

## ***Dr. McElmurry's "EXPERTISE" was not what he claimed***

Unfortunately for everyone involved (e.g., unsuspecting Flint residents, accused state employees, prosecutors who have been relying on his expertise and testimony) McElmurry's claims about his prior work in Flint were too good to be true. At best his experience in Flint was grossly exaggerated, and at worst he perpetrated outright academic identity theft, with profound long-term economic and social consequences for Flint and the State of Michigan. Herein we present just some of the evidence of unethical behavior by FACHEP's founder, which led us to this regrettable conclusion.

### **1. Second Impressions: Motivation, Expertise and Social Connections**

By January 2016, McElmurry's humanitarian story about his years of volunteer work in Flint, seemed demonstrably inconsistent with his behavior and performance as observed by Flintwaterstudy's Dr. Edwards. McElmurry showed little interest in conducting quality science or actually helping Flint residents, but rather, was myopically focused on seeking funding and associated academic power. Whenever he was directly questioned about specifics related to his supposed "intimate knowledge" of the Flint water distribution system, McElmurry was completely clueless and unable to provide answers to even the most basic questions. In October 2015, McElmurry acknowledged he did not know how to contact Howard Croft, Flint's Director of Public Works, and asked Edwards to introduce them. **To date, we have not found anyone who can verify that McElmurry was leading the research that he claimed, into the Flint water distribution system from 2010-2015.** When asked, former Mayor Walling stated that while he does not specifically remember McElmurry, he did recall research into Flint's water distribution system that was led by **Purdue University**.

### **2. Meet Dr. Kasey Faust: The actual expert that McElmurry was pretending to be.**

At that point Dr. Marc Edwards reached out to [Dr. Kasey Faust](#), a remarkable young woman from Purdue University who did work in Flint as part of her PhD dissertation (2011-2015). In 2011, Faust won a

prestigious National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, which enabled her to conduct research helping “shrinking cities,” like Flint, understand and prepare for challenges to their water sector infrastructure.

After Faust and her PhD advisor met McElmurry at an EPA organized workshop in April 2012, he was invited to be an external member of her PhD advisory committee in January 2013. Notably, the word “Flint” was not mentioned in McElmurry’s *VITA* or statement of qualifications provided to Purdue University at that time. Moreover, Faust and her advisor are not aware of McElmurry being independently involved in data collection related to Flint’s water distribution system, nor did McElmurry accompany Faust or her advisor on their trips to Flint, in his role as her external PhD committee member.

In response to a FOIA from Mr. Lyon’s lawyers, Dr. Faust provided her e-mail correspondences with McElmurry, and they are quite revealing. Reading through the emails is truly heart-breaking: suddenly McElmurry’s “cluelessness” makes perfect sense. McElmurry literally stole Dr. Faust’s unique and visionary work and claimed it as his own in order to get his foot in the door and a leading seat at the table in Flint. *How did he do it?*

First, in October 2015, McElmurry asked Faust to participate in his NIH emergency grant. This would have been a tremendous opportunity for Dr. Faust, who was now a newly minted assistant professor at the University of Texas, and it could have showcased her visionary expertise and continue her quest to help Flint residents. Next, McElmurry requested that Dr. Faust send him her Flint water network and associated hydraulic models from her dissertation work for the NIH proposal. Faust also introduced him by email to people in Flint with whom she had worked. Final step, once Dr. McElmurry had the data/hydraulic models and introductions to collaborators in hand, he subsequently claimed [they were “his”](#) and cut Dr. Faust out of his NIH grant. [McElmurry then used her data/models into his NIH grant proposal](#) (without her permission or knowledge). At some point he did inform Dr. Faust that he was sorry

she was dropped from the NIH proposal, but that the research went in a different direction than anticipated.

Thereafter, McElmurry essentially assumed Faust's identity related to her Flint work and embellished it by adding three years additional effort for good measure. In this manner, McElmurry completed his academic identity theft, effectively lining his own pockets, opening the door to important leadership roles and harnessing the Flint disaster for his self-promotion—at the expense of Dr. Faust, Flint and MI residents.

### **3) Violating Ethical Canons of Engineering and Perjury?**

By now, McElmurry has told and re-told the story of his 5-year volunteer humanitarian research mission in Flint so many times, he probably believes it himself. He testified to this story under oath as the star witness in the prosecution case against Mr. Lyons and Dr. Wells, and it is prominently featured in FACHEP press commentary and in [Wayne State pressroom materials](#). McElmurry occasionally cites a research paper written by Dr. Faust, on which he was included as the last (i.e., least contributing) author, to imply intellectual ownership of her entire dissertation work. Here is an example from a Wayne State page: **“McElmurry [began] working in Flint in 2010 (Faust et al 2015)”**. However, according to Dr. Faust and her advisor, *he conducted none of the work in that paper related to Flint or any other specific city mentioned.*

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#### Areas of expertise

Environment

#### About

Shawn McElmurry is an environmental engineer spe... He was recently tabbed to head up the efforts of the Health and Environment Partnership, a research gr... system in Flint. His research aims to address fundan... understanding of this field that prevent sustainable... impact human health. To this aim, he has worked on... organic carbon plays in the fate and transport of pol... sampling techniques and technologies that will prov... and engineered systems, and assessing the behavior

Recently, McElmurry has focused on evaluating the utility of green infrastructure and how it can be used to mitigate the impact of stormwater runoff. His research on addressing the challenges associated with decaying urban infrastructure in cities experiencing extensive population decline led McElmurry to begin working in Flint in 2010 (Faust et al. 2015). The results of this research, "Sustainability of Water and Wastewater Infrastructure in Shrinking Cities," were published in Public Works Management & Policy in 2015. In late 2015, McElmurry returned to Flint to assess the impact of changes in the source and treatment of drinking water within the city's municipal drinking water system.

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### Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Management in Shrinking Cities

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Wayne State release states Dr. McElmurry began working in Flint in 2010 citing a research paper by Dr. Kasey Faust. According to Dr. Faust and her then-PhD advisor, McElmurry did none of the work on Flint (or other cities) described in that paper.

As the veil is now being lifted, it is becoming more and more apparent that Dr. McElmurry seems to be in the habit of making false statements that benefit his career. When posing as a "uniquely qualified" leader for the FACHEP funding in 2015, he asserted in writing to the State of Michigan that his research specialty was in "urban infrastructure and human health." This false claim was not added to his online VITA [until mid-2017](#), before his sworn testimony in the case against Lyons and Wells. The reality is that McElmurry's true experience and academic record do not qualify him to serve as a contributing member of a group like FACHEP, much less lead it on behalf of Flint residents and the State of Michigan.

Our discoveries reported herein are truly shocking, and it is regretful to be put in a position where such information must be publicly shared, but it provides an explanation for the incompetence and disastrous consequences of McElmurry's FACHEP leadership. Ironically, our engagement in Flint was initially compelled due to the first canon of Civil Engineering ethics: *to hold paramount the public welfare*. Herein, as painful as it is, we are now compelled to call out McElmurry's blatant violation of the second canon of Civil

Engineering Ethics that “**Engineers shall perform services only in areas of their competence.**”

Accordingly, Dr. Edwards has submitted [a corresponding complaint to the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs \(LARA\)](#) and has agreed to testify in a second canon violation hearing if necessary. He has also reported McElmurry to NIH for possible scientific misconduct in the midst of a Federal Emergency, due to falsifications that directly (and indirectly) may have won millions of dollars in research grants for himself, Wayne State University, and his collaborators.

When it comes to truly criminal behavior related to the FACHEP grant, perhaps the individuals who are presently accused, should be star witnesses for the State of MI in the case against Dr. McElmurry.

<http://flintwaterstudy.org/2018/03/fachep-vs-the-people-of-the-state-of-michigan-part-i-dr-shawn-mcelmurry/>