Title: Food Insecurity Rudimentary Education for Local Youth (FIREFLY)

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Objective: Develop and deliver a series of lessons on food insecurity and sustainability to middle school students utilizing interactive activities.

Methods: Klondike Middle School (eighth grade students) served as the community partner for this initiative. Two Purdue students majoring in pharmacy and engineering together developed the project plan and recruited a volunteer group of six from various backgrounds. Subsequently, three team members delivered five presentations/discussions (42 minutes each) on the topic of food insecurity and sustainability and served as mentors to the eighth graders. Teams of eighth graders created posters based on their understanding of the issues surrounding food insecurity. Purdue students involved in the initiative reflected on their experience.

Results: During the 2017 spring semester, the series of presentations/discussions were delivered to 68 eighth graders during three classes of Family and Consumer Science at Klondike Middle School. Topics for the five lessons included: What is Food Insecurity?, Causes and Consequences of Food Insecurity, Sustainability and Climate Change, Eating on a Budget, and Community Resources for Food Insecurity. A total of 15 posters were created by eighth graders based on information shared during the lessons. Three posters were selected to be presented at the Purdue Engagement and Service-Learning Summit on March 1, 2017. Purdue students involved in this initiative found the experience to be enriching and enjoyed increasing the awareness of the eighth graders on the topic. In addition, they look forward to the possibility of sharing their lessons with other middle schools in the community.

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