

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH PROGRAM DIRECTORS



NewsBriefs

Upcoming Events

Pre-ISSOTL Conference
Collaboration on
Undergraduate Research
October 2 (Raleigh, NC)
Abstracts Due: July 22
www.CUR.org

ISSOTL Conference
October 2-5 (Raleigh, NC)
www.issotl.org

Annual Biomedical Research
Conference for Minority
Students
November 13-16 (Nashville, TN)
Abstracts Due: Sept 6
www.ABRCMS.org

Posters on the Hill
Abstracts Due: November 4th
www.CUR.org

Creative Inquiry in the Arts
and Humanities Institute
**November 8-10
(Sacramento, CA)**
www.CUR.org

SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY

Conference of Research
Experiences for
Undergraduates Student
Scholarship
This conference will feature
presentations by students from
REU programs in all disciplines,
sessions for REU administrators
and faculty, and opportunities
to meet with representatives
from the National Science
Foundation and other
government agencies.
October 27-28 (Arlington, VA)

Message from Our Chair By: Janice DeCosmo

Happy end of the academic year, and welcome to new and continuing URPD members and colleagues! It has been a fun two years serving as chair of the URPD division, and as I pass the baton to incoming chair, Anne Boettcher, I am happy to report that the division is doing well, with 454 current members, many active in URPD and on CUR task forces, committees, institutes, etc. The second URPD conference at Chapman has already surpassed our first conference in registrants (final tally isn't known at time of writing), and the presenter lineup covers many topics critical to issues facing URPDs and associates. I know that this division continues to be a resource to all of us as we contend with challenges and opportunities, and develop new strategies to expand undergraduate research in the context of the evolving landscape of higher education.

Thanks to editor Kim Schneider for her great work on developing this communication tool. Please send your NewsBriefs suggestions, submissions, and feedback to KRS@ucf.edu. In addition, if anyone is interested in helping with the URPD division webpage, please contact me (jdecosmo@uw.edu) or Anne (aboettch@southalabama.edu).

Lessons Learned: Bringing Undergraduate Research Opportunities to Scale By: Patricia J. Pukkila

Many members of our division are seeking to catalyze changes in their campus cultures so that undergraduates will arrive on campus expecting to get involved in research, and leave with tangible documentation of their involvement. Below are some tips from a recently retired Associate Dean who spent 14 years bringing undergraduate research to scale on her campus.

Harness the power of grassroots interest and build community: Nationally, undergraduate research is becoming the norm because it is effective, essential and deeply satisfying. Faculty allies, especially in smaller departments eager to increase enrollments, can help to convey important messages to the higher administration. Postdocs and graduate students welcome the chance to become part of a network of liaisons to connect students to appropriate opportunities. Encourage allies to “ask BOTH what the Office for Undergraduate Research can do for you AND what you can do for the Office for Undergraduate Research”.

Consider the curriculum: Changes to the curriculum, particularly in association with reaffirmation of accreditation, tend to last. Also, curricular-based scaffolding of introductory experiences, research-exposure courses (with graduate students serving as “coaches”), research-intensive courses, and a campus symposium can help students navigate the process of pursuing mentored research, scholarship or creative performance and communicate their discoveries and findings.

Seek influence beyond your campus: Organizing and participating in symposia for your state legislature in partnership with other schools and contributing your time and ideas to the Council on Undergraduate Research are important and valuable activities.

Understand the cycle of innovation: Although universities are often seen as conservative organizations that resist change, they are known to accept innovations that are perceived as beneficial. However, the University is likely to resist absorbing the cost of the innovation for as long as possible. Since the innovation will inevitably disappear unless it is supported, it is important for the leader to continue to negotiate to make the innovation a part of campus culture.

Take a long-term view: It is deeply satisfying to work to ensure that students can embrace unsolved problems with confidence, rely on truths that emerge from curiosity, inquiry, synthesis and communication, and become enlightened citizens and leaders in our complex world.