



**For immediate release**

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**USI student from Waynetown to present research at professional meeting**

Michael L. Walls, a senior majoring in biology at the University of Southern Indiana in Evansville, will make a presentation October 17 during the fall meeting of the Indiana Academy of Science (IAS) about research related to the guardian darter, a fish found in Kentucky and Tennessee.

A 1998 graduate of North Montgomery High School in Crawfordsville, Indiana, Walls is the son of Cindy and Danny Walls of Waynetown, Indiana. He and other USI students and their faculty sponsors will attend the IAS meeting October 16-17 at Anderson University in Anderson, Indiana.

Walls conducted research under the supervision of Dr. James H. Bandoli, USI associate professor of biology, during the spring semester.

The study investigated patterns of growth in dorsal fin knobs in the guardian darter. The knobs develop only in males and reach peak size during the breeding season. Bandoli said the work involved examining fishes collected in previous years and quantifying knob growth in males housed in a USI laboratory from January through May.

Walls said the study also explored whether or not the knob development was socially influenced by the presence of female darters.

USI's Pott School of Science and Engineering offers a number of undergraduate research opportunities that build on classroom learning and enhance the students' hands-on skills, organizational and time management skills, and the ability to troubleshoot and think critically.

The research on guardian darters was funded by the school's Department of Biology. Walls also has worked with Bandoli on research involving the spottail darter.

Located on a 300-acre suburban campus, the University of Southern Indiana has an enrollment of 9,899 students, including 33 from Montgomery County.