

Tackle Box

Newsletter from Michigan AFS DEIJB Committee
April 2024



MIAFS ANNUAL MEETING

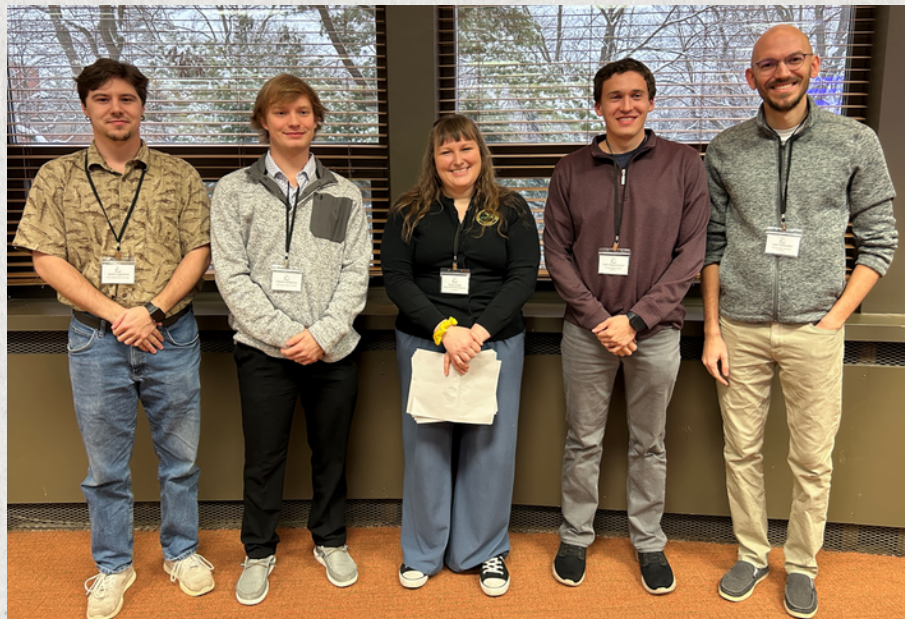
DEIJB HIGHLIGHTS



As always, the Annual MIAFS meeting provided an excellent opportunity to catch up with friends, make new connections, and learn about the fascinating fisheries work being conducted in Michigan. The conference began with a strong DEIJB component. Roger LaBine, Tribal Elder for the Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, was asked to give the plenary on manoomin (wild rice) and its spiritual connection to local tribal communities. Not only did this talk give a wealth of information on the ecology of manoomin, but also the cultural significance of this annual aquatic plant. For more information about manoomin watch

Roger's [Discover the U.P. interview](#) with Kristin Ojaniemi. The plenary was followed by our committee's presentation [Strengthening the field of fisheries: the importance of belonging](#), which focused on the importance of growing diversity within fisheries as well as factors limiting the recruitment of underrepresented individuals. For additional information on this topic, please see the [Reading List](#) that was developed to accompany our presentation. The last DEIJB focused talk of the meeting was [Finding Fish Fanatics: Fishing for Futures](#) which highlighted the outreach program developed by Arika Reed and other coworkers at USFWS Alpena Fish & Wildlife Conservation Office - Detroit River Substation and Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge.

While we're on the topic of presentations we would also like to acknowledge the winners and runners up of the Student Presentation and Poster Awards. In the adjacent photo the students on Dana Castle's (Awards Committee Chair) right are James LaPerriere (Poster Runner-up; Investigating the Impact of New Zealand Mud Snails on Macroinvertebrate communities and Algal growth in the Manistee River) and Clayton Robertson (Best Poster; Use of St. Marys River Coastal Wetlands by Black Bass) from Lake Superior State University, while on her left are Colin Assenmacher, (Best Presentation; Influence of Environmental Characteristics on *Procambarus clarkii* Burrowing in Southeast Michigan Waterbodies) and Josh Hoekwater (Presentation Runner-up; Competition between Round Goby and Slimy Sculpin in a Laboratory Setting) from Michigan State University.





Did you know that Michigan has the largest population of Arab Americans? It's true, we are home to 2.1% of the national population, most of whom reside in metro Detroit. Many immigrated to Michigan to work at Ford, and one story is that a Yemeni sailor met Henry Ford in the early 1990's and this chance encounter began a chain of immigration. Arab American's can trace their ancestry back to 22 countries, including Palestine, that are members of the Arab League. These countries stretch from North Africa to the Arabian Gulf and although these Arab nations are ethnically, religiously, and politically diverse they descend from a common linguistic and cultural heritage. It is a common misperception that all Arabs are Muslim, and while some individuals are, many others belong to various Christian faiths. This and other damaging stereotypes still linger, negatively impacting the lives of thousands of American citizens. It is hoped that National Arab

American Heritage Month, a 2017 initiative, recognized by President Biden in 2023 will help demolish stereotypes by spreading awareness and information about Arab American cultural diversity. So, during April we encourage you to learn a little bit more about Arab American heritage. Cook an Arab dish for dinner, dine at an Arab restaurant, visit the Arab American National Museum in Dearborn, and/or attend a National Arab American Heritage Month event at your university.

Resources

- [Arab Americans Commemorate National Arab American Heritage Month--April 2024](#)

FEATURED ARTIST:



Aiden Lee

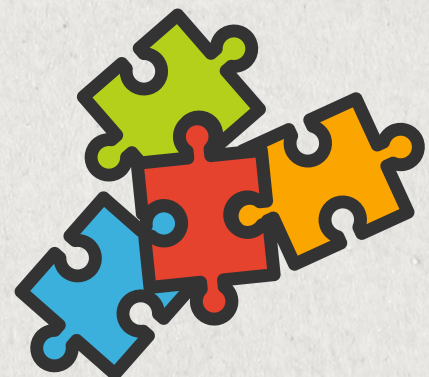


When young, Aiden struggled to communicate and express emotions, due to challenges associated with being diagnosed with Autism, ADHD, and Anxiety. Luckily, Aiden found art, which has become an avenue for expressing concepts he once struggled with. Abstract painting has not only become a tool for personal expression but also a platform for human advocacy work. The classes Aiden teaches focus on having students use art to explore and express themselves. Aiden's award-winning work has received international attention, gracing the cover of magazines, buildings and event venues. For more information about Aiden see: [Aiden Lee | Artist & Human Advocate](#) or https://youtu.be/O1Fh_NrDFik?si=hO1moWxOlPPQoPk2



AWARENESS MONTH & DAYS

- Arab-American Heritage Month (see above)
- Autism Awareness Month
 - Event
 - Hope Network Foundation - 2024 Blue Bridge Walk for Autism and Sensory Friendly Museum Night
 - Resources
 - Autism Grown Up
 - Autism Alliance of Michigan
 - 2024 Navigating Autism Today Conference - Autism Alliance of Michigan
 - Michigan Autism Services & Screenings | Center for Autism (hopenetwork.org)
 - Autism Support of Michigan (autism-mi.org)
 - Resources | Autism | Henry Ford Health - Detroit, MI
- Deaf History Month
 - Resources
 - Home - (deafhhs.org)
 - Division on Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing (michigan.gov)
 - Deaf and Hard of Hearing - Michigan Alliance for Families
- Earth Month
- National Child Abuse Prevention Month
 - Resources
 - Michigan In-State Resources - MiPSAC
 - Child Abuse and Child Neglect Prevention – Michigan Child Fatality Review and Prevention (mifrp.org) National Volunteer Month
 - Resources for child abuse and neglect prevention — Washtenaw Area Council for Children (washtenawchildren.org)
- Paralyzed Veterans Awareness Month
 - Resources
 - Resources for Veterans (Directory) (michigan.gov)
 - Michigan's Disabled American Veterans | Services, Resources & Support (mi-dav.org)
 - Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency
- Sexual Assault Awareness Month
 - Resources
 - National Sexual Assault Hotline: Confidential 24/7 Support : 800-656-HOPE (4673)
 - Michigan | National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC)
 - Michigan Sexual Assault & Abuse - Confidential 24/7 Support :
 - Call: 1-855-864-2374
 - Text: 1-866-238-1454
 - Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Resources & Information | Congresswoman Debbie Dingell (house.gov)
 - Michigan Resources – SIGMA PSI ZETA
- Lesbian Visibility Week (22-26) & Day (26th)
- World Autism Awareness Day – 2nd
 - Autism Fact Sheet - National Autism Association
- Tartan Day (Scottish Heritage Day) – 6th
- Earth Day – 22nd



HOW EARTH DAY CONNECTS TO ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

From the start the goal, of Earth Day was “...not just an environment of clean air, water, and scenic beauty while forgetting about the worst environments in America. Our goal is for the environment of decency, quality and mutual respect for all human beings, and all other living creatures” (Senator Nelson¹). Despite being founded with human rights in mind, too often when we think



about Earth Day, we overlook its origins in environmental racism and justice². Senator Nelson, the organizer of the 1st Earth Day, was likely referring to environmental degradation experienced by communities of color and other minorities when he said the “worst environments in America”¹. It is well documented that communities dominated by black, indigenous, people of color and/or other minorities experience higher levels of environmental racism, which is institutional rules, policies and/or decisions that deliberately target specific communities for undesirable land use, while zoning and environmental laws are weakly enforced. This results in minority communities being disproportionately exposed to toxins, hazardous waste, and other pollutants, meaning individuals from these communities suffer higher rates of pollution related health issues^{2,3}. In fact, the Toxic Waste and Race study found race to be the most significant factor in the location of hazardous waste facilities, with three out of five African American and Hispanic communities housing a toxic waste site⁴. Not only do these communities suffer greater exposure to toxins, but these residents have less access to natural spaces⁵. This “nature gap” not only means that minority individuals are 51% more likely to lack access to nearby outdoor areas, but also are more likely to experience harassment when using natural spaces⁶. Currently within the scientific community there is a push to protect at least 30% of U.S. lands/oceans by 2030 to address the climate and biodiversity crises. This initiative provides an excellent platform to help ensure that every American child can enjoy the benefits of nature near their home⁵. Although Michigan’s abundant resources would make it seem residents would have easy access to natural areas, the truth is many urban residents have limited access and opportunities to connect with nature. Furthermore, many who reside in these urban or industrial areas have and continue to be exposed to high levels of harmful chemicals, impacting their health and quality of life. Fortunately, through social and environmental justice movements both awareness of and in some

cases, remediation has begun to address these inequalities. Although many of us may not be directly involved in these processes, it is still important to keep environmental justice in mind while we work. This means asking ourselves if within our projects we can include components that help address historical inequalities experienced by minorities or provide opportunities for individuals from these communities to have better access to natural areas. So this year on April 22, remember we are not only honoring our connection to Mother Earth but also taking steps to ensure “quality and mutual respect for all human beings”¹.

References

1. Nabhan, G. P. Earth Day at 50 Towards a More Inclusive Environmental Movement. Resilience 1-7 [Resilience.org](https://resilience.org) (2020).
2. Ellinghausen, M. The Buzz: For Earth Day 2021 Challenge Environmental Racism. 1-3 [Theinclusionsolution.me](https://theinclusionsolution.me) (2021).
3. DEI in Motion: Earth Day and Environmental Racism. Women’s Transportation Seminar Foundation 1-2. WTSInternational.org
4. Chavis, B. F. & Lee, C. Toxic Wastes and Race: In the United States. Commission for Racial Justice United Church of Christ vol. 41 (1987).
5. Rowland-Shea, J., Doshi, S., Edberg, S. & Fanger, R. The Nature Gap: Confronting Racial and Economic Disparities in the Destruction and Protection of Nature in America. Hispanic Access Foundation 1 Hispanicaccess.org (2020).
6. Celebrate Earth Day: Work for Environmental Justice. Camp Fire Cental Oregon 1 Campfireco.org (2021).

Ally Corner

We are happy to introduce Ally Corner, this section will provide information on ways to improve your allyship. In fact, this month’s topic is just that, allyship. It’s empathy in action, meaning that you actively strive to understand other’s experiences and take steps to help them thrive. Allyship is built by reading, observing, listening, and hearing other people’s experiences. It’s about not only realizing something is unfair but making steps to address the discrepancies. Allyship is founded on the idea that while actions can be small over time, they build into something deeper.

Recommended Read

In the March edition of *Fisheries* Brittany Harried wrote an insightful article on why *Bans on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Programming at Public Universities Nationwide Are Threatening Future Directions in Fisheries*.



As always MIAFS Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice and Belonging Committee remains committed “to cultivating a chapter culture that ensures all members feel welcome and respected; recruits and retains members with underrepresented identities and backgrounds; and works with the Executive Committee to create and advocate for policies and procedures that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion at the chapter, regional, and international levels”.

As always, please contact us if you would like to become involved with the DEIJB committee or if you come across items that you would like to have shared. You can reach us at miafsdei@gmail.com (or you may contact us anonymously).

Warm Wishes -

Kyle Brumm (he/him), Dana Castle (she/her), Lydia Doerr (she/her), Tracy Galarowicz (she/her), Kynzie House (she/her)