



URCA

Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities

Volume 10, Issue 2

Spring 2019

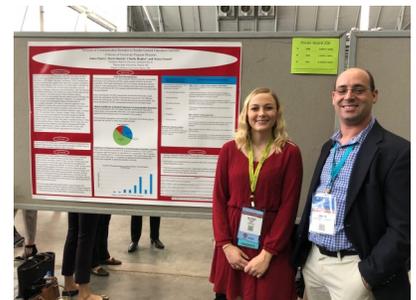
URCA Assistant Alyssa Groene Examines Public Perception of Stuttering

Mentor: [Dr. James Panico](#), Applied Health

Alyssa and Dr. Panico's project is a look into how the general public perceives different types of stuttering; a project important to their field. Speech Pathologists often work with people who stutter and this research could help them determine which strategies are better perceived by the general public.

"My experiences with URCA have been absolutely phenomenal. I have learned so much from Dr. Panico that I would never have learned from class alone. URCA has also given me the opportunity to travel to Boston to present at the National ASHA Conference. I cannot even begin to describe how much that experience taught me. I fell even deeper in love with this profession because I got to see the enormity of this field and all of the incredible work they do with people. This recognition at ASHA may even be a deciding factor in my acceptance to graduate school."

After graduation, Alyssa hopes to go on to graduate school. When she graduates with her Master's she plans get a job working with the preschool or elementary school population.



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 faculty with their research or creative activities. Assistants are not required to attend monthly meetings or present their work. Up to 90 students each semester may 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.

"What I love about the URCA program is that it provides students with a tremendous opportunity to engage in research experiences that undoubtedly add to the knowledge base within our field."
-Dr. Panico, Applied Health

Getting the word out! Did you know that SIUE URCA work has recently been featured on Show Me St. Louis and in the Edwardsville Intelligencer, River Bender, Advantage News, and the Alton Telegraph?

For More Information:

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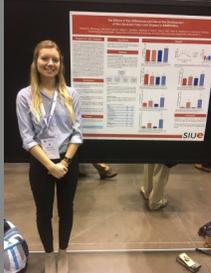
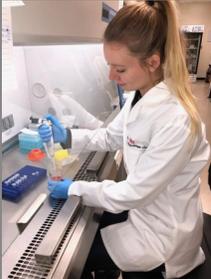


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URCA Associate
Haylee Altenburg

"As faculty in a graduate only program, URCA provides an opportunity to work with undergraduates as they are thinking about their post 4 year plans. Every year, I have learned something important about teaching and mentoring from the URCA assistants."

-Professor Megan Robb,
Art Therapy and
Counseling



URCA Assistant
Macey Brown

Featured Associate: Haylee Altenburg

Mentor: **Dr. Joshua Wooten**, Applied Health

Haylee's project is called "The Effects of Sex Differences and Diet in the Development of Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease in SAMP8 Mice." Liver fat and insulin resistance are seen in both males and females, but it is unclear whether the relationship from the diets consumed are dimorphic. Haylee and Dr. Wooten used an age-accelerated mouse model to look at the differences between a standard diet and that of a Western diet. So, the purpose of this project was to determine if there was a difference between the consumption of a high-fat, high-fructose diet compared to consumption of a standard diet.

"My experience with URCA has been great! I started as an Assistant for a year before applying to become an Associate. I have only positive things to say about the program from both sides and recommend that others pursue research in their respective fields as well. Dr. Wooten has been an excellent mentor by helping me to develop many skills including reading and evaluating academic journals, public speaking, as well as critical thinking. He and the other members of the lab are very knowledgeable and inspire me to work hard."

After graduation, Haylee will be attending graduate school here at SIUE for exercise physiology where she will continue to work in the lab as a GA. After that, she hopes to go to PA school to become a physician's assistant.

Featured Assistant: Macey Brown

Mentor: **Megan Robb**, Art Therapy and Counseling

Macey and Professor Robb are currently working on analyzing what it takes so be a successful group leader in group art therapy .

"When I got the initial URCA email I was interested because there were Art Therapy focused projects. As an undergrad, there is not a ton of opportunity to learn much about the Art Therapy field before grad school. I was anxious to see if this was truly the field I wanted to go into, and ensure that I had a solid plan for getting into a graduate program. The experience I have gained through URCA has been amazing! Professor Robb has been a great mentor, and I have already learned so much from her. It's comforting to know that I have a role model in the field that I can depend on for any guidance I need while at school. My favorite part of the project so far was the opportunity to travel to Miami and share the research we completed. What I like most about URCA is how much the program has pushed me to grow, step out of my comfort zone, and become involved, even if I am only a sophomore."

After graduation Macey hopes to attend a graduate program for Art Therapy Counseling, and to one day work in a children's hospital as an Art Therapist.