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Detroit area students find OU beekeeping program a real honey

By Dan Bodene, contributing writer

About 75 students from the Jerry L. White School in Detroit visited Oakland University this May to learn about honey bees and beekeeping from a team of local experts. And the payoff was pretty sweet.

The Jerry L. White School is the newest special education center in Detroit, providing educational services to students ages 14 to 19. All are moderately or severely cognitively impaired, or severely multiply impaired.

Dyanne Tracy, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Department of Teacher Development and Educational Studies, organized and led the program. She also leads the Apiary Science in Schools program at OU, which "teaches teachers" about beekeeping to help them integrate it into K-16 curricula.

"Bees have been in the news so much in the past few years because of the diseases that are affecting them," Tracy said. "It's important to show students how important bees are to the environment and ecosystem."

The apiary experts at the event also included Dawn Pickard, Ph.D., associate professor in the Department of Teacher Development and Educational Studies; her spouse, Tom Stapleton; D. David Newlin, Ph.D., a lecturer in the Department of Chemistry; Carol Jones, Ph.D., a science consultant with the Macomb Intermediate School District; and her spouse, Jerry Jones.

Students first watched short video segments about honey bees and beekeeping, including an Oakland television commercial where the campus apiary is highlighted in three photos. Throughout, they had opportunities to ask questions, such as, how do you treat a bee sting? (Answer: with toothpaste, meat tenderizer or ammonia.)

Then, they made a beeline to several interactive stations where Tracy's team showed them the tools and techniques of maintaining a bee colony.

At the end of the program, each student enjoyed a final treat of honey from a honey stick. Then, it was off to lunch in Oakland Center before the trip back to Detroit.

For more information on the Apiary Science in Schools program at OU, visit the website at [Apiary Science](#).



Students from Detroit were able to interact with honey bees and beekeepers through OU's apiary program.

SUMMARY

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