

2021 WV-INBRE Summer Research Program Fellow

WV-INBRE sponsors a Summer Research Fellowship Program for faculty members from the PUIs network. This year's summer fellow is Dr. Karen Kormuth. Dr. Kormuth is an Assistant Professor of Biology at Bethany College. She will conduct her summer research under the mentorship of John Noti, PhD, Chief, Allergy and Clinical Immunology Laboratory (ACIB), National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Morgantown, WV.



Dr. Kormuth is an expert in infectious disease transmission, which was the focus of her post-doctoral training at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. There, she studied the impact of airway mucus on the stability of influenza viruses in the air and on surfaces. She found that human airway mucus stabilizes the virus in more conditions than previously thought possible. She produced several first-author publications from this work, and her results were featured in a Nature Research Highlight and many online/local media outlets. She is currently continuing this work with undergraduates at Bethany College using a non-infectious bacteriophage in place of influenza viruses. During her WV-INBRE fellowship, Dr. Kormuth will investigate the effect of airway mucus on the decontamination of common surface materials exposed to influenza virus.