

HEADWATERS

A core publication of the Lilly Center for Lakes & Streams | Autumn 2026

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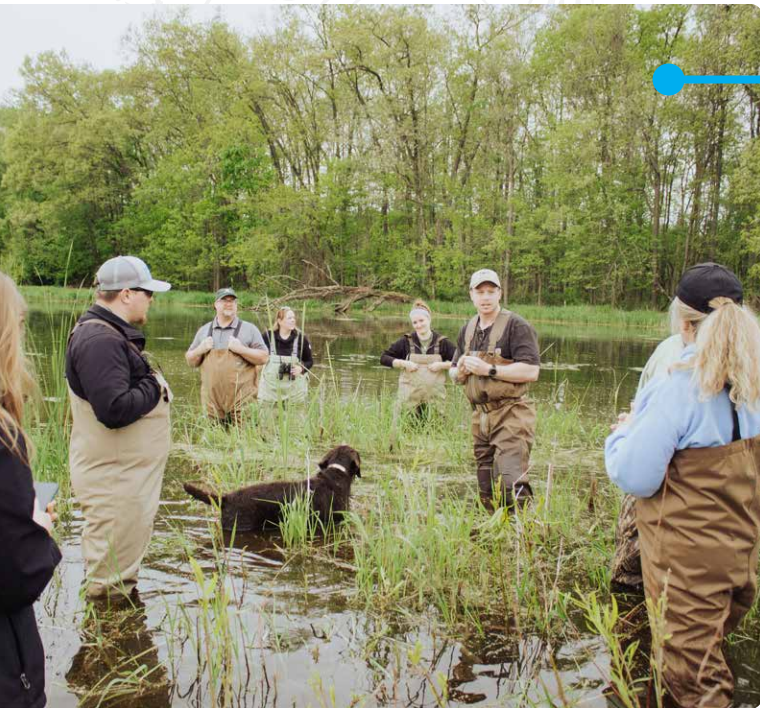
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LILLY CENTER FOR
**LAKES
& STREAMS**



AN ARMEY OF WETLANDS

From cornstalks to spadderdock, this is a wetland **restoration** story!

Wetlands are vital to improving water quality and can greatly impact the health of surrounding lakes. Because of this, wetlands are a core solution in **Lake Rx**. To get an idea of what this future chapter in the Lilly Center might look like, we asked Dawn Armeay and her son, Ross, to show us around her family's Kosciusko County property.

The Armeys have been working with Scott Fetters, private land biologist with the US Fish & Wildlife Service, to restore several acres of farmland to its original wetland ecosystem. It was inspiring to see the **six wetlands** they created and to learn more about how wetlands can improve lakes — and our communities.

We appreciate the time they took to show us around their beautiful property and the valuable information Scott Fetters shared about wetland restoration. •

Learn more about the future of Lake Rx in our community by visiting lakes.grace.edu/LakeRx.

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Cover: An aerial view of three wetland systems the Armeys restored.

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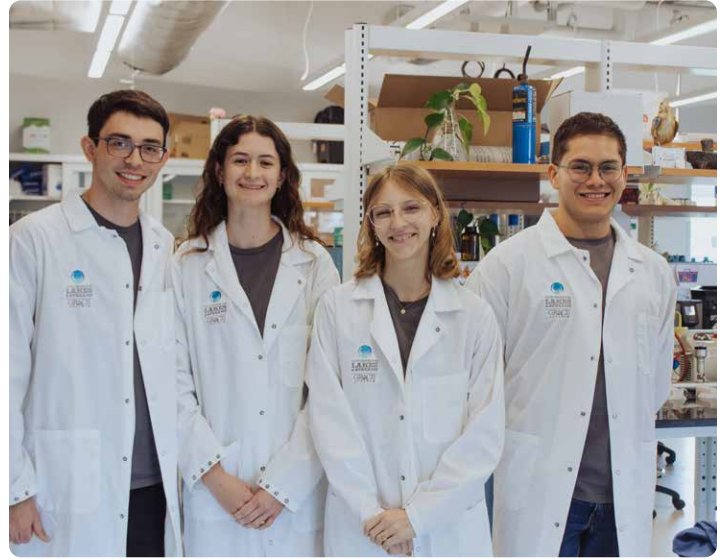
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Field Research Team (L-R): Tess Price, Elijah Bridegroom, Georgina Otero, George Mariacher, Abigail Bechtel. Not pictured: Ashlyn Erwin



Lab Research Team (L-R): Hutch Moore, Eden Moore, Hallie Arnold, Josue Corbalan Martinez. Not pictured: Bella Carter

SQUAD UP!

MEET THE 2026 SUMMER TEAM

Did you know that **80%** of Lilly Center interns continue their careers in Northern Indiana after graduation?

A Lilly Center internship is not just about meeting academic requirements; it is about preparing students for **long-term impact**.

Tess Price, pictured above, is the field research team lead. She supports the staff research technician in

collecting accurate field data and helps train team members to ensure research is conducted consistently and effectively.

“One of the best skills I developed was learning how to communicate effectively about sensitive environmental issues,” Price said. “Conversations with people with diverse perspectives helped me learn how to address

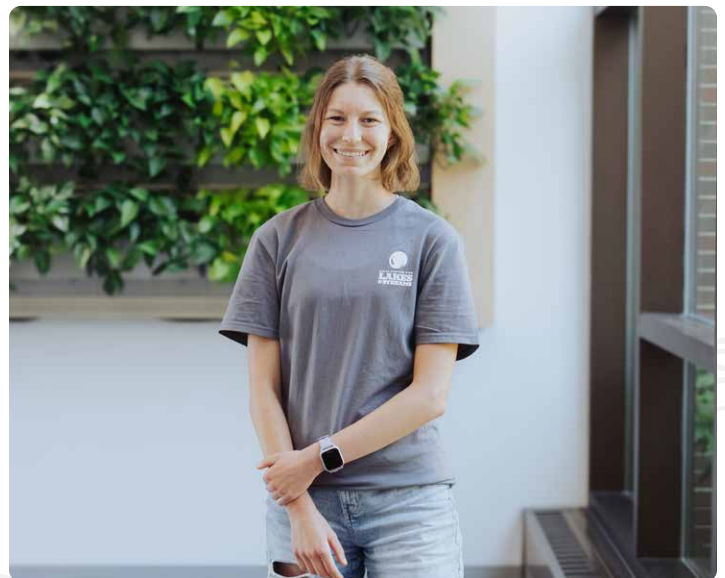
questions about lakes and streams **professionally and clearly.**”

The 15 summer interns are gaining skills in research, quality assurance procedures, microscopy, animal care, marketing — and growing as well-rounded professionals.

Turn to the next page to read about a day in the life of our field research team, written by Claire Sprankle, pictured below. •



Aquarium Team (L-R): Eden Moore, Joselyn Swank, Emily Jordan



Marketing Team: Claire Sprankle

A SAMPLER'S SURVIVAL KIT

Story and photography by Claire Sprankle, marketing assistant

From a distance, it may look like a normal briefcase. But you'd be mistaken to assume it contains your typical work necessities — laptop, wallet, pens, perhaps a business card if you're feeling nostalgic. The case actually opens to reveal a transparent, plastic cylinder with spigots on each end, attached to a long, coiled rope. It appears to be something you might see in a science fiction movie, like the container of some radioactive element. In reality, all it holds is lake water. This tool, called a **Van Dorn**, is a vital part of the Lilly Center field research team's lake sampling process.

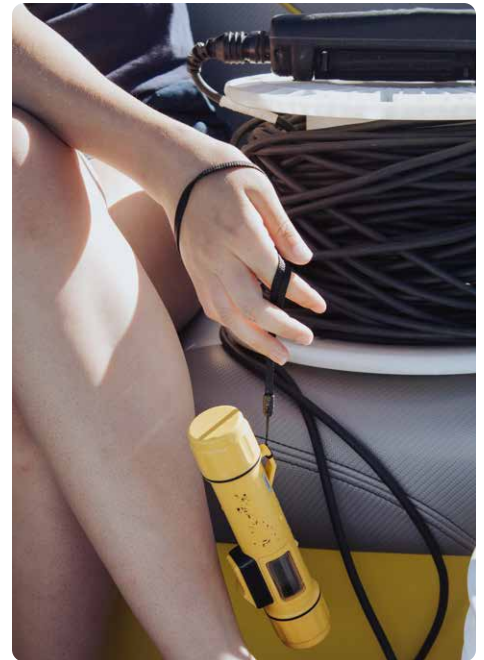
Among other supplies, the team's

sampling kit also includes a multi-parameter sonde, which records different attributes of the water, a Secchi disk, which measures the water's clarity, and a portable weather meter. Each week during the summer, the team **samples 16 different lakes** and 14 stream sites around Kosciusko County. By the third week into the summer, the steps for a successful sampling have become routine.

Each morning, three interns load up the truck with necessary equipment and drive to the first lake of the day. **Volunteer boat captains** from around the community generously offer their time and watercraft to take the team out to the deepest point in the lake, where they collect their measurements and samples. This process is then repeated on multiple lakes around the county.

Eventually, the team returns to the Lilly Center, tired and hot, while the water samples remain carefully chilled in the cooler. These samples are quickly sent to the research lab, where they are tested for **microcystin toxin and E. coli**.

Without further ado, the equipment is cleaned and prepped for the next day, and the process begins again. The job of a field researcher is **never truly finished!** •



Learn more about how students are making an impact at the Lilly Center by visiting our website: lakes.grace.edu.



Far left: Gina prepares the Van Dorn to collect water samples from three lake depths.

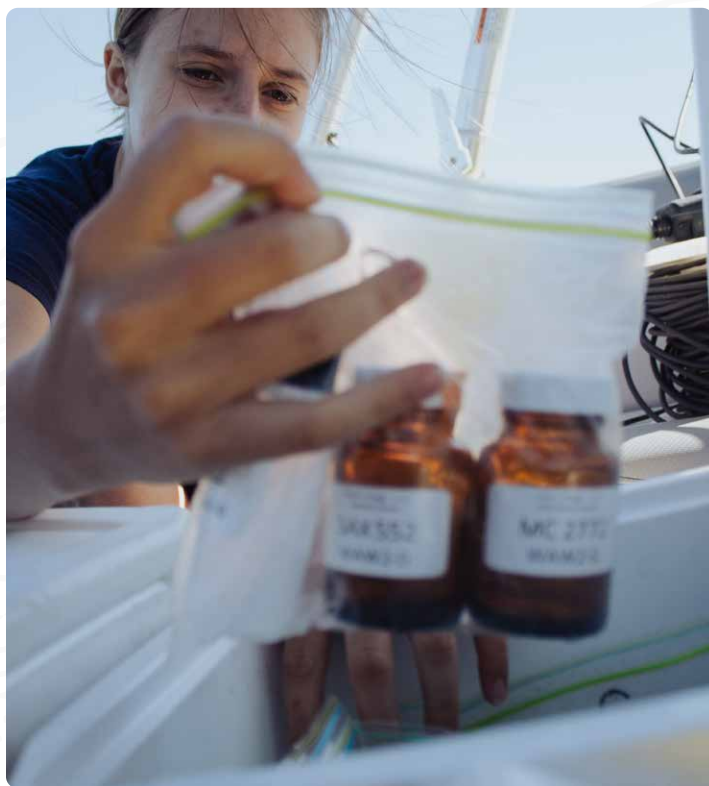
Above, top: A depth finder helps the field research team determine the deepest point on each lake.

Above: A Secchi Disk (orange handle with black and white disk) used by the research team.



Bottom left: A bottle is prepared for a blue-green algae toxin sample.

Top: George, Tess, and Abigail collect a lake sample; a process that takes less than 30 minutes to complete.



Bottom right: Abigail carefully places water samples in a cooler with ice packs to maintain the integrity of the samples until they are delivered to the research lab.



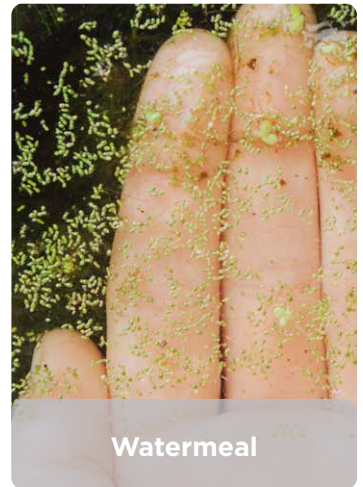
Blue-green algae



Duckweed



Green algae



Watermeal

YOU CAN IDENTIFY

BLUE-GREEN ALGAE

Your lake may be looking a little green, but before you immediately assume it's infamous blue-green algae, explore these common look-alikes!

Duckweed is a tiny aquatic plant that floats on the surface of the water. Unlike blue-green algae, it has individual leaves and small roots.

Green algae is a true algae species that is hairlike in texture and can be draped over sticks without breaking.

Watermeal is the smallest flowering plant in the world. It is even smaller than duckweed and has no roots.

Blue-green algae is actually a type of bacteria, so unlike aquatic

plants or true algae, it's not rooted to anything. It often looks like green paint spilled over the water's surface and can be stirred easily by a stick without draping off of it like green algae.

Did you **notice** a blue-green algae bloom on your lake? Send a description of the bloom, including a photo, the location, and time, to the email below. •

REPORT A BLOOM: LAKES@GRACE.EDU

ONE QUESTION, SIX WETLANDS

DOUG & DAWN ARMEY'S STORY

The cover of this issue features three wetlands the Armey family **revitalized** with the help of their friend and biologist, Scott Fetters.

Doug and Dawn help us kick off **season three** of the Lake Doctor Podcast. Future guests include educator Emily Anderson, TJ Faur from the Fort Wayne Zoo, Purdue professor Dr. Ty Hoskins, and many more!

Subscribe to the podcast on YouTube, Spotify, or Apple Podcasts so you don't miss an episode! •

