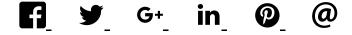
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## WKU professor appointed for Dugas Community Park

SUBMITTED Feb 3, 2020

Sean Ward



Sean Ward, WKU Instructor of Communication, has been appointed as the Dugas Family Visiting Professor for 2020-21 as part of the educational partnership associated with Dugas Community Park located in Allen County.

Ward will incorporate real-world experiences into the educational curriculum for undergraduate students at Western Kentucky University as they work toward the development of communications plans along with marketing, public relations and advertising efforts for the Park.

Ward brings a high level of expertise to this professorship as a current faculty member in the WKU Department of Communication where he has taught Communication and Advertising courses since 2017, as well as experience as a past Director of Marketing and Communication for WKU's division of Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement. Ward also serves as principal of Digital Design Advertising, a local graphic design and ad agency he established in 1993.

The Dugas Community Park and Dugas Family Visiting Professorship were developed in partnership with WKU from a generous contribution from the Dugas family in 2016. The 320-acre park in Allen County provides student engagement opportunities and creates academic experiences for students in a real-world environment. The Park and Professorship are named for the family that is the chief benefactor of the Park: Laura Jo Dugas, daughter of Dollar General founder Cal Turner, and her late husband, Wayne Dugas.

Ward shared his excitement to be involved in this educational partnership with the Dugas Community Park. "Anytime we at WKU can find creative avenues for real-world experiences for our students, it's a win-win for the organization we are serving and for the University," he said.

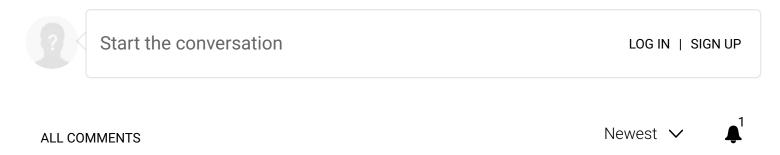
"This outreach directly aligns with WKU's strategic plan and creates opportunities for student-centered applied research," added Ward. "Projects with Dugas Park will be built into course curriculum for the upcoming semester and will provide great applicable experiences such as branding, digital marketing and public relations."

Previous student-centered initiatives have involved research and work with a variety of academic disciplines such as recreation administration with an emphasis on trail construction and route finding, tree and plant identification, archeological site digs, GPS mapping, water quality research, engineering and surveying, construction design, green initiatives and economic impact.

"This partnership has proved to be fruitful for both WKU and Dugas Community Park," said Brittany Fisher, Executive Director of Dugas Community Park. "The professorship brings a unique component to the partnership between the Park and the University, which has allowed for a lot of progress in the development of the Park and has generated creative opportunities for collaboration among Dugas Park, WKU students and the Allen County community."

## Conversation

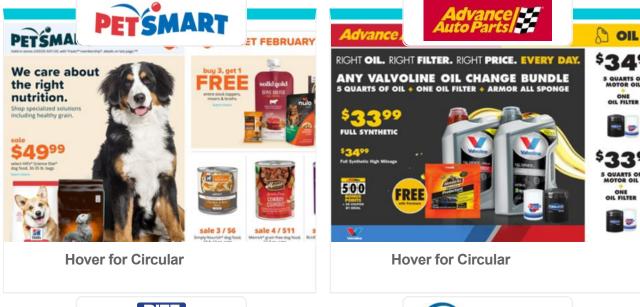
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