THE SUMMER RESEARCH PROGRAM BEGINS MAY 29!

The URC is ready for another exciting summer of undergraduate research at Oxy. The photo below is a snapshot of a groups’ research in Costa Rica last summer. The SRP is open to all majors, making the research topics each year memorable and unique. To get a glimpse at the assortment of topics and majors, here are a few examples:

Naomi Fields ‘20, Studio Art and Biology: *Scientific Process Through Art: An Interactive Coloring Book and Two Stitched Canvas Tapestries.* Naomi currently has an art exhibition in the Green Bean (which was also supported by URC funds!). It will be on display through finals week so please check it out!

Andrew Henson ‘20, Philosophy: *The Role of Comedy in Modern Society*

Franny Hutchins ‘19, Religious Studies: *The Resurgence of Catholic Exorcisms in the United States*

The SRP runs from May 28 - August 4, 2018 and the Research Conference when students present their work either by oral presentation or poster session, is on August 1, 2018. If you’re a student participating, be on the lookout for emails with more information and updates!
A new paper from the Oxy Comp Bio Lab was published in the journal Biological Invasions. The paper was the result of Tatum Katz’s senior honors thesis and summer independent research. In the paper they compare the performance of different model selection techniques in distinguishing among different species distribution models for predicting the spread of newly invasive species. They use the newly emergent fungal pathogen, *Bsal* (*Batrachochytrium salamandrivorus*), as a case study. *Bsal* is closely related to the better known amphibian chytrid, but differs in that it primarily impacts salamanders. They found that model selection methods that rely on absence data are biased, which they argue is due to the fact that newly invasive species are not yet at an ecological equilibrium and thus absence data are uninformative.

Tatum is now half-way through her first year in a PhD program at UCSB in the Briggs lab working on modeling global amphibian pathogens.
Claudia Lechner is a Psychology major and a rising senior. She has participated with the URC Summer Research Program for the past two years and additionally this upcoming summer. During her first summer, Lechner worked with Prof. Andrea Hopmeyer as an American Psychology Association (APA) research assistant on Developmental Psychology research, a project she later continued the next summer through the SRP. Additionally, Lechner has taken advantage of the conference travel grants and attended SCCUR to present at poster sessions twice. As a rising senior, Lechner will spend her third summer working on two Cognitive Psychology research projects with Prof. Andrew Shultman and his research team. Claudia explains, “The two projects we will be running this summer are both about the coexistence of intuitive theories and scientific theories. One will explore coexisting theories of matter and life in children, and one will explore coexisting theories of social categories in adults. For both studies, we will assess how quickly and accurately people respond to counterintuitive statements relative to intuitive ones involving the same concepts.”

Lechner’s favorite part about participating in research during the summer is how passionate and close the research team becomes. She says that being surrounded by hardworking students who are excited about research is an engaging and rewarding experience. In closing, Lechner wants to thank Prof. Andrea Hopmeyer, because “without her I would never have imagined doing research! The SRP is something every Oxy student should experience!”

NCUR 2018

The 32nd Annual National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) was held at the University of Central Oklahoma from April 4-7, 2018.

This year, the URC sent Taylor Robinson ’18 to the conference. Robinson’s research is “Motion-Encoding as Evidence for Multicompetence: Lexical Diversity and Manner Expression in Russian-English and Spanish-English Bilinguals.” Robinson is a Cognitive Science departmental honors candidate. NCUR is just one of many URC Conference Travel opportunities available to all students!
"Analyzing the conflict between colonizing religions and indigenous peoples: Negotiating issues of sexuality and reproduction in 20th Century Kenya"

Joselyn Guzman is a senior majoring in Religious Studies and minoring in Education. Last summer, she conducted research through the SRP with her advisor Professor Kristi Upson-Saia. Joselyn analyzed the conflict between colonizing, missionary religions and the deep-rooted, indigenous cultural practice of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in 20th century Kenya. The topic of FGM interested Joselyn because it intersects with religion, women’s rights, and education. "I had never heard of FGM before reading a novel where the protagonist undergoes FGM. After learning that FGM existed, I wanted to research more about it."

Joselyn is also a tour guide and was recently selected to receive the Dean’s Award for Excellence. Her future plans include: graduating from Oxy, completing grad school, become a teacher, work in education policy, and serve as an advocate for more equitable education.