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Letter from the Dean

Gregory J. Weidemann

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Letter from the Dean

Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences provides many opportunities for undergraduate students to engage in learning experiences beyond the normal course work. Conducting a research project or creative project with a faculty mentor is one of these opportunities. Sixty faculty members presently serve as mentors to students to assist them with research and creative projects. Most, but not all, such projects are designed to meet the requirements of an honors thesis in the Bumpers College Honors Program. Whether in the Honors Program or not, students who take advantage of such opportunities find that it brings into sharper focus principles they learn in class. It is truly an added value in their university education.



Gregory J. Weidemann

The Bumpers College encourages student research by awarding undergraduate research grants, including the Carroll Walls Undergraduate Research Fellowship, which provides a grant of \$1,000. We awarded 22 Undergraduate Research Grants in the fall of 2002.

Discovery provides a reporting outlet for our student scientists, which allows them to bring the research process to fruition. It does not supersede publication elsewhere, but it does provide a forum for students and faculty to share their results and findings in a citable publication.

The 15 articles in this fourth annual volume of *Discovery* are on a wide range of topics. They include production issues in rice, organic apples, broiler chickens, and blackberries. Topics also include environmental issues and functional genomics research. We are proud to present these articles as examples of the research accomplishments of our undergraduate students.

I heartily congratulate the student authors on their accomplishments and extend thanks to their faculty mentors and to the editors who reviewed their manuscripts. Thanks also to the Honors Committee for providing a structured program that encourages our students to spread their wings in this way.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'G. J. Weidemann'.

Gregory J. Weidemann, Dean
and Associate Vice President for Agriculture