CBAS Early Undergraduate Research Stimulus Award

Description
The CBAS Early Undergraduate Research Stimulus Award (EURSA) is designed to encourage students at the Freshman- or Sophomore-level to gain research experience earlier in the educational process. The goal of the award is to provide research training and professional mentoring to early-career students in order to develop the next generation of scientific leaders. This award is unique by providing financial support to students lacking significant research experience. Support is provided to five applicants each year selected by the CBAS Awards Committee in the form of student stipends and laboratory supply funds. Award recipients will receive support in the identification of faculty mentors leading to the development of an active research project appropriate for students at the freshman- or sophomore-level.

Receipt of this award should not render participants ineligible for any university-, college-, or department-level academic scholarships. The award is intended to provide support for students to become involved in research activities without the explicit requirement that award funds be used for education-related expenses. In contrast, academic scholarships are often rewarded with the expectation that funds offset the cost of education-related activities such as tuition, housing, books, etc.

Eligibility
The CBAS Early Career Undergraduate Research Stimulus Award will be granted to five applicants who are eligible under the criteria presented below:

1) Have a GPA of 3.0 or higher from high school studies, undergraduate studies, or both
2) Show leadership and academic potential for research as demonstrated through letters of recommendation as outlined below in the Nomination Process section
3) Enrolled full-time in pursuit of a B.S. degree in the College of Basic and Applied Sciences
4) Be classified as a Freshman or Sophomore. New transfer students will be considered on a case-by-case basis, but should not have been enrolled at MTSU for more than two years at the time of application.
5) Be willing to participate in a minimum of two semesters of research
Each of the above criteria must be met in order to receive the CBAS Early Career Undergraduate Research Stimulus Award. Each recipient will receive $500 per semester up to four semesters as long as he or she remains actively engaged in a research laboratory over that period of time. Funding may be extended beyond the initial two semester commitment if the student has demonstrated exceptional progress in his or her research activities. Evaluation of research progress will be performed at the end of each semester in which award funds are received. The evaluation process will include the submission of a written report summarizing research progress in the current semester and a presentation during the annual CBAS Scholars Day event.

No award will be made if, in the opinion of the CBAS Awards Committee and/or the Dean of the College of Basic and Applied Sciences, there is no nominee who adequately meets these criteria. Preference will be given to students not currently receiving funds from any other university-, college-, or department-level research awards. All award recipients will have the option to enroll for course credit related to research activities, but is not required for eligibility.

Nomination Process
Only electronic submissions in pdf format will be accepted. This packet of information should be submitted from the applicant’s email address to cbasawards@mtsu.edu no later than February 26th, 2021 by 5:00 PM. Please include the name of the award in the subject line of your email to simplify the process for committee members reviewing the nominations. The submission should include the following:

1) A copy of transcripts of all High School and College coursework performed (does not have to be an official copy)

2) A nomination survey completed by an MTSU faculty member, which may include, but is not limited to, the potential research mentor or current/former course instructors

3) A letter of recommendation from a professional contact such as a former instructor or employer providing insight into future potential for success in science, intellectual abilities, character, etc.

4) A written statement from the nominee describing (no more than two pages, single spaced): 1) results of any previous research experience, 2) why the applicant wants to pursue a research experience, 3) professional goals, and 4) how a research experience will support the stated professional goals.

5) The applicant’s resume or curriculum vitae with relevant extracurricular activities highlighted.
Selection Process
The College of Basic and Applied Sciences Awards Committee will evaluate nominations and make a recommendation to the Dean of the College. Final selection will be made by the Dean, who will inform the recipient(s) of their award.