

# Inquiry: The University of Arkansas Undergraduate Research Journal

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## Honors Corner

Inquiry Editors

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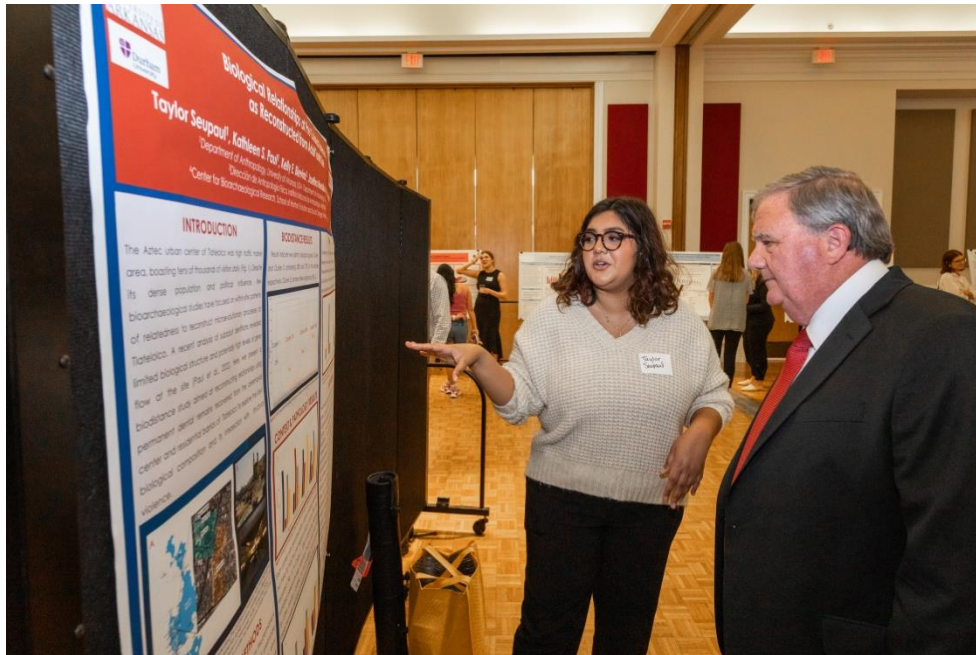
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## *Honors College Corner*

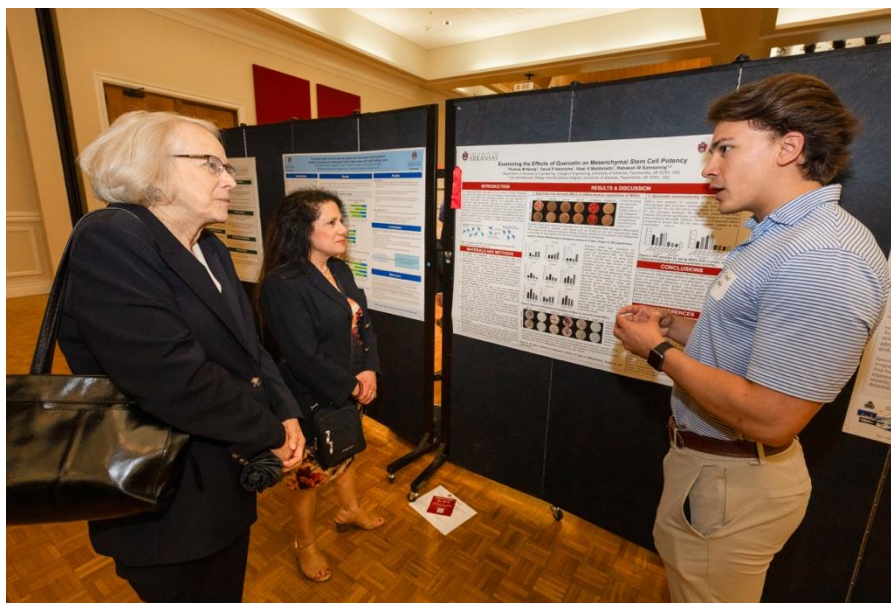
The University celebrated National Undergraduate Research Week April 15<sup>th</sup> through 19<sup>th</sup>. A combined effort of the Honors College, University Libraries, and the Office of Undergraduate Research, this week recognized the work of undergraduate students and provided extensive programming to help students develop their research initiatives. The feature event of the week was the Undergraduate Research Symposium. The first round, in which students submit a research abstract, almost doubled the previous year's applicants, with 105 submissions. Of those, 91 students moved on to the poster and presentation round which were judged by faculty panels. Students presented their posters at an in-person session on April 18<sup>th</sup> in the Union Ballroom. In addition to faculty and students, several university administrators attended the Symposium and heard from the student researchers.



*Image 1 Visitors mingle with the student presenters. Photo by Chieko Hara*



*Image 2 Taylor Seupaul shares about her research with Provost Terry Martin. Photo by Chieko Hara*



*Image 3 Thomas Needy describes his project to Dr. Kim Needy, Dean of the College of Engineering, and Dr. Suzanne McCray, Vice Provost of Enrollment and Dean of Admissions. Photo by Chieko Hara*

The students competed in six different discipline categories, one of which were divided into two competition groups due to the high number of submissions. The first place winners in each category provided a quote about the value of research to their academic experience:

## Competition Winners

**Category:** Arts and Humanities

**Name:** Daisy Rehbock

**Honors Affiliation:** Honors Student

**Major(s):** International and Global Studies

**Title:** Gender Equality Threatened: A Digital Analysis of Spanish Right-Wing Political Parties

**Quote:** This research pushed me outside my comfort zone and forced me to interact first-hand with hard truths about what social media is being used for in the modern day. However, I believe the impacts of this research are important and worth all the hours I spent scrolling right-wing Twitter and Facebook accounts. I want to thank my incredible mentor, Dr. Lisa Corrigan, for guiding me along this research process and giving me all the tools to be successful. I owe her the world. I feel excited and prepared for my post-grad journey as it takes me to Panama to serve in the Peace Corps and then to graduate school.



**Category:** Education

**Name:** Madison Price

**Honors Affiliation:** Honors Student

**Major(s):** Agricultural Business

**Title:** Understanding the Impact of Food Insecurity Among First-Generation College Students on the University of Arkansas Campus

**Quote:** My experience conducting research during my undergraduate career was transformative. It not only deepened my knowledge, but also fostered a passion for discovery that motivates me to pursue a master's degree. The research experience itself equipped me with valuable skills in critical thinking, data analysis, and problem-solving, which will be instrumental for my success in graduate studies.



**Category:** Engineering

**Name:** Colton Gattis

**Honors Affiliation:** Honors College Fellow

**Major(s):** Biomedical Engineering

**Title:** Utilizing Spatial Transcriptomics to Compare Gene Expression in Volumetric Muscle Loss Injury Recovery



**Quote:** This experience allowed me to truly dive into the complexities of bioinformatics and discover my own strengths and weaknesses within it. I've since been able to enhance my skill set in a way that has been extremely attractive to employers, and I will continue to expand this skillset as I strive to expand my familiarity with this field. I plan to utilize what I've learned in this project along with advice from my mentor, Dr. Jeffrey Wolchok, to guide me as I transition to the next chapter of my life.

**Category:** Health

**Name:** Lucia Barraza

**Honors Affiliation:** Honors Student

**Major(s):** Exercise Science

**Title:** Perceptual Responses to Partial Water Immersion Body-Bag Cooling Following Exercise-Induced Hyperthermia



**Quote:** This project was an eye opening experience for me, and I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to be involved in research during my undergraduate career. I've been able to learn so much about the research process and all the work that goes into making important studies happen. I would like to thank my mentor, Dr. McDermott, for his advice and support, and for letting me be a part of such a cool project.

**Category:** Natural Sciences 1

**Name:** Gary Jackson

**Honors Affiliation:** Bodenhamer Fellow

**Major(s):** Biology and Chemistry

**Title:** Investigation of the Protein Dynamics Responsible for the Establishment and Maintenance of Compartmental Boundaries

**Quote:** I have been deeply grateful for the lessons that research has taught me," said Jackson. "It has led me to question the little things in life, and to see the beauty in scientific inquiry and discovery. Through research, I've gained a deeper appreciation for the complexities of the world around me, igniting a passion for exploration and understanding that will continue to shape my identity.



**Category:** Natural Sciences 2

**Name:** Emilee Walden

**Honors Affiliation:** Honors Student

**Major(s):** Mathematics and Biology

**Title:** Mathematics-AI Based Phylogenetic Analysis of Influenza Mutation Data

**Quote:** Undergraduate research has been such a rewarding experience! I have had a lot of fun getting to contribute to research in infectious disease as well as develop new skills in preparation for graduate school."



**Category:** Social Sciences

**Name:** Olivia “Olive” Kuester

**Major(s):** Political Science

**Title:** The Impact of Long-Term Partisan Monopolies on Voter Turnout

**Quote:** My experience as an undergraduate researcher at the University of Arkansas has ignited my passion for data, statistics, and political science. Being immersed in academic research has equipped me with an invaluable skill set that I'm excited to carry into my Ph.D. program at the University of Iowa in August. And of course a big thanks to Dr. Parry and the Office of Undergraduate Research for supporting both me and my project!

