Innovate UNO Sees 50-Plus Entries — UNO Sends15-Plus Presentations to UL System Academic Summit

More than 50 students participated on Friday in Innovate UNO, the University of New Orleans first juried undergraduate research competition. The showcase event was designed to expose undergraduates to scholarly research competitions and put them on a path to pursuing graduate work and attaining grant funding.

"Everybody is a winner," said Michael A. Tarr, chair of the UNO chemistry department and UNO Undergraduate Research Council. "I was very impressed by the thoroughness and professionalism with which the students presented their work."

More than a dozen students who showed their work will head next month to the University of Louisiana at Monroe, where they will represent the University and compete against students from nine Louisiana universities at the second annual academic summit of the University of Louisiana system. This year, UNO will send five oral and five poster presentations, said Elizabeth Sigler, coordinator of undergraduate research. The university will also send five art works that meet requirements of the UL System competition, as well as a literary performance.

Molly Miller, who graduated in fall as a psychology major in the University's College of Sciences, won "Overall Best" in the poster competition with her presentation "Group Differences in the Prediction of Psychopathy on a Dimensional Level."

Joshua Baer, a planning and urban studies major who works with the University's Merritt E. Becker Jr. Transportation Institute and the nonprofit Bike Easy program to study bicycling traffic in New Orleans, won "Overall Best" oral presentation for his research presentation "Bicycle Incidents in New Orleans."

Desiree Bewley won "Overall Best" Drama/Literary Presentation with her performance "The Year of the Institution."

Kathleen Garaudy, a fine arts major, won "Overall Best" for Art with her oil-on-canvas work, "Julia in my Car."

Other winners included:

In the College of Business Administration, business administration major Esther Phelps won first place in the oral
competition for her presentation "Do Celebrity Endorsements Always Increase Sales?" Michael Larey, a business administration major studying hospitality, restaurants and tourism, won first place in the poster competition with his presentation "Priming Consumer Attitudes." Valeria Aguerri won second place in the oral competition with her presentation "The Effect of Identity Salience on Consumers' Purchase Intention."

In the College of Engineering, Jason Merritt, a chemical and environmental engineering major won first place in the oral presentation with his presentation "Geological Mapping of Subsidence in New Orleans." Garrett Fried, an electrical engineering major, won first place in the poster competition with his presentation on MICE Technology (Multilingual Interactive Children’s Educational Technology).

In the College of Liberal Arts, anthropology major Austen Dooley won first place in the oral competition with her presentation "Trade and Luxury: The Archaeological Aspect of Iberville Housing Projects." Duncan Cheney, an urban planning major, won first place in the poster competition with his presentation on the UNO Rainworks Challenge. Emily Knox won second place in the oral competition with her presentation "Conceptualizing Tomboy." Cecilia Russell, a gender and women's studies major won second place in the poster competition with her presentation "Gender Bias vs. Feminism in Comic Books."

In the College of Sciences, computer science major Jonathan Redmann won first place in the oral competition with his presentation "Binding Free Energy Calculation Planning Using Graph Theoretic Techniques." Chemistry major Cinnamon Mitchell won first place in the poster competition with her presentation, "The Synthesis of New Layered Perovskites via Ion Exchange." Psychology major Florencia Iturri won second place in the poster competition with her presentation "Attachment level modifies testosterone reactivity in a laboratory setting." Sadia Akram, who studies chemistry and biological sciences, won second place in the oral contest with her presentation, "Synthesis of Novel Dibenzo[ffuran Analogues."

The University has also submitted proposals for several presentations on service learning to the to the UL system, which includes service-based learning projects in its academic summits. Five UNO faculty and students have presented service-learning projects for consideration: "UNO Literacy Alive" by Paul Bole; "Student Filmmakers Producing Documentaries for the Community," presented by Lado Fulop; "Developing Strategic Marketing Plans for Community Businesses," presented by Elizabeth Joint and Elyria Kemp; "Commemorating LSUNO's First African American Students," by Becky Retz and Michael Mizell-Nelson and "UNO Planning and Urban Studies Students Help Rebuild New Orleans Neighborhood," by Michelle Thompson.

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