SOAR Retreat & School Returns

Welcome back to campus everyone! The school year is in full swing, and the energy on campus is refreshing after a long, hot summer. You know what’s also refreshing? White water rafting! The SOAR Officers and Ambassadors took on the ultimate team building activity before cabin camping just off the Ocoee river during the 2023 SOAR retreat. Check out page 7 to see what they have been up to.

For those of you new to MTSU, we are excited to get to know you during the coming months! If you are ready to get involved in undergrad research but are unsure where to start, take a peek at our Student Research Guide on page 15.

This edition of our newsletter is full of lots of great info including information about SOAR’s upcoming undergraduate research workshop (co-sponsored by MT Engage!), Snacks and Abstracts, as well as some student highlights!

Be sure to "save the dates" for upcoming events and conferences including the Fall Open House, the National Conference on Undergraduate Research, and Scholars Week. NEW this year: the URC calendar! It’s a great way to see all our upcoming events in one place and to find ways to get involved.

Never hesitate to let us know what you would like to see featured in future editions of our newsletter. We wish you a wonderful fall semester!
THE URC TEAM

YOU, our students and faculty, are our #1 priority. We are here to help however possible, whether it is getting you involved in undergraduate research, helping you find a faculty mentor, thinking through a research or creative activity project, hosting a workshop on a topic of need, or facilitating events. Meet our team!

DR. JAMIE BURRISS
Program Manager
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

Dr. Burriss oversees the URC, the Student Organization for the Advancement of Research (SOAR), our newly created SOAR Ambassador program, the URECA grant program, communications, Scholars Week, Posters at the Capitol, and all other activities related to the URC.

Prior to returning to MTSU, Dr. Burriss served as the Curriculum Administrator for the SELECT MD Program at the University of South Florida while pursuing her doctorate. After USF, she accepted a position at Vanderbilt University as the Assessment Analyst for the College of Medicine. But, her heart has always been TRUE BLUE and she is happy to once again serve her undergraduate alma mater.

KATIE MEDRANO
Coordinator
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

Katie is the Coordinator for the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs and works to offer support for URECA, URC events, student conference travel, SOAR, and more.

Katie was born and raised in Murfreesboro, TN. In 2019, she completed her bachelor’s degree in Organizational Communication with a minor in English here at MTSU. She is currently pursuing a M.S. in Management. Prior to joining ORSP, Katie worked as a Creative Arts teacher for a local nonprofit. She loves working in the field of education and is glad to be a part of undergraduate research!

ROSS SIBLEY
Major: Biochemistry
SOAR Involvement: President, Communications & Social Media Ambassador

BROOKE BUSBEE
Major: Psychology
SOAR Involvement: Vice President, READY to SOAR Ambassador

JACOB GRONES
Major: Biology
SOAR Involvement: Member
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH WORKSHOP

Have You Ever Wondered Any of the Following Questions?

- How do I reach out to professors?
- What is Undergraduate Research?
- How can I receive funding?

The Student Org. for the Advancement of Research (SOAR) and MT Engage Invite All Students to Participate in Our Free, Student-Led Undergraduate Research Workshop!

Short Interactive & Informational Sessions Will Cover Topics Including:

- Research Across ALL Majors
- On-Campus Funding Opportunities
- Finding a Faculty Mentor
- Presentation Skills & Opportunities

Monday, September 25th, 2023
9:00am-10:15am
STU 220
Panera Bagles & Light
Refreshments Will Be Served

RSVP HERE BY 4:30PM ON SEPTEMBER 15TH, 2023!

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR CO-SPONSOR, MT ENGAGE!
SOAR will enhance a student’s research capacity through increased awareness, collaboration and skill building by offering workshops and trainings to fulfill the needs of undergraduate researchers.

SOAR will assist students in the preparation of poster presentations and development of abstracts to increase conference presence on a national level, encourage students to attend the National Conference on Undergraduate Research, and facilitate travel preparations.

SOAR will provide peer mentoring to students new to undergraduate research.

SOAR's Mission
To enhance student’s research capacity through increased awareness, collaboration and skill building.

Why Join?
- SOAR will enhance a student’s research capacity through increased awareness, collaboration and skill building by offering workshops and trainings to fulfill the needs of undergraduate researchers.
- SOAR will assist students in the preparation of poster presentations and development of abstracts to increase conference presence on a national level, encourage students to attend the National Conference on Undergraduate Research, and facilitate travel preparations.
- SOAR will provide peer mentoring to students new to undergraduate research.
FALL LUNCHEON & BUSINESS MEETING

When? Tuesday, September 12th | 11:00-12:00pm

Where? MTSU Student Union Gallery Room (2nd Floor)

Who? ALL Majors - Biology, English, Aerospace, Computer Science, Business, Chemistry, Marketing, Recoding Industry, Psychology, Health and Human Performance - ALL Majors - all of them!! Anyone interested in being a part of a really cool student organization and is interested in advancing their involvement in undergraduate research or creative activity should join us!

Why? We will go over events, workshops, and other ways to get involved this fall. Meet new friends! And, free lunch.

How? RSVP HERE by September 1st!

MEET OUR 2023-2024 SOAR OFFICERS

Ross Sibley  
President  
Major: Biochemistry

Brooke Busbee  
Vice President  
Major: Psychology

Ariel Nicastro  
Secretary  
Major: Physics

Weston Williams  
Treasurer  
Major: Fermentation Science
SOAR RETREAT

Your SOAR Officers and Ambassadors are prepped and ready to go for this year after the 2023 SOAR Retreat!

RIVERS! RAPIDS! RETREATS! OH MY!

On August 24th, the SOAR leadership crew set out for the ultimate team bonding exercise: rafting the Ocoee River! After a quick lunch at Sugar's Ribs in Chattanooga, the crew hit the water for the 2-hour adventure, rafting class 3 and 4 rapids.

Following the rafting excursion, the crew headed just up the road to the cabins and campsite where they would spend the night. Before hitting the hay, the crew had a lot of time to get to know one another, brainstorm ideas for student engagement, and plan events for the upcoming year.

The night ended with a good 'ole campfire and s'mores! In the morning, the crew headed back to Murfreesboro before representing SOAR at the President's Welcome Back Bash that night.

Want to partake in the fun next year? Look out for ambassador applications in the spring!
SOAR President and Vice President, Ross Sibley and Brooke Busbee, represented SOAR at Presidium 2023 on August 23rd. The two developed skills in leadership and club administration in preparation for the upcoming year!
Never Written an Abstract?

Want to Learn About Presentation Opportunities?

Writing abstracts is a crucial skill for students pursuing research! Join us to refine your abstract writing skills and to learn about upcoming events that require abstracts including:

The National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR)
Scholar’s Week
Posters at the Capitol

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25TH, 2023
LOCATION HERE
12:30PM-1:30PM

RSVP HERE BY
OCTOBER 13TH @8AM
Scholars Week is a week long tradition during which MTSU's academic colleges celebrate scholarship, research, and creative activity through a variety of events and activities.

TO BE DETERMINED

Scholars Week

APRIL 8-10, 2024

The National Conference on Undergraduate Research hosts 3,500 to 4,000 students from across the globe, presenting their research through posters, oral presentations, visual arts, and performances. It will take place at Long Beach State University.
COVERED COSTS THROUGH URECA TRAVEL FUNDS

HOTEL:
The Westin Long Beach
333 East Ocean Blvd
Long Beach, CA 90802
April 8-11, 2024

Conference Meals:
Two light breakfasts
& one light afternoon reception

Group Meals:
Two group meals

REIMBURSED COSTS (PENDING STUDENT ACTIVITY FEE FUNDING)

Recommended Flights:
Monday, April 8th
Southwest Airlines Flight 2102
BNA -> LAX (Los Angeles)
7:45AM-10:35AM
~$275

Thursday, April 11th - TBD
Southwest Airlines Flight XXXX
LAX (Los Angeles) -> BNA
XXXXXXXX
~$XXX

NCUR Registration:
$230
"Student/Faculty/Staff Institutional CUR Member"

Out of Pocket Expenses
Transportation to/from BNA and LAX

Other Meals

IMPORTANT DATES/DEADLINES

October 25, 2023: Snacks & Abstracts
December 8, 2023: Abstract Submissions Close
January 11, 2024: Abstract Decisions Released & Registration Opens
January 31, 2024: Early-Bird Registration Closes
Project Title:
Conducting Research with Traditional Specialists to Better Understand the Local Culture's Uses to Aid and Cure Ailments in Singapore

Project Overview:
Culture impacts health and the quality of life more than one could think. Western civilizations have become accustomed to visiting the doctor, receiving a diagnosis, and then being sent home with proper medication to help aid an ailment. This ritual has been built because of our culture. By looking through the lens of an Eastern civilization, this was not the case. During my time in Singapore, I was able to speak with owners of local medicine stands at wet markets, health practitioners at a community hospital, and purchased multiple different items that they recommended to keep on hand.

Singapore’s history plays into how they view health and the quality of lives due to their cultural background. TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine) and TIM (Traditional Indian Medicine) has crafted an approach to treating ailments using natural herbs, spices, oils, foods, and external remedies.

Chinese medicine halls ranged from massage parlors, herbal tea shops, apothecaries, and dried merchandise stalls. The purpose of a traditional Chinese massage is to relax the muscles and release unwanted energy by realigning chi and chakras.

Along with these massage parlors would often be tea stands and wet markets with dried herbs, spices, and other items to cure ailments. It was an amazing experience to see the markets in the morning during their busy times of operation. The smells, sites, and even tastes are incomparable to those in the US.

Overall, traditional medicine still holds a strong running against Western medicine as far as use and consumption are concerned. The natural remedies can be healthier for the body, work quicker than typical medications, and help the quality of life during hard times.
OFFICE HOURS

I'M HERE TO HELP YOU...

➢ GET INVOLVED IN UNDERGRAD RESEARCH
➢ APPLY FOR A URECA GRANT
➢ FEEL CONFIDENT ABOUT IT!

EVERY MONDAY
3-4 PM

Reach out to me (Emilie Conners)
at emc5w@mtmail.mtsu.edu
RAIDER RESEARCH SERIES

MONTHLY RESEARCH PRESENTATION SPOTLIGHT

SEPTEMBER

[ CHEMISTRY ]

DR. KEVIN BICKER
"HIGH-THROUGHPUT DISCOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT OF ANTIMICROBIAL PEPTOIDS"

DR. KEYING DING
"SWITCHING SYNTHESIS BETWEEN BORROWING HYDROGEN AND ACCEPTORLESS DEHYDROGENATIVE COUPLING BY A MOLECULAR COBALT CATALYST"
LEVELS OF RECOGNITION:

Distinction in Undergraduate Research
- Students must fulfill all requirements
  
  Successful completion of an Assistant level URECA project - 50 hours of research or more.
  
  Poster presentation or creative performance at one of the URC’s signature events: Fall Open House, Scholars Week, or Summer Research Celebration.
  
  Active participation for at least one academic year in the Student Organization for the Advancement of Research (SOAR).
  
  Confirmation of support from URECA faculty mentor.

Scholar Distinction in Undergraduate Research
- Students must fulfill all requirements
  
  Successful completion of a Scholar level URECA project - 100 hours of research or more.
  
  Poster presentation or creative performance at one of the URC’s signature events: Fall Open House, Scholars Week, or Summer Research Celebration.
  
  Active participation for at least one academic year in the Student Organization for the Advancement of Research (SOAR).
  
  Poster or presentation at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research or published in a peer-reviewed academic journal.
  
  Confirmation of support from URECA faculty mentor.

**DISTINCTION CRITERIA**

**Distinction in Undergraduate Research**
*Students must fulfill all requirements*

1. Successful completion of an Assistant level URECA project - 50 hours of research or more.

2. Poster presentation or creative performance at one of the URC’s signature events: Fall Open House, Scholars Week, or Summer Research Celebration.

3. Active participation for at least one academic year in the Student Organization for the Advancement of Research (SOAR).

4. Confirmation of support from URECA faculty mentor.

**Scholar Distinction in Undergraduate Research**
*Students must fulfill all requirements*

1. Successful completion of a Scholar level URECA project - 100 hours of research or more.

2. Poster presentation or creative performance at one of the URC’s signature events: Fall Open House, Scholars Week, or Summer Research Celebration.

3. Active participation for at least one academic year in the Student Organization for the Advancement of Research (SOAR).

4. Poster or presentation at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research or published in a peer-reviewed academic journal.

5. Confirmation of support from URECA faculty mentor.
LOOKING TO START YOUR RESEARCH JOURNEY?

Check Out Our STUDENT RESEARCH GUIDE

The URC's guide for upcoming student researchers, Research Guide: How to Start your Student Research Journey, is a great resource for undergraduates seeking to enter the world of research! This guide covers when to start research, how to find a project, student experiences, helpful advice, URC resources, and SOAR resources at MTSU.

The next time you are asked how to get involved in research, direct that student to this resource!

This guide was initiated, compiled, and formatted by Dara Zwemer.

Stories were provided by SOAR students, including Cassandra Perrone, Leah Piccirillo, Javier Hernandez, Robert Conner, Charlotte Daigle, Madeline Aadnes, Maria Fernanda Clark, Kylie C. Moe, Miquellie Bonner, Merry Young, Kaitlyn Berry, Zachary Sanchez, Kap Paull, and Christopher Hall.

We hope you find it useful!
State of the Art MTSU Laboratories, all in one place.

The URC is proud to announce our new laboratory directory. This resource will allow students to learn about excellent MTSU labs across several disciplines. Both new and experienced student researchers can utilize this document to find research positions, set up collaborations with other labs, or to establish a specific thesis mentor.

This directory is also a resource for faculty members seeking student researchers. Each lab's accomplishments, publications, and goals are detailed within the pages of this directory.

This directory contains laboratory descriptions, the key skills necessary for each lab position, and semester openings for several labs, divided by specific college. To access the directory, click the button on the right or scan the QR code.

PDF copies of the directory are also available to print.

*Please send any additions or updates to our URC Research Assistant, Gracie Johnson: gpm2h@mtmail.mtsu.edu
The National Science Foundation (NSF) Search Page
- The National Science Foundation has a search page that includes the contact information for Research Experiences for Undergraduates summer research programs. You will need to contact the specific program for application information. Additionally, programs may submit their specific application information for publishing in the list below.

PathwaysToScience.org
- PathwaysToScience.org has a searchable database of 600+ summer research programs for undergraduates in all STEM disciplines. These are all fully funded opportunities including programs sponsored by NSF, NASA, NIH, etc. They also have a selection of resources to help you strengthen your applications.

Practical Geocommunication - Geologize- American Geosciences Institute
- The American Geosciences Institute (AGI) is pleased to offer free training in geoscience communications to members of AGI Member Societies, with generous support from the American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG) Foundation, starting March 1, 2023. The Practical Geocommunication course offered by Geologize LTD, which is endorsed by leading geoscience organizations around the world, is being made available at no cost to all members of AGI Member Societies. AGI encourages every one of its Member Societies to reach out to all members with information on how to take advantage of this unique opportunity. "We all understand the importance of communicating geoscience to the public and other stakeholders, and we believe this is crucial in addressing societal issues," AGI Executive Director Jonathan Arthur said on announcing the initiative. This free training opportunity will be available for one year. Click here for more information.

U.S. Department of Energy Seeking Applicants for the Science Undergraduate Laboratory Internships (SULI) Program
- Are you an undergraduate student pursuing a degree in science, technology, engineering, or math (STEM) or recent graduate who completed an associate’s degree or bachelor’s degree in STEM? Do you want to develop and hone your research skills at a national laboratory while learning from some of our nation’s best scientists and engineers? Then the Science Undergraduate Laboratory Internships (SULI) program is for you. As a SULI participant, you’ll gain valuable hands-on research experience and build your professional network while collaborating on an exciting project under the guidance of a mentor. You will also have opportunities to present your research to your mentors and peers, join in social activities, and engage in a variety of professional development activities to enhance your career skills. Applications for the Science Undergraduate Laboratory Internships (SULI) Program are now open for the 2023 Fall Term. Applications are due Wednesday, October 4, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. EDT. Apply HERE.

Interested in more opportunities? Click here to explore more internship/research opportunities!
The 133rd Meeting of the Tennessee Academy of Science will be held on November 18th at Rhodes College. The Tennessee Academy of Science seeks to promote scientific research and the diffusion of knowledge concerning science; to secure communication between persons engaged in scientific work, especially in Tennessee; to assist by investigation and discussion in developing and making known the material, educational, and other resource and riches of the state; to arrange and prepare for publication such reports of investigations and discussions as they further the aims and objectives of the Academy.

Kentucky Academy of Science Annual Meeting
- Each November KAS hosts about 700 students & faculty from around our region to present their research as papers and posters. Registration fees are modest- Join us on November 3&4, 2023 at Northern Kentucky University. Abstracts are due October 1.

Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference for Undergraduate Scholarship (MARCUS) - Randolph College
- Celebrating 25 years of hosting undergraduate research - MARCUS is a presentation venue for undergraduate scholarship in all disciplines. This event will take place entirely in person on the Randolph College campus, Lynchburg, VA.

Student Journals
Student journals create unique avenues by which emerging scholars can engage with research more profoundly. They offer a more viable path for students to earn publication and provide valuable professional opportunities, as student leaders can experience academic publishing from a distinct vantage point and develop as leaders in research. Student journals often play an integral role in research engagement programs at the institutional level. CUR offers a Student Journals community as a place for those involved in student research journals---students, faculty, librarians, administrators, and others---to share resources, foster discussion of best practices, seek solutions to issues encountered in the operation of student journals, and provide support and networking to such individuals.

Check out the links below to explore student journals!