



CALEB HETTINGER

*BS, Biology Education,
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What have you been doing since the publication of your article in JPUR, volume 8?

After graduating from Purdue, I spent two years in AmeriCorps. I first worked as an outdoor educator with Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the National Park Service. I then worked as a Community Partnerships Coordinator for the School District of Philadelphia. In August 2021 I started my career as a teacher in K-12 public education; today, I teach high school biology in Lititz, Pennsylvania.

What are your career goals?

I hope to devote my career to educational advocacy, in whatever form that takes. For now, I'm happy in the classroom. I intend to pursue either a master's in educational policy or a law degree in the next five years. With this I hope to either advocate for unions or play a role in education legislation.

How did the research you did as an undergraduate at Purdue impact your current endeavors? What is the value of undergraduate research?

My undergraduate research at Purdue taught me the complexities of racial issues and social justice. It made me a better educator and a more well-rounded person. The research process in general improved me holistically; it forced me to improve at time management, taking initiative, problem solving, writing, and many more skills.

How did the faculty mentor relationship impact you during your time at Purdue?

I worked with Dr. Rachel Roegman on this project. Working with a professional on a project like this opened my eyes to all that goes into project management and research protocols. I was forced to become much better at managing my time. More importantly, my eyes were opened to new perspectives and new experiences.

How did the experience of publishing an article in JPUR benefit you? What advice would you give to other undergraduates at Purdue who are interested in contributing to the journal?

Publishing with JPUR was an incredibly valuable experience. It provided a great network boost. Publishing with JPUR also taught me the editing process and how to take constructive feedback. To anyone interested in submitting to JPUR, I cannot recommend it enough; don't give up. Applying and getting rejected, editing, and applying again is an important part of the research process.



TALKING IN WHISPERS:
How School Leaders Approach and Discuss Race

Student Author



Caleb Hettinger is a fifth-year senior at Purdue University majoring in biology education and educational studies. He began this research through the Undergraduate Research Training Program and was paired with Professor Roegman in August 2016. In summer of 2017, he interned with the National Association of State Boards of Education, focusing on publications and principal licensure. Hettinger intends to graduate in May 2019 and go on to teach high school biology before eventually getting his master's degree in educational policy.

Mentor



Rachel Roegman is an assistant professor of educational leadership in the Department of Education Policy, Organization and Leadership at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Her research and teaching focus on the support and development of equity-focused school and district leaders through an understanding of the ways that contexts and systems interact.

17

What advice would you give to other undergraduates at Purdue who are interested in doing research?

Go after it! Don't wait for the opportunity to find you. There are more opportunities and possibilities at Purdue than you realize, far more than you'll find anywhere else. Being a go-getter, the person who tackles problems head on, is one of the best traits you can have. Talk to a professor, and even if they don't have an opportunity for you at that moment, they can point you to someone who does.

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