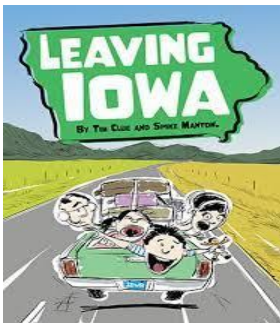


Fourth Quarter
2023

LAB MISSION NEWS

*"Do not go where the path
may lead, go instead
where there is no path and
leave a trail."*

Ralph Waldo Emerson



University Laboratory High School's mission is to enhance the lives of young people through innovative learning, discovery, and public engagement.

Lab Mission Updates

Lightening round of updates by Uni faculty at recent Faculty Meetings:

Brian Lauthen updated the faculty on the Illinois Junior Classical League South Latin Convention he hosted at Uni on Saturday, April 22 involving several Illinois schools. At the convention, students participated and competed in skits, costume contests, various tests, Latin quiz bowl, Olympic events, and artworks. He is also looking forward to working with the U of I's summer Classics Camp.

Chris Guyotte recently finished directing Leaving Iowa for the Twin City Theatre company which focuses on presenting productions relating to underrepresented voices and cultures.

Kaila Simpson and Dr. Valerie O'Brien took 9th grade Uni students to Booker T. Washington school on May 8. The Uni students coached the younger students about geometry vocabulary and concepts. Uni students will be laser cutting the geometric designs of the BTW students using Uni the Maker Lab's laser cutter.

Christian Millan-Hernandez and Cyndi Smyser were interviewed by Matthew Trohan of Q Magazine (a University of Illinois magazine for student environmental writing projects) about their challenges teaching climate change. The subject can be difficult to approach because the reality is that there is nothing on the horizon that can easily take the place of fossil fuels. Both Uni teachers try to balance the negative news with research projects and experiments to help students understand the challenges and potential solutions.

Lynda Lopez reports that on May 3rd the U of I VR team from the School of Literatures, Cultures and Linguistics visited the French 3 class for a block period Virtual Reality activity. Each of the teachers in our department was able to pop in for a few minutes to watch the team and students in action. The team will come to a future department meeting for a debrief and determine what might be the next steps.



Lopez reports that the collaboration began when a Shedd reviewer reached out to Japanese teacher, Mari Porter. Lopez says, “Tricia Thrasher, Mr. Sadler and one assistant came to our department meeting to share the project information and see what our level of interest might be. I invited them to come work with my French 3 class. I am asking my French 3 students to come up with some possible ideas of lessons they might find engaging and will share those ideas back to the team to see what they might be able to develop further. The VR Team is working with other schools here in town, as well as schools in Texas and California. Possibly they could envision a wider collaboration and dissemination if we created some lessons and engaged virtually with other schools”.

More information on the U of I Team providing the VR headset experiment can be found [here](#).

Professional Learning Communities (PLC) were launched fourth quarter, meeting twice after school for 50 minutes. The groups identified were:

- a. Campus Collaborations
- b. Community Engagement
- c. Classroom Experimentation
- d. Lab Mission Incubator (for those new to Lab Mission)
- e. Faculty Writing Projects

The PLC shared notes reveal their group’s engagement in collaborative lab mission development and are very helpful. Thank you to all who shared their ideas about how to make the PLC concept a success at Uni High.

Opportunities:

[Booker T. Washington Stem Academy](#) is very open to collaborating with Uni teachers. If you’re interested in planning something for next year, Valerie O’Brien would be glad to discuss models for collaborative activities with BTW and to support you in planning your activity.

[Professional Development funding](#) of up to \$1000/teacher is available. This money can be used to fund professional associations dues or attend conferences. These associations typically encourage sharing of teaching methods amongst colleagues and can be a gateway to lab mission opportunities.

Teaching Research:

Siebel Center for Design’s “Immersion” event for local teachers who are using inquiry based, project based, and problem-based learning has been rescheduled for the Fall of 2023. Make sure to document any relevant student work this year if interested in presenting at the poster session.

HAVE A WONDERFUL SUMMER! Share your **lab mission/activities/photos/links** for inclusion in the faculty meetings/newsletter. Contact levans@illinois.edu.



