



[Gargi Chaudhuri, PhD](#)

Professor

Dept. of Geography and Environmental Science

2022 Cowley Hall, 1725 State Street,

La Crosse, WI 54601

Ph: 608.785.8338; Email: gchaudhuri@uwlax.edu

To,
The Committee Members
Travel and Supply Grant
University of Wisconsin-La Crosse

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to endorse Emma Everett and Courtney Osmek for the Travel and Supply Grant. Emma and Courtney are currently engaged in an independent study project under my supervision. This project was initiated by La Crosse County Health Department where they requested to create a map of community gardens, food pantries, and meal service organization within the county. They are looking for a mapping platform that will serve as a one-stop-shop for La Crosse County's food accessibility related resource.

The goal of the present project, as outlined in the project description, is to gather existing tabular and text data from the Health Department, and other dataset related to food accessibility from local, regional, and national sources that will provide a holistic picture of food access, or lack thereof, within the community. The Health Department is planning to use it as a resource to share with their partner and stake holders to evaluate, and analyze the present gaps in the program, and plan for future need.

The students have already completed the first step of converting the community gardens, food pantries, and meal service data into a geospatial database. Currently, they are reaching out to each of these locations (~40) to verify their information and cross-check their present status. We are going to meet with our Health Department partners in two weeks to provide an update. The next step will be adding ancillary information and conducting network analysis to provide insight on the physical access to each location and socio-demographic status of the surrounding neighborhood.

Emma and Courtney are scheduled to present their findings at the Midwest Undergraduate Geography Symposium (MUGS) 2024, to be held at the University of Wisconsin – River Falls on April 26-27, 2024. I am planning to attend this conference. It is an invaluable opportunity for undergraduate geographers in the Midwest to showcase their research, engage with peers from other institutions, and cultivate professional networks.

Having had previous students attend MUGS, I can attest to the benefits they derived from exposure to peers' work, gauging their own skills, assessing competition, and enhancing their employability. Given that both Emma and Courtney are graduating at the end of this semester and Fall semester respectively, with impending entry into the job market, participation in MUGS holds particular significance for his professional development.

Funding support is sought to cover registration fees, one-night accommodation at the designated conference hotel, and two meals. Emma and Courtney intend to share the transportation with Ryan Fell, my other student who has also applied for this grant.



Gargi Chaudhuri, PhD

Professor

Dept. of Geography and Environmental Science

2022 Cowley Hall, 1725 State Street,

La Crosse, WI 54601

Ph: 608.785.8338; Email: gchaudhuri@uwlax.edu

Considering Emma and Courtney's dedication, academic excellence, and demonstrated potential, I wholeheartedly endorse him as a deserving candidate for the Travel and Supply Grant.

Regards,



Gargi Chaudhuri

2/18/2024