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**The Milwaukee Public Museum Announces
2017 John J. Brander and Christine E. Rundblad Research Fellowship Winners**

Milwaukee, Wis. -- The Milwaukee Public Museum (MPM) has awarded three John J. Brander and Christine E. Rundblad Research Fellowships for 2017 to Dr. Suzanne Joneson, Department of Biology, University of Wisconsin – Waukesha; Dr. Todd Levine, Department of Life Sciences, Carroll University; and Dr. Michael Pauers, Department of Biology, University of Wisconsin – Waukesha.

Dr. Joneson will be studying cyanobacteria, refining our understanding of the genetic diversity of *Nostoc*, a genus for cyanobacteria, and its symbiotic partners throughout Wisconsin. Cyanobacteria are very important organisms for the health and growth of many plants. They also are one of very few groups of organisms that can convert inert atmospheric nitrogen into an organic form, such as nitrate or ammonia. It is these "fixed" forms of nitrogen which plants need for their growth, and must obtain from the soil.

Dr. Levine will be looking at how mussel shells are influenced by their environment, the ecomorphology of mussels. This research will play a big part in conservation efforts should these animals need to be relocated because of construction projects. Relocation to a habitat not suitable for the mussel, based on shape, could result in loss of the population in that locality. This project will involve citizen scientists taking measurements from digital photos of specimens in the collection.

Dr. Pauers will continue his search for the large-scaled Orangespotted Sunfish in Wisconsin. He will expand the project to include genetic diversity of the species as well as historical and contemporary abundance in Wisconsin.

MPM's John J. Brander and Christine E. Rundblad Research Fellowship Program seeks to stimulate fundamental research by scientists doing research on Wisconsin biodiversity or environmental issues, especially those that utilize and strengthen the natural science collections at MPM. The award is given annually to two or three fellows.

The fellowship was created as part of the one million dollar gift given to MPM by Board Member and long-time Museum volunteer Christine Rundblad in 2015. The fellowship is co-named after Ms. Rundblad's late husband, John J. Brander, who was a Milwaukee-area entrepreneur and business owner.

For more information on the John J. Brander and Christine E. Rundblad Research Fellowship Program go to www.mpm.edu/researchfellows.

About the Milwaukee Public Museum

The Milwaukee Public Museum is a natural and human history museum located in downtown Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The museum is among the oldest in the United States, with a history dating back to the 1850's. It was chartered in 1882 and opened to the public in 1884. MPM has three floors of exhibits that encompass life-size dioramas, walk-through villages, world cultures, dinosaurs, a rain forest and a live butterfly garden, as well as the Daniel M. Soref National Geographic Theater and Planetarium.

MPM has 4 million specimens and objects in its collections and has an active program of research in natural science. The Museum hosts nearly half a million visitors each year, making it the most visited museum, of any type, in the State. MPM is operated by Milwaukee Public Museum, Inc., a private, non-profit organization, and its building and collections are owned and supported by Milwaukee County for the benefit of the public.

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