

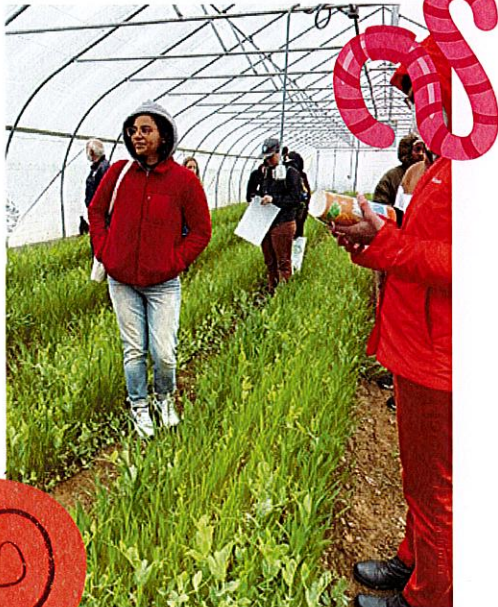
ESS Newsletter

April, 2023

Student Farmer's Conference

On the weekend of March 24th, students from Allegheny drove to Penn State's University Park campus to attend the first ever Northeast Student Farmer's Conference! There, students from various colleges throughout the region were given a tour of the on-campus farm. Throughout this, they were also told about current and future projects taking place there. They were then invited to attend various sessions that involved everything from discussions about hot peppers to skill sessions on floral arrangements! Overall, attending the conference helped students to build connections while allowing them to share ideas related to current issues like combating food insecurity on college campuses. It is planned to be held annually going forward, and our students are already looking forward to seeing what's in store for next year!

Students and faculty gather inside a high tunnel that contains intercropped cover crops!



Kelly and Kurt pose outside of the Sustainability Office

Alumni Spotlight- Kelly & Kurt

Kelly Bolton and Kurt Hatcher work in the Sustainability Department at Allegheny College and act as the sustainability experts to incorporate sustainable practices into other parts of campus. This includes, but is not limited to, keeping Allegheny carbon neutral, maintaining the campus garden, teaching in the ESS Department, and working with students on various projects. Both Bolton (class of 2002) and Hatcher (class of 2007) are Allegheny graduates with an Environmental Science Major and emphasize that Allegheny helped them develop their career because of the unique relationships they formed with professors and other staff members. Bolton remembers being able to work on the flower road signs by Giant Eagle over a summer and Hatcher remembers attending a collegiate leadership conference. They now enjoy being able to give back to Allegheny in the ways they were supported as a student.



Spotted Salamander Research

Humans aren't the only ones excited about spring; as temperatures begin to stay above freezing and rain waters the soil, salamanders and other amphibians are waking up and are on the move. Of the many salamander species that can be found at Bousson Experimental Forest, one particular population of interest is the spotted salamander, which has been monitored at Bousson for over twenty years. Every spring, these animals are collected as they migrate toward the ponds where they breed. After measurements are made, the salamanders are released to the ponds they were trying to enter. When conditions are right, hundreds of salamanders are collected in one day! This year the salamander project is being led by Mark Kirk with the Watershed Conservation Research Center and has involved a number of Allegheny students.



A spotted salamander collected at Bousson.

Junior Seminar Energy Audit

In Professor Ian Carbone's Junior Seminar course this semester, the class is performing an energy audit on Seton Catholic school. The project's goal is to determine the energy efficiency of Seton's facility and to offer insight to the school on how they can be more efficient. There are multiple groups within the class working on different focus areas of the energy audit such as the building envelope, health and comfort of the building inhabitants, heating and cooling systems, appliances and electronics, and solar potential. They have used tools such as a blower door and infrared cameras to determine how much energy is escaping from the building, watt meters to find how much energy is used by appliances, and a solar pathfinder to complete a shade analysis. Their results are sure to be *electrifying!*



Several collected spotted salamanders resting in a bucket. Photos taken by Mick Demi.





Farming as if the Planet Mattered

On March 22, the Environmental Science and Sustainability Department hosted a lunchtime Zoom discussion with Allegheny Alumnus Lindsey Kelly. Kelly graduated in 2016 with a degree in Environmental Science and recently completed a degree in International Agricultural Development with an emphasis in Soil Science from the University of California, Davis. Her presentation discussed how agriculture can be a driving force for sustainability with Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA). CSA is an approach that supports the UN Sustainable Development Goals by working to decrease farmers' vulnerability to climate change, increase their crop productivity and income, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions where possible. Frameworks like this will become increasingly important as the stresses of food insecurity and climate change effects intensify around the world. Kelly discussed different "synergies" of CSA, but noted that sometimes these synergies can have negative effects depending on the local context. For this reason, it is crucial that CSA take into account different global and cultural contexts to ensure the best fit approach.

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New Rock Climbing Club!



Bouldering, belaying, top roping, and knot tying are all activities that the new Rock Climbing Club loves to do! Started in the Fall of 2022, the Rock Climbing club is ascending to greatness through safety clinics and collaborative trips to Ascend (shout out to Outing Club)! The founders of the club want to create a community to learn and partake in safe rock climbing practices. They believe the student body can reap some of the benefits of rock climbing such as better strength, problem solving skills, confidence, and, of course, fun! The club meets every other Tuesday in Carr 221 at 7 pm to plan future events. Right now there are only off campus events, but they hope to incorporate rock climbing on campus in the near future.

**Interested in writing for the ES
Newsletter?**

**Contact our editor at
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