



For Immediate Release

**UMSL BIOLOGIST DR. AIMEE DUNLAP LAUNCHING MULTI-YEAR STUDY OF BEE BEHAVIORS AND URBAN AGRICULTURE POSSIBILITIES ALONG INTERSTATE HIGHWAYS AT GREEN HOUSE VENTURE CAMPUS IN ST. LOUIS**

St. Louis, Mo., January 16, 2024 – A nationally-known cognitive ecology scientist at the University of Missouri-St. Louis Biology Department and the Whitney R. Harris World Ecology Center is launching a multi-year study of behavioral patterns of the bee populations living at an urban agriculture research site along Interstate 44 in the City of St. Louis and the positive impact of those behaviors on food production and sustainability.

Led by Associate Professor of Biology Dr. Aimee Dunlap, the study will compare the nesting, foraging and pollination patterns of bees living at the Green House Venture’s Embankment Greenway to that of bees living in rural areas. The study follows the multi-year development of the Embankment Greenway with native plants successfully establishing a bee pollinator habitat supporting approximately 50 species of bees.

“This study will help determine if busy urban roadsides with green spaces can be repurposed into thriving bee habitats and sustainable parts of the nation’s food production system,” Dunlap said.

A team of UMSL scientists and graduate students with the Dunlap Laboratory and the Whitney R. Harris World Ecology Center will study how different species of bees forage at the site, including the collection and distribution of pollen among different species of nearby plants. Dunlap and her team will also collect pollen samples from the site and develop a pollen library for research purposes.

As part of the new study, Dunlap’s research team will invite students from four nearby elementary schools to observe the behaviors of the bees being studied and learn about the bees’ role in urban food production.

“We will use digital cameras with Go-Pro technology in the field and microscopes in school laboratories to help students understand the important behaviors and resulting impacts

of the bees that we are studying,” Dunlap added. “We will also search for underground bee nests with the students and teach them the life cycles and habits of important bee populations.”

“Dr. Dunlap’s study is the next major step forward in our efforts to boost urban agriculture and sustainable food production research and education in the City of St. Louis,” said Tom Purcell, President of the Green House Venture. “We seek to inspire future generations of St. Louis plant scientists to help develop a sustainable and affordable food supply in our region. This study will have a dramatic impact on helping us achieve our mission.”

### **About Green House Venture**

The Green House Venture is an innovative STEM education program dedicated to educating and inspiring elementary students to create a sustainable world. Through hands-on experiences in bioscience and urban agriculture, the GHV equips students with the knowledge and skills needed to address pressing challenges in science, nutrition and dietetics, and urban agriculture. The organization aims to make a meaningful impact on the future of education and sustainable practices. For more information about The Green House Venture, visit [www.greenhouvestl.org](http://www.greenhouvestl.org) or send an email to [craig@workman-company.com](mailto:craig@workman-company.com).

### **About University of Missouri–St. Louis**

The [University of Missouri–St. Louis](http://www.umsl.edu) (UMSL) is the largest public research university in eastern Missouri, and the third largest in the state, priding itself on creating greater access to higher education and opportunity for its nearly 15,000 diverse students. UMSL confers nearly 3,000 degrees annually and offers a wide range of baccalaureate and master’s degrees, two education specialist degrees and 17 doctoral degrees, including the only professional doctor of optometry program in Missouri. Established in 1963 as the fourth campus of the University of Missouri System, UMSL boasts more than 117,000 alumni, 73 percent of whom live and work in the St. Louis region.

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