

News Release

Greenhouse Gas Research Takes Nannenga to France

By Elizabeth Tollefson on Wednesday, September 2, 2015



Research on greenhouse gas emissions has taken Associate Professor Katy Nannenga from the wheat field to the golf course. This summer her ongoing study has taken her across the ocean to France.

A professional relationship with Guillaume Echevarria that began when Nannenga was in graduate school at Purdue University was rekindled last summer when she was in Germany presenting at a conference.

"I took a trip to France while I was in Germany to visit Guillaume and discuss a possible internship exchange program focused on the study of greenhouse gas emissions," she explains. "They already were working on experiments cleaning contaminated soils, known as phytoremediation, but not really looking at the greenhouse gas emissions. Together, we want to take a look at both soil and air contamination and what can be done to lessen the impact on the environment as a whole."

The idea for an internship abroad came to fruition this summer when 2015 graduate Amber Suchy, a double major in biology and environmental science, travelled to France to establish a study combining of phytoremediation with greenhouse gas emission research. It fulfilled Nannenga's hope for an expanded view of environmental impact.

Along with Echevarria and his technicians at the University of Lorraine, Suchy set up the greenhouse gas chambers and taught them how to take samples for the study.

Four weeks after Suchy arrived in France, Nannenga followed. She conducted a seminar on the greenhouse gas research taking place on the Lincoln Park Golf Course in Grand Forks, N.D. , as well as look at the work being done by Echevarria.

Together, Suchy and Nannenga were able to take a field trip to the Vosges Mountains to see plants known as hyper-accumulators, meaning they accumulate high levels of metals making them



particularly effective soil cleaners.

The visit by Nannenga also opened the opportunity for students in her environmental science and remediation techniques class to take on a project spring semester 2016 where they will collaborate with a group in France. "We will have a 9 a.m. class in the spring, and we will be meeting with a class in France where it will be 4 p.m.," Nannenga explains.

The international learning experience will take place through the State University of New York (SUNY) Center for Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL), one of the leading international organizations focused on the emerging field of Globally Networked Learning.

"This team teaching across the U.S. and France will be an opportunity to bring an international learning experience to my classroom that is also a real life study to find ways to clean the environment that are both cost effective and environmentally beneficial," Nannenga continues.

The potential for a future internship exchange would offer opportunities for students from both France and the U of M Crookston to learn abroad. "The details are still being worked on, but we are hoping to pursue this exchange program in an effort to broaden the internship experience for students in environmental science," Nannenga says.

The contamination and cleaning of the environment impacts everyone and everything on the planet. Bringing these kinds of hands-on learning experiences to students may help the Crookston campus become part of discovering a solution for the environment that has the potential to make the world a safer, healthier place to live.

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In the photo, at top, left to right, are Katy Nannenga, Amber Suchy 2015, and Guillaume Echevarria.

At bottom, right, Amber Suchy points out one of the hyperaccumulators they looked at during a field trip to the Vosges Mountains.

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