
The Institute for the Environment & Sustainability (IES) Alumni Newsletter

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Message from the Director

Greetings IES Alumni and Friends:
In 2016, we sadly lost two people whose contributions to IES were immeasurable. **Gene Willeke**, the IES director for 27 years, passed away in January. Gene was a huge force in making IES what it is today.



Orie Loucks passed away in September. Orie, an ecologist, joined Miami's Zoology Department in 1989. Like Gene, he was a huge proponent of multidisciplinary studies and approaches towards environmental problem solving. Gene and Orie will be greatly missed, but their legacies will continue to thrive in IES. See the dedication by Sandi Woy-Hazelton at the end of the newsletter. This past year was also filled with many rewarding special events. In February alumnus **Dan Irwin** from NASA was our keynote speaker at the annual banquet. That was followed by our Willeke Lecture by **Gabe Filippelli**, the Director of the Center for Urban Health at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. In March we held a symposium on interdisciplinary environmental research with colleagues from Zambia and visited Zambia in June through [an IES study abroad](#)



[workshop](#) studying environmental and health impacts of mining. In October, we celebrated the newly-renovated Shideler Hall with an IES alumni career panel and a keynote by IES alum **Cynthia Sonich-Mullin**, Director of US EPA's National Risk Management Research Laboratory in Cincinnati, OH.

An exciting initiative for this next year is working with [Miami's new Institute for Food](#) and the new 35-acre organic farm. Together we are working on a new undergraduate IES co-major in Food Systems & Food Studies. Tying into this, the Feb 6 Willeke Lecture is featuring **Elizabeth Hoover** from Brown University whose research explores [indigenous food systems and environmental health and justice in Native communities](#). A highlight for me this year was co-teaching a new environmental film studies course for undergraduate Sustainability Scholars and Social Justice Scholars, part of [Miami's University Academic Scholars Program](#) (UASP). I had the great pleasure of co-teaching with **Steve Lippmann**, the Chair of Sociology and **Ron Scott**, film professor extraordinaire. The course reminded me of what IES is really all about. Our mission is to promote leadership in addressing environmental problems and promoting a more sustainable society. I am proud to be part of IES and would like to thank all of our alumni, staff, faculty, affiliates and students who share our mission.

All the best,
Jonathan

In Memoriam: Dr. Gene Willeke

[Dr. Gene Willeke](#) exerted an enormous influence on all the people who worked with him. And I emphasize **with**.

His strength was in getting people to work with one another. To Gene, "interdisciplinary" wasn't symbolic jargon, it was fundamental to successfully addressing environmental concerns. Gene never taught "answers" - he built the IES curriculum around the process of problem-solving. While inspiring his students, and encouraging colleagues, he consistently tried to get people to cooperate in working on projects that would make a difference. Gene will be missed, but his lessons live on in you.



Warm regards,
Sandi Woy-Hazleton

Featured IES News: Miami's New Institute for Food Housed in IES

Miami University's new Institute for Food, housed in IES and Co-directed by **Peggy Shaffer** (History and Global and Intercultural Studies) and **Alfredo Huerto** (Biology), fosters innovative solutions that support healthy eating, healthy food, healthy communities and a healthy planet. For more information about the Institute for Food, see these stories:



- [The Institute for Food at Miami University](#)
- [Institute for Food farm produce helps local pantry](#)
- [Institute for Food harvests first crops](#)

IES in the News

- [IES Director Jonathan Levy unites Miami and Zambia scientists in environmental research](#)
- [IES affiliates and Miami's Center for Aquatic and Watershed Sciences recognized](#)
- [Daryl Baldwin, Myaamia Center Director and IES Partner receive MacArthur "genius grant"](#)
- [Miami's GreenHawks Media online publication, advised by IES Affiliate Annie-Laurie Blair](#)

Alumni Spotlight IES alumni provide valuable career insight

On October 10-13, Miami staff, students, and alumni celebrated the re-opening of Shideler Hall. [Read more on the CAS news website.](#)



[Click here to view the full IES newsletter.](#)

[Institute for the Environment & Sustainability](#)

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