Greetings and welcome to the fourth issue of the Conservation Leadership Corps (CLC) newsletter.

I first would like to say thank you to the CLC Executive Committee on all their hard work and dedication they have put into the CLC over the past year! I also would like to congratulate CLC Class 5 on their graduation. I was impressed with every single resolution.

I am excited to see the future growth of the CLC with the new executive committee that was voted in at the 2018 Wisconsin Wildlife Annual Meeting. The new executive committee has a mix of new and old, with two executive committee members returning to their positions. The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation annual meeting was another success with all resolutions passing and some CLC Alumni being voted in as associate directors and district directors.

I cannot wait to see what the CLC can accomplish next as we continue to grow our organization and spread to other states.

Please enjoy this issue of the CLC newsletter,

Justin Mueller
CLC Past President
Final Countdown of Class 5

Wrapping up the 5th Year of the CLC

---Submitted by Marco Mascitti, April 2018

CLC 5 gathered on a chilly February weekend at the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station to meet with their coaches and write their policy resolutions, the pinnacle of the CLC experience. The weekend began with an enjoyable rendezvous in in the cozy Walker Lodge, a few students even brought instruments for a spontaneous cabin-jam.

The next morning everyone got to work quickly. The resolution coaches arrived and after a brief introduction each group got to work diligently. It is humbling to see great conservation professionals support the CLC as coaches year after year. Without them, it would impossible to produce the high-quality pieces that our students consistently generate.

As the snow began to fall hard outside, the class settled deeper into their work. At one point, I tried to get everyone’s attention to announce a lunch break. At first, no one seemed to notice I had said a thing, it took three or four yells before the class begrudgingly turned their heads to hear the announcement, before quickly returning to their work. I realized then how serious this class was and their level of dedication to our program. I decided lunch could wait a few minutes.

By the end of the day the groups all the framework for solid resolutions, but not after much effort and deliberation amongst the teams. It was rewarding to walk around the room and hear the various discussions taking the place. The students worked hard and made compromises where necessary to make their work represent all viewpoints from around the table. This is an important theme of the CLC experience and I enjoyed watching the students work through their differences to produce comprehensive documents representing ideas from all group members. I could tell the students were tired by the end of the day but proud of their hard work. Everyone departed into the snowy abyss that central Wisconsin had become that day and headed home in anticipation of the much-hyped Annual Meeting in April.

By the time the Annual Meeting came around, the resolutions had been adjusted and polished and the class was ready to display their efforts over the past six months. This was my third Annual Meeting and a special one indeed as I watched a group of talented young students who I had met only months before, but was now so proud to be leading into their 4th and final round of their CLC participation.

Representative Katrina Shankland gave an inspiring talk Friday night to our CLC Class and Alumni, followed by CLC Officer Elections. I was pleased and encouraged to see several of our graduating students elected for positions. The continuation of students participating in our program have allowed the group to expand in the ways it has, leading to everything from our awesome field trips to this newsletter!

The next day went by quickly. I was nervous for the students as they took their posts in front of the WWF membership body to present their resolutions. Everyone did a great job. A few groups were questioned by federation members and they were clearly prepared for questions and did a great job of clarifying and standing up for their hard work and sophisticated ideas.

All the resolutions were adopted by the federation and the hard work of the day led to an enjoyable and fast-paced evening as the Federation elected new board members, presented awards, and enjoyed friends old and new.

As the Annual Meeting came to a close I took the time to look back at my CLC experience over the past three years and be thankful for all the lessons I have learned and all the new friends I have made from my participation in the program. It was truly an honor to lead the 5th group of the CLC. We had an amazing group of students and I learned so much from working with them. The CLC has many strong years ahead and I am excited to watch this important organization continue to flourish and branch out to the rest of our country to address pertinent conservation issues.

Congratulations to Class 5, I can’t wait to meet next year’s class!
**George Meyer: Inducted into the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame...FINALLY!**

--Submitted by Elsa Litecky, May 2018

For many people who know George Meyer the news of him being inducted into the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame was met with everything from “Finally!” to “Wait, wasn’t he already in it?” George has been involved in conservation long before he helped start the Conservation Leadership Corps in Wisconsin. Like many of us his appreciation for the land started in his youth and from the family farm it developed into a long career. George had a 30 year career with the Wisconsin DNR where he served as a Staff Attorney, Enforcement Division Administrator, and as Secretary of the WDNR where he worked on a wide variety of issues, everything from air and water quality to fish and wildlife and the implementation of Treaty Rights by the Wisconsin Ojibwe Tribes. In 2002 he retired from the DNR and about a year later became the Executive Director of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation where he has continued to work protecting Wisconsin’s resources.

George was inducted into the Hall of Fame thanks to the persistence of Molly O’Grady, Monica Banaszak, and Janel Scharhag who had worked together on drafting the materials needed to get George into the hall of fame since 2014 along with assistance from WWF Board Members and the backup from the CLC. On May 5th the event finally happened after being canceled due to one of the April snow storms and George along with Charlotte & Roy Lukes and Arlie Schorger were inducted into the hall of fame. People from all facets of George’s life came to celebrate and comments were made by Ron Semmann for his days with the DNR, Jerry Knuth for the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, and Molly O’Grady for the Wisconsin Conservation Leadership Corps who made a video to send in all the way from Hawaii.

It was a big day for George not only was he being inducted into the hall of fame it was also his and his wife’s 45th wedding anniversary. His wife, Jane, a conservationist in her own right has been an irreplaceable partner, mentor, and advisor throughout George's career and “she has earned this award today as much as I have.” George stated in his speech.
When Your Mentor makes his way into Conservation History

George was among good company as well getting inducted alongside Roy, Charlotte Lukes and Arlie “Bill” Schorger. The Lukes are long time Door County Naturalists and prolific writers who have done so much for environmental education alongside many other things. Roy passed away in 2016 and Charlotte continues to spend time educating others about the environment. Schorger who passed away in 1972 almost had his contributions lost to history. He is best known for his book the Passenger Pigeon but he played an important role for advocating for the Wildlife Department at UW-Madison and persuading the hire and retention of Aldo Leopold. Without Schorger there is a good chance that the Aldo Leopold we know today might not have come to be.

To watch George get inducted into the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame please click the link below!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WNDbpHL0PxM&list=PLN68KnsnDoyw6WRiiRLg3bx0oe3UE2J6U&index=3 or search 2018 Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame on Youtube!

George was his humble and charismatic self, receiving the award as well as proud to be joining many of his mentors and friends already in the hall of fame. After the ceremony George talked to the CLC members to thank us for coming and let us know he looks forward to the day the conservation hall of fame is filled with members of the CLC. Molly said it best the CLC will probably be George’s Legacy that he is known for well into the future and I know I will be proud to continue that legacy as a CLC member and conservation leader. As Molly said “We are so proud to call you our mentor George!” Congratulations George on this lifetime achievement you certainly have more than earned it!

Photo Credit: Elsa Litecky, CLC
Where Are They Now?

Kirsten Schmidt

--Submitted by Sawyer Boldt, May 2018

My name is Kirsten Schmidt and I began with CLC my junior year of college and have continued to stay connected after graduation. I attended the University of Wisconsin-River Falls where I majored in Field Biology and minored in Geographic Information Systems (GIS). I grew up in the Midwest, but wanted to learn about other parts of the U.S. I decided to take a year off between my undergrad and master’s to travel and work at various locations. This brought me to Hawai’i Volcanoes National Park on the island of Hawai’i where I was hired to work with the parks resource management invasive species team. As expected I worked towards eradicating Kahili Ginger, Strawberry Guava, and Faya tree (to name a few) from the park. I learned through Hawai’i’s isolation, plants lost defenses like thorns and toxins. This made them extremely vulnerable when invasive mammals were brought to the islands. I worked to clear areas overtaken with invasives so natives could thrive again, and coordinated with the native plant team to plant over 400 natives like A’ali’i and Ohia Lehua in a single day.

But invasives aren’t the only thing threatening the native plants. A new fungal disease called Rapid Ohia Death (ROD) is killing Ohia Lehua trees in as little as 14 days. The trees are endemic to the Hawaiian Islands and influential in Hawaiian culture. Since so little is known about this fungus my team worked to collect data on suspect ROD trees and confirmed cases. We sampled suspect trees and meticulously recorded any detail that could provide us more insight on the disease. I mapped ROD positive trees using GIS to coordinate future sampling and establish where infection is worst so preventative measures could be taken when entering or leaving the area. I could see the difference I was making and further developed my love for plants and research.

While at Hawai’i Volcanoes I was accepted to the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point where I will study natural resources and start a master’s project this summer. My project will take place at Upper Mississippi National Wildlife and Fish Refuge managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. I will be collecting cores from various pools along the Mississippi river in search for Wild celery buds. I will use the amount of buds I find to calculate duck energy days and in turn, determine how many Canvasbacks and Tundra Swan can be supported by the refuge. Then I will then compare my findings with bird surveys taken in the target pools. I am anxious to start my project and excited to see what I will uncover. I will also be working at Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge this summer as a Biological Science Technician leading an invasive species team. I plan on using skills I gained at Hawai’i Volcanoes National Park to further preserve other native habitats. Although the Kilauea eruption cut my job short I am beyond thankful to have been on Hawai’i Island to witness such an extraordinary act of nature, learn their beautiful culture, and be an advocate for endangered and native species restoration.
New WWF Website!

The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation’s website has a new look!

One of our very own CLC members, Molly O’Grady, has served as an intern for the WWF working on this new website design.

Check out the new WWF website: http://www.wiwf.org/
The CLC page has a new look as well! Check it out here: http://www.wiwf.org/clc/

On the CLC page you can find our promotional video, newsletters, student written resolutions, and more!!

Fund the CLC

Donate your unused Scholarship Funds to the CLC Program

Are you part of an organization that has unused scholarship funds? Do you know of an organization that has unused scholarship funds?

We understand that many organizations have scholarship funds that never receive applicants, therefore they have funds but no one to award these funds to. If you or an organization that you know would be interested in donating these funds to help sustain the Conservation Leadership Corps program, please contact the CLC Chair, Lil Pipping.

The CLC is made possible by generous funding from the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, the National Wildlife Federation, the Izaak Walton League, and those that donate to our annual auction. We are always looking for ways to Fund the Conservation Leadership Program. If you have any ideas or are interesting in donating, please email our Treasurer, Sawyer Boldt, at sawyerboldt@hotmail.com.

Treasurer’s Report

As of June 18th, 2018, the Conservation Leadership Corps bank account balance is $4,992.18. These funds can be used for field trips, awards, fundraising events, travel expenses, and all other CLC needs not already covered by the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation.

The largest fundraiser this year was the gun raffle at the 2018 Wisconsin Wildlife Federation annual meeting. The gun, donated by George Meyer, brought in a total of $1,165. We would like to thank everyone who purchased tickets and donated towards this raffle, as well as those who have donated privately towards our program this year. There are several more fundraising opportunities in the works for 2019, so keep updated on emails and our website for more ways to get involved!

CLC Executive Committee 2018-2019

Treasurer: Sawyer Boldt

Originally from Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin, I graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a degree in Wildlife Ecology and a certificate in Environmental Studies in December of 2017. Currently, I’m employed with the United States Forest Service as a wildlife technician for the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest Great Divide District working on a variety of wildlife survey and habitat management projects. I have also had a variety of other experiences working in the wildlife field, including a research project involving Chronic Wasting Disease in White-Tailed deer, working as a research assistant for the National Wildlife Health Center in Madison, and involvement with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resource’s “Snapshot Wisconsin” project. In addition to being a graduate of CLC Class 4, I’m also involved with the WWF as an Associate Director, serving on the Wildlife, Conservation Leadership Corps, and Forestry, Parks, and Recreation committees.
Meet our CLC Executive Committee, selected by CLC alumni and students to serve the 2018-2019 year

President: Hunter Nikolai

Hunter is from Kenosha, WI and gained a strong appreciation for the outdoors through family hunting and fishing traditions. He is a graduate of Conservation Leadership Corps Class 5 (2017-2018) and the current CLC president. Hunter is currently a senior at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and he is pursuing a Bachelor of Science Degree in Wildlife Ecology with a certificate in Environmental Studies. He is presently employed by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources as a seasonal water patrol officer and has plans to become a full time conservation officer after graduation. In his free time, Hunter enjoys attending Badger football games, visiting Washington Island, and fishing or hunting with his family. Hunter is excited to work with like-minded individuals that can empower the next generation in conservation leadership in Wisconsin and beyond!

Vice President: Kailey Kraus

Secretary: Halley Feil

Halley is from Appleton, WI. She is a graduate of the Conservation Leadership Corps Class 5 (2017-2018). Growing up in the city inspired her family to seek peace and adventure in the Northwoods of Wisconsin. It was there where she found her calling studying wildlife, tree species, hiking and testing water samples. Her explorative passion for wildlife and conservation always made her feel as though this is what she was meant to do. She is currently a senior at the University of Wisconsin, Madison working towards a bachelors in Conservation biology with a certificate in environmental studies. In her free time, Halley is an aspiring artist, and entrepreneur. Finding ways to combine her creative interests with science research from the Neotropical forests of Ecuador where she interned for a month to the UW Campus. Her conservation benefits program, called “Eco Perks” allows individuals in Dane County, WI to participate in local conservation projects while getting discounts at participating businesses!
CLC Coordinator: Monica Banaszak

Hello! I am Monica Banaszak and I am a graduate from CLC Class 2. I have been an active member since my graduation from the program. I served as an associate director for the WWF and as a secretary and publicist for the CLC Executive Committee. I started my Bachelor’s in Wildlife Ecology at UW-Stevens Point, but I am now finishing my degree online through Oregon State University as a major in Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences in my hometown of Chicago, IL. In addition to serving as coordinator I work full-time as a veterinary assistant at a local animal hospital. Conservation and animal care have been two passions that always seem to intertwine for me. On my off time I like to go hiking in the many places offered through the Forest Preserves of Cook County and DuPage County.

Publicist: Lexi Allworden

Lexi is from Wisconsin Rapids, WI. She was a member of the CLC in 2016-2017 then went on to become an associate director for the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation. Lexi is currently attending Mid-State Technical College for Criminal Justice. Some of the things she enjoys doing includes, camping, swimming, fishing, having campfires with friends, hunting, playing with her four dogs, and working.

Program Coordinator: Nicole Loeffler

Currently I am studying Environmental Education and Interpretation at the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point. I was a graduate of CLC class 4. I have a passion for urban environmental education and justice. The fall field trip for last year was to the Milwaukee Urban Ecology Center, where students got to learn about environmental actions going on in the community and how it is different than working in a rural community. This year I would like to plan field trips that explore environmentalism in different cultures and communities. If you have any idea or suggestion for field trips, please let me know!
Past President: Justin Mueller

Justin grew up on a small hobby farm in Kewaunee, WI and learned about the conservation ethic from his parents and grandparents. Justin is a graduate from the Conservation Leadership Corps Class 2 (2014-2015). He graduated from University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point in 2015 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Resource Management-Law Enforcement. Justin currently works for Elkhart Lake Police Department and the Algoma Police Department. During his free time, Justin enjoys spending time at his family’s cottage in Door County, recreating on the water during all seasons. Justin is looking forward to this new opportunity and working with everyone that shares the same passion of protecting our environment.

George Meyer (WWF Executive Director)

Lillian Pipping
Interested in being a leader in conservation?

Interested in having your voice heard on conservation issues by Wisconsin and National policymakers?

The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation has created a Conservation Leadership Training Program just for you!

The Wisconsin Wildlife Federation (WWF) accepts applications throughout the year, and we are currently accepting applications for the 2018-2019 academic year, for our exciting program to assist in the development of future conservation leaders in Wisconsin, known as the Wisconsin Conservation Leadership Corps. (CLC). WWF has based the CLC on a highly successful and similar project developed by the Conservation Federation of Missouri, our counterpart organization.

The CLC is designed to provide expert training for seniors in high school along with college freshmen, sophomores and juniors to develop leadership skills and techniques to allow students the ability to analyze as well as develop conservation policies in his or her subject of interest. Students involved will also gain experience advocating their conservation resolutions at the Annual Meeting for WWF. Successfully written and presented conservation resolutions may be adopted by WWF to serve as official polices.

Training will be provided by current and former natural resource professionals in both public, non-profit as well as private sectors. Students will be presented with real-world experience and will receive feedback from professionals with the conservation policy process. Such interactions will be valuable to participants in relation to school success, future career aspirations, and involvement in organizations.

It is anticipated that the program will take place during the 2018-2019 academic year. Events will be scheduled for four weekends throughout the year. Conservation resolution presentations conducted by those involved would be made at the Annual Meeting of the Wildlife Federation in April 2019. Selected CLC candidates are encouraged to attend three of the four events. All expenses while participating in the CLC program will be covered by WWF. At the successful completion of the year, each participant will receive a Certificate of Accomplishment for the training program, a letter of commendation for their resume portfolio and a $250 scholarship to advance their continuing education.

Interested CLC candidates should fill out the application on this page and send it to the CLC Coordinator, at CLC.WWF.Coordinator@gmail.com by May 30th, 2019. Candidates will be selected by June 15th, 2019. All applicants will be notified of the results.
CLC Application

---The deadline date for applications is May 30th, 2019.

Please answer the following questions and limit your response to TWO pages in length.

1. What is your personal and professional interest in conservation?

2. What would you say are the high points in your life related to conservation, either from an educational, personal, or organizational standpoint?

3. Why do you want to be a member of the Conservation Leadership Corps with the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation? What would you like to get out of the experience?

4. Why is the concept of a Wisconsin Conservation Leadership Corps important?

5. What role do you see conservation organizations have in the future of conservation in Wisconsin?

6. Will you be willing and able to attend a majority of the training sessions?

Background and Contact Information- Please include this information as part of your application:

Name: ____________________________________________

Street Address: ____________________________________________

City, State and Zip Code: ________________________________

Email Address: ____________________________________________

Telephone Number: ________________________________

Present School: ____________________________________________

Year in School (please specify whether high school or college): ____________________

Please include a name and contact information for a reference related to your conservation interest.

The reference can be a parent, teacher or other adult that you have had contact with related to conservation. The reference is a very important part of the application.

Applications, preferably electronically, should be submitted to WWF Leadership Corps Coordinator, at CLC.WWF.Coordinator@gmail.com or sent through mail to the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, 213 N Main Street, Suite 100, PO Box 460, Poynette, WI 53955-0460. The Deadline is MAY 30th, 2019.
Follow Us

Want to learn more? Watch our Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OKHNmPOakSg
Visit our Website for more: www.wiwf.org/clc/
Follow us on Facebook: Wisconsin Conservation Leadership Corps

Calendar of Events

Principles of Leadership: Session 1
October 5-6, 2018
Fall Field Trip: TBD
Policy and Advocacy: Session 2
Dec. 7-8, 2018
Resolution Development: Session 3
Feb. 15-16, 2019
Policy Resolution Presentation/Awards (WWF Annual Meeting): Session 4
Apr. 12-13, 2019

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