

SUMMER 2023

FREE

the ROOT magazine

A PUBLICATION BY
UW-PARKSIDE STUDENTS

IT ALL
GOES
SOME
WHERE

SPECIAL EDITION: WATER



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Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin Funding Allows UW-Parkside to Train Future Water Scientists

By Lauryn Humphrey The University of Wisconsin-Parkside (UW-Parkside) received more than \$40,000 from the Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin (FCW) in March 2022 to enhance water-related academic programs.

Wisconsin's abundant water resources make it the perfect home for the Freshwater Collaborative. In Wisconsin alone, there are over 44,000 miles of rivers, 15,000 lakes, 1,000 miles of inland sea shorelines, nearly 200 miles of Upper Mississippi River shoreline and three watershed regions.

The FCW is a partnership of 13 Wisconsin public universities that work to train the next generation of water professionals. They aim to invest in water resources and have Wisconsin become a global leader in water-related science, technology, and economic growth. "Water is one of the fastest growing sectors of our economy," said Marissa Jablonski, Executive Director for the Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin. "With these funds, the 13 UW Universities can expand training opportunities for students and prepare them to meet the needs of Wisconsin's workforce and address our state's biggest water challenges."

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In Dr. Jessica Orlofske's lab, UW-Parkside students Grant Ludwig and Jonathan Cochrane prepare to collect water samples from the Pike River. Photo: Glen Larson

As part of a statewide initiative, the Wisconsin State Legislature and Governor Tony Evers backed the funding to tackle ten grand water challenges. The funding supports curriculum development, undergraduate research opportunities, career development, and field training experiences. The state and the FCW plan to focus on Agricultural Water Management and Water Quality Safety/Emerging Contaminants—the state's top two grand water challenges.

PARKSIDE'S LINE INTO GRAND WATER CHALLENGES

UW-Parkside funding will support multiple projects at the university, including a Freshwater Camp, the field-study course, Human Interactions with Lake Michigan Coastal Ecosystems, the Root Magazine and the laboratory and field-study course, Principles of Freshwater Informatics. These programs all work to educate students in freshwater research and train undergraduate and graduate students in freshwater-related disciplines, according to Dr. Jessica Orlofske, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences at UW-Parkside. "The support of the FCW will enable UW-Parkside to recruit, engage and equip a diverse population of students—innovative and creative students currently underrepresented in the water sector—that are needed to help solve our

current and future water challenges," Orlofske said.

The Freshwater Camp is a water-focused summer camp for high school juniors and senior that is a collaboration between UW-Parkside and UW-Whitewater. Professor Orlofske explains the goals: "This camp highlights important freshwater habitats in our region, builds confidence and skills with hands-on field and laboratory activities, as well as introduces potential freshwater career opportunities to high school students from communities in Southeastern Wisconsin." The camp allows students to learn about topics with which they are unfamiliar and are unlikely to have been exposed to during their studies in school. Indeed, careers in freshwater are not well-understood, especially in underserved communities throughout the rural-urban corridor of Southeastern Wisconsin, Orlofske added.

EXPLORING THE LAND AND SEA THROUGH THE LENS OF AN URBAN SETTING

The Human Interactions with Lake Michigan Coastal Ecosystems field-study course is offered during the summer and done in collaboration with three campuses: UW-Parkside, UW-Milwaukee, and UW-Green Bay. This

course aims to give undergraduate students an understanding of the complex water issues faced by communities of the Great Lakes. Dr. Julie Kinzelman, Associate Lecturer of Sustainable Management at UW-Parkside, said: "Students will explore the land and sea interface with a focus on urban versus rural changes in habitat potential as we move from the north to the south of the state along the coast."

This FCW funding gives UW-Parkside faculty and staff the tools that they need to equip and train students for a career in freshwater science. The next generation of freshwater scientists will then be prepared for the state's biggest water challenges and be able to contribute to the state's continued economic growth. "These hands-on experiences will demonstrate why technical expertise is important. Interactions with diverse faculty and local practitioners will provide insight into potential academic and career opportunities," Kinzelman concluded.

LEARN MORE

To find out more about the program, please visit:

<https://freshwater.wisconsin.edu/>

Coastal Erosion Threatens Midwest Residents: Lake Michigan Coastal Resilience Initiative Provides Hope

By Camryn Cole

If you are from a state that borders Lake Michigan, you know what winter means: wicked storms and coastal erosion. What once was a half mile of white sand are now giant white rocks that separate a Kenosha city sidewalk from harsh Lake Michigan waves.

Instead of beach, all that remains is a “do not swim” sign anchored into the concrete sidewalk.

Zachary Zeyen, a resident of Kenosha since 2005, recalls watching one local beach disappear. “The beach and the park were a big part of why we moved here,” he said. “It kept our kids active when they were little, got us outdoors, and helped us stay connected. Now the lake is more dangerous, and our beach is gone.”

“to see rows of houses with for sale signs is almost apocalyptic”

TACKLING THE PROBLEM

Lake Michigan borders the Midwest states of Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin, making it the second largest of the Great Lakes. Consequently, the shores of Lake Michigan are home to a population of approximately 12 million people. Residents often face coastal erosion with rising water temperatures and harsh winters.

On Nov. 3, 2022, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) released a report from their Office for Coastal Management, entitled “Top Projects for the Great Lakes,” which details the Lake Michigan Coastal Resilience Initiative. It is a two-year project shared by the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities

Initiative and NOAA that provides training and support to municipalities surrounding Lake Michigan. The goal is to continue supporting the implementation of nature-driven solutions to coastal cities impacted by erosion.

Bonnie Anton, a local greenhouse owner in Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin, described how native plants could help combat coastal erosion. “Native Wisconsin plants have deep, fibrous roots that reach deep into the soil,” she said. “My favorites that tolerate wet and boggy soils are sweet pepperbush, ostrich fern, and golden ragwort.”

SOLUTIONS FOCUS ON SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

According to NOAA, they received over 25 proposal worksheets from 17 communities in 3 states. Advocates of this initiative attended forums to further research their projects for each phase. Currently, the groups are working on Phase I, which will focus on specific sites and the education of local officials, who will be taught the best sustainable practices to deal with coastal erosion.

Phase II will focus on tackling municipal-scale projects for coastal erosion. A recent example of coastal erosion occurs across the border in Evanston, Illinois. On October 25, 2022, at the Evanston Public Library, residents learned that their city is threatened by coastal erosion. Lack of winter ice, fierce storms, and the ever-changing water level of Lake Michigan continue to pose a problem. Members of the SmithGroup engineering firm listed options the city has to protect against erosion.

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Some solutions were temporary; some were more long-term. In April 2022, the City Council approved a \$333,000 plan for the SmithGroup “to design permanent shoreline stabilization solutions,” according to the *Evanston Round Table*. The rapidity of the erosion prompted Evanston to approve the stabilization solutions that will be implemented by March 2023.

Carol Beach, a neighborhood on Kenosha’s lakefront, points to another

example of the devastating impacts of coastal erosion. Carol Beach residents have been battling Lake Michigan’s harsh waves for decades. Now, homeowners are forced to sell their once-desirable properties, fearing they will soon slip into the lake. “I cannot believe all of the houses that are for sale,” said local Brooke Alfano. “I grew up in Carol Beach, and to see rows of houses with for sale signs is almost apocalyptic.”

But the NOAA initiative gives communities reasons to hope that there are workable solutions for even the most seemingly intractable problems. Working together communities and government agency can find ways to adapt to our ever-changing environments.

A Kenosha-area home near Lake Michigan shows efforts to mitigate the effects of erosion. Photo: Glen Larson



Maintaining Clean Beaches in Racine: A Necessity for Tourism & Financial Stability

By Benjamin Hermes

Maintaining clean beaches in Racine is crucial to attracting tourism and financial stability to Racine County.

The beaches offer multiple opportunities for restaurants and small businesses along the lakefront to attract more customers during the summer. Directly affecting the local economy, a fully operational beach serves as the backbone of tourist spending in Racine County.

The upkeep of recreational beaches is harder than most people might suspect. Effective beach care includes weekly maintenance checks, updated stormwater relocation systems, and thriving native wildlife surrounding the water. All three of these aspects are vital to a healthy beach. In Racine County, however, stormwater relocation is the biggest challenge.

Dr. Julie Kinzelman, an expert on coastal resilience from UW-Parkside, who currently holds a position on the editorial board of *Aquatic Ecosystem Health and Management*, explains: “Stormwater relocation is so important because of the change of the quality that occurs to the water once it is returned to the lake. Think of the drainage system as a toilet. The water drawn into those drains and sent back out to the lake is not clean.”

In 2012, Kinzelman successfully cleaned up North Beach in Racine by using these methods—that is, maintenance, stormwater relocation, and planting indigenous habitat.

CLEAN BEACHES BOOST THE LOCAL ECONOMY

It goes without saying that a beach riddled by shutdowns negatively impacts the local economy. “The summer months are when we are the busiest,

particularly on a great beach day,” said Rachel Fanella, a waitress at a bar/restaurant on the lakefront called Smoked On The Water. “You can really see the town come alive on a sun-filled day in the middle of July. I definitely bring home more money when the beach is packed compared to empty.”

This is just a small example of how the local economy is affected by a healthy beach. The beach attracts tourism, directly impacting local businesses. The many tourists that flock to the county during the summer months provide an annual boost to the economy. That boost, in turn, improves the quality of life among residents in the county.

“Summertime in Racine is as good as anywhere when the beaches are open,” said Jared Betke of Racine. “It is the only time of year I can get my friends to come and visit this little old town.” While aware of what the county has to offer, Betke strategically uses the beaches as a bargaining chip to persuade his peers to visit.

HOW TO HELP

There is still plenty that residents can do to help maintain healthy beaches. Racine residents can make simple changes in daily life that impacts the surrounding area. Planting native wildlife, directing downspouts and drainage systems to run through vegetation, and simply washing your car at a carwash rather than at home are easy ways to help the cause. “It all starts with the small changes in our homes, but these changes lead to much greater change and impact on our environment,” Kinzelman concludes.

Road Salt Necessary for Winter Travel, But Negatively Impacts Environment and Aquatic Life, Experts Say

By Mitchell Arneson

When winter inevitably hits Wisconsin, salt trucks ramp up to keep the streets clear of ice to ensure safe traffic passage. And while salting the roads throughout winter may be necessary for travel, there are negative impacts to over-salting the roadways.

Dr. Jessica Orlofske, professor of Biology at UW-Parkside, remarked in a talk

said that salt eventually gets into the soil or waterway. Once there, there is no biological process to remove it.

“Chloride is toxic to aquatic life, and even low concentrations can produce harmful effects in a freshwater ecosystem. High chloride levels in water can inhibit aquatic species growth and reproduction, impact food sources and disrupt osmoregulation in amphibians,” he wrote.

HOW ROAD SALT IMPACTS HUMANS AND AQUATIC LIFE

During the UW-Parkside panel discussion, Dr. Jessica Orlofske mirrored the sentiments of Hinsdale.

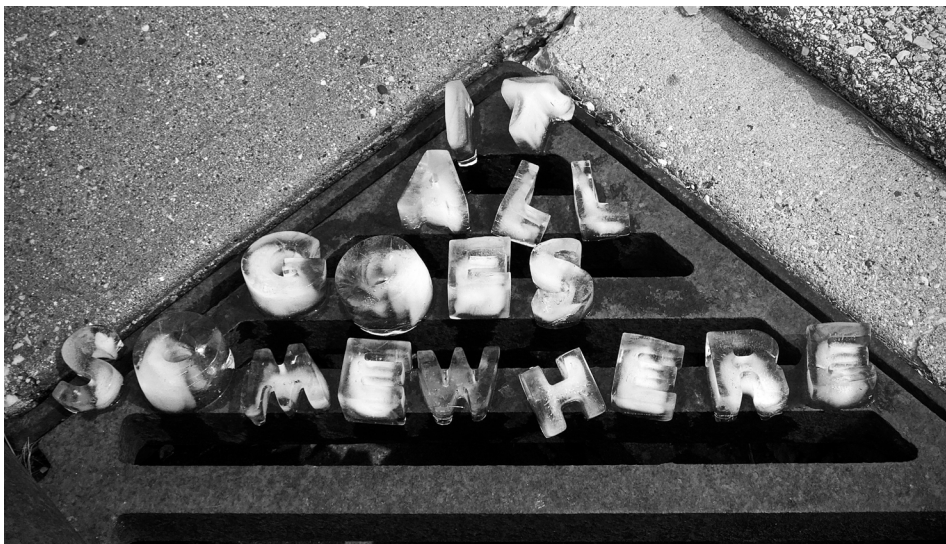
“Salt is something that occurs in every water body, and salt-like minerals are going to be in every water body, so aquatic animals have ways of processing that, aquatic plants have ways of processing that. But if you are hitting them with high concentrations, do they cope, adapt, or fail to persist,” she said.

In a report published by the EPA titled *Winter Is Coming and With It Tons Of Salt On Our Roads*, they describe the issues with salt invading the environment.

“Road salt can contaminate drinking water, kill or endanger wildlife, increase soil erosion, and damage private and public property. Alternative methods are needed to mitigate the drawbacks,” the report read.

In the same report, the EPA describes the issues road salt can cause, not just with the environment but with animals and people:

“Road salt can also infiltrate nearby



with students that the idea of using less salt on Wisconsin roadways has been discussed for a while, but municipalities are only beginning to take action.

“Especially in the Midwest, places are trying to manage their roadways for number one safety, but [they] also realize salt doesn’t disappear,” she said. **“It all goes somewhere.** It ends up in a body of water, in the Root River, in the Pike River, or eventually in Lake Michigan.”

In an article by Jeremy Hinsdale titled, “How Road Salt Harms the Environment” for *The State of the Planet*, he

surface and ground water and can contaminate drinking water reservoirs and wells. High sodium levels in drinking water affect people with high blood pressure, and high chloride levels in surface waters are toxic to some fish, bugs, and amphibians. Furthermore, excess road salt accumulates on roadside areas killing plants and harming wildlife.”

Joshua Rapp Learn, the author of *The Hidden Dangers of Road Salt*, also describes how salt can affect aquatic life as well as the lives of people. “Research they’ve conducted has

shown that higher levels of salt can kill tiny, shrimp-like amphipods, which provide important food sources for fish and insects as well as snails and clams,” he stated. “It can also produce health issues with people on low sodium diets due to diabetes or other health issues.”

WHAT ARE THE ALTERNATIVES?

With all the problems of road salt that the environment and the people in heavily salted areas face, there are alternatives. The same report by the EPA describes possible replacements

for standard road salt. According to the report: “Magnesium chloride ($MgCl_2$) is considered safer than $NaCl$ but requires twice the amount to cover the same area, making it more expensive. Calcium chloride ($CaCl_2$) is safer for the environment but is three times more expensive than $NaCl$ and is typically reserved for use in vulnerable areas.”

These drawbacks unfortunately have led to many communities not switching to the better alternatives available now.



UW-Parkside COM 255 students discuss water science with a panel of experts in the Bedford Concert Hall. Photo: Elisa Kruger

Fresh Water Collaborative

Interview: Dr. Jessica Orlofske



HOW DOES YOUR OWN RESEARCH INTERSECT WITH THE FWC?

Freshwater features prominently in my research program at UW-Parkside. I study two facets of aquatic invertebrate communities: the incorporation of invertebrates into traditional, traits-based, or molecular biomonitoring programs and the ecology of rare, threatened, or endangered invertebrates.

Through the FWC, I have been able to introduce high school students to the basic principles of biomonitoring during our high school camp in June 2022. I was able to incorporate datasets relevant to aquatic invertebrate conservation into the Principles of Bioinformatics course during Winter 2023. I also describe these topics in the introductory course, Fundamentals of Freshwater.

In addition to these FWC supported teaching activities, I also have active research on community science-based biomonitoring as well as several student-led river monitoring projects on the Root River and the Pike River in southeastern Wisconsin – in the same communities where many of our UW-Parkside students reside.

ONE OF THE GOALS OF THE FWC IS TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR CAREERS IN WATER-RELATED DISCIPLINES. COULD YOU DESCRIBE A COUPLE OF POTENTIAL CAREERS THAT A PARKSIDE STUDENT MIGHT PURSUE?

Our students are currently pursuing careers with ecological restoration companies, non-profit conservation organizations, and nature centers in the private sector and federal, state, and municipal positions in the public sector. Specifically, several UW-Parkside students have worked for the Racine Health Department, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Additionally, some of our UW-Parkside students have continued their freshwater education by pursuing graduate studies at UW-Parkside, at other UW-System campuses, or at other institutions. The types of positions our students pursue vary from water quality monitoring, to leading restoration projects, to environmental education, to conducting research. However, the opportunities for careers in freshwater are broader than field and laboratory work as communication, policy, economics and many other fields are linked to freshwater.

IN ADDITION TO THE 12 OTHER UW CAMPUSES, WHO ARE SOME OF THE PARTNERS INVOLVED IN THIS PROJECT?

The FWC works with more than 140 external partners from government and tribal agencies to non-profit organizations and businesses. At UW-Parkside our Principles of Bioinformatics course was a collaboration with curatorial staff at the Milwaukee Public Museum. Additionally, current and retired staff with the Racine Health Department participated in the high school camp experience.





Opposite page: Dr. Jessica Orlofske collecting water samples along the Pike River.

Top: UW-Parkside students collect samples of water from the Pike River for Dr. Orlofske.

Bottom: Snails relaxing in Dr. Orlofske's Greenquist Hall laboratory.

Photos: Glen Larson



“higher levels of salt can kill tiny, shrimp-like amphipods, which provide important food sources for fish and insects as well as snails and clams”

Community Advocate Monte Osterman Fights for Safe Drinking Water and Environmental Health

By Herman Lewis



Monte Osterman at North Beach in Racine.
Photo: Glen Larson

At 58 years old, Monte Osterman is a humble man who seeks to help the community by advocating for safe drinking water. As the chair of the Racine County Land and Water Conservation Committee and the Wisconsin Land and Water Conservation Association, he represents Wisconsin and its 72 counties at the national level.

Before starting his career in the Racine community, he spent a few summers at a camp in Indiana where he and campers unknowingly restored a nearby stream and received a Kentucky State Conservation award for their work. This random occurrence brought Osterman to do the work he's still doing today. "I always had a passion for water and land resource management, and that passion has led me to help many people," he explained.

A TEAM APPROACH TO TACKLING WATER ISSUES

Conservation Districts sit at the intersection of the federal government, state government, municipalities, local and regional government. They function as the central hub to bring people together to restore water quality/quantity and public health. Working on the Committee touches everyone in the community, explained Osterman. "One of my goals is to get people to understand the importance of this work, to understand the economic impact that clean water and resource management can have," he said.

WORKING ON WATER ISSUES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

Osterman only noticed the magnitude of the impact once he got into regional government. He realized that the

projects undertaken and completed could positively affect people's bottom line or pocketbook—and that keeps him going. He is proud to be part of the river restoration plan and working with the National Association of Conservation Districts, a nonprofit organization representing America's 3,000 conservation districts.

Their first project is to develop a river restoration plan—a 200-square-mile watershed with a group of about 30 contributors, lasting over four years. For Osterman, the most exciting thing is that every problem area of the river was charted. He explained that you

can go into that plan and see the size of the problem; what's wrong with it; what could be done to fix it; and how much it would cost. "It's a living and working plan that everyone involved is proud of the current and future goals accomplished," he said.

Osterman described how the National Conservation District established the very first Urban Conservation Plan through the USDA in the last farm bill. Legislators first appropriated \$6 million and now it has grown to \$12 million. "It relates to water issues because anytime you can improve the environment with conservation practices, you

improve water quality by controlling or treating runoff, all having to do with human health," he said.

THE IMPACT OF ADDRESSING WATER ISSUES

Osterman has done a lot of work with the community to see it thrive. "I wanted to see communities grow healthier and become more stable," he said. "When our environment is healthy, people have jobs that connect them to achievement. The government is delivering good services at a price they can afford."

Restoration efforts along the Pike River in Petrifying Springs Park. Photo: Glen Larson



Discover Surprising Ways to Reduce Your Water Footprint and Help Fight Water Scarcity



By Kiley LeRoy-Stowell

Water scarcity is a significant threat, impacting billions of people worldwide, with “almost two-thirds of the world’s population experiencing severe water shortages for at least one month each year,” according to UNICEF. Without further action or change, “half of the world’s population could face water scarcity as early as 2025.”

Many know the importance of conserving water throughout their daily routine—taking shorter showers or turning off the faucet when brushing their teeth. However, for people living in the Midwest, who are concerned about their water consumption, a few, possibly surprising habits can contribute in an outsized way to their “water footprint,” according to ACCGOV.com.

DRIP, DRIP, DRIP

Julie Kinzelman, a biology professor at UW-Parkside, said that the food a person eats is the number one cause of daily water consumption. “It’s not just the water in the cup of coffee

you’re drinking; it’s the water that went into the entire process of making the coffee itself,” Kinzelman explains. The “process” Kinzelman refers to—that is, how the food we consume is made—includes the growing or making of the food product to its shipment. For instance, a single cup of coffee requires 140 liters of water to grow, process, and transport enough beans to make that cup of java.

Though the average person cannot control this alarming fact, it puts things into perspective. It stresses the importance of buying less food and finishing what’s already at home before throwing it out. Planning weekly meals and creating grocery lists ahead of time is the perfect way to cut down on over-consumption and food waste.

HOW COLLEGE STUDENTS PIVOT ON WATER USAGE

Another effective technique to reduce water consumption is to buy less meat. Depending on how far back you look

into the process, a single hamburger can take up to 1,300 gallons of water to produce (ACCGOV.com). By following the lead of peers, college students can conserve water. Trinity Alexander, a student at Carthage College, educates other students on her reasons for choosing vegetarianism.

The above statistic combined with the brutal mistreatment of animals caught up in the meat industry persuaded Alexander to renounce eating meat—she could no longer stomach the idea. “Sometimes I miss eating meat, and I’ll randomly crave one thing really bad,” she said. “But then I picture a baby cow’s little face or a pig’s cute little tail, and I just know it’s not worth it to me.”

Another way to conserve water, according to Kinzelman, is to be mindful of the clothes you buy and eventually discard. The clothing industry is the second most water-intensive industry in the world; the fashion industry consumes around 79 billion cubic meters of water per year. Furthermore, a single average t-shirt uses 2,700 liters of water, equivalent to 900 days of fresh drinking water for a person, (campus.fsu.edu). “Thrifting, buying second hand, and trading clothes with friends” is the best solution to avoid over-usage of water, Kinzelman said.



UW-Parkside professors Dr. Julie Kinzelman and Dr. Jessica Orlofske discuss freshwater science with students in the Frances Bedford Concert Hall. Photo: Elisa Kruger

“a single cup of coffee requires 140 liters of water to grow, process, and transport enough beans to make that cup of java”



Photo: Glen Larson

Kortni Robinson, another Carthage student, said she buys almost all of her clothes at thrift stores. “It’s cheaper, and I end up finding things I never would have found in a regular store,” she said. “It’s also great if you have a fashion style that’s constantly changing because it was already used when you got it, so you don’t feel as bad for donating it back a year later.”

At the end of the day, it is essential to remember that any actions to avoid water over consumption are better than no actions at all.

Earth's Freezer is Getting More Watery by the Day

By Nick Brown The melting of polar ice sheets is a well-publicized aspect of climate change. Despite frequent repetition of this fact in the media, it is still happening every day and will soon begin affecting life on earth.

According to worldwildlife.org, our ice on earth is decreasing by 13% every decade. That may not seem like a lot, but in the last 30 years, 95% of our most prominent ice sheets have experienced melt. This problem is increasing and will soon impact humans in world-changing ways.

"Sea levels will rise, which will have an impact on global temperatures, ecosystems and especially coastal settlements," said John Ward, a geography professor at UW-Parkside. He explains that humans need to adapt to these new conditions, thus changing how people will go about their daily lives.

An example would be a city on or near a coastline forced to move its buildings and roads farther inland. The problem then becomes funding because these projects are expensive. Another concern is how much physical space would be available for these inland coastal developments. Relocating one or two buildings may be fine, but shifting the entire city of Miami would be a different story.

CONCERNS VOICED OVER WATER LEVELS

Rhonda Estes, a current Florida resident, expressed her concern about the status of the rising water. "After living in Florida for the last ten years, my worry for the well-being of the state has done nothing but grow," Estes said. "With the water rising as fast as it is in the south, we could lose it. Which would be truly devastating considering it has the most coastal residency in the state."

Another challenging aspect of climate change is that it is difficult to predict. "Over the past century, they're [sea-level] up an average of about eight inches. But the seas are rising more in some places than others," according to "The Sea Level Threat To Cities Depends On Where The Ice Melts — Not Just How Fast" by Christopher Joyce at NPR. "This uncertainty of how the ocean levels will rise and at what pace makes it hard for places to prepare and adjust settlements of people and wildlife."

Joe Lison, a Florida coastline local, expressed his concern about this problem's uncertainty. "The lack of predictability is unsettling for those of us who are near the water. Some scientists expect the Thwaites Glacier to calve off from its shelf within the next few years, which will create additional melting, causing global waters to rise upwards of 10 feet," he said. Lison feels uneasy about how a flood could permanently alter many houses, buildings, and public places.

FLORIDA DEVISES A PLAN

A program called Florida Resilient Coastline Program, funded by the Florida Coastal Management Program, has begun identifying potential areas of concern and problems that could arise there. To date, this group has helped Florida communities devise plans to fight back against the rising sea level. The downside for this organization and others like is the lack of public knowledge and awareness about its mission.

Still, when asked about any government officials or other leadership in Florida bringing the rising sea levels to the forefront, he simply said, "Unfortunately, I have not heard anything." A fact that is also extremely dismaying because he is a father of two young



Photo: Glen Larson

boys whose futures depend on positive change.

A CALL FOR CHANGE

Regardless of location of the coastline, everyone has a role in affecting the earth's climate, which will impact the status of our polar ice sheets. "A willingness to view climate change from a 'we are all in this together' perspective, as opposed to 'this is affecting other people, not me' perspective is what will allow humans to get climate change under control," Professor Ward said.

“ice on earth is decreasing by 13% every decade”

Understanding the Importance of Clean Water: A Personal Perspective

By Nick Brown

Writing for Multimedia has not only taught me the building blocks necessary to write a complete and thorough story, but it has also allowed me to broaden my understanding of the world's growing problems related to water. The topic I discussed throughout the semester was climate change, which gave me lots of opportunities to write about water. In fact, two of my three stories involved water.

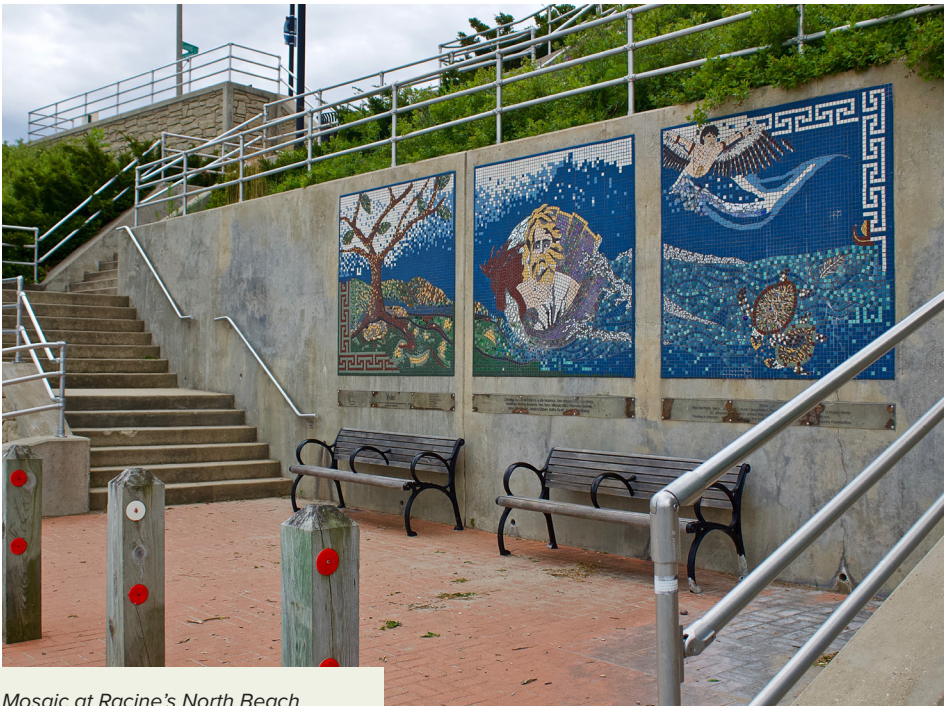
After researching and interviewing for these stories, the biggest surprise was the enormous number of people still being impacted by poor water quality in the United States, today. Despite being a “top-of-the-line” first-world country, much of the country’s water infrastructure is not up to date, which is both dangerous and scary to think about. The other shocking aspect of

the area’s water quality is the number of governmental levels and steps involved in the process. Learning in detail about what happened in Flint, Michigan, showed me how water quality matters in the daily lives of people and communities.

Having clean, safe water is an underappreciated by most, including myself. Realizing how many communities, like Flint, suffer from harmful water was eye-opening. It’s crucial to be aware of the origin of every droplet of water before drinking or using it. In addition to the negative human impacts, I learned that poor water quality could be extremely detrimental to the environment. Contaminated water impacts the plants, animals, and humans that depend on it—potentially causing a whole web of destruction.

When writing about these topics, I made sure to use a variety of sources. For my two most successful papers, I interviewed someone who was an expert on the topic so that they could share their knowledge of the evidence-based research I included in the story. To connect to the everyday reader, I interviewed people I knew who lived in or around the community where the story took place. This often gave me an insider scoop about water quality issues that our communities face on a daily basis.

Overall, this community-based learning class brought the importance of water quality to my front page. Thankfully, I have never had to deal with low-quality water. But after hearing from experts and community members with firsthand experience, it has shown me the magnitude of the problem. Now I feel more aware and able to help provide clean and healthy water to as many people as possible.



Mosaic at Racine’s North Beach
Photo: Glen Larson

Writing for Multimedia and Writing for the Root

By Dr. Adrienne Viramontes

Comm 255: Writing for Multimedia, is a course designed to show students how to write for multiple online platforms including news websites, Twitter, Instagram, establishing and maintaining a blog, along with creating images that accompany multimedia writing, like photography, video links, etc. This course is a Community Based Learning experience, which means that the instructor and students work with an organization or business in the community to accomplish a shared goal that focuses on some aspect of Communication. The Communication Department believes in experiential learning and is committed to fostering relationships with local organizations. Our department has worked with organization such as Hospice Alliance of Kenosha, Southeastern Wisconsin's Emergency Management Director, The Fresh Water Collaborative, and many others.

The panel discussion gathered together experts that could explain the importance of understanding how water and water-related issues impact the Southeastern Wisconsin community. Areas of focus included research on the local governments' role in water-related policies, the effects on the local economy, climate change, energy, and the health of Lake Michigan. Faculty and staff from UW-Parkside's Biology and Sustainable Management departments as well as the Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network participated in a 90-minute discussion where the Writing for Multimedia students asked questions as part of their research process for gathering information to write the stories for this issue of the Root Magazine.

Fall 2024 at the Rita (uwp.edu/therita)

MUSIC

September 22

October 7

October 12

October 24

November 3

November 10

November 11 & 12

November 17

November 21

November 30

December 2 & 3

December 7

Ethan Phillion Combo

Symphony & Community Orchestra

Wind Ensemble & Community Band

Parkside Jazz Ensemble

Parkside Choirs

Parkside Student Recitals

Symphony & Community Orchestra

Parkside Chamber Ensembles

Parkside Range

Wind Ensemble & Community Band

Parkside Choirs

Parkside Jazz Ensemble

THEATER

October 13–22

November 10 & 11

December 1–10

The Laramie Project

Burn, the Musical

Meteor Shower

Learn local.

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