

The Creek's Champion



Stan Hedeem, an emeritus professor of Xavier University, has dedicated his life to ecology and education. From a young age, he had a keen interest in the environment that surrounds and sustains us all. Growing up near Lake Michigan, Hedeem developed a curiosity about how organisms function and adapt to their environment. As Hedeem began to connect with the living web of nature, ecology was not yet a familiar term. But he understood very early that ecology has important implications for the future of the local and global community. At the University of Minnesota, he designed his own PhD program with an ecological focus.

In 1968, he landed his first job as Xavier University's first ecology professor. He introduced an ecology lab in order for students to get hands-on experience in their own community. The Mill Creek served as a great laboratory for students because of the biological differences between the southern and northern sections. Between guiding ecology field trips and supervising senior research studies, Hedeem found he harbored a passion to restore the Mill Creek. He began to link his teaching and his research to various efforts to resurrect the biological health of the entire stream.