



**For Immediate Release**

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

*“Embrace the Possibilities”*

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### **Clean Water and Renewable Energy: Conquering Environmental Challenges**

**September 24, 2015-** One of the greatest environmental challenges that humankind faces is how to obtain and produce clean water and renewable energy. The challenge lies in not only understanding types of environmental impacts, but also in understanding how to evaluate and mitigate these impacts.

Doctors Heather Bechtold, Barrie Overton, Steven Seiler, Md. Khalequzzaman, and Marian Tzolov from Lock Haven University have received a collaborative research and educational grant to target this environmental challenge. This grant was awarded as part of an Environmental Education Partnership Grant by the Dominion Foundation (\$30,000) and through donors at the Lock Haven University Foundation (\$20,000). Funds will be used to build a student laboratory at the LHU Sieg Conference Center, and to provide equipment for fish diversity sampling, water quality testing, and sustainable energy demonstrations. “We envision this project will enrich current courses by putting boots on the ground (or in the water) at the Sieg Center,” said Bechtold. “This project will provide research opportunities for Lock Haven University students such that they become more aware of the local environmental problems, and the science behind the solutions to these issues. We are very excited to receive this funding to help meet our project goals.”

“Dominion is very pleased to support research conducted at Lock Haven University,” said Don Houser, Dominion’s Director of Government of Affairs. “Dominion shares a long history of local community support with Lock Haven University and we are proud to partner with LHU in this project that will involve students in valuable environmental research.”

Lock Haven University's Sieg Conference Center is located in forested woodlands (State Game

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Land 295) along Big Fishing Creek, Clinton County, Pennsylvania, about 17 miles south of the University's main campus. State Game Land 295 is considered one of the largest land reclamation projects in Pennsylvania's history and consists of 10,000 acres.

Big Fishing Creek is now thought to be one of the best limestone streams in the United States, making it a phenomenal trout fishery; it is reported to have the largest natural number of invertebrates (and thus, trout food) of any stream system in Pennsylvania. It is a major tributary to Bald Eagle Creek, which is a tributary to the West Branch Susquehanna River, which then drains into the Chesapeake Bay. Research will help students connect how land-use practices in headwaters affect downstream locations. Biology, Geology, and Physics students will use this facility and equipment to better understand this valuable local resource and to monitor its health. This work will provide hands-on training and skills needed in a number of careers as part of classes at Lock Haven University and will continue environmental stewardship efforts in this watershed that was historically targeted by Western Pennsylvania's Conservancy as a reclamation project.

Dominion is one of the nation's largest producers and transporters of energy, with a portfolio of approximately 24,600 megawatts of generation, 12,200 miles of natural gas transmission, gathering and storage pipeline and 6,455 miles of electric transmission lines. Dominion operates one of the nation's largest natural gas storage systems with 928 billion cubic feet of storage capacity and serves utility and retail energy customers in 13 states.

For more information on Lock Haven University, visit [www.LHUP.edu](http://www.LHUP.edu), email [admissions@LHUP.edu](mailto:admissions@LHUP.edu), or call (570) 484.2011.

Lock Haven University is a member of Pennsylvania's State System, the largest provider of higher education in the Commonwealth. Its 14 universities offer more than 250 degree and certificate programs in more than 120 areas of study. Nearly 405,000 system alumni live and work in Pennsylvania.

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