

URCA Finds its Voice

Students from SIUE will be presenting two performances this semester: “Godspell” and “Scenes of Death and Daggers.” Musical theater students will be performing “Godspell” at St. Boniface Church in Edwardsville November 5th through 8th and the SIUE Opera Theatre will present the Fall Opera Scenes, “Scenes of Death and Daggers” on December 11th.

URCA Mentor, Associate Professor of Voice, and Director of Graduate Studies in Music, **Dr. Marc Schapman**, will be directing both performances, and Dr. Schapman’s URCA Assistant, **Sarah Paitz**, is assisting with both productions.

Sarah is currently a sophomore at SIUE studying Vocal Performance in the Department of Music. According to Dr. Schapman, Sarah “is currently performing multiple duties for each project, some of which include: Stage Manager, Assistant Stage Director, Publicist, Assistant Costume and Scenic Designer, and others.” According to Dr. Schapman, “this has been an excellent [opportunity] for Sarah to experience productions coming together from another perspective. She has been vital for both projects and we are looking forward to our final performances!”

More information can be found on SIUE’s Music Events Page (<http://www.siue.edu/artsandsciences/music/events.shtml>) or by calling the SIUE Fine Arts Box Office at: (618) 650-2774.

URCA Welcomes New Assistant Provost



In August of 2015, the Department of Academic Innovation and Effectiveness (under which the URCA program is housed) promoted Dr. Erin Behnen to the role of Assistant Provost. Dr. Behnen has been at SIUE since 2005 when she was hired to create and direct the SIUE Drug Information and Wellness Center within the School of Pharmacy. Dr. Behnen reported that she expects “to contribute significantly in this position” and that she intends to “help programs identify, collect, and use data in a meaningful way to allow for continuous improvement.”

Dr. Behnen will be taking over for Dr. P. Denise Cobb, who has served as Assistant Provost since 2012 and Associate Provost since 2014. URCA would like to thank Dr. Cobb for her many years of service and contributions to the URCA program. Dr. Cobb will now be serving as Acting Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.



What is URCA?

URCA is a program designed to get undergraduate students more involved in research and creative activities. There are two ways in which students can participate in URCA: as Associates and as Assistants

Associates:

These are year-long positions in which a student designs his or her own research or creative activity project and then works with a mentor to see it through. Associates are required to attend monthly meetings and to present their scholarly work at the Spring Symposium. Associates earn a stipend and can also receive money for project-related equipment and travel. Only a maximum of 10 students are accepted into this program each year.

Assistants:

These are semester-long positions in which students assist with faculty led research or creative activities. Up to 80 students each semester receive a stipend for being Assistants; however, each semester several students also participate as unpaid Assistants. It is also possible for Assistants to earn course credit for their participation.

Featured Associate: Kyle DeProw
Mentor: Dr. Ryan Krauss,
Department of Mechanical and
Industrial Engineering

For his URCA project entitled “Incorporating Force-Feedback into a Teleoperative Device,” Kyle is working on building a device that controls a robot and can also feel the force that is being applied to the robot. Kyle says that this is important to him because “in most of our current controllable, robotic devices (think RC car and controller), we only use our visual sense, or what we see, to control the robot. In most cases, a visual line of sight is all that is needed to control an RC car or plane. However, in cases such as Robot-Assisted Minimally Invasive Surgery (RMIS), the more control we have, the better! The idea is that if a surgeon was able to feel the force being applied to specific tissues during a medical procedure along with a visual line of sight, the surgeon will have better control.”



Robotics and Automation have always been of interest to Kyle, and upon graduation he plans on continuing to work in the field. He also plans on continuing his education, aspiring to eventually obtain his Master’s in Mechanical Engineering.

Kyle believes that the URCA program offers invaluable opportunities to SIUE students. He had this to say about his URCA experience: “I started in the URCA program as an Assistant in my sophomore year and I cannot stress enough how helpful this has been for me.”

Publications & Presentations

Congratulations to Dr. Xing Su and URCA Assistant **Chad Kolmer** on their recent publication: “BIM-Controlled Signage System for Building Evacuation” in the *Journal of Procedia Engineering*. Dr. Su is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Construction in the School of Engineering. Chad Kolmer, who is listed as the second author of the publication, served as Dr. Su’s URCA Assistant in the spring and fall of 2014

The manuscript was also presented in Chicago at the *International Conference on Sustainable Design, Engineering and Construction* earlier this year.

Featured Assistant: Kenneth Coleman
Mentor: Ms. Kathryn Bentley, Department of Theater & Dance

Since his freshmen year at SIUE, Kenneth has been a part of Black Theater Workshop. He has both directed pieces as well as written and performed his own original works. This year is particularly noteworthy as Black Theater Workshop is collaborating with a St. Louis-based theater company, A Call to Conscience, to co-write a script inspired by Martin Luther King’s “Letter From A Birmingham Jail,” which will be performed next semester. Kenneth is now a junior at SIUE with a declared major in Theater Performances. Kenneth had this to say about his URCA experience: “Being Ms. Bentley’s URCA Assistant is very meaningful to me. It has allowed me the opportunity to work alongside and learn from a professor whose work I admire and can relate to because we share a goal of using theater for social change.” Upon graduation Kenneth plans on attending graduate school in a program that emphasizes theater performance. Ultimately, Kenneth wants to use theater to “uplift and enrich communities.”

