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Lake Campus researchers working to improve regional water quality

Lucas Gonzalez

News Editor

The water quality of Grand Lake St. Marys waters has improved with the help of a research project led by a professor at the Wright State University Lake Campus. The study has been published in the peer-reviewed Journal of Environmental Quality.

The study documents how water quality has changed in the past 10 years, and how nutrients and agricultural runoff has affected it. It also covers the development of new best management practices, according to a release from the Wright State Newsroom.

Stephen Jacquemin, associate professor of biology and research coordinator at the Lake Campus has led research efforts on the study, which seeks to improve the quality of watershed and reduce the amount of nutrients getting into the water.

Jacquemin has a background in ecosystems; he has been involved in watershed studies for Wright State for about five years, but his involvement in regional watershed has taken place for nearly ten years.

In years prior to the study, the water of Grand Lake St. Marys was so bad that warnings for people not to come into contact with the water had to be posted. In 2011, the Grand Lake watershed was designated as distressed.

In an interview with WRGT, Jacquemin stated that the distressed watershed designation of the Grand Lake “signified a call to action to really look at these areas of Grand Lake and use community expertise to try and understand the problem.”

Algal blooms in Ohio lakes has been largely attributed to fertilizer getting into the water. Another major problem facing regional waters is nutrients getting into it due to manure application from surrounding farms, according to WRGT.

Other individuals involved in the study include Greg McLinch, the agricultural program coordinator at Lake Campus and Theresa Dirksen, coordinator of Mercer County Agriculture Solutions.

This project requires reconstruction of wetlands in order to filter out stream water before it gets into the lake. The research team has also been working with farmers to develop new practices, according to Jacquemin.

WGRT reports that since the Grand Lake was designated as distressed, farmers have been required to have a nutrient management plan and can no longer spread manure during winter months.

Recently, there has been a reduction in the amount of nutrients in water in the region. “We don’t want to give the impression that water quality issues are fixed – they are certainly not fixed, but we are heading in the right direction,” said Jacquemin.

Jacquemin has stated that the methods used to improve water quality at Grand Lake can be used as a model that could be applied to other Ohio lakes.

The full study is openly accessible to the public, and can be viewed [here](#).

Body of CDC researcher found in Chattahoochee river

Sarah Cavender

News Writer

On Apr. 3, the body of Timothy Cunningham, a 35-year-old employee of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) was found in the Chattahoochee River in Atlanta.

Cunningham was last seen in early February leaving work early, claiming that he did not feel well, according to the Atlanta Journal Constitution. Later, police found his keys, wallet, and dog at his apartment.

The circumstances of Cunningham's disappearance have been described as unusual by Maj. Michael O'Connor of the Atlanta Police Department.

"The most unusual factor in this case is that every single belonging that we are aware of was located in the residence," O'Connor said, according to ABC News. "His keys, his cell phone, credit cards, debit cards, wallet, all his identification, passport – everything you can think of, we've been able to locate. None of those items are missing."

People who knew Cunningham told several news outlets that in the days before he had gone missing, Cunningham was disappointed about not getting a job promotion.

CNN reports that on the day of his disappearance, he tried to contact his mother at 5 a.m. and again at 9 a.m.

Cunningham responded to several public health emergencies during his time with the CDC, including the Ebola and Zika viruses. He worked as an epidemiologist.

Atlanta police said that the body was badly decomposed when they discovered it, but there were no signs of foul play, according to Dayton Daily News.

Woman who carried out YouTube shooting was angry with the company

Angel Lane

Features Editor

More information is currently being discovered about the woman who carried out a shooting at the YouTube headquarters in San Bruno, California. [CNN](#) reports are saying the woman, Nasim Najafi Aghdam had been practicing at a shooting range just before the shooting.

Authorities in San Bruno have stated that Aghdam did not know the victims she shot, but her motive was instead anger with YouTube for many of their online policies for content creators. After shooting three people with a handgun, Aghdam shot and killed herself.

Police are now investigating a possible website, YouTube channel and other social media accounts allegedly created by Aghdam. In one of her posts, shared by [CNN](#), she states, "There is no equal growth opportunity on YOUTUBE or any other video sharing site, your channel will grow if they want to!!!! Youtube filtered my channels to keep them from getting views!" and continues to call the company and employees "close-minded" while blaming them for her reduction in views.

Police were contacted this past weekend by Aghdam's brother who knew her anger, and when he couldn't contact her, feared she might do something. Police found and questioned her, but claim she was calm and cooperative, and never mentioned any anger or plans of harm.

When speaking again with Aghdam's family, they never brought up that they thought she might do something violent, but her father had mentioned that she was angry about YouTube's treatment of her videos.

Over a thousand employees work at the San Bruno site, according to [CNN](#). Two of the victims were released from the hospital, while one remains in serious condition.

YouTube released a statement saying that they are increasing security at all offices as well as giving employees time off and the ability to work from home.

Project Linus lets you make blankets for children in need

Angel Lane

Features Writer

Students and members of the WSU community will be able to give back to children in need on Thursday, April 5 between 12 p.m. and 7 p.m. thanks to Project Linus.

“Project Linus is a national nonprofit organization that makes blankets for children in need. That could be children in shelters, social service agencies or any child that is in need of a big hug basically,” Ryan Oates, VP of the National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH) service committee, said.

The Project Linus blanket making marathon began at Wright State about 15 years ago, and according to Oates it has been an on and off tradition. “We’ve worked to keep the contribution to the community going. We had, I think 250 people attend last year,” he shared.

Oates and other members of the NRHH began their journey this past fall semester by sending funding requests to places like the Student Government Association, and then calling Joann Fabrics to prepare for the event. They raised approximately \$5,000, according to Oates.

“We went the day after Black Friday and bought like \$3,000 worth of fabric. We went back again President’s Day weekend and purchased more fabric, the next part of our journey was getting it all cut,” he said.

Because Oates is also a Resident Assistant in housing, he decided to have a cutting contest on his dorm’s floor, gifting the winning group a Wendy’s gift card. A second cutting event called Loving Linus allowed NRHH to get more blankets cut in preparation for Project Linus.

“We work with the local chapter of Project Linus and we give the blankets to them and they have relationships with different shelters and social service agencies. When you get there, we will have a huge pile of blankets that have already been cut, so basically we just ask that people help tie off a blanket,” Oates said.

There will be over 500 blankets in the Student Union Atrium, each one taking about 15 minutes for an individual to finish off. Oates said the event was made possible with help from Greek Life, Student Government Association, University Activities Board, the Community Council on campus as well as Habitat for Humanity and many more.

“It’s just a way to get to know the people in the community and do something nice to give comfort to a child in need and show them that we really value them. We really appreciate all of the help that we get from all of the different student organizations and individuals because it takes a lot of work to make this event happen. It’s really nice to get to work with so many amazing people,” Oates said.

Wright State joins grant project to address achievement gaps

Lucas Gonzalez

News Editor

Wright State, along with 12 universities in Ohio, has volunteered to participate in “Ohio Strong Start to Finish,” a \$2.1 million grant that was awarded to the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) in partnership with the Inter-University Council and the Ohio Association of Community Colleges.

Grant money will be directed toward providing students with pathways to completion of their degrees and filling attainment gaps for students who are economically disadvantaged and underrepresented.

The overarching goals of Strong Start to Finish are “to put all students on a path to a successful future and to ensure that our businesses have the skilled workers they need to succeed. This grant will go a long way in pursuit of those goals while supporting students as they begin their postsecondary journey,” said ODHE Chancellor John Carey in an ODHE press release.

Wright State has been a leader in reducing equity gaps. In order to achieve that goal, it has implemented a model in which students who are behind in their academics take a developmental course as a co-requisite along with a college-level course. When the courses support one another in this way, students have been proven to succeed at higher rates, according to Tim Littell, executive director of student success at Wright State.

The co-requisite in English was piloted in Fall 2014 and scaled up in Fall 2016. The same thing was piloted in Math in Fall 2017; the pilot will continue through this year, with the intention of scaling up the program within the next academic year.

“When students fall behind in Math and English, it has all sorts of other implications for their other coursework,” said Littell. Focusing efforts toward Math and English co-requisites will “increase success rates in those courses within the first year of enrollment [and] benefit retention and graduation rates,” he said.

Funding for the grant is provided by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, and Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation.

On May 2 there will be a convening of universities and community colleges that have been doing similar work in Columbus, OH. Following that convention, Wright State will have more information regarding the next steps it should take to support initiatives that align with the objectives of Strong Start to Finish, according to Littell.

The specific amount of funding that each school may receive has yet to be determined and will likely be decided at the May 2 conference. Many institutions across Ohio will be competing for grant support.

Wright State is “a strong competitor for funding because of our history of working on these goals already; this will help us complete the work that we’ve already started,” said Littell.

Mystery musical on campus lets you choose your own ending

Angel Lane

Features Editor

“The Mystery of Edwin Drood” has just five shows remaining at the Creative Arts Center. A show full of exactly what the title says, mystery, allows the cast to interact with the audience and let them vote on their desired ending to the show.

“What you’ll find out with the show is it’s delightfully funny. The whole conceit is that it takes place in a music hall, so it’s a play within a play. All of a sudden, two thirds of the way in, Charles Dickens dies, so they have to figure out what the ending is and you get to vote among seven different characters and two different villains and another pair (of lovers),” Artistic Director of the department of theatre, dance and motion pictures Stuart McDowell said.

Senior Musical Theatre Major Megan Valle, who plays the central character Edwin Drood, explained that the show shares an inspiring message about seeing the positive and pushing through when things get hard.

“It is so brilliantly directed and our cast does a magnificent job. We’ve received brilliant reviews, some say it’s their most favorite thing they have seen on the stage,” Valle said.

If you do the math, there could be up to 25 different endings, according to McDowell. After act one, the audience picks everything that happens next, leaving the actors to memorize and perform new songs and scenes every single night.

“This show is physically demanding because it is a whole different style. Edwardian age characters are hard to channel when we are so used to living in the 21st century. I love Drood’s spunky quality and high ambition. I play upon that a lot,” Valle said.

McDowell shared that he is surprised the department has never done such a “rich jewel” like Drood before.

“It’s just wonderful, I mean people are just standing ovation and going crazy and a lot of people are saying it’s the funniest thing they’ve ever seen. The music--it’s breathtaking. It shows us at our best strength,” McDowell shared.

The three leads in the show are seniors, and for some of them, this may be their last performance ever at Wright State. “Come see us! You’ll have a bloody good time,” Valle recommended.

A history of Wright State's remediation efforts

Lucas Gonzalez and Sarah Cavender

It's been almost a year since the first major budget cut from Wright State University; since then the university has made local news for its cuts and eliminations in an effort to recover the reserves and debt of the school.

Administrators including Provost Thomas Sudkamp and Chief Business Officer Walt Branson stated that the university's efforts have ranged from major policy changes and budget cuts to minor practice changes, all in the name of budget remediation.

In March of 2017, Dayton Daily News reported an \$850,000 rebranding effort from the university.

In February of 2018, the Division of Facilities Management and Services eliminated their contracted custodial services and now utilize WSU custodial personnel only. The university will also rely on their own HVAC team instead of a contracted group.

"These two modifications will save over \$500,000 annually," said Chief Business Officer Walt Branson in an email. "We are doing everything we can to prevent students from being affected or noticing these changes."

Branson also stated that internal changes and processes have been implemented over the course of the past year, which have saved the university money.

Scrutiny has become more important in determining cuts and eliminations, according to Seth Bauguess, director of communications.

"There has been a lot more emphasis on monitoring and reporting; the financial governance policy allows the board of trustees to check on how the budget is doing in more regular intervals," Bauguess said.

The financial governance policy "added a lot of structure around accountability and oversight." said Doug Fecher, chair of the Board of Trustees. "In essence, that plan makes it very difficult for the administration to go outside the approved spending plan that is the budget."

The policy was revised last year. Before that, it had not been updated since 2003, according to Fecher.

The Board of Trustees now uses an external financial reporting model that is put out by the National Association of College and University Business Officers. That model categorizes revenues and expenses. The reports allow the board to know where revenue is coming from and how the university is spending it, according to Fecher.

The report makes a distinction between two categories in particular: institutional and instructional expenses. Instructional includes faculty salaries and benefits or “checks that we write to pay for the instruction of students,” while institutional is where administration and other offices lie, said Fecher. Administration is, however, not the only thing included in institutional expenses.

The objective model reports that from Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 to FY 2017, the compound annual growth rate of instructional expenses was 2.12 percent. while institutional has grown 2.78 percent. during that same period.

Between FY 2016 and FY 2017, the board and administration began making cuts. From last year to this year, instructional expenses grew by 2.68 percent and institutional expenses fell by 8.61 percent.

As for salaries and benefits, the data shows that during FY 2017, \$12.8 million more was spent on instructional expenses than in FY 2013. In just the last year, those expenses went up by 3.6 percent, according to Fecher.

By comparison, the total dollar growth on institutional support from FY 2013 to FY 2017 was \$3.9 million; the growth rate went from 2.66 percent in 2013 to 1.13 percent in the last year. The data shows that “the university is cutting back on its institutional support expenses to a greater degree than it is cutting back on instructional expenses,” Said Fecher.

Fecher was unable to answer which positions were cut in administration.

The Office of Communications has also contributed to cutting costs. The office will be relocated from the Wright State Research Institute to the main campus; this will cut the cost of lease payments, according to Bauguess and Sukamp.

The Office of Marketing chose to print the Wright State University Magazine once this year, according to Bauguess. “Everything else is online but we printed the magazine once.”

Sudkamp explained how construction and building projects were a focal point to cut costs in the budget.

“An area that caused a drain in our reserves was a number of our building projects. They were funded but started without having the full money behind it to be able to finish. They would be listed in the budget as gifts to be generated during the process and when those gifts didn’t come in, we still built the building and we still had to pay the contractors,” Sudkamp said.

According to Sudkamp, other changes include:

1. Cutting costs associated with some on-campus events and discontinuing others; such as the roughly \$200,000 annual Christmas party hosted by former president David Hopkins.
2. Reconsidering the leases over property that the university owns
3. Restricting discretionary spending in areas such as travel and outside catering
4. Cutting phone allowances down to two people; Bauguess and emergency manager
5. Renegotiating contracts with software companies and student information company
6. Cutting library hours due to reducing faculty
7. Eliminating bring your child to work day for staff
8. Scaling back on spending for staff appreciation night at basketball games

“We went for a period of time where we really restricted discretionary spending like travel. In the long run we can’t do that forever because students go on trips and faculty go to conferences,” Sudkamp said.

A budget presentation from Chief Financial Officer Jeff Ulliman showed that department merges have been considered. One merge included in the presentation was the combination of the Office of Latino Affairs with the Asian and Native American Center.

Student Support Services has since been merged with Counseling and Wellness Services. Katie Deedrick, director of Student Support Services, now reports to Robert Rando, Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs.

Ulliman’s presentation also showed that the Office of Disability Services began offering reduced test proctoring hours after 5 p.m., and the College of Nursing is now performing Skype visits rather than in-person visits whenever possible.

Wright State also used to have a New York Times program which cost \$20,000 a year, according to Sudkamp. “It was a nice thing because not only did you get the newspaper, but the New York Times would send one person a year to be a speaker,” he said. “We had some very interesting speakers through the program but there was a lot of expense in bringing them.”

Other measures undertaken by the university including a year-long negotiating contract with the faculty union, implementing the reorganization of some colleges and schools on campus, and introducing a strategic planning process to guide the university.

“Our comprehensive strategic plan will help achieve financial stability for Wright State and foster a campus atmosphere that provides our graduates with opportunities to excel in fields that define the future and our region,” said President Cheryl Schrader in a campus-wide Communications email.

“I think there are a lot of tiny inputs and big ones – but in many cases students are genuinely unaware. Because they are not events that students go to, they are not office supplies that students use, they are not staff that students are working with. But a lot savings has happened – [about] 50 million dollars,” said Seth Bauguess, director of communications.

How much sleep do college students actually get?

Holly Souther

Features Writer

College students are known to get little sleep, often caused when sleep patterns become disrupted due to stress, sickness, extracurricular activities, work, academics and a variety of personal reasons. Staying up late at night can also contribute to sleep disturbance.

“Twenty percent of students pull all-nighters at least once a month and 35 percent stay up past three in the morning once or more weekly,” according to FastWeb.

Students don’t always get the sleep they need to keep up with their daily activities and responsibilities.

“An average adult typically needs between seven and nine hours of sleep a night. College students may need a little more than that depending on individual differences, but I would say a minimum of seven but probably a little bit more.” Pam Garverick, instructor and assistant chair for the Department of Psychology, stated.

Caffeine, exercising late at night, and bright lights are some common examples as to why students may struggle to sleep. Beds are used for texting or reading on their phones, rather than sleeping. Falling asleep becomes more difficult because they associate their bed with more than one thing, according to Garverick. They may look for other ways to help them fall asleep. Alcohol and drugs can also impair your ability to sleep.

“These are mostly things that are influencing your ability to get to sleep. Another thing is alcohol consumption late at night. We know that although sometimes it makes you sleepy, it also tends to disrupt the patterns of sleep, so your sleep doesn't go through the normal patterns,” Garverick said.

Lack of sleep can affect a student’s academic and extracurricular performances. They can become reliant on drugs and alcohol, which is linked to depression and anxiety. “Sleep is probably more important than you think it is and it’s good for mental and physical health,” Garverick said.

"Modern Therapy" -- the phone counseling service for college students

Angel Lane

Features Editor

Brandon Christensen and his wife Cassie worked together to create a tele-mental health company called Modern Therapy.

"My wife, who is a therapist, would see clients in person and would always mention some of the common barriers that traditional therapy presents like stigma, high cost, and lack of accessibility. My background is in technology, and together we came up with Modern Therapy as a solution to eliminating those barriers," Christensen explained. "Cassie began connecting to her clients through text, email, phone and video and realized that it was an extremely effective way to provide therapy services."

Upon realizing clients were more comfortable with doing therapy from the comfort of their home, Christiansen decided to make things more affordable, and structured the service as a membership model.

"I like to say it's kind of like a gym membership for your mental health, where members have access to therapy when they need it and are not bound to paying per session like traditional therapy. Because everything is virtual, we can keep our prices low. Often times, a single month of unlimited therapy through Modern Therapy can be more affordable than a single traditional out of pocket session," he said.

The process begins with a new member scheduling their initial consultation on the Modern Therapy [website](#) where they then connect with a client care coordinator.

"The purpose of this call is to learn more about the members needs and match them with a Modern Therapist who is best suited to help them. Once that match is made, and our agreements are electronically signed, the therapist reaches out with a new member questionnaire to begin working with the new member," Christensen said.

Christensen explained college can be a very difficult time full of pressures and transitions that create a larger need in this population. Students interested in becoming a Modern Member, or learn more, can visit the [website](#) and schedule their initial consultation.

"College students who take the step to talk to someone about the issues they face will be better equipped to navigate challenges and improve the quality of their life and future. College is a time when crucial decisions are being made and it is so important to have a clear head and a healthy mind during this time," he said.

Currently, modern therapy employs five therapists, all of which have a master's or doctorate degree, and are full licensed to practice in their state. The therapists are carefully screened and specialize in unique areas.

"We would really like to convey the importance of seeking help when it's needed. Our hope is that people become more educated on the importance of mental wellness and the stigma continues to be busted," Christensen shared.

Org Spotlight: Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance

Holly Souther

Features Writer

The Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance (FMLA) club began several years ago and was briefly dismantled, due to lack of members. The organization was reconstructed a few years later when a group of women from the Women and Gender Sexuality Studies program reinstated it. FMLA meetings take place on a weekly basis and tackle topics such as feminism and social justice.

"We do a lot of tabling to raise awareness. We also had an event deconstructing feminism displayed in the quad for about a week, where people talked about or wrote down why they were feminists or what feminism meant to them," FMLA President Janice Sikon said.

The FMLA club has collaborated with the Women's Center in the past for events like the Vagina Monologues and helping to hand out pamphlets to students. A decrease in events have taken place in the last couple of years due to a reduction in members.

"We do a lot more supporting when we have lower membership, and then more of our own events when we have higher membership," Sikon stated.

At organization meetings, members discuss topics such as LGBT discrimination, abortion and reproductive rights, anti-domestic violence, and intersectional feminism. The FMLA also works with other institutions in the community like the Dayton Women's Rights Alliance, and St. Vincent de Paul shelter.

"A core focus of our group is intersectionality, which is a term from Gender Studies. It's about recognizing that, for instance, all women don't have the same problems or goals, so it's kind of trying to work in different directions. I would say that our core goal and value is being intersectional," Sikon shared.

Sikon also believes that what helps make the club stand out is the focus on "learning about diversity and accepting and celebrating diversity."

Fifth annual Amigos Latinos Gala celebrated

Holly Souther

Features Writer

The Office of Latino, Asian and Native American Affairs (LANA) celebrated the fifth annual Amigos Latinos Gala was held Thursday, April 6 in the Nutter Center. Students celebrated culture and diversity with a variety of Latinx dishes, music and dancing.

Since the merge between the Office of Latino Affairs and the Asian and Native American Center into one, the gala has been only partially shaped by this change.

"I have only seen the positive impacts. This year a record amount of Asian students are attending the gala in support of their Latinx peers," said Julia Acosta, director for the Latino, Asian and Native American Affairs.

The merge has also allowed the diverse communities to join together to promote cultural diversity and work towards spotlighting the different events.

"LANA is focusing on the fifth annual Amigos Latinos Gala and Asian Culture Night. It's been a busy time but our student workers, graduate assistant, Mia Honaker and I have jumped in to make this event great. Since the merger of LANA, we support, allocate and do our best for students at WSU," Acosta stated.

The main significance of the gala is to grant opportunities for Latinx students and raise scholarship money. "It's one night we can gather together as a school and a community to support students at Wright State University. For me personally, I love seeing our students feel welcome, appreciated and supported at WSU," Acosta said.

The gala had a new addition this year: student spotlights occurred throughout the night. It provided an opportunity to showcase talented Latinx students.

"Our students have the opportunity to connect and meet their peers, faculty, staff, students from other neighboring institutions, meet community members and vice versa. It's a great thing for the community to see our Latinx students and what the next generation of leaders bring to the area," Acosta shared.

