

URECA FALL APPLICATION DEADLINE

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs administers University funds to directly support mentored undergraduate research through Undergraduate Research Experience and Creative Activity (URECA) grants. These grants provide students an opportunity to work on a research or creative project and get paid for their time and commitment, while gaining valuable experience and transferable skills desired by employers and graduate schools. Awards range from \$500 for beginners to \$3,500 for experienced researchers.

Please check out our ["Information and Applications"](#) page for more information.



Deadline for Fall proposals:

Thursday, September 3, by 4:30pm

MTSU's *Out of the Blue* features URECA "Story Bandits" Project

Story Bandits is a creative project that focuses on gathering stories written by children ages 1st grade to 6th grade and brings them to life by turning them into works of performing art. The result has been art that speaks to the heart and is mentored by Dr. Jette Halladay, an internationally recognized theatre professor in the College of Liberal Arts.

URECA student, Cassidy Woodall, who will be the playwright for the project, hopes that by allowing children to see the power of their words and the words of others on stage, their confidence will increase, and they have something of value to contribute in their thoughts, ideas, concepts, and written words. The outcome of this creative project will be to collate the stories together and come up with a cohesive home. Several other students will serve as actors and work together to bring the stories to life.

The project has added the element of producing videos and creating a Youtube channel for delivery. Show or show pieces may be performed live in social distanced venues, however, the team is excited to create something that is ongoing with the Youtube channel. To learn more about the project, click the Youtube image.



URC'S MISSION

The Undergraduate Research Center's (URC) mission is to be the central hub for communication about undergraduate research grant programs and other related opportunities on and off campus, to distribute university funds for undergraduate research and creative projects, and to promote dissemination of results through travel grants and by offering opportunities for students to present their research findings.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

➔ Research Spotlight



Jared Frazier, a three-time URECA Scholar, was recently published in the Journal of Forensic Chemistry. The article ***Practical investigation of direct analysis in real time spectrometry for fast screening of explosives*** can be viewed [here](#). A recent recipient of the nationally competitive Barry Goldwater Scholarship, Jared now researches analytical techniques for the quantification and characterization of colloidal quantum dot ligands.

Faculty Mentor:
Mengling Zhang, Chemistry

Emily McTyre, a Spring 2020 URECA Assistant, focused her creative research on the story of George Vanderbilt's legacy, made through his family, environment, and Biltmore Estate. Emily conducted her research at UNC Asheville's Ramsey Library and the NC Room at Pack Library. There she had access to manuscripts, photos, and other primary sources detailing Asheville's history, specifically the heritage of Black Highlanders, local industry, and the impact Biltmore made as it moved into the area. The end goal of the research is an television mini-series about George's legacy, grounded in Biltmore and Asheville. Emily is writing the scripts for four, hour-long episodes and a paper detailing the historical research supporting the dramatized story. Upon completion, the teleplays will be registered with the Writers' Guild of America (WGA) as an official body of work.

Faculty Mentor:
Leland Gregory, Media Arts

➔ Creative Activity Spotlight



Students Vote on URECA Logo Design

The Undergraduate Research Center is pleased to unveil our new URECA logo. Students were presented with two different images and voted for the one they felt best represented the URECA program.

The logo will be used as a symbol of research and creative activity on academic poster presentations, event marketing, and other promotional materials.

Special thanks to Brittany Stokes in Creative and Visual Services for her help in designing the logo.



NEW URECA Team Application Now Available

Effective Fall 2020, the URECA Committee has implemented a new URECA Team structure. The URECA Team program is designed to involve 2-4 students in intensive, high quality research or creative project experience.

Successful applications will describe a well-thought out approach in which each team member has a defined role, yet benefits from teamwork. The projects should include significant faculty participation with a strong mentoring component.

To view the application and more details

[CLICK HERE](#)



WHAT IS SOAR?

SOAR stands for Student Organization for the Advancement of Research and is a new student organization comprised of undergraduate students who are committed to developing and sustaining an active and successful undergraduate research environment at MTSU. SOAR's mission is to enhance student's research capacity through increased awareness, collaboration and skill building.



FEATURED SOAR STUDENT GABRIELLA MORIN, PRESIDENT

Major: Biology & Spanish Faculty
Mentor: Dr. David Nelson

Current Research Focus: Parkinson's Disease-associated mutations in PINK1:Parkin Mitophagy Pathway

Professional aspirations: With a background in international missions and community health, Ella's goal is to further my impact by pursuing a joint medical doctorate and masters in Public Health program. Ella seeks to serve underserved communities both in the United States and in Central America, giving back to the communities which supported and provided the way for her training.

Do you have any advice for future researchers? Don't be afraid to ask questions. If you're not asking questions, you're not learning. Take incredibly detailed notes when you are first training, and as you progress, figure out what factors remain constant in a certain experiment or procedure, and what factors remain variables. Consolidate your notes as you become more comfortable with the structure, but always have your detailed set for review if needed.

Also, I highly recommend that you buy a hard cover lab notebook. It will save you time when searching through your backpack, stabilize well when on your lap during experiments (especially helpful with culture labs), and it will hold up for your entire undergraduate career. Keep protocols and procedures in the front, and make it fun.

questions or comments?

We welcome them!

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