

University of Missouri System Undergraduate Research Day at the Capitol

April ??, 2008

Call for Nominations for Student Ambassadors from MU

The University of Missouri System is seeking nominations for undergraduates to share their university research experiences with state lawmakers in Jefferson City for Undergraduate Research Day at the Capitol in April. The deadline for University of Missouri-Columbia nominees is October 24th, 2007.

Last year's event showcased the work of 20 MU students to Missouri legislators. The 2008 event will continue to be a system-wide activity with space for 40-50 undergraduates from all four campuses of the UM system.

The purpose of this event is to demonstrate to lawmakers in Jefferson City the unique opportunities undergraduate students have to participate with faculty in research at the University of Missouri. Many lawmakers do not differentiate between regional colleges and public research universities, and we hope this opportunity to showcase our undergraduates involved in research will help make the distinction. We will also use this event to underscore higher education's role in developing educated citizens and preparing a work force with the necessary skills to further the economic growth of the state.

We are seeking undergraduates who have been significantly involved in the research enterprise of the university either with their own project or through meaningful involvement with an on-going faculty project. To qualify for participation in this event, nominees must meet the following criteria:

- Students must be undergraduates at the University of Missouri during the 2007-2008 Academic Year.
- Students must be residents of Missouri.
- Research must have been completed under the guidance of a University of Missouri faculty member.
- Research projects must represent significant investment of time by the student outside of normal course requirements and class projects.
- Research projects must follow the methodology of the appropriate academic discipline.
- The research project must be of sufficient quality to be presented at a professional academic meeting.

Successful nominees should also be able to convey their experience and enthusiasm to state representatives, senators, and other state officials in a poster session. Students who have already presented their research project on campus or at a professional meeting are strongly encouraged to apply. We are seeking students from a broad range of disciplines. We are

especially interested in projects that relate to the economic development of Missouri and issues important to the state legislature (e.g., education, health, agriculture, biotechnology, transportation and infrastructure, social services). Presentations that include visual demonstrations or displays beyond the typical poster are also encouraged.

Selection of Undergraduate Ambassadors will be based on geographical distribution across the state, relevance of the project to the state, quality of the project, and distribution among the four campuses.

Students selected to serve as Undergraduate Research Ambassadors will be asked to attend several meetings and workshops in preparation for April. Workshop topics will include presentation skills, how the state legislature works, how to meet and greet lawmakers, and other protocol. Students will also be asked to revise their poster and abstract for a lay audience and to prepare a brief presentation on their work suitable for delivering the "take home message" in a few minutes. Projects should be completed by February 2008, and students will be asked to turn in the first draft of their revised abstracts early during the Winter semester. Posters will be printed in March, and students will participate in a practice session in early April.

Students will also communicate with their Senator and Representative about the event in advance by mail and will visit those lawmakers during their trip to the capitol in April. Parents of Ambassadors will be invited by the University of Missouri President to attend the event in Jefferson City. Students will have the opportunity to tour the state capitol and to have their photo taken with their local lawmakers to send to their hometown newspaper. Transportation to and from Jefferson City will be provided, along with a box lunch. Letters explaining the student's absence from class on April will be sent to appropriate instructors upon request.

Nominations from the Columbia Campus are due into the Office of Undergraduate Research (150 Life Sciences Center) by Wednesday, October 24th at 5:00 pm.

Faculty nominators are encouraged to request the assistance of their nominee in completing the nomination form. For additional information or questions, please contact Dr. Linda Blockus (BlockusL@missouri.edu) in the MU Office of Undergraduate Research (882-5979, 150 Bond Life Sciences Center).

Undergraduate Research Ambassador Nomination Form

Please PRINT!

A. Faculty Mentor/Nominator Information

Name _____ Department _____
Campus Address _____ E-mail Address _____

B. Undergraduate Researcher/Nominee Information

Name _____ Student ID# _____
Major _____ Year in School _____
Columbia Address/Zip _____ E-mail Address _____
Columbia Phone Number _____

Parent's name and full Address/Permanent Residence in Missouri (include street # and zip code) [This is the address the student's parents/family members use to register to vote in Missouri.]

My Missouri Senatorial District is _____. My Missouri House District is _____.
Go to www.senate.state.mo.us/zipcode/leg_lookup.htm to find your districts. You must enter your zip code + 4 number. Don't know your + 4 number? There is a link to the US Postal Service at this web site to find out that information too!

C. Project Information

Research Project Title

Funding Source (if any)

Briefly explain, in simple terms, why this project is important and/or is relevant to the state of Missouri.

- Please attach an abstract of this project.
- Faculty members should attach a brief letter of recommendation, addressing the student's degree of enthusiasm for the project, their educational experience at the University, their ability to communicate with others outside their field of study, and their ability to represent the University.

Please return this form with an abstract and recommendation letter to:

*Office of Undergraduate Research
150 Bond Life Sciences Center
University of Missouri-Columbia*

Deadline: Wednesday, October 24, 2007