

Academic Affairs Update

September 15, 2025

College of Arts and Sciences

Student Accomplishments and Activities

- Dr. Julianne Grenn (Biology 2020) has been appointed to the Technical Extension Committee (TC-E) of the North Central Regional Aquaculture Center for a 4-year term beginning January 1, 2026. Julia recently completed her doctorate at Virginia Institute of Marine Science and is now a faculty member at University of Minnesota, involved with aquaculture outreach.
- Margaret Lawrence (Biology 2024) has been appointed to the Technical Extension Committee (TC-E) of the North Central Regional Aquaculture Center for a 4-year term beginning January 1, 2026. Maggie is currently an aquaponics outreach educator at Purdue University.

Publications and Creative Works

- Noah Lucé, Assistant Professor of Theatre and Director of the Arts Center, recently directed *Life Sucks* for New Canon Theatre Company in Moss Landing, California, and the response was extraordinary. The Santa Cruz Sentinel praised the production as “a triumph of acting and direction that deserves attention and praise... cutting-edge contemporary theater in an unexpected location,” highlighting Lucé’s inventive use of space and deeply human approach to storytelling. Monterey County Weekly called the show “a delightful comedy,” noting its communal impact and concluding “Life sucks – except when it doesn’t.”



Four lives tangled in longing and regret, a snapshot from *Life Sucks*

Under Lucé’s imaginative direction, the intimate in-the-round production delivered what audience member Sarah Saxby described as “wildly entertaining, innovatively staged, rich, and the actors are stellar.” The immersive environment embraced audience and actor alike, inviting viewers to lean into the laughter, vulnerability, and existential joy at the heart of the piece.

- Dr. Adam Mosey and students Megan Voisinnet (Cannabis Chemistry/Forensic Chemistry 2023), Haley Carlson (Forensic Chemistry/Chemistry 2024), Thomas Brzezinski (Cannabis Chemistry 2025), and Kaylin Burton (Biology Pre-Medicine 2024) published two manuscripts in *Bioorganic & Medicinal Chemistry Letters* and the *Journal of Organic Chemistry*, respectively.

Voisinnet, M. M.; Palmentiero, C. M.; McKeon, J. E.; Roster, C. P.; Carlson, H. M.; Brzezinski, T. D.; Burton, K. M.; Morris, J. C.; Mosey, R. A. Development of Dihydroquinazolines as Novel Therapeutics Against *Naegleria fowleri*. *Bioorg. Med. Chem. Lett.* 2025, 129, 130363.

Carlson, H. M.; Mosey, R. A. Tandem Synthesis of Tetrahydropyrroloquinazolines and Related Polyannular Scaffolds. *J. Org. Chem.* 2025, 90, 9300.

- Dr. Jun Li recently published two articles in *Aquaculture* and *Fisheries and Cell Communication and Signaling*, respectively.

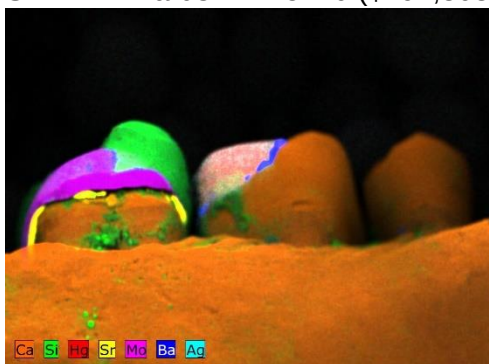
Wu, L.; Ye, J.; Li, J. The Linkage Between Innate and Adaptive Immunity: Recent Advances in Antigen Recognition, Processing, and Presentation in Fish. *A.F.* 2025 In Press

Wang, J.; Dong, WJ.; Tian, TT;. Cold-blooded Vertebrates Evolved Regulatory B Cells to Participate in Inflammatory Diseases. *Cell. Commun. Signal.* 2025 23, 295.

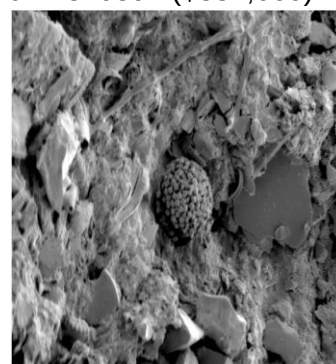
- On August 24, Drs. Derek Wright and Mark Zierden hosted Dr. Hannah Cavalieri (Forensic Chemistry, Northern Michigan University) and analyzed skeletal remains in the Micro Analysis & Spectroscopic Characterization (MASC) Lab. She is using scanning electron microscopy (SEM) to examine the remains for decomposition patterns, and micro X-ray fluorescence (μ XRF) to image the teeth for dental record matching. The remains were from a 2007 small aircraft crash in the Straits of Mackinac and offer a unique opportunity to examine the effects of cold freshwater on the preservation state of human remains following extended exposure. The MASC Lab is funded by NSF MRI Awards #2215270 (\$197,808) and #2320397 (\$384,660).



Dr. Hannah Cavalieri with skeletal remains



μ -XRF showing elemental analysis of dental work



SEM showing skeletal remains with algal debris

Community Engagement

- Dr. Barbara Evans hosted an aquaculture workshop with students with the Alpena Trio Overnight Group. Students learned about crayfish anatomy and investigated the response of crayfish to low oxygen water. They also toured the aquaponics learning lab and learned about problems with invasive crayfish.
- Dr. Barbara Evans ran a 6-week, 4H "Aquatanker" spin club this summer. Students learned about water quality, growing plants, fish, and friendly microbes. Their final project involved designing and building an aquaponics system, which they were able to take home with them.



Young child with a crayfish in an aquaponics system.

- Dr. Paul Kelso assisted with a geology field excursion for the Sault Naturalists. The field excursion examined the geology north of Sault Sainte Marie, Ontario from Alona Bay to Chippewa Falls. The focus of the field excursion was rocks and geologic processes related to the Mid Continent Rift. It was a great day in the field examining the geology of 1.1 billion year old lava flows, igneous intrusions and sediments in our back yard. The Sault Naturalists is a binational nature club with over 250 members from Ontario and Michigan.



The Sault Naturalists



Dr. Paul Kelso in the field.

Appointments to Boards and Professional Organizations

- Dr. Barbara Evans has been re-appointed to the Technical Research Committee (TC-R) of the North Central Regional Aquaculture Center (NCRAC) for another 4-year term beginning January 1, 2026. She was initially elected to the TC-R in 2014. Note: The North Central Regional Aquaculture Center (NCRAC) is one of the five Regional Aquaculture Centers established by Congress that are administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). NCRAC is an administrative unit that serves the twelve states in the North Central Region: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

College of Business, Engineering, Computer Science, and Mathematics

Student Accomplishments and Activities

- Tayla Brassier (Business Administration – Marketing) was awarded a \$2,500 Centennial Scholarship through Delta Mu Delta International Honor Society in Business.
- Jackson Rund (Cannabis Business) participated in the United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development as a youth delegate with Students for Sensible Drug Policy. He also attended CannaCon and Psychedelic Science 2025.

Academic Program Success

- We successfully launched a second cohort of 15 MBA students.

- We successfully launched a second cohort of 25 students pursuing a Small Business Associate degree as part of the STEP UP program.

College of Great Lakes Ecology and Education

Student Accomplishments and Activities

- Sarah Nimtz and Lacie Padl (Teacher Education) were selected as Golden Apple Scholars, a program that provides financial and professional development support to students pursuing degrees in education.
- Shelby Eavou (Education, 2026) wrapped up her Environmental Education Internship at CFRE with positive comments below. Shelby said, “I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at CFRE. This internship has greatly boosted my confidence as I prepare for student teaching. I truly don’t think I could have gained this type or quality of experience by working anywhere else over the summer.”
- CoGLEE welcomes their new freshmen and transfer students with a whole-day event called CoGLEE Connections: people, place, and community. The goal was to help build a sense of place and community for incoming students. The day started with an optional sunrise hike led by Dr. Mackey and also included a fun meet and greet with all faculty and staff in the college, followed by kayaking on the river and painting sidewalk murals (in partnership with the city and Bird’s Eye Outfitters). The afternoon ended with an Indigenous water ceremony led by a Sault Tribe Knowledge Keeper and Elder. The water ceremony introduced our students to an important cultural practice but also was meant to help them reflect on where they are and the uniqueness of our region. The program was made possible by grant funding.



- This fall, Dr. Toni Stith will bring her students in her science methods courses to CFRE in order to use CFRE's resources to design science learning activities and give them the opportunity to implement their science learning activities with visitors in the Discovery Center on Saturdays throughout the Fall semester.
- With the leadership of Dr. Edo Sarda, Professor Devaprasad and the CFRE leadership team, engineering students will work on designing a robot that is part of an interactive exhibit at CFRE's Dr. Constance Baker Great Lakes Discovery Center (GLDC). The partnership will help introduce visitors in the GLDC to LSSU's Engineering program as well as provide a new interactive exhibit for visitors.

Conference Presentations

- Dr. Dustin Brewer presented an invited talk at a symposium at the American Ornithological Society's conference in St. Louis, MO.

Recruitment and Outreach

- Dr. Tommy Mackey and students, Torin Miller and Alana Schofield (Fisheries and Wildlife), participated in a natural resources career expo for Native American students at Camp Nesbit in the Western Upper Peninsula. Forty students attended their table and learned about how our own Alana Schofield participated in the camp years earlier and is now successfully pursuing her bachelor's degree at LSSU.
- CFRE hosted MSU's Glassen Scholars—12 MSU undergraduate students in natural resources and education internships and 2 MSU faculty. CFRE research technicians Nikki, Cam, Silas, and Connor gave an in-depth presentation of all CFRE research projects. Guests spoke with three of our LSSU undergraduates about undergraduate research opportunities and hands-on experiences. Guests also toured the CFRE Barch Building and Atlantic salmon hatchery. Dr. Rose Stewart from MSU wrote, "Our visit to CFRE was informative, interesting, and a lot of fun! The students especially liked touring the exhibits, the labs, and the hatchery. We had an amazing time on our UP Trip (CFRE was one of our favorite stops!) and I'm so thankful for such a great group of students this year – thank you again for being a part of their experience."
- During the last week of July and the first week of August, 136 first through eighth grade summer school students and 19 adults from J.K.L. Bahweting Anishinaabe Public School Academy visited CFRE for field trip programs. Programs focused on native and invasive species, human impacts on water, outdoor adventures, lake sturgeon and its cultural importance, watersheds, and native gardens. After the 6 school programs were completed, the Education & Outreach team met with Dr. Chris Gordon (J.K.L. Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Federal and State Programs) and Ms. Heather Purple (J.K.L. Principal) to plan for continuing field trips and in-class programs during the academic year that align with grade-level curriculum to support learning goals.

Publicity

- Sault News on 8/29/25 - *Could student research at LSSU change oil spill response?* The article highlighted LSSU undergraduates and their role in the international multi-partners research initiative at CFRE that is advancing oil spill science in the Great Lakes.

Community Engagement

- Nearly 250 Victory cruise passengers and 400 members of the public visited the GLDC in August. We heard positive comments about our student workers during each visit, including "They know so much," and "They're great!" One guest said, "You guys are my favorite place in town. My kids love this place and ask to come here. I just love what you do," and a visitor from Jackson, MI said, "This place is great! We've been here about six times. I consider it a hidden gem and we stop every time we're in town."



- Dr. Dustin Brewer and Dr. Tommy Mackey sat on a panel discussion following a film screening co-hosted by LSSU and Sault Tribe Department of Natural Resources. The film and discussion were titled *"Restoration and Reciprocity: Healing our Relationships with the Natural World"*.
- Silas Dunn and Dr. Bo Liu participated in the table-top exercise for US-2 Cut River Oil Spill Response at Little Bear East Arena in St. Ignace, MI, on August 21. Through the exercise, people from different backgrounds (local and federal authorities, responders, communities, and researchers) were grouped and discussed the response process of hazardous materials release in the Cut River and Lake Michigan under 3 scenarios.
- CFRE supported the Little Anglers event at the Kid's fishing pond, in partnership with Rotary Park and the Tackle Shack. CFRE student employees Shelby Eavou (Environmental Education Intern) and Blake Patterson (Education and Outreach assistant) kicked off the evening with an activity at Bayliss with 58 people attending the story time. They then moved on to Rotary Park for the rest of the evening of fishing where Blake did a "how to fish" overview before working with Shelby to support kids learning how to fish. At one point in the evening, all 40 poles from the Little Anglers fishing shack were in use! The total count of individuals at the pond was 73. The event was a new initiative launched by our very own CFRE hatchery technician, Riley Waterman, and his wife Jasmin who works at the Bayliss Library.



Operations and Infrastructure Projects

- The wave generator for our 30'-long wave tank was installed this past month by collaborators at Limnotech in Ann Arbor. The new wave generator, which was grant funded, will support research to understand oil behavior and detection in simulated lake conditions.



Scholarship Activity

- Natural Resources CTE instructor Michelle Visser was accepted to and attended the 2025 Great Lakes Watershed Field Course put on by Inland Seas Education Association in Sutton's Bay, Michigan. This training introduced a framework to support student community action projects, which second-year CTE students will be working on. A mini-grant of up to \$400 will be awarded to assist with the implementation of the students' project. It was also an opportunity to observe the work of and collaborate with other Great Lakes education and outreach professionals and bring ideas back for our own programming here at CFRE.
- Dr. Kevin Kapuscinski started his sabbatical by visiting colleague Dr. Derek Crane at Coastal Carolina University. Drs. Kapuscinski and Crane are co-developing a field-intensive course that will focus on sampling, identification, ecology, and management of coastal fishes. During Dr. Kapuscinski's visit, they toured the Belle W. Baruch Institute for Marine and Coastal Sciences, Bears Bluff National Fish Hatchery, and various field sites, including Winyah Bay and North Inlet. Dr. Kapuscinski also assisted with field sampling (yes, that is field sampling below!), received training from Dr. Crane on preparation of hard parts for estimating age of Lake Sturgeon, and met with Dr. Scott Parker, Chair, Department of Biology, to discuss the field course.



- Dr. Verena Kalter, a post-doctoral student at Memorial University (Canada), visited CFRE this month. Verena continues to work with CFRE staff and faculty on a project evaluating microbial degradation of oil in freshwater.

- Dr. Ken Lee visited CFRE in August to discuss research activities on the Multi-partner Research Initiative. Dr. Lee met with faculty, staff, and undergraduate students working on the project during his visit.
- In July, Dr. Toni Stith attended an NGSX training at Wayne RESA, engaging in hands-on learning around three-dimensional science instruction and effective facilitation strategies. She gained new tools to support preservice teachers in implementing NGSS-aligned, phenomenon-based lessons and deepened her understanding of productive talk moves.

Advisory Board Activity

- Beth Christiansen participated in the EUP materials management planning committee. The committee is working with MI EGLE on a combined materials management plan for Chippewa, Luce, and Mackinac counties.

College of Health and Emergency Responders

Grants

- Through the NURSES Grant – a collaboration between the Michigan Primary Care Association and nine state universities (including LSSU), senior-level BSN students in NURS 432 Nursing of Populations were each awarded a \$1,600 stipend to assist with mileage, and other expenses for their clinical at the Sault Tribal Health Clinic. This grant supports clinical learning opportunities in Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and Rural Health Clinics (RHCs) like the Tribal Health Center to help address the rural nursing shortage.

Community Engagement

- Faculty in the Fire Program have been engaging with community partners for continued training. Professor Nick Vaught assisted the Pickford Fire Department in providing training for forcible entry. Additionally, the Dafer Township Fire Department was on campus at the beginning of August to complete their yearly hose testing. This type of engagement with the community provides continued connections for our Fire Science students to engage in internships and job placement with these organizations.

Operations and Infrastructure Projects

- Professor Nick Vaught and Instructor James Garlitz collaborated with Physical Plant and Bocco Construction to reconnect a broken water main serving the north side of the Townhouses (student housing). By utilizing specialized equipment from the Fire Science program, they were able to restore service quickly and prevent a prolonged disruption to the Townhouses' water supply.

Conference Presentations

- Dr. H.R. Searight presented his work: *"Social Justice and Health Care: Viewing the Documentary Film, The Waiting Room in an Undergraduate Psychology Course to Highlight Disparities."* This presentation was part of the symposium: Transformative Teaching about Social Justice Issues: Examples and Reflections, American Psychological Association, Denver, CO, August 8, 2025.

Upcoming Events

- Creating Supported Spaces with Noah Lucé, CETAL, September 16, 12:00 pm
- Study Abroad Fair, LBR231, September 16, 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm
- CE Basic Home Electrical with Cory Parker (Registration Required), Library Commons, September 16, 6:30 pm
- Fish Thief Documentary, Arts Center, September 18, Time TBD
- Joint Book Club with NMU (Radical Grace), CETAL, September 19, 2:00 pm
- Monthly Art Display: World Scenery with Artist Kevin P. Keenan Demo, Library Art Gallery, September 23, 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm
- Bringing Back Continuing Education, CETAL, September 24, 2:00 pm
- Scholar Series Supported Spaces: Consent, Creativity, and Theatrical Intimacy with Noah Lucé, Library Commons, September 25, 3:00 pm
- Laker Top Picks Book Display with Paul Kelso, Library Commons, September
- The Belle of Amherst, Arts Center, October 3, 7:00 – 9:00 pm
- The Belle of Amherst, Arts Center, October 4, 2:30 – 4:30 pm