

**First Year Research Award:**

**Education**

**Faculty Supervisor:**

**Dr. Michael Daiga**

**Position Title: Experiential Learning and the Great Smoky Mountain Institute at Tremont**

**Criteria:** The Wittenberg University Department of **Education** will offer a First Year Research Award for the academic year 2025-2026 to incoming students to work with **Dr. Michael Daiga**. These students will have a demonstrated academic ability and research interest in STEM and/or K-16 Education.

**Expectations:** FYRA Scholarship recipients will devote between 6 and 8 hours per week across their first year to FYRA program and their research-related project, according to the FYRA Learning Contract agreed upon by the sponsoring professor and the scholarship recipient. Recipients will also be expected to participate in a regular meeting of FYRA recipients, present their results in an appropriate forum and submit a copy of their presentation to the appropriate university office. FYRA Scholarship recipients will also participate in an assessment of the FYRA program. (The FYRA Scholarship is not part of a student's work study award.)

**Research Activity:** The First Year Research Award recipients will assist Dr. Michael Daiga, Associate Professor of Mathematics, Data and Statistics Education, in his research involving experiential learning in STEM education in partnership with the Great Smoky Mountain Institute at Tremont (GSMIT: <https://gsmit.org/>) during the annual Focused, Integrated, Reflective, Experience (FIRE: <https://www.wittenberg.edu/connections/fireweek>) which will occur at the beginning of March. FYRA Scholarships recipients will work as a team coordinate and develop a research project, which could include a broad range of topics including aspects of preservice teacher beliefs, exposure therapy, lesson design, STEM Education and experiential learning. The specific project will be determined based on team members' backgrounds, research priorities, and conversations of the FYRA recipients. Recipients should be detailed oriented, motivated to learn, and be comfortable working outdoors. Depending on the recipients' interest and level of involvement, there may also be the potential for co-authorship of manuscripts to be submitted for publication in an academic journal or presentations at professional conferences. For information about the current partnership, please contact Dr. Michael Daiga directly at [daigam@wittenberg.edu](mailto:daigam@wittenberg.edu).