

## NEWS RELEASE

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CAMPUS RELATIONS

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Photos can be found at:

[http://www.pnc.edu/cd/news/newsphotos/Timothy\\_Ames.jpg](http://www.pnc.edu/cd/news/newsphotos/Timothy_Ames.jpg)

Caption: Timothy Ames, of Knox, examines a crawfish that he found at the PNC Bards' Pond during the week-long Science Camp held at PNC for Starke County middle school students.

[http://www.pnc.edu/cd/news/newsphotos/Spears\\_Kerr.jpg](http://www.pnc.edu/cd/news/newsphotos/Spears_Kerr.jpg)

Caption: Melissa Spears, left, and Amanda Kerr, from North Judson-San Pierre Middle School, hold synthetic bones they found during a mock forensics dig that was part of their Science Camp activities at PNC.

## PNC Brings Starke County Students to Campus for Science Camp

WESTVILLE - Purdue University North Central became a learning lab for a group Starke County middle school students and teachers who participated in a science and health camp.

This is the second year that Starke County middle school students and educators were welcomed to campus to enjoy an array of learning activities that helped to pique their interest in science, increase their awareness of potential health science and medical professions and introduce them to a university campus and classrooms.

This program was designed by Christine Brletic, associate director of Northwest Indiana Area Health Education Center, in close collaboration with Dr. Nancy Marthakis, PNC associate professor of Biology, and a Doctor of Osteopathy. The camp is made possible by a grant from the Starke County Community Foundation and presented through a partnership of the Northwest Indiana Area Health Education Center and PNC.

Most all of the 21 students who attend Knox Middle School and North Judson-San Pierre Middle School are interested in science and health care professions. The camp is intended to not only reinforce their enthusiasm for science, but to give them a broader look at the subject and give them hands-on learning opportunities and give them a look at career. For most students this is the first opportunity they've have to be on a university campus and learn from a PNC faculty member. Plus, members of the PNC Pre-Med Club came out to mentor the Starke County students for the week and help with activities.

"One of our major goals with this camp is to stimulate interest in health care and biological sciences early on, so that students are better prepared for these disciplines when they enter the college," said Marthakis, PNC associate professor of Biology, and a Doctor of Osteopathy. "Our goal is to hook a kid on science or health care." Knox

Middle School teacher Loretta Kosloske took part in the camp so that she could become familiar with new classroom exercises and activities for her students. "I've heard very positive feedback from the students," she said. "It is great to see them working and participating in these learning activities."

While the students attend schools that are cross-county rivals and are in fifth through eighth grades and may not usually interact at school, the camp brings them together, exposing them to yet another new experience.

Melissa Spears, a ninth grade student at North Judson-San Pierre Middle School, hopes to become a pediatric nurse. "The camp makes me want to learn more," she said.

Jenna Landrum, a Knox ninth grader who hopes for a career in zoology said, "There were so many activities. I liked using the microscope."

During the week the students learned about the human body, blood and the circulatory system, bacteria and communicable disease and human anatomy. They visited the PNC nursing lab and worked with SIM man - a full size mannequin of the human body and also had a chance to view a cadaver in the PNC lab.

The student also learned about forensic science with a mock crime scene that Marthakis set up at the PNC pond. The week ended with a tour of Starke County Hospital.

PNC student Andy Tanksley, a biology major who is president of the campus Pre-Med Club helped out with the week's activities. He is in the midst of serving an eight-week internship at St. Mary Medical Center in Hobart.

"I never had the opportunity for a learning experience like this when I was younger," he said. "If I had, I may have decided a lot sooner that I wanted to become a doctor. I've enjoyed the opportunity to mentor the students. I answer their questions and help them through their activities. We're all having a great time."

Kelly Manning, of the Regional Coordinator for 21st Century Scholars Program in Knox, commended the partnership between the Northwest Indiana Area Health Education Center, the Starke County Community Foundation and PNC.

"This is a tremendous learning experience for our students," she said. "It gets them thinking about higher education, it exposes them to career opportunities and gets them thinking about what they may want to study in high school to prepare for college. The students have an opportunity to see how many careers are open to them. It is enlightening for all of us."

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