

# 13th & UNION PARTNERSHIP

Newsletter



## Exploring Science: ASPHALT Forest 2015

For the third year, 13th and Union fifth graders had the opportunity to look for life in the stream and wetlands near the Albright Woods Apartments. The exploration was led by Albright students Riley Metz '15, Alyson Hutter '17 and Ellen Underwood '17, with direction from David Osgood, Ph.D., professor of biology.

Surprised that there are wetlands and a stream so close to their school, the fifth graders were excited to find salamanders, bullfrogs, a snake and red-winged blackbirds on their trip. And when they turned over rocks in the stream, they uncovered fly larvae, worms and crayfish, to name a few.

This program was established in 2013 by Osgood, Susan Seidenstricker, Ed.D., associate professor of education, and Sheila Simyak, M.S., visiting instructor of education, early childhood/elementary education.

In June, 13th & Union faculty will work with Simyak to write science curriculum.

## A Lesson in Organic Gardening

In April, second graders from 13th and Union visited the greenhouse and organic garden on the Albright campus. Led by Education Curator Beth Krumholz, the first stop was the greenhouse where students learned about the fish and plants there. During the trip, the group talked about sustainable food and visited the organic garden where they discussed how to plant in a more eco-friendly way.

## Living Sustainably

Third graders not only had the chance to see what it's like to live on a college campus when they visited the new Sustainability House, but they also got a lesson in living sustainably. The house, located on 14th Street, is home to several science majors. While living at the house, the students are required to monitor their use of electricity and water, as well as compost and recycle.

Riley Metz '15, who coordinated the field trip, and Allyson Hutter '17, spoke with the third graders about how the residents monitor their electricity usage and why conservation is so important. The students then had an opportunity to explore the compost areas and the organic garden, which they had toured when they were in second grade.



Riley Metz '15 takes fifth graders on an exploration of the wetlands near the Albright Woods Apartments.



## Operation Bald Eagle

The Albright Children's Theatre performed their original play, *Operation Bald Eagle*, for third-, fourth- and fifth-grade students at 13th and Union. The show, written by Matt Fotis, Ph.D., assistant professor of theatre, and Connor Feeney '16, who also directed the play, is the story of a woman named Amy, whose two moms conspire to help her rediscover love after tragedy strikes, by moving her in to their retirement home, The Balding Eagles Retirement Village & Freedom Center.

After the show, which carried an anti-bullying message, the students wrote letters to the actors. Many of the students wrote that they had learned that it was wrong to bully others. They also learned not to listen to or pay attention to bullies.

Thanks to Matt Fotis and the Albright Children's Theatre members for taking the time to share this important message with the students of 13th & Union.



*Ready. Set. Read!* volunteer Julianne Lowenstein '17 says reading with elementary school children has been as much of a learning experience for her as it has for the students.



Albright Children's Theatre performs an original play, *Operation Bald Eagle* by Matt Fotis, Ph.D., and Connor Feeney '16, for students at 13th & Union Elementary.

## Gratitude for Our Funders

Without funding, the partnership we have developed would not be possible. We are so grateful to the Wyomissing Foundation, which has funded our coordinator position, as well as other projects over the last two years. Their help has been invaluable, and we are happy to report that they will continue to fund the coordinator position for two more years.

We also thank several others for funding specific projects, including Wal-Mart, the Foundation for Sustainability and Innovation, Berks County Community Foundation and the Kurr Foundation. Thank you all for your support!

## Volunteer Spotlight: Julianne Lowenstein '17

Julianne Lowenstein '17 is an education major who has been volunteering with *Ready. Set. Read!* for the past two years.

As a volunteer she has had many memorable experiences, but one in particular served as a learning experience for her as well. "After three weeks of my student having trouble with the word 'everywhere,' he finally saw it and proudly said, 'everywhere!' Although it was a small accomplishment, I was so proud of him. This moment reminded me that if you're willing to have the patience, you can teach a kid anything. It also showed me the importance of the program because teachers do not have a lot of time to spend individually with each student, and so that's where the tutors step in, to provide that extra individualized support."

Lowenstein also works with the student Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA). Last April, she attended a student PSEA convention in Hershey. "We did an Outreach to Teach project in which we revamped an impoverished middle school. For the whole district, they have one librarian who alternates between the eight different schools. We painted the middle school with mosaics, quotes, pictures, etc., everywhere, from the halls to the gym to the library. Most of the school staff and students didn't know we had come in, but watching those who were there—including the principal, who was walking around crying—made all the labor totally worth it. It was an incredible experience that I hope to be a part of again next year."

Many thanks to Julianne Lowenstein and all our *Ready. Set. Read!* volunteers!



## Contact Information

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