



Mettler-Cherry Fills New Director Role At NGRREC

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EAST ALTON – Former Southwestern Illinois College Dean of Math and Sciences Paige Mettler-Cherry has joined the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center (NGRRECsm), a division of Lewis and Clark Community College, as the new Director of Operations and Strategic Initiatives.

As part of NGRREC’s leadership team, Mettler-Cherry will be responsible for overseeing the strategic direction for the education and conservation departments, along with supporting research operations.

“My career in higher education gives me the best of both worlds, working with students and conducting research,” she said. “I am passionate about conservation and love introducing students to science, ecology and the great outdoors.”

Mettler-Cherry started her career as an undergraduate research assistant at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE), working with Professor of Plant Biology Marian Smith.

“I was extremely lucky to meet Dr. Smith - she not only introduced me to floodplain ecology, but also encouraged me to go on to graduate school,” Mettler-Cherry said. “As a first-generation college student in my family, the mentoring she provided opened doors that I did not even know existed.”

Mettler-Cherry is also an expert on the threatened plant species, Decurrent False Aster (*Boltonia decurrens*), which is an endemic species to the Illinois River floodplain. Throughout her career, she has worked with various federal agencies including the U.S Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service.

She also received the President’s Scholar Teacher Award during her time at Lindenwood University, where she was a professor of biology.

“Lewis and Clark Community College has a wonderful sense of community to go with a beautiful, historic campus,” Mettler-Cherry said. “I am very excited to bring my experiences to NGRREC and look forward to working with Lewis and Clark students while becoming more involved with conservation and outreach efforts in the community and beyond.”

For more information, visit www.ngrrrec.org or contact Mettler-Cherry at pmettlercherry@lc.edu.

National Great Rivers Research and Education Center (NGRREC?)

Founded in 2002 as a collaborative partnership between the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Lewis and Clark Community College, NGRREC is dedicated to the study of great river systems and the communities that use them. The center aspires to be a leader in scholarly research, education, and outreach related to the interconnectedness of large rivers, their floodplains, watersheds, and their associated communities. To learn more about NGRREC, visit www.ngrrrec.org.