

Congratulations to
our 2023 graduates!

Jaden Ballard
Staci Banks
Jason Brandyburg
Kathryn Brown
Lydia Gates
Miah Goldsborough
Grace Jenkins
Moriah Martin
Sarah McMullen
Claire Nadeau
Lydia O'Fallon
Jillian Phillips
Joseph Terhune Walston
Riney Woodbridge
Joseph Dickerson
Casey Feiler
Grace Fialkowski
Talia Olbrich-Daniels
Mariah Perry
Alexander Sabol
Kenyon Taylor
Gabrielle Wray
Audrey Alt
Kathleen Charles
Toast Forte
Amy Rush
Rhianna Weavil

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ENVR Spotlight

Experiential Learning Meets Service Learning



Lecturer, Ashley Case, taught a new course in the fall called Experiential Learning in Ecology. Students learned hands-on skills while collaborating with campus and community partners. For their main project, students worked along Reed Creek Greenway with the guidance of Melissa Acker, our campus Landscape Designer and Developer (photo above). Students identified and removed non-native invasive plant species. By the end of the semester, they planted a variety of native fruit-bearing trees and bushes in the cleared areas. They also visited a silvicultural study with the US Forest Service, assisted with Asheville GreenWorks tree giveaway program, and spent an afternoon working at Asheville Peace Gardens. During their time at the Peace Gardens, they discussed concerns of long-term inequities and continued concerns regarding displacement of communities of color. Furthermore, the students contributed to River Link's work in reestablishing native and culturally important river cane on the banks of the French Broad River.

Special Thanks to our Supporters

Thanks to those who donated to our department and our scholarship funds. Because of you we are able to enrich our curriculum and provide an impressive number of scholarships.

Visit <https://giving.unca.edu/> to support our commitment to educating the next wave of environmental professionals.



Ashley Case

Faculty News

After 30 years with the department, we said goodbye and happy retirement to our Administrative Assistant, **Debra Robbins**, and welcomed our new Administrative Assistant **Jann Goetzmann**!

Ashley Case accepted the role as co-faculty adviser of the Student Environmental Center. She taught a new course, ST: ENVR 373 Applied Ecology, a service-learning course where students gained hands-on experience working alongside local non-profits and government organizations around Asheville. The course was made possible by Key Center funding and with the collaboration of Melissa Aker in campus operations. Ashley is also joining our department a new position as Lecturer.



Dr. Dee Eggers

ENVR has welcomed **Dr. David Gillette** into the position of Department Chair!

Dr. Jake Hagedorn published a journal article on the flux gradient method for measuring soil greenhouse gases in drainage water management areas. He and his students enjoyed a weekend visit to Wild East Farm, run by UNCA alumni, to investigate soil systems. He also welcomed a second child, Gerrit, to his family!



Dr. David Gillette

Dr. Casey King took a position as the Director of Sustainability. As part of that role, she mentored the 2023 cohort of McCullough Research Fellows. We also welcome her as an ENVR lecturer. Casey also coordinates UNCA's Interdisciplinary Sustainability Certificate.



Dr. Jake Hagedorn

Dr. Jackie Langille published a journal article about evidence for recent topographic uplift in a portion of western North Carolina. This was her first year leading the H.I.P.P.I.E.S. program (along with Dr. Jen Ward in BIOL and Landon Ward), a new SHIFT funded project to bring BIPOC students from UNCA on outdoor excursions to increase success, retention, and recruitment in ENVR.



Dr. Casey King

Dr. Andrew Laughlin taught a new course on Global Change Ecology which focused on the effects of climate change on populations, communities, and ecosystems. His paper exploring climate-driven winter range shifts in eastern North American birds was published in *Ornithology*.

Dr. Irene Rossell stepped down as department chair and began a new venture as Interdisciplinary Professor of the Mountain South. She wrapped up a 23-year project on the grassy bald at Craggy Gardens, and her student Jane Jeffrey spent the summer studying Bluebead lily in spruce-fir forests.



Dr. Jackie Langille

Landon Ward co-led the new H.I.P.P.I.E.S. program. As part of that program he brought several BIPOC students to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park to participate in the filming of a documentary about African Americans in the park by producer Tommy Nichols. This was in participation with the parks Science Communicator, Antione Fletcher. Landon will be spending the first half on 2024 in Ghana with his family as part of a Fulbright Fellowship!



Dr. Andrew Laughlin



Dr. Brittani McNamee



Dr. Irene Rossell



Landon Ward



Dr. Jeff Wilcox

2023 ENVR Scholarship Recipients

Laura Nelson
Lexie Ortega
Hope Donnellan
Russ Krantz
Ava Bjorkman-Tracy
Vee Carter
Isabel Abraham
Presley Price
James Williams
Connor Cannon
Julia Thomas
Angie Herbert
Zac Weas
Danny Tipps
Abby Sgan
Gabbi Paluzzi
Sean Miller
M.J. Pedigro
Sailor Williams
Nicole Mooradian
Atticus Head
Phoebe Schropp
Zoe Montgomery
Gabi Parker
Vincent Reyes
Phoebe Gittis
Tess Parker
Thomas Germann
Christopher Maradiaga
Samm Beichler
Kaia Pickens
Jane Jeffrey
Sam Kershner
Gillian Gavenus

Scholarships
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Gretel and Hans Timan Fund

Darlene and Gene McCorkle
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Bill and Peggy Steiner Field
Studies Award

Blue Ridge Audubon Society

Rebecca Reinhardt Memorial
Fund

Payne and Ouellette Fund

French Broad River Garden
Club Foundation

Weaverville Garden Club

ENVR News

Student Spotlight

Hope Donnellan ('24)

Hope is working on her degree with a concentration in Environmental Management and Policy and will graduate in May 2024. In 2023 she received a McCullough Fellowship to map heat vulnerability in Buncombe County in collaboration with Asheville GreenWorks. She used GIS to find the most vulnerable locations in the county that would benefit from tree planting initiatives. She presented her work at the NC ArcGIS Users Conference and is creating a website that GreenWorks will use to make the heat study available to the public. She is currently interning with the National Environmental Modeling and Analysis Center (NEMAC) to expand her heat study.



Alumni Spotlight

Travis Bordley ('15)

After graduating, Travis joined the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy (SAHC) as an AmeriCorps member, and later became a full-time staff member. With SAHC, he has worked and lived on the Appalachian Trail, doing visitor use



management in the iconic Roan Highlands, and monitoring their conservation properties throughout the Roan. Travis now works as their Outings Program Manager, tasked with connecting local communities to SAHC's conservation work across Western North Carolina and Eastern Tennessee. Travis is also an avid photographer. His photography has been featured in Blue Ridge Outdoors Magazine, the Asheville Airport, the US Forest Service Plan, and the US Capitol Building. He believes that combining art with conservation work adds a personal touch to this deeply meaningful work. Travis credits his success to the influential professors he had at UNCA, who prepared him with the real-life lessons he needed for a career in conservation.

Alumni: We would like to hear from you!
Send pictures and updates to jlangill@unca.edu