

Student Quote:

• "Undergraduate research has allowed me to gain skills in finding information and coming up with my own conclusions that I will be able to use in my future career. It has allowed me to connect more with the VT faculty while finding resources from universities around the country."

-Brian Peters

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The Making of an Undergraduate Research Institute

With the support and encouragement of Dean Jerry Niles, the College of Liberal Arts & Human Sciences (CLAHS) Undergraduate Research Committee was formed in 2005. The concept of the Undergraduate Research Institute for CLAHS resulted from their meetings.

The CLAHS Undergraduate Research Faculty Committee members are:
 Gena Chandler, English;
 Bradley Hertel, Sociology;
 Kee Jeong Kim, Human Development;
 Diana Ridgwell, Undergraduate Academic Affairs; and
 Peter Wallenstein, History.
 Racheal Stimpson served as

the Graduate Assistant for Undergraduate Research.
 The opening reception for the Undergraduate Research Institute (URI) was held on Thursday, September 7, 2006 in the Graduate Life Center. Over 70 administrators, faculty, and staff in the College of Liberal Arts & Human

CLAHS Undergrad Researchers Contribute to Published Book

Peter Wallenstein, Professor of History at Virginia Tech, is the author of the newly released *Cradle of America: Four Centuries of Virginia History*. Pushing 500 pages in length with 84 images, it is the first modern history of Virginia.

"This book is going to change the minds of citizens and scholars alike," said Wallenstein, "Or at least challenge them as to what they've always thought was true about the past."

The book also represents a research-and-writing collaboration

between a University Honors colloquium of undergraduates and a Virginia Tech professor. Wallenstein has encouraged and utilized undergraduate research for years, and this book takes his championing of undergraduate involvement in historical research even further.

"I've cited my students' work in various previous publications," said Wallenstein. "My undergraduates have presented their work at the annual conference of the Virginia Social Science

Association and elsewhere, and some of it has even been published."

Dr. Wallenstein and the student authors were honored at a reception sponsored by the Center for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching in early April.



Web-Site gets close to 7,000 hits from VT and other Institutions

The CLAHS Undergraduate Research Institute website was created over the summer of 2006 to be the main "hub" for the Institute. After extensive research looking at other undergraduate research program websites, the CLAHS URI website was established at <http://www.uri.clahs.vt.edu/>.

The website features information for both faculty and students: 1) faculty postings of student research opportunities, 2) contact information for students to apply for these research opportunities, 3) links to undergraduate research websites, 4) listings

5) information on the Internal Review Board process for working with human research subjects.

Since coming online, the website has received over 7,000 hits. Numerous students and faculty from other colleges and universities have contacted us for information. Examples are Duke University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and West Virginia Wesleyan.

We will continue to

other websites to make sure that we are up-to-date and providing quality information about undergraduate research.



for these research opportunities, 3) links to undergraduate research websites, 4) listings of undergraduate research conferences, and

Wesleyan.

We will continue to update the website and review



70 students presented their work at the English Undergraduate

Nearly \$8000 Awarded to Support Undergraduate Research

The URI was extremely pleased to offer grants to students and faculty working on undergraduate research projects. The grants were distributed in two cycles, fall and spring, with many deserving applicants.

The URI awarded 12 grants for a total of nearly \$8,000. The students

are presenting their work at various conferences such as the College Language Association Convention, the Mid-Atlantic Undergraduate Research Conference, the Virginia Social Science Association Annual Meeting, the Virginia Tech English Undergraduate Conference, and the Virginia Tech Undergraduate

Research and Prospective Graduate Student Conference. Several student researchers are currently preparing their work for possible publication.

A list of grant recipients, their projects, and their faculty mentors can be found on the back page

Second CLAHS Student Selected for Annual ACC Conference



Daniel Dresch presents at the ACC Conference.

of this newsletter and online at www.uri.clahs.vt.edu/grantsawardedsp07.html. Congratulations to all of the 2006-2007 Grant Recipients!

The ACC Undergraduate Research Conference provides an opportunity for

undergraduate students to share their unique research projects to an audience of peers and scholars.

Each ACC institution selects only four student representatives. Abstracts are published and distributed to each participant. For the second consecutive year, a College of Liberal Arts & Human Sciences student was

selected to represent Virginia Tech at the ACC Conference held this year at the University of Virginia.

Daniel Dresch, a senior History major, was selected to present his project titled "Indo-American Relations Between 1947 and 1964." He analyzed the Cold War's impact on

CLAHS Students Well-Represented at VT Undergrad Conference

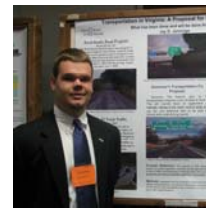
One of the goals of the Undergraduate Research Institute is to increase the number of students presenting at the Virginia Tech Undergraduate Research Conference held each spring and sponsored by the Center for Academic Excellence and Enrichment.

The results have been phenomenal. In 2005, the College of Liberal Arts & Human Sciences had only 8 participants. After the advertising efforts of the URI, in 2006, CLAHS student participation almost doubled to 15 students.

This year, for 2007,

37 CLAHS students participated in the VT Undergraduate Research Conference, making up 41% of the total students registered.

All URI grant recipient presenters were given ribbons to indicate that they were funded through our institute.



Jay Jennings displays his research project.

Other CLAHS Student Researchers

John Cassara, History Major Wallenstein

John has worked on and presented two research projects. "The Summer of '51: The Story of Percy Miller, the Norton Little Leaguers, and the Integration of Virginia Baseball." He presented this project at the 79th meeting of the Virginia Social Science Association (VSSA), the 9th Brian Bertoti Graduate Conference, and the 4th Annual Virginia Tech Undergraduate Research Conference. He also won third place in VSSA's undergraduate essay category. John's second project, "Lewis and Jackson: African American Pioneers in College Athletics," examines the lives of William H. Lewis and William T.S. Jackson who were the first African Americans to play college football. John presented this project at the 80th VSSA conference and the 5th Annual Virginia Tech Undergraduate Research Conference.

Amanda Davis, Political Science Major Stivachtis

Amanda is working with her faculty mentor on a project entitled "The European Union as an International Actor" that examines the status of the European Integration. This project also includes topics such as EU policies concerning security, power, leadership, and the "War on Terror." This project appears as part of a book due out in May.

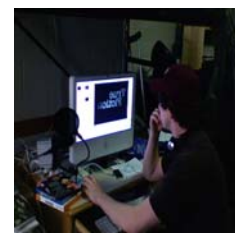
Patrick McCarthy, English Major Advisor:

Patrick is creating a sitcom pilot titled True Fiction. Patrick has also had his short story, "Burning Town" win first

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Peter

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Yannis

Faculty



Patrick McCarthy works on his sitcom pilot, "True Fiction."

Advisor:

Patrick is creating a sitcom pilot titled True Fiction. Patrick has also had his short story, "Burning Town" win first place in a VHSL writing contest as well as published. Patrick is also currently working on writing 3 movie scripts, a cartoon show, and finishing a novel.

Brian Peters, History Major

Faculty Advisor: Dr. James I.

How Undergraduate Research Turned Into National Recognition

Most of you recognize the name Tim Leaton from the many press releases on his film project. Tim's project, "A Closer Look at the Lives of Children at a Ugandan Orphanage" was a 20-minute film depicting the lives of Ugandan children. When Diana Ridgwell, Director of Student Development, first

encouraged Tim to submit his film as research, he was reluctant, unsure if his project could be considered research. After she explained that research is different in various fields and that using the tools of his craft to explore a topic and expand knowledge of that topic was indeed research, he presented his findings at the 4th Annual

Virginia Tech Undergraduate Research Conference.

After that, the rest is history. His newfound confidence in his work led him to enter and win the national "Film Your Issue" short film contest. He has also presented his film at the United Nations Headquarters, an awards reception in Hollywood, and



Tim Leaton works on a film project.

Fall 2006 URI GRANT RECIPIENTS

Morgan Cain, Interdisciplinary Studies Major, Faculty Advisor: Dr. Anita Puckett—"Community Heritage—NRV Montgomery;" Attended the Appalachian Teaching Conference and presented findings to the Appalachian Regional Commission.

Thomas Casey, History Major, Faculty Advisor: Dr. Greta Kroeker—"Slavery and Ratification in Virginia;" Attended the Mid-Atlantic Undergraduate Research Conference at West Virginia Wesleyan and the Undergraduate Research Conference at Virginia Tech.

Holly Cuneo, Apparel, Housing, and Resource Management Major, Faculty Advisor: Dr. Jihyun Kim—"Impulse Buying and Online Shopping"

Kristen Peterson, English Major, Faculty Advisor: Dr. Nancy Metz—Funding to support and advertise the Spring 2007 English Undergraduate Conference

Elizabeth McLain, Music and History Major, Faculty Advisor: Dr. Amy Nelson—"Exploring Russian and American Interpretations of Shostakovich."

Danielle Rosner, English and Music Major, Faculty Advisor: Dr. Tom Gardner—"How Music Brings Out and Complicates the Notion of the Poet's Voice."

Vladimir Smirnov, Music Major, Faculty Advisor: Dr. Esti Sheinberg—"The Notions of External and Internal in Tchaikovsky's Symphony #6."

Spring 2007 URI GRANT RECIPIENTS

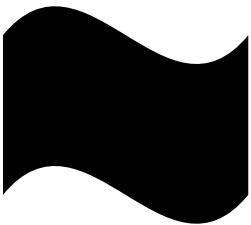
Cristin Coles, English Major, Faculty Advisor: Dr. Gena Chandler—"Reclaiming Womanhood: Conversion in Nella Larsen's *Quicksand*;" Presented at the College Language Assoc. in April and the Undergraduate Research Conference at Virginia Tech.

Ashley Foerster, English Major, Faculty Advisor: Dr. Peter Graham—"Byron and Messolonghi: The Public and Private Faces of Philhellenism;" Presented at the English Undergraduate Conference and the Undergraduate Research Conference at Virginia Tech, will present in Greece over the summer.

Katelynn Johnson, Sociology/Psychology Major, Faculty Advisor: Dr. Carol Bailey—"Relationships Between Stigmas of Mental Illness and Level of Education;" Presented at Virginia Social Science Assoc., Southern Sociological Society, Sociology Departmental Conference, Virginia Undergraduate Research Conference. Her work was nationally recognized and she was chosen as an American Sociological Assoc. Honors Program Participant and will be presenting at the ASA Annual Meeting in August.

Crystal Lacey, Interdisciplinary Studies Major, Faculty Advisor: Dr. Isis Mullarky—"Compare

www.uri.clahs.vt.edu



would like to become involved and support the efforts of CLAHS Undergraduate Research Institute, please contact Diana Ridgwell, Ph. D., Director of Student Development

540-231-8577 or dridgwell@vt.edu

Crystal Lacey, Interdisciplinary Studies Major, Faculty Advisor: Dr. Isis Mullarky—”Compare Management Practices Between Conventional and Organic Herds.”

John Paul Mason, Sociology Major, Faculty Advisor: Dr. Bradley Hertel—The role of presidential rhetoric in generating and sustaining a moral after 9/11/01; Presented at the Undergraduate Research Conference at Virginia Tech and submitted proposal to Virginia Social Science Association Conference.

The CLAHS Undergraduate Research Institute has made huge strides in getting students interested in Undergraduate Research and providing them with the resources and information needed to pursue these opportunities.

Benefits of Undergraduate Research are all highly tied to the mission of Virginia Tech and the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences including: the increased ability to think, learn, and work independently, strengthening oral and written communication skills, sharpening critical thinking skills, contributing new knowledge, and providing an opportunity for faculty and students to connect and foster a positive learning experience.