

THE TACKLE BOX

MAY 2024

MI AFS DEIJB Committee Newsletter

This is what "Real Self-Care" looks like

CODE SWITCH INTERVIEW WITH DR. DR. POOJA LAKSHMIN

All too often we are told that self-care and mindfulness can be achieved by buying some new flash product or following some influencers step program. The truth is that self-care is much more complex and is a product of 1000 small decisions. Dr. Pooja Lakshmin, professor at George Washington University School of Medicine, says self-care is achieved through four main principles: set boundaries and deal with the associated guilt; developing self-compassion; being clear on values; and embracing your self-power. Setting boundaries is often difficult, especially for women and particularly women of color. In society, there is this idea women's time does not belong to them (i.e., they must be caretakers) and

setting boundaries can help regain self-power. Unfortunately, these and other biases (i.e., sexism, racism, classism, etc.) persist, and while it seems simpler to follow a self-care fad, true wellbeing can only be achieved by establishing your individual values and boundaries. During this May's Mental Health Awareness Month, we ask all of you to take the time to reflect on your wellbeing. We also encourage you to have a listen to [Dr. Lakshmin Code Switch interview](#) as the information it provides may help you improve your self-care.

A TRANSFORMATIVE PROGRAM
FOR REDEFINING WELLNESS

REAL SELF-CARE

(CRYSTALS, CLEANSSES, AND
BUBBLE BATHS NOT INCLUDED)

POOJA LAKSHMIN, MD

Awareness Month & Days

- [ALS Awareness Month](#)
- [Mental Health Awareness Month](#)
- [Asian American and Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander \(AANHPI\) Heritage Month](#)
- [Jewish American Heritage Month](#)
- May 12 – Mother's Day
 - [All Mothers Welcome: Are Our Workplaces Inclusive Enough for Mothers?](#)
 - [Redefining Mom: Diversity & Inclusivity on Mother's Day](#)
- May 17 – [International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia](#)
- May 19 – [Malcolm X's Birthday](#)
 - [Malcolm X is set to be the first Black person in the Nebraska Hall of Fame](#)
- May 21 – [World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development](#)
- May 26 – [Arbor Day Events](#)

Inspiring Underrepresented Youth: Day in the Life of a Fisheries Biologist

CONTRIBUTED BY: MICHALA BURKE, ARIKA REED, JANINE LAJAVIC



Since its establishment, the face of the U.S Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) has been predominantly white males. Within the last decade, the USFWS has recognized the lack of representation from other groups and has since developed initiatives to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion within the USFWS workforce. The USFWS' Alpena Fish & Wildlife Conservation Office's (FWCO) Detroit River Substation and Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge (DRIWR) staff have spearheaded several outreach programs to help break down barriers, engage with local, urban youth, and promote awareness of careers in conservation in hopes of recruiting the next generation of stewards. These facilities' locations, less than 30 miles from metro-Detroit and home to nearly 3 million residents, has been pivotal to reach such target audiences.

Beginning in 2022, the Alpena FWCO Detroit River Substation partnered with the DRIWR to develop an outreach program to provide youth from nearby communities the opportunity to experience the "Day in the Life of a Fisheries Biologist" (ADITL). This program is geared for both younger and older youth (ages ranging from 8 to 17 years old), including a wide range of fishing and outdoors experience levels from participants. Some ADITL

participants have included the Girl Scouts of Southeast Michigan, Hamtramck High School, and Cesar Chaves Academy. The Alpena FWCO Detroit River Substation and the DRIWR received funding from this program through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). In all, this program is meant to educate urban youth about the Great Lakes ecosystems within the extent of DRIWR lands and careers in conservation. The ADITL program starts out in the DRIWR Visitor Center's classroom where USFWS staff give an introduction of themselves and detail how they got into their current positions, the Great Lakes ecosystem and DRIWR habitats, native and invasive fish species, general fish anatomy, and field safety. Afterwards, participants head out to the DRIWR's Monguagon Marsh, located in front of the DRIWR's Visitor Center, to pull and process catch from fyke nets and minnow traps set by USFWS staff the evening before.



Pictured here are the women largely responsible for developing the ADITL and DRFYT programs. From left to right is Madeline Drury, Jorden McKenna, Michala Burke, (teacher), Haley Vanscoyoc, Arika Reed, Jocelyn Samu-Pittard, Janine Lajavic.



Above Greg Wright is teaching students about local fisheries at a ADITL event.

opportunities, and build aptitude in the outdoors via hands-on experiences. Through GLRI, DRIWR & Alpena FWCO Detroit River Substation were able to secure a trailer fully equipped with fishing gear for environmental educational programming. The beauty of the DRYFT program is that the program comes to YOU, provides participants with the necessary equipment to participant in program activities, and is completely free of charge! These unique characteristics help breakdown common barriers associated with underrepresented groups (e.g., transportation to off-site events, equipment, and programming fees).

Each group of participants is paired with an USFWS Fisheries Biologist to help identify, measure, and record each fish. Since its development, the ADITL outreach program has received national attention and has sparked interest from other USFWS offices to develop similar programs in their own communities. The DRIWR and Alpena FWCO Detroit River Substation staff have continued to develop additional outreach programs such as, The Detroit River Youth Fishing Team (DRFYT, pronounced “drift”). DRYFT is another GLRI funded outreach program developed to connect program developed to connect youth from local communities to their watershed, create fishing



Featured Artist: Hadassah GreenSky



A goal of World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development is to highlight that intercultural dialogue is key to achieving peace. This dialogue includes the right of indigenous communities to safeguard ancestral knowledge. The perpetuation of cultural wisdom relies on strong leaders and community activist such as Hadassah GreenSky, a Detroit born member of the Waganakising Odawa . In addition to Ojibwe woodland style painting (left), Hadassah is a musician, dancer (modern and powwow), textile artis, graphic designer, photo/videographer, and model. In addition to sharing their ancestral knowledge through art, they are an active Indigenous futurist and community organizer. Hadassah has been key in the development of both Vibes with The Tribes music festival and the Waawiyaatanong NDN Market, which provide opportunities for native artist to show case their works. Through their involvement with these and other initiatives Hadassah help to preserve and safeguard cultural knowledge.



Happy Mother's Day to All



Ally Corner

EDUCATION NOUN - an enlightening experience

Educate yourself about the forms and types of oppression and discrimination that exist in your workplace and society at large. Try to find books, articles, and blog posts written by people from underrepresented groups and marginalized communities. When possible, attend workshops and trainings on diversity and inclusion. Improving your education will not only deepen your empathy and understanding of social issues, but it will also make you be better equipped to help create positive changes in your workplace and community.



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 miafsdeij@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)

AFS Annual Meeting: Indigenous Outreach Travel Award



To support Indigenous students and early career professionals, AFS is offering sponsorships to attend the annual meeting September 15-19, 2024 in Honolulu, Hawai'i. This will provide opportunities for Indigenous college students and early career professionals to attend an international fisheries conference, meet peers and other professionals, attend sponsored events, and broaden their horizons. Awardees will receive travel funding based on their individual need.

The application can be found [here](#), and the deadline is June 25th, 11:59 am HST.