy. Yet, she became somewhat discouraged working in the environmental field.

“In the early 2000s, there was a global shift of many corporations toward a greener image. Initially this was exciting, but after nearly 8 years in this career I felt discouraged by the "greenwashing"; all talk and no substance.” In a somewhat surprising turn of events, Gordy decided to make a career shift.

“Frankly, I felt overwhelmed, and I craved the ability to make a difference more immediately, which is why I decided to pursue a career in medicine.”

Gordy will finish her M.D. from Indiana University in Indianapolis this May.

“I am pursuing a career in Internal Medicine. I enjoy the complexity of the patients in this specialty and the care of the person as a whole, not just a single organ system.”

Still, Gordy has not given up her passion for the natural resources field.

“I am still dedicated to nature and the environment. I'm an avid gardener, and continue to pursue a more sustainably sound lifestyle with my husband in our home in Muncie. For the future, I plan to take one day at a time, focusing on my new career and my family.”

It goes to show that there is no knowing where a degree in NREM will take you!
News from NREM

Tim Johnson (NREM '85) Reflects on Benefits of Joining the Alumni Society

On March 14, alumni and faculty from the College of Sciences and Humanities gathered at Rock Bottom Brewery and Restaurant for a fun evening of food, networking, and friends. Graduates reconnected with faculty and each other, and also had the opportunity to meet new acquaintances. While at the event, we had the opportunity to speak with Tim Johnson (NREM '85), who reflected on his experiences being involved with the NREM Alumni Society.

“When I came to Ball State, I was a transfer student from Vincennes. At that time, transfer students couldn’t live on campus, and I ended up hanging out with other people from Vincennes until my last year. To a degree, I didn’t get acquainted with a lot of the pros until late in the game, and I never really felt connected to Ball State.”

Johnson said he never really even gave a thought to joining the Alumni Society – it was not something he saw himself doing years ago.

“Terry Coleman was the NREM Alumni Society President and was the one who really got me involved. I hadn’t really seen him since we graduated, but we kept in touch – we may have talked once or twice on the phone. It was one of those things where you always plan on getting together, and it doesn’t happen. When we finally did get together, he told me he thought I should get involved with this alumni society. One of the things that really appealed to me at the time is that I felt like we could do something to really help some of the graduating students - maybe give them a little bit of guidance.”

“I’ve been on the board a long time now,” Johnson continued. “I’ve met a lot of good friends this way – some that I knew briefly at college and I now have become better friends with, and others who I didn’t know at all but have built relationships with. It’s something totally out of the realm of what I expected I would be doing someday, but it’s been a very worthwhile experience. It’s been enjoyable, and I’ve grown through it, too.”

Each year, the NREM Alumni Board is involved in planning and executing several events, such as the Awards Banquet in April, the White River cleanup in the fall, and the Internship and Career Fair in the winter. Alumni also take part in networking and social events, such as the recent Rock Bottom event in March, as well as undergraduate outreach activities such as career panel discussions. For more information, visit www.bsu.edu/alumni.

Top: Keegan Waggener (right) pitches his story idea to a panel including IPR manager Marcus Jackman (left).
Bottom, from left to right: Kody Kirby, Keegan Waggener, Allison Kiser, Shawn Kelley, Allie Davis, Zane Naylor, Lauren Lutz, Matt Litten, Nimisha Krishna, Daniel Fleming, Samantha Grover, Dr. Joshua Gruver

NREM on the Radio: Immersive Learning with IPR

Ten students from departments across campus have come together to create a series of radio broadcasts focusing on food, farming, and sustainability in East Central Indiana. The broadcasts are part of an immersive learning course developed by Dr. Josh Gruver and graduate assistant Samantha Grover that partners students with Indiana Public Radio.

Students began the semester with a crash course in food systems, sustainable agriculture, interviewing techniques, and writing for radio. After developing their personal interests related to sustainability and food systems, the class “pitched” their ideas to a panel including IPR manager Marcus Jackman and Dr. Brian Lepore.

“What’s really cool about this course is that students are involved in making decisions for the project from start to finish,” says Dr. Gruver. “They decided what stories to pursue, conducted the interviews, wrote the storylines, and learned sound production techniques to edit the final pieces for radio. Not only that, but they also contribute to leading our class meetings every week. It’s really been a fun learning experience for all of us.”

“In this class, the learning has really been based on doing things instead of reading about things,” says Lauren Lutz, a sophomore from the English department involved in the class. “It’s really pushed me to try things I wasn’t used to and has put me outside of my box. I love the team I work with, and the course has a very ‘community’ feel.”

Assuming the stories meet final approval from IPR, you can expect to hear broadcasts from the team about topics such as urban chickens, community gardens, and local food movements. The pieces will likely be aired this summer in a weeklong series played during Morning Edition and All Things Considered. To hear the stories, tune into your local IPR station in East Central Indiana, or listen online at www.bsu.edu/ipr.
The NREM Department will lose two professors this spring: Dr. Paul Chandler and Dr. Brian Lepore. NREM would like to acknowledge both for their accomplishments, thank them for their contributions at Ball State, and wish them luck in their future endeavors.

“I enjoyed working with Dr. Lepore because he provided me with the right amount of guidance/instruction, but also gave me the independence to figure things out on my own,” says Ann Raffel (NREM ’11). Raffel had Dr. Lepore as an instructor, and also worked with him in the soils laboratory.

“I always felt that Dr. Lepore was very approachable and helpful. I just want to say thank you for giving me the opportunity to work in his lab and for all the help and advice he gave me throughout that time!” says Raffel.

Dr. Lepore will be moving with his family to Bend, Oregon this spring to pursue a career in farming. He is in the process of negotiating the purchase of a grass-fed herd of cattle, which he hopes to develop into a viable farm business.

Dr. Paul Chandler will retire this year after 22 years of service in the NREM department. Since starting here in 1990, Dr. Chandler has taught a wide variety of courses, including: American environmental history, international rural community development, environmental management in developing countries, environment and society, research methods, and decision-making for environmental management (to name a few). He also led several field studies to Costa Rica. In ‘99-2000, Dr. Chandler was honored with the student-nominated C. Warren Vander Hill Award for his work teaching honors courses.

Dr. Chandler has conducted extensive research in the fields of forestry, environmental anthropology, and international rural development. In one of his major works, Dr. Chandler studied the validity of traditional ecological knowledge in rural China. In another study, he explored reasons for non-participation in rural development assistance programs in Brazil. Dr. Chandler’s other major research projects have included forestry studies in Jordan, as well as the examination of literacy program participation in Guatemala. He was the first BSU faculty member to be awarded as a Fulbright Scholar in 1999 for his research work in Brazil. Among his other achievements, Dr. Chandler is also an accomplished linguist. Besides English, Dr. Chandler is a fluent speaker of Brazilian Portuguese, Mandarin and Ponghua Chinese, South American Spanish, and Tagalog (Philippino street language). He reads and writes fluently in French, and also speaks conversational Italian.

“It was a pleasure and privilege to work with Dr. Chandler as a mentor,” said Boubacar Thiam, a former student of Chandler. “I liked his ability to encourage someone who is not used to the system to work smarter and achieve high quality results. Dr. Chandler helped me to work well and keep a high level of confidence as foreigner and as a non native of English to succeed in a western academic institution.”

Thiam came from Guinea to study in the U.S., and said that among other things, Chandler helped him secure an internship with USAID in Washington, D.C. Chandler also served as Thiam’s thesis advisor and worked with him in several courses.

“Dr. Chandler made me come to Ball State. Dr. Chandler also made me stay, study, and succeed at Ball State. I can’t thank him enough. Whatever he ends up doing during his retirement, I wish him best of luck.

Dr. Chandler plans to use his retirement to spend more time with his wife, ride his motorcycle, and do some painting. He also has several books in the works, and he will be glad to have additional time to pursue his interests in writing.
NREM would like to thank those individuals who contributed to this issue of the newsletter. Your input is appreciated! Our gratitude goes to:

- Natural Resources and Environmental Management
- West Quad 110
- Muncie, IN 47306

Visit us on the Web!
http://www.bsu.edu/nrem

Contact NREM and submit news for consideration in the newsletter!

- For more information about news and upcoming events, contact Connie Tyner, administrative coordinator, 765-285-5780, nrem@bsu.edu
- Please send news about promotions or new positions, recognitions, and changes in you contact information to Sue Taylor, bsualumni@bsu.edu, 765-285-1080. “Like” NREM Alumni Society on Facebook, and visit their Website. Click here to nominate an alumnus for an award.

Support NREM and Achieve Active Alumni Status!

The Ball State University Alumni Association has historically provided “active status” to alumni when they make monetary gifts to the BSU Foundation. These monetary gifts may be of any amount, to any BSU Foundation account, and take the place of a dues paying program that some other universities utilize. We ask that you consider becoming active-- it is a great way to say thanks for your own education and to ensure that Ball State continues to provide outstanding programs for its students and alumni.

Your gift may be designated to any account in the BSU Foundation, including NREM. (Indiana residents can receive a 50% tax credit up to $200 when they file form CC-40 with their state taxes, reducing their out-of-pocket cost. Please contact either the BSUAA or Ball State University Foundation for more information).

Not a Ball State graduate? We need your support as well. Please consider a gift to one or more of the following BSU Foundation accounts that support programs and scholarships related to NREM:

6201 General welfare of the NREM department
6203 Operation of the Hults Environmental Learning Center
6204 NREM Alumni Society activities and award programs
6216 Research programs with the NREM department
6217 Soil research projects with the NREM department
6218 Soil and water conservation education activities
6219 Renewable energy and industrial ecology research
6250 NREM scholarships
6253 Clyde Hibbs Scholarship
6254 Alex and Ana Nicoloff Scholarship
6255 Charles Mortensen Fellowship

Thank You!

NREM would like to thank those individuals who contributed to this issue of the newsletter. Your input is appreciated! Our gratitude goes to:

- Sue Taylor
- Laura Waldron
- James Eflin
- Joshua Gruber
- Amy Sperback
- Lina Gordy
- Daniel Fleming
- Brian Lepore
- Paul Chandler
- Boubacon Thiam
- Laura Herron
- Amy Raffel
- Kerry Nielsen
- Kelsey Bonhivert
- Joey Monger
- Amanda Smith
- Cheryl LaBlanc
- Michael Schutz
- Natalie Hartman
- Jane Runge Darlage
- Zach Weber
- Anastasia Bliznoff
- Tim Johnson
- Lauren Lutz

Questions?

To make a donation, please visit the NREM website and click on the link labeled “Make a Gift.” Or click this link: www.bsu.edu/giving

- For more information about giving to NREM, contact Darleen Lugenbuhl at dmlugenbuhl@bsu.edu
- To support the creation of a new scholarship, contact Dr. James Eflin, NREM Department Chair at 765-285-7055 or jeflin1@bsu.edu