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Wells Sophomores at the Brandenburg Gate, May 2022

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The Trustees of Indiana University
Dear Friends,

Our last academic year certainly had its ups and downs, though we in the Wells Program were fortunate to have much more of the latter than the former. We did have to bid adieu to our longtime Associate Director Elspeth Hayden, who has moved on to a new position at the O’Neill School, but we’re excited to welcome her successor, Nathan Schmidt, who is currently completing his doctorate in American literature and joined us on August 1. Acting Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education Kurt Zorn will hand over the reins to our old friend Dennis Groth, who has returned to the Vice Provost’s position after having served two years at the helm of IU’s Luddy School. We thank Kurt for his unstinting support and look forward to renewing our relationship with Dennis. Kurt won’t go far anyway; he has resumed his duties as Associate of Undergraduate Education.

Earlier this year, we celebrated the inimitable Elvin Irihamye, who nabbed a prestigious Rhodes fellowship, our third win in the last four years. Thanks to the pandemic, Elvin was able to interview for this super-competitive opportunity from the comfort of our Harlos House Library. I think I was the one who freaked out when Elvin told me afterwards, matter-of-factly, as is his way, “I won.” Elvin will be studying at Oxford University in the fall. Whatever field he will decide to focus on—whether it’s patient care or public health management—we know he’ll transform it.

As we do every fall, we also welcomed a new class of Wells Scholars to campus last year, this time with three international students as members of the cohort: Belle Chatpunnarangsee from Thailand, Maria Amanda Irias from Nicaragua, and Shivam Garg from India. We are so happy that what began a few years ago on a ferry ride from Martha’s Vineyard to Cape Cod, when Wells Founding Director Breon Mitchell and I sat down to talk about the future of the Wells Scholars Program, has taken off in such unimagined ways. (In case you were wondering, Breon and I were not coming back from a beach vacation; we had spent a few days in the house of the socialist writer Max Eastman, now owned by Indiana University, packing up his books and manuscripts to be transferred to the Lilly Library).
The incoming class of Wells freshmen will have four international members, two Scholars from Brazil and one each from Nigeria and Myanmar. When Breon and I hashed out our plan for an international Wells competition, we hoped that this would be yet another way of honoring Chancellor Wells’ legacy, and one that he would have been particularly excited about. We’re so gratified that our dream has become a reality.

Wells Sophomore Madelyn Mustaine at the Berlin State Opera

Seeing our Scholars resume their international travels has been one of our greatest joys this semester. In this newsletter, two Scholars are reflecting on their experiences: Maddie Butler, who spent a semester in Amman, Jordan, and Emma Hand, who was fortunate enough to be able to combine her fall semester in Aix-en-Provence with a semester in Copenhagen. We have also been diligently working through our backlog of Freshman International trips. In March, Kristin Varella and I took our Wells juniors to Berlin, and in May, Christoph went back with the Wells sophomores. Our new issue features reports about our adventures by rising junior Garrett Williams and rising senior Kathryn Mick. Once again, we were grateful to partner with the always inspiring Andrea Moore, director of the IU Europe Gateway in Berlin Kreuzberg. Our experiences ran the gamut from the exhilarating (magnificent performances of L’elisir d’amore and The Magic Flute at the Berlin State Opera) to the thoughtful and sobering (notably the day we spent at the former concentration camp in Berlin-Sachsenhausen). For many of us, the latter visit especially was life-changing. I will always remember the intense post-Sachsenhausen discussions we had at the Gateway.

The thoughtfulness of Wells Scholars is well-represented by an essay written for last year’s Freshman Seminar that we are also including in this issue. Evan Jackson’s meditation on species extinction, and the ways in which we can wrap our minds around the problem and, however insufficiently, address it, is an excellent example of the impressive work done by our Wells freshmen—and one that should be of particular interest to the alums who have asked for copies of my syllabus (which I am happy to send to anyone who is interested).

We’re ending this newsletter on an upbeat note, with an excerpt from former Wells Director Scott Sanders’ new book, Small Marvels, just out from Indiana University Press, a funny and loving tribute to the resilience of the Hoosier spirit. And, as always, your updates deliver the grand finale! Indiana University has gone through many dizzying changes during the last year, so it’s heartening to see that the bonds that tie us to each other, the community we have created and continue to create every single day, still hold strong. Thank you, Scholars, parents of Scholars, alums, friends of the program, and donors of the program for your continuing support. You are what keeps us going!

Christoph
I had dreamed of studying abroad since taking my first French class in middle school and decided on attending IU due to its wealth of study abroad programs and the generous funding provided by the Wells Scholars Program. I spent last fall in Aix-en-Provence, France, and then shifted to Copenhagen, Denmark, for the spring. Both provided life-changing experiences, in different ways.

The Aix-en-Provence program allowed me to complete the remaining requirements for my French major, but it offered so much more than that. I took a few courses directly through the study abroad program, mostly focused on French writing and oral expression. The latter course was taught by a local theater director, and since I had no prior theater experience, this was one of the strangest but most genuinely helpful courses I have ever taken and immeasurably improved my confidence in French and public speaking skills. I also took classes at Aix-Marseille University in psycholinguistics, history, literature, and cinematography, alongside other French university students. I really enjoyed the variety of courses I was able to take and receive credit for. Professors left students to be more independent, with little homework or direction concerning the material to be studied outside the lectures, which challenged my learning style. People sitting next to me would start conversations or joke or introduce themselves not knowing I was an international student, and once they found out, would offer me help with the classwork or just invited me to hang out with them, which made me feel really welcome. By the end of the program, I had met people from all over the world and made a few genuinely lifelong friends from France, the UK, and the US. I also attended weekly dinners with a French family living nearby. It
was a great way to practice the language, but also to build relationships in a new place. We played board games, exchanged books, and had dinners ranging from the traditional *confit du canard* to the just-as-French *chèvre-au-miel* pizza ordered from Domino’s. I am still in touch with the family and have an open invitation to stay with them if I return to the area (which I want to do desperately).

One unique feature of IU’s program is that Aix is not a major city in France. It has a population of just over 140,000, with an interesting mix of students, French vacationers, and locals. I was able to fit in travel to many different cities, both within and outside of France, and it was refreshing to have a smaller, familiar city to return to each week. Aix is beautiful, full of narrow cobbled streets lined with boutiques and bakeries and farmer’s markets three times a week—an easy-going place radiating a sense of community where people love to sit outside and greet passers-by.

In January, I moved to Copenhagen, where I participated in a program through the Danish Institute for Study Abroad. These four months in Copenhagen were some of the best of my life. I spent the semester focusing on my biology and environmental science majors and took courses entitled Ice Cores and Ice Ages, Biology of Marine Mammals, Urban Ecology, Biodiversity and Conservation, as well as a Danish Language and Culture class. The courses emphasized experiential learning and incorporated field trips that ranged from whale watching to mushroom picking to touring old castles. A regular feature of many of my classes was time spent outdoors, getting to know Copenhagen and its many natural green spaces and parks. I also took trips though my Ice Cores and Ice Ages course to the island of Møn, where we explored the coastline and geologic past of the region, including the K-T boundary, as well as a week-long excursion in Kangerlussuaq, Greenland. It was an incredible experience—just imagine a class of twenty college students turning into five-year-olds pushing each other down ice hills and then again walking in silence, basking in the unearthly serenity of the austere Greenland landscape. We explored the glacier and ice sheet and learned about how ice core drilling can be used for climate records and projections.

“By the end of the program, I had met people from all over the world and made a few genuinely lifelong friends…”

Although my classes were mostly with other American students, I was able to break out of that bubble through living in a “kollegium,” an arrangement that pairs visiting students from the United States with permanent residents in Copenhagen. My apartment had three other American students and three permanent residents: two who attended Copenhagen Business School and one who was studying at the University of Copenhagen medical school. One was Danish, one was Swiss, and one Norwegian, and through them we were able to meet other Danish and international students. We all became close and would sometimes talk for hours or even go on trips together. Whether by bike or metro, it is extremely easy to get around in Copenhagen. It took me about twenty minutes to get to my classes in the city center from where I lived in Frederiksberg, an area right next to a giant park complete with winding walkways through dense foliage, trampolines, an old castle, and access to the elephant exhibit at the nearby zoo.

I left Copenhagen with many more
stamps in my passport and renewed confidence in my ability to face new situations head-on, with an open, excited attitude. Seeing the differences in infrastructure, education, safety, healthcare, social welfare systems, and environmental practices in both France and Denmark, as well as discussing these differences with the friends I have made, has made me look more critically at comparable institutions in the United States and will allow me to become a more politically active and informed citizen. I am continuing my time abroad in the

Maddie Butler, WSP '19
“Living and Studying in Amman, Jordan”

migrated to Jordan to learn about her family’s Palestinian identity.

Language immersion in Jordan was a bit more difficult than I thought, in the sense that it takes effort and initiative to ensure you are having an immersive experience! Because many people in Amman speak wonderful English, locals may often default to speaking English with English-speaking non-Jordanians. After becoming more comfortable with the local dialect, I conversed in Arabic with the locals even if they tried to switch back to English.

The program allows students to choose between a homestay option with a Jordanian family and living in an apartment building with other students. I opted to live in an apartment because I was coming out of the COVID years and wanted to be surrounded by peers! I was also a bit wary of being “on” at home and during classes, and I wanted time to decompress on my own in the evenings to have energy to fully immerse myself during the days.

“I am grateful for the meaningful relationships I was able to form throughout the semester...”

Protections for, and experiences of individuals with, marginalized identities vary greatly in Jordanian society. I found that street harassment in Jordan was quite constant and draining; public spaces in Jordan are largely viewed as owned by men. For this reason, it can seem difficult to form relationships with Jordanian women as they seemed to me to be less present in public spaces and the workforce. I say this with the full realization that gender discrimination is alive and well in the United States, too. However, there are incredible opportunities for building community with Jordanian women!
I joined a women-only gym, which served as a place of community for the women who owned and frequented it. I also befriended women working in the coffee shop near my home, students at the University of Jordan, and women at the local nail and hair salon. Spending time in these women-only spaces felt very empowering and helped me to understand women as a force to be reckoned with in the Jordanian community.

I am grateful for the meaningful relationships I was able to form throughout the semester, both with peers and instructors in my study abroad program and with friends within the local Jordanian community. Between the wonderful program staff and professors, my supportive language partners from the University of Jordan, and the baristas at the local coffee shop with whom I shared Arabic conversations most evenings, I have a long list of friends to visit when I, hopefully, travel back to Jordan in the future.

Upon returning home, I have engaged in deep conversations with my family and peers about Palestinian history and current events, and I can clearly see how my time in Jordan has informed my views and understanding of regional relationships, including the relationship shared between Jordan and Palestine. Furthermore, as I plan to pursue a career in immigration law, I am certain that my experiences in Jordan have helped me to better understand regional migration issues and will allow me to contextualize the lived experiences of future clients from the region. I also hope that the improvement in my Arabic language skills will facilitate relationship-building with Arabic-speaking clients.

Maddie Butler in Petra, Jordan
Photograph by Maddie Butler

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Kathryn Mick at the Pergamon Museum in Berlin.

The 2019 class of Wells Scholars finally made it to Berlin! It was a trip almost three years in the making. A small part of me felt like a first-year student again as we reunited at the Indy airport to board our first flight to Atlanta. With every passing semester, each of us grows increasingly independent, relentlessly pursuing our degrees and interests. For a week, however, we were two years younger, experiencing all the things that were waiting for us back in 2020. There was some sweetness in getting to take our first-year trip as third-year students. We began the trip with years of shared experiences already, looking back on the times we spent together, and talking excitedly about the future. Talk of LSATs and MCATs and graduation plans ebbed and flowed throughout the trip.

Surprisingly, not one of the scholars on this trip spoke German, except Christoph, of course. You can imagine the laughter and confusion when, on our first night out to dinner as a group, we were each handed menus entirely in German.
Fortunately, our server was patient, and Christoph jumped into interpreting for everyone. Don’t worry, though: we were sure to give our server a hearty “thank you” in our best German.

In many ways, I saw a greater picture behind the lessons we learned in Berlin. On the first day, we hopped on the metro without fully understanding how to use it. We figured it out. Some scholars gave nicknames to important stops on the U8 line to help us remember which direction to take to get to the hotel or the IU Gateway. On our way to the opera, we realized that the door doesn’t wait for anyone after the train pulled away with only half of our group inside. It was stressful, but we figured it out. By the end of the week, we were mostly fluent in public transportation and could confidently navigate the metro on our own.

This class of scholars has done the same thing over the last three years. When we threw ourselves into our first year, we didn’t know what we didn’t know. Yet, through seminar discussions at Harlos and dinners at Wright quad, classmates turned into friends, and we began to figure things out. We started as a group of first-year students, all so new to IU and our respective programs. What a cool moment to step back in Berlin and watch my peers talk about graduate programs with the same anticipation that they used to talk about their first lab internship three years ago. We grew, and we continue to grow. That’s what we do. Berlin was just a small snapshot of that.

“We grew, and we continue to grow. That’s what we do. Berlin was just a small snapshot of that...”

Wells Sophomore Ethan Roos captured in the side mirror of a motorcycle at the Museum of the German Democratic Republic, May 2022
Garrett Williams, WSP ’20

“May in Berlin”

and reunification which we later explored in the DDR Museum.

We began most of our days at the IU Berlin Gateway, a short walk away from our hotel, where we discussed our first impressions of the city and...our path quickly intersected with the partial remains of the Berlin Wall...”

Beyond the city’s history, we also had ample opportunities to experience Berlin’s art and culture. We viewed the extraordinary paintings of German Impressionists at the Berlin National Gallery on Museum Island. Some highlights were the works of Max Liebermann and Caspar David Friedrich’s The Monk by the Sea, although a personal favorite was The Iron Rolling Mill by Adolph Menzel. Later in the week, we ventured outside of Berlin to German impressionist Max Liebermann’s villa on Lake Wannsee, where he spent much of his later life painting during the interwar period. At the Berliner Philharmonie, we enjoyed a performance from the renowned Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Later, we had the amazing opportunity to watch Mozart’s Die Zauberflöte (The Magic Flute) in its original language at the Berlin State Opera House.

German culture. We later built upon our initial impressions with discussions about contemporary German politics, economics, healthcare, and social services. In preparation for the week’s activities, we also learned more about 20th-century German history, including the brief, yet fascinating interwar Weimar period. Near the end of our trip, we had the opportunity to experience the amazing exhibits of the Jewish Museum Berlin. Designed by Daniel Libeskind, the museum’s intricate architecture presents a fascinating narrative of German-Jewish history. In the lower levels, we walked along the museum’s three axes (Exile, Holocaust, and Continuity), each containing objects and stories from German Jews during the time of National Socialism. While being educational, the museum also used its architecture to evoke feelings of oppression and confusion in its environments, such as the Holocaust Tower and the Garden of Exile.

Wells Scholars in Berlin, Unter den Linden. Garrett is third from left.

After a semester of hard work, our class had the amazing opportunity to travel to Berlin for an enriching and educational experience. We began our trip with a guided tour of Berlin’s most notable landmarks, including the Brandenburg Gate, the Reichstag, and the Berlin Cathedral at Museum Island. As we made our way through the city, our path quickly intersected with the partial remains of the Berlin Wall, now in various states of disrepair. From the top of a nearby guard tower, we had our first view of Berlin’s skyline, with the beautiful dome of the New Synagogue and the Berlin TV Tower rising above the rest of the city. As we walked down the street into former East Berlin, the sturdy concrete wall gradually unraveled into metal supports before disappearing entirely, as if recreating its destruction. I found this to be the highlight of the tour, acting as an introduction to the city’s complex history of division...
Evan Jackson, WSP’21
“Thinking About Extinction”

Freshman Seminar continues to be the cornerstone of a Wells education. For several years now, the spring portion of the class has been devoted to “environmental change,” with readings ranging from Henry David Thoreau to Rachel Carson and Subhankar Banerjee. The essays students write for this class never cease to amaze us. Here, slightly abridged and adapted, is an essay by Wells freshman (and now rising junior) Evan Jackson, a computer science major from Wexford, Pennsylvania.

Humans have altered the environment to fit our needs like no other species before us. The consequences—among them a global loss of biodiversity and an increase in extinctions among animal and plant species—are evident. With current extinction rates “between 100 and 1,000 times higher than the pre-human background rate of extinction,” the present period will be remembered as the sixth mass extinction event in Earth’s history unless we manage to stop it (Begum). Which raises the question of how much we should intervene to mitigate this extinction event and what steps we should take to do so.

To many people, extinction is not something we need to be terribly worried about. As the biologist R. Alexander Pyron points out, “[e]xtinction is the engine of evolution, the mechanism by which natural selection prunes the poorly adapted and allows the hardiest to flourish.” For millions of years, animals and plants have had to adapt to changing environments, and those who cannot adapt go extinct. Current estimates suggest that as many as 99% of all species that have ever existed are now extinct (Pyron). On top of this, there have been several other mass extinction events throughout history. These mass extinctions, although they did eliminate many species, were often followed by an extreme growth in
biodiversity (Brand). The animals we know and love today, including humans, blossomed in the wake of the dinosaurs’ extinction. In the long run, so the argument goes, nature will recover.

“We reform our environment to suit our needs...”

One common objection to this line of thinking is that because humans have caused the current extinction, it is unnatural (and therefore especially heinous or irrecoverable). Yet this is not really the case. Take, for instance, now-extinct species like mammoths or saber-toothed tigers. They were unable to adapt to changing ecological landscapes, including the presence of humans, and died out because of it. There is nothing particularly unnatural about their demise: species that were struggling to adapt were snuffed out by a species more fit to thrive in the given environment. This logic seems cruel, but that’s life. Humans are as much a part of nature now as they were 10,000 years ago, just with a much larger footprint. Pyron compares the changes humans have made to their environment to beavers building a dam, where the beavers “cause the local extinction of numerous riverine species that cannot survive in the new lake” but usher in new life that will thrive in the lake setting. Humans do functionally the same thing on a much larger scale. We reform our environment to suit our needs, and this is, inevitably, good for some species and bad for others. The extinction that results from this is still a natural phenomenon, and, according to Pyron, species will die or adapt like they have for the previous extinction events.

Pyron also suggests that humans should be looking out for themselves first, saying that in the face of climate change, extinction is a minor issue. If species go extinct because of our actions, nature will recover and new species will take their place eventually. The problems facing humanity right now are immense, and Pyron insists that we make sure our own future is secure before we expend too many resources saving other species.

It is easy to think of counterarguments, though. Even if we are only looking out for humans, there are several selfish reasons for protecting threatened species. One such reason is nature’s complexity and, to an extent, unpredictability. As Pyron says, humans are part of nature, and one of the defining features of nature is its interconnectedness. We know that the removal of a species from its environment can have effects that reverberate throughout the ecosystem. As the ecologist Georgina Mace put it in an interview with the Horizon magazine, “[w]e developed and evolved with other species here, and their diversity allows us to thrive. So, it’s very reckless to assume that we can do without them.” While we know that Earth will eventually (in a few million years) recover from the present mass extinction event, we are far less certain about the effects that numerous extinctions could have on us now. A New York Times article mentions that “humans are relying on significantly fewer varieties of plants and animals to produce food,” meaning that “the food system is becoming less resilient against pests and diseases” (Plumer). This loss in resiliency and biodiversity, combined with the increasingly negative effects of climate change, could result in a food crisis. Losing even one or two species could have a domino effect that proves disastrous for humans. We just can’t be certain.

Increasing biodiversity is just as beneficial to humans as decreasing it.
is detrimental. “Wild species break down organic material back into nutrients, so it can be recycled and used again,” Mace says, “The water cycle also relies heavily on living organisms.” One report even estimates that “nature provides some $24 trillion of non-monetized benefits to humans each year,” such as forests absorbing carbon dioxide, pollinators pollinating crops, medicinal plants, and the water purification I have already mentioned (Plumer). Another major economic benefit of biodiversity is ecotourism. For instance, the economy of the village of Red Bank in Belize is built on ecotourism for the Scarlet Macaw (Barcott 110-11). The income derived from that is multi-layered as well. Visitors will hire tour guides, of course, but they also require lodging and restaurants, spending even more money that gets recirculated throughout the village. Ecotourism is a big part of many city, state, and even national economies.

“Increasing biodiversity is just as beneficial to humans as decreasing is detrimental.”

Another important argument for halting extinction is morality. Humans alive today have a moral obligation to protect the world for future generations. Many of the consequences of extinction will linger for decades or even longer after species go extinct. It seems unfair for us to force future generations to suffer the consequences of actions they had no part in taking, especially when these consequences are as potentially dangerous and world-altering as they are with extinction. Humans are in a unique position compared to other animals. When a beaver builds a dam that results in the death of other animals, it, as far as we know, knows little about the death it caused. Humans are smart enough to understand the ramifications of our actions, and the dams we build are much larger and more deadly. While humans can and should think about our own survival and well-being, we have no moral right, knowing what we know, to allow our own actions to result in the deaths and extinctions of innocent creatures. If we feel so smart and unique to have created the ethical systems that serve as the backbone of our societies, we ought to at least follow them (“Big Question”).

“...the big question is how to consolidate these two lines of thinking...”

Of course, now the big question is how to consolidate these two lines of thinking, the pragmatic as well as the ethical one. As I would argue, shifting away from thinking solely about extinction moves the emphasis from individual species to broader ecosystems that are being damaged through deforestation, climate change, and other human intervention. While extinction does negatively affect a particular ecosystem (at least in the short term) and should therefore be mitigated, the overall health of an ecosystem has to do with more than just the health of one species. On the one hand, a species on the brink of extinction can be used to raise public awareness, leading to the protection of an ecosystem as a whole. Sharon Matola, the late director of the Belize Zoo (a model of species conversation), describes her beloved Harpy Eagles in these terms, calling them “an umbrella species... To protect them you’ve got to conserve big forests with a lot of biodiversity. So if you save the harpy, you’re saving everything else in the forest” (Barcott 279-80). As in this case, protecting one species can sometimes lead to the protection of the entire ecosystem. On the other hand, emphasizing extinction or endangerment can take the focus away from protecting these ecosystems. An ecosystem that is struggling and shrinking, like a forest that has been deforested and damaged, might not get the attention it deserves because more effort is going toward preserving endangered species elsewhere. Protecting species from extinction should be...
part of protecting larger ecosystems, not a goal in and of itself.

Concerns about species traditionally labeled as invasive complicate the issue. For the past few decades invasive species have been viewed as harmful, but as species are being forced to migrate due to climate change and other anthropogenic disruptions, this view is becoming increasingly problematic (Bolotnikova). This vilification stems from the desire to protect ecosystems against potentially dangerous invaders and to protect individual native species, but both goals are somewhat flawed. The desire to protect ecosystems, for example, often disregards the actual effects of invasives. The environmental journalist Marina Bolotnikova, in an article for Vox, mentions that only “about 10 percent of species introduced into new ecosystems will survive, and about 10 percent of those ... will cause problems that lead them to become ‘invasive.’” The urge to protect native species results in conservationists having to decide if one species has more of a right to exist than another. A great example of this is the “the hog deer, a small deer native to South Asia,” which is “endangered in its home range but hunted and treated as feral in Australia” (Bolotnikova). It would appear to be immoral to ascribe a higher value to one species over another because it is more beautiful or because it is rarer or just because it is native, and the outright slaughter of animals deemed invasive to protect native species completely goes against the spirit of conservation (Bolotnikova). Given all this, we cannot justifiably focus entirely on ecosystems and disregard individual species or vice versa.

Moderation is key in this regard. We must strike a balance in which we save both ecosystems and individual creatures. Prioritizing ecosystems is vital, but we should still, from a moral and ecological standpoint, protect individuals whenever possible. We need to eliminate the stigma associated with invasive species, especially those being forced to migrate because of climate change. Admittedly, these migrations will almost certainly cause some changes to ecosystems, but as Bolotnikova aptly puts it, “In the 21st century, there’s no such thing as an undisrupted ecosystem.” A healthy ecosystem is not exclusively one in which everything is as it always was, and the introduction of new species will not necessarily wreak havoc on an ecosystem (although we should still be careful to avoid that possibility). Translocation, which includes both reintroducing species to environments they used to inhabit and bringing in species from other areas that fill a similar niche to an endangered or extinct species, could be used to maintain the health of individual creatures and even whole ecosystems (Brand). Translocations can help maintain the ecological health of an area while a certain species is endangered, allow a threatened species to regenerate in a suitable environment, or even completely revitalize an ecosystem, as happened in the case of the wolves being reintroduced in Yellowstone National Park (Brand). This can be a good way to protect Southern Indiana, May 2020
ecosystems while also protecting endangered species and species that might otherwise be labeled as invasive.

“Tackling climate change should be the biggest part of this…”

However, we should not rely on translocation too heavily because it still runs the risk, as uncommon as it may be, of damaging or drastically altering an ecosystem as a result of a new species being added. Setting aside larger areas of land for conservation and cracking down on the illegal deforestation and habitat destruction that currently plagues places like the Amazon must be done in tandem with species conservation to protect ecosystems and the species within them in the long run (Sandy).

Ultimately, limiting anthropogenic damage should be at the heart of all conservation efforts. Preventing further environmental destruction is the most effective way to protect animals and ecosystems, as it reduces the necessity of trying to “fix” ecosystems by replacing endangered species or trying to determine if a migrating species will fit well in a new environment. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, as they say. Tackling climate change should be the biggest part of this, as it plays a huge role in the habitat destruction and forced migrations that are becoming increasingly common. Other human disruptions like deforestation and pollution should also be limited as much as possible. To create this change, the public should be trying to decrease their carbon footprints and avoid products that are known to be detrimental to the environment. We need to, as Sharon Matola did with the scarlet macaws of Belize, make saving the environment more valuable than destroying it (Barcott 110).

“We can and must change…”

There are many ways that going green is already good for business, as Jagannadha Pawan Tamvada and Mili Shrivastava discuss in a piece for The Conversation. Green companies can fill a lucrative niche among environmentally conscious consumers, they can build a good reputation for workers as ethical employers, and they can become more efficient by limiting energy costs (Tamvada and Shrivastava). Tax cuts for greener companies or tax penalties for big polluters could also encourage companies to be more environmentally conscious.

Spending money to go green now will allow us to continue to reap the “$24 trillion of non-monetized benefits” nature provides and will likely save billions or trillions of government dollars that would otherwise be necessary to deal with the consequences of climate change and biodiversity loss (Plumer). Even with these benefits, we will need to put pressure on companies and governments to implement these changes. Buying from green companies, lobbying for new legislation, and generally pressuring for more environmental care can all go a long way to ensuring that change is implemented on a much larger scale. We can and must make change if we want to keep the Earth a beautiful, diverse place for the generations that come after us.
Jaguar in Belize. Taken by one of our field cameras during our Wells International Trip in May 2019.

Works Cited


Scott Russell Sanders, Distinguished Professor of English Emeritus and an award-winning writer of fiction and non-fiction, directed the Wells Scholars Program from 1998 to 2003 and is fondly remembered by generations of Wells alums. Last semester, he generously made himself available for a well-attended, virtual question-and-answer session with current Scholars and alums, in which he shared his life story and answered questions about his amazing career. Scott has just published a new book with Indiana University Press, Small Marvels, a novel-in-stories centered around the memorable Gordon Mills (more about him below), set in Limestone, Indiana, a place “you won’t find on a map,” he says, but may remember visiting in your dreams, the good ones, that is. Here’s an excerpt from Small Marvels Scott has kindly agreed to share with us. For the full experience, reserve your own copy at a good bookstore near you. The Wells Scholars Program is partial to our new bookstore in town, Morgenstern Books (order online through https://bookshop.org/shop/Morgensterns).

“Small Marvels

“Scott Russell Sanders, "From Small Marvels"

“In Limestone, Indiana, a city tucked away among forested hills, peculiar things happen, often in the vicinity of a jack-of-all-trades named Gordon Mills. Centaurs and nymphs shelter in a local cave, alligators lurk in the sewers, warm snow falls on the Fourth of July, cornstalks rise higher than chimneys, and the northern lights shine down on the municipal dump.

Gordon takes such events in stride and deals with them as part of his work on the city maintenance crew. He earns just enough to support a boisterous family, which includes his formidable wife, Mabel, their four children, Mabel’s parents, and his widowed mother—nine souls packed into an old house that falls apart as fast as he can fix it.

Gordon knew from experience that everything on Earth is doomed to sag. Roof beams, floor joists, the spines of horses, the stems of cut flowers, the heaps of dirt over graves, his wife’s breasts, his own belly—minute by minute all were yielding under the insistence of gravity. If he could believe the scientists on TV, even the planet was slowly shrinking from the pull of molten iron at its core.

Well-fed on Mabel’s cooking, Gordon wasn’t shrinking, but his abundant flesh was drooping on his bones. His jowls wobbled beneath his beard. The muscles of his arms and shoulders, still powerful enough to lift a couch, turned as soft as bread dough when they relaxed. His chest was slipping toward his waist and his waist was slipping toward his butt, providing more territory for Mabel to clutch when they were making weary love.

“Pull a hunk of that loose,” he told her one night as she squeezed him, “and I’ll use it to make a tire for the truck.”

“Then how would I find you in the dark?” said Mabel.

Never having outgrown the smashed homeliness of a newborn—homeliness remarked by everyone present at the birth, including his mother—Gordon didn’t need to worry about losing his good looks. What scared him was the prospect of losing his strength. Weekdays, he drove trucks or fixed them, welded girders, dug sewers, patched roads. Evenings and weekends he worked odd jobs, moving furniture, cleaning gutters, building fences, trimming trees, hauling trash. If he took a weekend off, the bill collectors started breathing down his neck, because
motion leaked out of the checking account as fast as it trickled in. So if his body quit, the whole family would be in trouble.

There were enough people in his mortgaged house to field a softball team. At least for another fifteen years, until his mother and Mabel’s parents (bless their souls) passed on, and the youngest of the kids finished college, and his checks began arriving from social security, he would have to carry the household on his back. This weight, more than his mashed face or thick legs, made him recall a tortoise he had seen at a backroads zoo when he was a boy. As he watched the ancient creature lumber slowly forward, three kids climbed onto its back, weighing the tortoise down until its belly scraped the ground, but still the scaly legs kept rowing.”

— from Small Marvels: Stories

(Indiana University Press, 2022)

**CLASS NOTES**

**Class of 1990**

**Sarah Freeman** is finishing her sixth year as a commissioner with the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission. She and her husband, Ian Stewart (Maurer, JD, 2001) live in Indianapolis with their amazing daughter, Nia Stewart, and their three cats (Socks, Meredith, and Lexie) and two dogs (Bentley and Max).

**Class of 1991**

**Kyle Kramer** lives outside of Louisville, KY, with his wife Cyndi and their three children (the oldest two of whom are headed off to college in the fall). He is executive director of the Passionist Earth & Spirit Center, a nonprofit, interfaith spirituality center devoted to mindfulness, social justice, and care for the Earth. He serves as the host of the Earth & Spirit Podcast, which is part of the National Public Radio podcast family, and he recently published his second book, *Making Room: Soul-Deep Satisfaction Through Simple Living*, with Franciscan Media. He enjoys hiking, rock climbing, and spending time with his growing-up-too-fast children.
Marc Pelath lives in Chicago with his wife Diana, daughter Nell, and house beast Tigrik. He has stumbled into a second parallel career as a musician, spending most of his spare time writing, recording, and learning creative techniques in music production. In April, he released his first album, Integrals, under the name The Laconic (available on your favorite streaming service). He is well into writing and recording the second.

Alison Streeter is finishing up prerequisite coursework and submitting applications to PA School. She decided to make a career change during the COVID-19 quarantine and the week-long curfew in Atlanta in the summer of 2020. She looks forward to serving her community as a Physician Assistant! She moved to Atlanta in 2016 after living in Virginia for thirteen years. Alison has an adorable, albeit hyperactive, eighteen-month-old Miniature Schnauzer named Jasper. She reminds her fellow Wells Scholars that it’s never too late to pursue new endeavors!

Class of 1992

Sarah Ferrario continues as Chair of the Department of Greek and Latin at Catholic University in Washington, DC. This academic year she has been on sabbatical, catching up on research projects for presentations in Jerusalem and Lyon, editing a Companion to Leadership in the Greco-Roman World (Wiley-Blackwell), and, with her husband Andrew Simpson (IUB JSOM DMA ’95), co-leading a really big den of Cub Scouts. She will teach an intensive, site-based course on ancient Roman history in Rome this summer before returning to the classroom in the fall.

Khozema Shipchandler lives in Lafayette, CA. He is the Chief Operating Officer of Twilio, a technology company based in San Francisco. He is amazed at how grown up his kids are! Khozema and his wife Alefiya are savoring every moment with them. Oh, and he just recovered from Covid!
Karl Torke lives in Berkeley, CA with his wife Rochelle (IUB class of 1998) and sons Jonas and Abram. He is a vice president with the law company Elevate. Beyond work he tries (usually unsuccessfully) to keep things simple—spending time with family and friends, reading and running. He returns to Bloomington at least once a year to visit his wife’s parents and enjoys staying connected to his Hoosier roots.

Class of 1993

Aamir Malik lives in Summit, NJ with his wife Amy (also an IU alum) and his two daughters. He recently joined Pfizer as Chief Business Innovation Officer after spending 25 years at McKinsey & Company.

Class of 1994

In late 2021, Will Stephens became one of two Assistant Deputies in the Public Advocacy Division (PAD) for the District of Columbia Office of the Attorney General (OAG), DC’s elected state attorney general’s office. (Yep, he said “state.”) In that role, he helps oversee all of DC’s affirmative public interest enforcement—including civil rights, consumer protection, elder justice, worker rights, tenant rights, environmental justice, nonprofit, and antitrust. His son Ayaan also was named “Cutest Kid in This House” for the fourth straight year.

Class of 1997

Rob Tayon lives in Bangkok, Thailand with his wife and two children. He recently started a new career as a data scientist at Agoda.
Andrew Dilts teaches at Loyola Marymount University, where they are Associate Professor of Political Science and the Associate Director of the University Honors Program. They are currently working on two books: one is about the racist, sexist, and ablest roots of “human capital” theory, and the other argues for the necessity of prison and police abolition in order to fight against resurgent fascism in the US.

Charles McCrory is an Associate Professor of Chemistry and Associate Professor of Macromolecular Science and Engineering at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, MI. After graduating from Indiana University in 2004 with degrees in chemistry and mathematics, he earned his PhD in chemistry from Stanford University in 2010 and conducted his postdoctoral studies at Caltech. From 2011-2015, Charles was a research scientist for the Joint Center for Artificial Photosynthesis, a Department of Energy Innovation Hub focused on renewable energy storage. Charles joined the faculty at the University of Michigan in 2015, and he was promoted with tenure in 2022. His research focuses on developing new catalysts for solar fuels generation and wastewater remediation. His work has been recognized by several national awards including a Department of Energy Early Career Award, a National Science Foundation Career Award, and a Cottrell Scholars Award. More information about Charles’s work can be found at https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/mccrory-lab/. 
Aaron Remenschneider lives in Boston, Massachusetts with his wife Emily and two children, Lucy (5) and Henry (3). After finishing undergraduate studies at IU, he went on to medical school at Yale and completed residency and fellowship training at the Harvard combined program in Otolaryngology at Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary. He works as a surgeon/scientist, treating patients with hearing loss and running a laboratory focused on the mechanics of hearing. His research is supported by federal grants through the NIH and Department of Defense. In 2021, technology from his lab that uses 3D printing to generate biomimetic eardrum grafts was acquired by Desktop Health, where product development can continue and hopefully lead to improvements in patient care.

Jason Bell lives in London and is the Director of Partnerships at LoyaltyLion, a data-driven loyalty and engagement platform for fast-growth ecommerce merchants. Jason is married and has two daughters, who will soon turn 5 and 3. Jason misses Bloomington dearly.

Joe Mazur is an Assistant professor of Economics at Purdue, where he recently became the faculty advisor for the business fraternity Delta Sigma Pi. Joe lives in West Lafayette with his wife, Stephanie, and their three children, Izzie, Ellie, and Ben.
Dan Stanko lives in San Francisco with his wife (Mandira) and two kids (Samara, 5, and Jahan, 2). He is a Managing Director at Crosspoint Capital, a private equity firm focused on cybersecurity and infrastructure software. He and his family recently celebrated getting (and fully recovering from!) COVID by attending a relative’s Indian wedding in Mexico, shown here. Highly recommended (the wedding, not the COVID)!

Class of 2004 & 2005

Carolyn Homer ('05) and Bradley Jones ('04) welcomed a baby boy, David Homer Jones, on April 12. The family lives in the Washington, D.C. area. Carolyn is a senior associate practicing intellectual property law at Latham & Watkins, and Bradley is a shareholder practicing bankruptcy law at Odin Feldman & Pittleman.

Class of 2010

Elizabeth Davis is a PhD candidate in geology at the University of Washington in Seattle. She digs in muddy riverbanks and considers underwater data and historic documents to evaluate earthquake and landslide hazards in Washington. Her work was recently featured in a news documentary. She is thankful for having had the opportunity to participate in many exceptional field courses at IU. For fun, she helps organize disaster preparedness challenges for cargo bicyclists, who get to practice carrying emergency supplies up and down Seattle’s hills.

Aaron Dy lives in Boston and recently started working in business/corporate development for Relay Therapeutics, a clinical-stage biotech. Over the last year he’s enjoyed growing a mullet and going for long runs, especially his 4th Boston Marathon.
**Class of 2011**

Jonathan Hawkins-Pierot has finally finished his PhD in economics at Yale University. Starting this summer, he will serve the public and continue to pursue his research interests in regulation, competition, and financial inclusion at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau in Washington, D.C. Jonathan and his wife, Agathe, are looking forward to getting to know the city, throwing dinner parties, and finding good places to forage (maybe even in a garden of their own!). He can’t wait to connect with all the Wellsies living in, or passing through, the area.

Grant Manon and his wife Caroline celebrated their marriage at Alumni Hall in Bloomington in November 2021. They were honored that some of Grant’s fellow Wells Scholars were able to join the celebrations. They now live in San Francisco, CA. Grant works for Meritage Group, an investment advisor.

Allison Winstel graduated with dual master’s degrees in business and public policy (MBA/MPP) from the University of Michigan in April. She loved calling Ann Arbor and Michigan home over the past three years, making use of Michigan’s ample outdoor recreation space during the pandemic. She even achieved a goal of completing fifty-two hikes in 2021! This summer she is moving back to Chicago to begin a new role as the Chief of Staff to the CEO at mHUB, an innovation center and startup incubator for all things manufacturing and physical product/hard tech development.

**Class of 2012**

Kristie Hsu lives in San Francisco with her husband and is currently a resident physician in UCSF’s Internal Medicine program.
**Class of 2013**

**Jenny Huang** lives in Oxford, England, where she is pursuing a doctorate in political theory supervised by Professor Amia Srinivasan. As the summer months approach, she is looking forward to moving about outdoors, listening to music, writing, and sharing time with friends and family!

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**Class of 2014**

**Vinayak Vedantam** has now been living in the Bay Area for five years. He moved to Berkeley in November 2021 and has been enjoying being back in a college town, accompanied by Sophia (his fiancée) and their puppy, Clarence. Vinayak is still working as a product manager at Meta, focused on keeping bad guys off Meta platforms. In his spare time, he enjoys gaming, playing guitar, and his new obsession, bouldering/rock climbing. He'd love for any Wellsies coming to the Bay Area to reach out so they can grab coffee and go for an East Bay hike.

**John McHugh** is a Marshall Scholar at Oxford reading for degrees in politics and Chinese studies. He entered Oxford after two years in Boston, where he was Research Associate at Harvard Business School. There, he authored case studies on Chinese companies such as Huawei and Byte Dance. John also contributed to the new book, *Empires of Ideas: Creating the Modern University*, by William C. Kirby, dean emeritus of Harvard’s Faculty of Arts and Sciences. John’s time at Harvard built on all that he had learned about China in the Hamilton Lugar School and about higher education through the Board of Aeons. He was pleased to be joined in Oxford this year by fellow Wells-Marshall, Tom Sweeney, and Wells-Rhodes, Jenny Huang.
Kushal Shah is progressing towards his PhD in biostatistics at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, as a member of the Precision Health Artificial Intelligence Research (PHAIR) Lab. His research focuses on developing statistical and machine learning algorithms for precision medicine—a paradigm seeking to leverage data-driven approaches to improve medical decision-making, so therapy can be customized to each individual patient. He published his first papers last year, and his current research pertains to the use of continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) in Type 1 diabetes patients. Outside of school, he has also recently gotten into climbing (both bouldering and rope climbing). His favorite hikes over the last year included Grandfather Mountain (NC), Hawksbill Mountain (NC) and Brasstown Bald (GA).

As performing arts organizations came back to life this year, so did Gabriel “Gabe” Young’s schedule. Normally the Second Oboe at the San Francisco Opera, Gabe has served as the Acting Principal Oboe for the entirety of the 2022-23 season. The company welcomed its new music director, Eun Sun Kim, this fall, and looks forward to big celebrations for next year’s Centennial season (we’re halfway to you, IU). Gabe, still the youngest member of the orchestra, also serves as a union representative, holding an elected position on the Orchestra Committee, where he advises on artistic and operational matters and protects the orchestra’s collectively-bargained contract. He lives in San Francisco with his partner, fellow IU alum and friend of the program, Olivia Malone, who recently graduated from Stanford Law School and will begin work at a firm in the city this fall.

Jonah Andreatta spent the fall teaching at Western High School in Russiaville, IN, leading the marching band to its 18th state championship. At the beginning of 2022, he relocated to the San Francisco Bay Area and currently teaches concert band, jazz, and elementary music with the Berkeley Unified School District. He is loving everything that the Bay Area has to offer, including living so close to fellow class of 2015 scholar Sophia Muston! Jonah is also enjoying the art, activism, and outdoor activities that Berkeley and San Francisco are known for.
**Rhi (Lucy) Battersby** lives in Washington, DC with her fiancé Johnny and their new kitten, Nimbus. Rhi is the clinical manager of an independent abortion clinic and is a passionate advocate for equity and justice in reproductive healthcare. One of the highlights of her year so far was visiting Wellsies Sophia ’15, Jonah ’15, and Vinayak ’17 in the Bay Area this spring. Come say hi when you’re in DC!

**Sophia Muston** learned a lot from her job as a case manager at Episcopal Community Services of San Francisco. She recently wrapped up that job, so that she can pursue her MSW at UC Berkeley this fall. She enjoys growing backyard vegetables, contributing to the turnover of North Berkeley’s little free libraries, and hiking with her and her fiancé Vinayak’s new dog Clarence. She has loved having fellow Class of 2015 Wells scholar Jonah Andreatta live within walking distance this year. Feel free to reach out if you find yourself in the Bay Area!

**Joseph Vaz** moved to New York City in August to pursue a doctoral degree in piano performance at the CUNY Graduate Center, where he has just finished his first year in the program. He will be traveling plenty this summer, for festivals and performances in Canada, Austria, and stateside. Living in Washington Heights with fellow Class of 2019 Wells Scholar/good friend Luka Marinkovic, Joseph continues to enjoy the school lifestyle while working at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church and the Mina Rees Library. Whenever Wells Scholars are visiting New York, he would love to meet up for coffee anywhere in the city!

**Catherine (“Cat”) Xu** works as a litigation assistant at the Natural Resources Defense Council in Washington, DC. Outside her 9-5 job, she’s been really enjoying watercolor painting, trying new recipes (and perfecting old favorites), and dancing to YouTube Zumba videos with her long-distance bestie. In the fall, she will be attending Yale Law School and is excited to be back in the classroom of Prof. Doug Kysar (WSP ’91). Sometime before then, she hopes to finally become a certified Zumba instructor.
Lauren Ehrmann is delighted to be completing her long-awaited Fulbright (awarded in 2020) as an English Teaching Assistant at Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in Jerusalem/Al-Quds. Bezalel is an exciting and eclectic place, and Lauren has been able to work on everything from English tutoring for Arabic-speaking students to heritage preservation in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher to a rapid design workshop focused on the future of public transit. After her Fulbright ends this fall, she is looking forward to reuniting with fellow Wells scholar Coleton Hast in Hualien, Taiwan.

Neil Shah currently lives in Chicago and is a Senior Associate Consultant with Bain and Company. In his time at Bain, he has worked on a variety of projects and topics, including private equity, racial equity and social justice, commercial insurance, and agriculture. He plans to take a four-month leave of absence at the start of 2023 to work with a non-profit in India, Shrimad Rajchandra Love and Care. Outside of work, Neil invests significantly in spirituality. He often travels to India to spend time with his spiritual Guru, Pujya Gurudevshri Rakeshji, at the Shrimad Rajchandra Ashram in Dharampur, India. These experiences serve as reinvigorating reminders of the bigger missions in life and help keep everything in perspective. When in Chicago, Neil does his best to stay active, participating in volleyball and pickleball leagues, alongside other sports.

After graduating from IU in 2020, Neha Srinivasan moved to Washington, DC, where she works for the Bipartisan Policy Center’s federal lobbying and advocacy team. In the fall, Neha will begin law school at Yale with the hope of exploring both domestic and international public interest law. She looks forward to connecting with fellow scholars and Hoosiers who are living or just passing through New Haven!
Tiffany Xie lives in Chicago, where she is finishing her first year as a medical student at the University of Chicago. At Chicago, she helps teach cooking classes for diabetes patients and is planning to do research about housing and health this summer. She enjoys walks along the lakefront, playing board games, and cooking with friends. She also recently started powerlifting!

Asmaa Mahoui graduated last May with the class of 2021 and is currently working as an associate for the Medical & Scientific Affairs team of Roche, helping guide strategy in the cardiometabolism space. This fall, she will be attending medical school at the University of California San Francisco while jointly pursuing a master’s degree at UC Berkeley centered in health equity. In her free time, when she’s not FaceTiming other Wellsies, Asmaa reads, boulders, and plays tennis.

Margaret Schnabel has spent the past year in England, where she is completing a master’s degree in World Literature at Oxford and missing the Midwestern sunshine. Her master’s dissertation examines how diasporic and Indigenous feminist poets of color use sonic play to disrupt colonial visions of legal subjectionhood. This fall, she will start a PhD in English at Harvard, where she will specialize in contemporary American poetry. She would love to grab coffee with any Boston-area Wellsies and welcomes emails from anyone interested in studying at Oxford.
Sydney Adams recently graduated with a BS in psychology, a minor in epidemiology, and a certificate in clinical psychological science. Near the end of her senior year, she defended her Honors thesis (which investigated racial-ethnic differences in the diagnosis and treatment of ADHD in a large-health claims dataset) and received the Provost’s and Executive Dean’s awards for undergraduate research in the social and applied sciences, as well as the Cheryl Burnham Buhler and Robert Weiskopf awards from the psychology department. After graduating, she took a few weeks off to go camping and spend time with family and friends. Now she is working as a full-time visiting research associate for IU’s Developmental Psychopathology Lab. She’s incredibly grateful for the support of the Wells Scholars Program and others, and she’s very excited to get to know Bloomington post-grad!

Amna Ahmed graduated in May with degrees in international studies, political science, and economics. This summer she will be traveling abroad for a month and then getting ready for the Windy City. She is excited to move to Chicago in August and begin working as an Associate at L.E.K. Consulting! If you’re in the area, she would be more than happy to connect over a coffee and hear some advice on navigating the city/corporate world.

Kali Konstantinopoulos graduated in May with a B.S. in Intelligent Systems Engineering and a B.A. in mathematics with a minor in chemistry. She is now pursuing MD-PhD training jointly with the Indiana University School of Medicine and Purdue Biomedical Engineering. She will continue her research in the mathematical modeling of disease with potential applications in personalized medicine.
After returning from her study abroad experience at St. Anne’s College at the University of Oxford, Hana Shafique jumped right back into life on the IUB campus for her senior year. From publishing a paper in the Cannabis and Cannabinoid Research Journal to working alongside the Office of the President with the Board of Aeons to successfully defending her independent major in Scientific Communication, this final year has truly been one she will never forget, and one that could not have been possible without the support of the Wells Scholars Program. She was honored to be the recipient of multiple university awards such as the Elvis J. Stahr Senior Recognition award, the Herman C. Hudson Scholastic Excellence award, and the Sharon Stephens Brehm Excellence in Research award. She is humbled, grateful, and absolutely ecstatic to be starting medical school at Duke University School of Medicine this coming fall.

Walker Smith has used electronic music techniques to convert data from his chemistry research into sounds that represent the molecules he makes as a chemist. “The Sound of Molecules” is viewable on YouTube, and “Chromatic Chemistry” will be coming shortly! His innovative work was recognized with the Jacobs School of Music’s Innovation Competition, which will allow him to develop his performances into a “Music & Science” show that will debut at WonderLab Museum in Bloomington in September 2022. If you’ll be around Bloomington then, you won’t want to miss it! He will also be presenting “The Sound of Molecules” this summer at the International Computer Music Conference in Ireland. Walker is currently studying electronic music in Paris at IRCAM, one of the foremost institutions for electronic music and acoustics research, where he is continuing to learn new ways to marry his scientific and musical interests.

Joye Tracey graduated in May with a degree in biology and minors in international studies and Spanish. In her senior year, she completed her honors thesis in biology on the effect of cannabinoid receptors on neurite outgrowth and regeneration. This summer, she is excited to relocate to San Francisco, where she will be working as a Clinical Research Coordinator with the Brain and Spinal Injury Center at UCSF, a group conducting research on traumatic brain injury.
Wisdom Ibikunle has spent this past summer studying abroad in Copenhagen, her first time traveling abroad without her family and her first time in Europe. She has greatly appreciated the courses she has taken while abroad, which have shown her that while Denmark is not the utopia it is often made out to be, it is much more tolerant regarding race and sexuality than the U.S. During her time abroad, she has visited Malmö, Sweden, and Rome as well. Her travels this summer have given her more wanderlust, and she hopes to continue to travel after she graduates in the spring (or even before then!).

Matthias Benko spent the past year continuing to grow IU’s birding club, Bloomington Birders. As part of the club’s affiliation with the National Audubon Society, Matthias was invited to attend a bird walk at Jasper-Pulaski Fish and Wildlife Area with current Indiana Senator Todd Young. Thanks to the generosity of the Wells Scholars Program, he studied abroad in Monteverde, Costa Rica this past spring, where he focused on the territoriality of the Clay-colored Thrush in response to conspecific vocalizations from different localities. This summer, he will create an equitable tree management plan for the Town of Zionsville, and, in the fall, he will head to DC as a part of IU’s Washington Leadership Program.

Heidi Peng is a rising senior at IU, studying for a Psychology BA and Graphic Design BFA. She is the president of two student organizations on campus, the American Institute of Graphic Arts and Diverse Dance Crew. She owns her own small business, HPdesign. Heidi will soon be a published author: her autobiographical account Yellow is currently in production. Heidi plans to attend law school after she graduates. Over the summer, she also went to Copenhagen, Denmark for the DIS Graphic Design program.
Adebowale Adelekan is currently training as part of a six-member team (three from IU, three from Purdue) to participate in a supercomputing cluster competition in Dallas, TX in November. He also took three summer classes, with one of them, (“What is America?”) leading to a revolution in his understanding of America and its history. He will be starting an externship with PricewaterhouseCoopers in late June while continuing to sharpen his skills for the upcoming cluster competition.

Zoe Bardon is a rising junior Wells Scholar. This last year has been action-packed for Zoe. She served as Deputy Director of Activism for College Democrats of Indiana and led the organization’s campaign against Indiana H.B. 1134, banning the teaching of “critical race theory” in schools. Additionally, the O’Neill School for Public and Environmental Affairs published Zoe’s report on Indiana local government officials’ working relationships with nonprofits. When school is not in session, Zoe has been traveling around Europe. This summer, Zoe is living in Denmark and studying democratic education and sex work. In the fall, she will participate in IU’s Political Science program and intern in Washington, D.C.
Over the last year, Madelyn Mustaine has been involved in health policy research including writing articles on Medicaid health equity published by Academy Health, developing the IU Mental Health Initiative Report, and synthesizing articles on the opioid crisis. She also works at the IU Health Center as a peer educator and, for 180 Degrees Consulting, as a team manager. She is spending her summer in London and Amsterdam studying comparative public healthcare before entering her junior year. In August, Madelyn plans to declare her intent to complete a Master’s in Public Affairs at IU.

Joelle Jackson, a sophomore studying anthropology and folklore & ethnomusicology, had a great second year at IU and loved experiencing fully in-person college for the first time! In December 2021, Joelle presented research from an internship with the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage at the IU Undergraduate Research Conference in Indianapolis. Through this internship, she published four articles in Folklife Magazine. In the spring 2022 semester, she joined the board of the National Association of Student Anthropologists as well as the IU Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education Student Advisory Board. She also began working for Traditional Arts Indiana as an undergraduate research assistant and will be participating in fieldwork in Indianapolis later in the summer. During the spring semester, Joelle chaired the IU Journal of Undergraduate Research’s Research Slam competition, and in April, she received the Sam Burgess Library Research Award for a paper about the Benin Bronzes. This summer, she is studying abroad in Dublin, Ireland, and she looks forward to studying abroad again in Canterbury, England in the fall! She is immensely grateful to the Wells Program for making all these experiences possible.
Cooper Sykes just finished his sophomore year at IU as an Environmental and Sustainability Studies and Geography major. After a phenomenal trip to Berlin with his fellow Wells Scholars, Cooper is now working as a Student Geospatial Sciences Volunteer at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in Durham, North Carolina for the summer. He will be working with geospatial datasets for the betterment of human and environmental health. In Fall 2022, Cooper will be studying abroad in Vienna, Austria to further his understanding of sustainability in a global context and work on his German minor. Cooper looks forward to hearing beautiful symphonies performed by the Vienna Philharmonic and exploring Austrian culture.

Savannah Price is a rising junior from Shepherdsville, Kentucky. This summer, she will be finishing up the manuscript for her crochet pattern book, which is coming out Fall 2023 with Page Street Publishing! In the fall, she is heading to the University of Kent in Canterbury, England to spend a semester across the pond, where she will take history courses and perfect her British accent.

Anastasia Spahr is a rising sophomore double-majoring in English (with a concentration in creative writing) and French. This past year, she was a member of Rotaract at IU, the Publishing and Editing Club, Writers Talk, a book club called Bookmarked, and Les Chevaliers (French Club). She was also a Hutton Honors Ambassador and gave individualized tours to incoming Honors students. At the conclusion of her freshman year, she was awarded the Barbara S. Markman Scholarship in recognition of her performance in the English department. This summer, she is spending her time writing a novel and traveling to France with her family.
The Herman B Wells Giving Society acknowledges the unbelievable opportunities alums received as Scholars and recognizes the role one can play in facilitating these opportunities for current and future Scholars.

The Society honors the loyal commitment and spirit of philanthropy of our alumni contributing at or above $1,000 in a calendar year, and our young alums (WSP graduates in the past five years) at or above $500 in a calendar year. One-time donations, monthly recurring gifts, pledge contributions, and employee matching gifts are all recognized. HBW Giving Society members are celebrated annually on the WSP website and in the newsletter.

We are grateful to the following Wells Scholar alums that contributed a leadership gift to the Program and joined the HBW Society in 2021:

- Stephen Browne, 2014
- Catherine Clements, 1992
- Carolyn Homer, 2005
- Lauren Wolven, 1992
- Bradley Jones, 2004
- Jay Krutulis, 1990 and Christy Krutulis
- Tim Lemper, 1991
- Grant Manon, 2011
- John McHugh, 2014
- Matthew McQueen, 1990
- Nate Meyers, 2014
- Ward Myers, 1993
- Marc Pelath, 1991
- Tyler Poniatowski, 2000
- Khozema Shipchandler, 1992
- Dan Stanko, 2003
- Sarah TeKolste, 2011
- Karl Torke, 1992 and Rochelle Torke
- Marion Forsyth Werkheiser, 1997
- Anne Wymore, 1994
- Pai-Ling Yin, Ph.D., 1991
- Anonymous (1)
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