CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2016-2017 BIOLOGY DEPARTMENT SENIOR FELLOWS

Katie Darrah
Trishna Desai
Ryan Jay
Na’il Scoggins
Connor O’Neill-Dee

Click on each award for names!

See page 2 for group photos!

Please visit the Biology Departmental Awards page for more details on each of our Senior Fellows!
http://denison.edu/academics/biology/wh/88193

Biology Department Student Awards
Research • Service • Academic • Margaret Ann Watkin

Or for descriptions of each of these awards and its recipient
http://denison.edu/academics/biology/honors-awards
If you have an update to share with other biology alums or if you wish to be removed from the BioBuzz Newsletter mailing list please let us know at biology@denison.edu.
On Saturday, February 18, DUBS organized a kickball tournament, students vs faculty. “Technically” the students won by a couple runs but the faculty made them work for it!

Dr. Weingart’s Diversity of Microorganisms class did something fun. They used microbes as paint and agar as the canvas to create microbial art. They submitted their artwork to the American Society for Microbiology Agar Art contest.

Erin Hudson ’19
“The school symbol of my university, Denison University. This school boasts a diverse array of talents, and I hope to one day see a microbial art minor implemented!”

Grace Zukowski ’19
“I scream, you scream, we all scream for microbes.”

LauraAnn Schmidberger ’18
“Caves are difficult places for things to live, with no sunlight and few sources of food. However, some microorganisms thrive in this environment. This microbial art was inspired by the bacteria that dwell in caves among the stalactites and stalagmites.”
Neurophysiology students developed neuroscience curricula for students in South Africa

Juniors and seniors in Dr. Heather Rhodes’ Neurophysiology (Bio 349) class spent the several weeks this spring creating video lessons, worksheets, and lab activities for students at the Maths and Sciences Leadership Academy (MSLA) in Kimberley, South Africa. The MSLA serves secondary school students in an economically disadvantaged part of the country, providing supplemental STEM education through after school and break programs. The Denison students crafted lessons to introduce students to neurons and developed lab activities that utilize low cost equipment from Backyard Brains to let students record sensory neuron responses and even stimulate motor nerves in invertebrates. Dr. Rhodes secured grant funding from The Grass Foundation and the Alford Center to purchase and ship the necessary equipment to the MSLA.

The lessons students put together were amazing and fun: recording electrical activity from muscles while arm wrestling, measuring the speed of an action potential in an earth worm, and even making a disembodied insect leg dance to the beat of a song! A total of 88 students in South Africa participated in a weeklong series of neuroscience lessons in early April, using the materials we sent. The MSLA students really enjoyed the lessons reporting things like: “Neurophysiology was so interesting because it taught me about things that I knew nothing about. The materials we used such as the Backyard Brain Box got us to see a locust leg dance. WOW! How amazing! I wish to study neurophysiology in the future.” The MSLA plans to use the lessons and equipment again with future classes, as well as for neuroscience based science fair projects and community education events.

Dr. Chris Weingart’s Diversity of Microorganisms class taught 35 middle school students from Newark schools about microbes. Here, Lexi Lake '19 and Parnell Sheldon '18 are showing the students how the protist Tetrahymena ingests food.
Couldn’t be more proud!
Senior Biology Fellow, Na’il Scoggins ’17 earned a Presidential medal and our own Dr. Rebecca Homan was awarded the Charles A. Brickman Teaching Excellence Award!

Na’il with Dr. Rebecca Homan

On April 5, Shantanu Bhatt '04, Department of Biology at St. Joseph’s University was a guest speaker in Dr. Weingart’s class. Entitled “Regulatory small RNAs: Big players in the virulence of enteropathogenic E. coli and Escherichia albertii” His talk provided an overview of the physiological significance of small regulatory RNAs in the virulence of two gastrointestinal pathogens that cause human disease.

Thanks for sending me the latest on the Biology Department. After nearly 40 years of working in another field, I have renewed my interest in biology after building a house on the edge of Waterloo Recreation Area in Michigan. Sandhill cranes visit our front lawn every morning in season and I have had the pleasure of watching five different species of turtles dig their nests in my yard. Now approaching retirement, I actively participate in a web group that reports Michigan herpetology sightings. John L. Daly ’75
Saturday, April 23rd, we chartered a bus, oh yes we did! Everyone gathered at the Mitchell Athletic Center parking lot and 30+ (students, faculty, alumni, children and community members... hey, LOOK! It’s Ken Klatt!) traveled to Columbus to participate in the March for Science.

The 2016-17 school year marked the 50th anniversary of the Denison Bioreserve, established by Professor Bob Alrutz. The Bioreserve has served many generations of Denisonians well, and so the Biology Department is throwing it several birthday parties! There will be activities in the Bioreserve during Reunion Weekend and at the Big Red Weekend in October. Come by and visit, and check out our new kiosk at the Polly Anderson Field Station. Special thanks for alumni gift contributions from Steve Sedan and Mark Hooper ’72. ~Andy McCall, bioreserve committee chair