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# Lewis '16 to Spearhead Bus Stop Project, Thanks to Zoellick Fellowship

Feb. 26, 2016

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— A proposal to build up to 25 benches for bus stops in Bloomington is the winner of the [Zoellick Fellowship in Social Entrepreneurship](#) at Illinois Wesleyan University.

Julie Lewis '16 (Glenview, Ill.) will receive \$1,500 to implement her idea for the Westside Bench Project. A blitz-build event planned for May will create 25 benches to be placed at bus stops on Bloomington's west side.

Administered through the [Action Research Center](#) (ARC), the Zoellick Fellowship was introduced in 2013 through the generosity of Todd Zoellick '00 to develop an Illinois Wesleyan student's idea for an innovative and creative way to generate positive and sustainable societal change. In addition to the funding, winners receive assistance from ARC, the Department of Business Administration and [Design, Technology and Entrepreneurship](#) program director Bruno deHarak to launch the idea.

Lewis and three other students presented their business ideas to a panel of judges that included Chicago-area entrepreneur and alumnus Zoellick in the tradition of the ABC reality competition program "Shark Tank." In her proposal, Lewis explained that students enrolled in the "Action Research Seminar" course attended a town hall meeting last fall where they learned Bloomington residents expressed a desire for some type of seating at bus stops. Students then built a prototype bench using tools provided by the [Tool Library](#) and subsequently met with Connect Transit to discuss the possibility of installing benches. Details need to be finalized, but Lewis's current plan includes local residents coming together to build benches in a one-day "blitz" in May.

A [sociology](#) and [Hispanic Studies](#) double major, Lewis has received the Weir Fellowship and an ARC Alumni Fellowship. She is also director of the Mini Masters program where Illinois Wesleyan students provide free music lessons to local youth. She has served internships with Conexiones Latinas de McLean County and the Boys and Girls Club. Lewis is a member of Alpha Kappa Delta international honor society of sociology and Phi Beta Delta honor society in international education.



After her "ARC Tank" presentation, Julie Lewis '16 discusses her winning social entrepreneurship idea with Todd Zoellick '00.