

Dear RPTA Alumni and Friends,

The 2016 Fall semester is in full swing and there are several exciting updates that I would like to share with you. We hope you're able to join us at one of the many events we're hosting this year. Support from alumni and friends is one of the reasons our department continues to be successful.

Lodge and Libations - Saturday, September 24, 2016

Our first successful event took place on September 24. I would like to thank everyone who was able to join us at Horn Field Campus for the 3rd annual Lodge and Libations celebration. This year we celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Environmental, Conservation and Outdoor Education Expedition (ECOEE). As you are hopefully aware, we are working with donors, friends, and alumni to try and raise funds to create a Horn Field Campus Outdoor Education Center. This multipurpose space would allow us to continue the department's rich tradition of creating future leaders in the fields of outdoor education and leadership, and natural resource management. If you would like to know more about the event or the outdoor education center, please contact Mindy Pheiffer at mj-pheiffer@wiu.edu.

"It was truly a delight to see all of the ECOEE alums and their families who attended Lodge and Libations this year. Each time we get together I am reminded of what a vibrant and creative a group of people they are. It is good to know that ECOEE played a part in their journey." – Dr. Michael McGowan

IPRA Social Gathering - Friday, January 20, 2017

If you're going to be in Chicago, or at the IPRA/IAPD Conference in January, please join RPTA faculty, students, and friends for a social gathering. The event will take place at Howells and Hood (435 N Michigan Ave) from 5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.. The purpose of this event is to provide opportunities for alumni and friends to engage with faculty and students in a festive environment. Please visit the link below for more information regarding the event:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeC3I0L5e86FyNWgR97T7RejQmiDFL1s9bnC6F6QeJPBUTcXA/viewform>

Summer Camp Job Fair - Wednesday & Thursday, January, 25/26, 2017

The Summer Camp Job Fair is an event that RPTA coordinates for the students of Western Illinois University and the American Camp Association-Illinois. This event provides a two-day recruitment opportunity for residential and day camps to recruit and hire WIU students. In addition, it provides wonderful networking opportunities for RPTA faculty, WIU students, camp directors, and the Macomb community. Many of our students have found internships and employment through this event. If you would like to learn more about the event, please visit:

<http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/rpta/scjf/>

Professional Development Conference - Friday, April 7, 2017

Our department has great alumni and friends who are passionate about sharing their experiences with current students. We have always prided ourselves on helping to prepare our students for professional practice through not only classroom instruction, but also interactions with practitioners who are in the field. The RPTA Professional Development Conference is an event that facilitates such interactions. Through a series of educational sessions, often led by our alumni and friends,

students gain a richer appreciation for what it's like working in our field. At this event, we also celebrate and recognize our current students' success, and honor our outstanding Graduates of the Last Decade, Distinguished Service, and Distinguished Alumni Award recipients.

If you are interested in leading an educational session, and/or want more information about the event, please contact Jeremy Robinett jl-robinett@wiu.edu or visit:

<http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/rpta/pdc.php>

RPTA Research Laboratory

RPTA now has a research lab that is dedicated to research focused on improving the lives of individuals and communities. This year the lab is coordinating research focused on veterans transitioning from military service to higher education. The lab is also hosting research exploring community theater, disability sport, and veterans' recreation patterns.

The department continues to be a leader in providing students opportunities to make a difference in the local community. Below are some of the initiatives that our faculty and students are leading.

Camp Rocky – April 21 & 22, and April 28 & 29, 2017

RPTA students coordinate a free day camp that is available to K-8th graders at Horn Field Campus. Camp Rocky encourages personal growth, discovery and well-being through a variety of engaging activities. For more information, please visit:

<http://www.camprocky.org/>

Senior Olympics - April 29 & 30, 2017

RPTA partners with the Kinesiology Department to deliver a two-day, competitive event for older adults. This is a great opportunity for older adults to enjoy being physical and social in an organized and fun environment. For more information please contact Michael Lukkarinen at md-lukkarinen@wiu.edu or visit:

<http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/kinesiology/seniorolympics/>

Foos for Families - April 30, 2017

The RPTA Department partners with the Macomb Park District to raise funds for the Center for Youth and Family Solutions in Macomb. The human foosball tournament is led and coordinated by students. If you would like to learn more about the event, please contact Jeremy Robinett at jl-robinett@wiu.edu

The RPTA Department remains committed to its mission:

- To provide dynamic, highly effective learning opportunities for personal and career development;
- To encourage and facilitate scholarly and creative activity;
- To enhance the quality of life throughout the State and beyond; and,
- To serve the leisure services profession, including those organizations involved in program and service delivery.

We welcome any questions you may have, and greatly appreciate your support. Please feel free to contact me, and/or any of our faculty to learn more about events and other things happenings within the department.

Thank you for your time and support,

Daniel G. Yoder
Recreation, Park and Tourism Administration Department Professor and Chair