

NEWS FROM THE UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CENTER

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Check Out TENSOS!

The Scholars Week Scramble

Scholars Week (SW) is fast approaching, and we need all hands on deck for our 18th annual Research and Creative Activity (RCA) Exposition on **March 15th, 2024**.

The first half of this newsletter is dedicated to all things Scholars Week. Make sure to **mark you calendars** with all of the important dates coming up (*page 3*). **Students interested in presenting** can apply on *page 4*. We didn't forget about you **faculty members** - sign up for **judging** and/or a **classroom pop-in** from a SW ambassador (*page 5*). We also encourage everyone to **vote for your favorite SW T-Shirt design** submitted by students (*page 6*)! Last up for SW, we are looking for students interested in mentoring high school students through our **READY 2 SOAR** program before the RCA exposition on March 15th. Student group leaders will receive lunch and be compensated for their time.

The latter half of this newsletter is mostly the same as other months, however, we are excited to announce a partnership with Dr. Karen Nourse and the James E. Walker Library to host a four-part **Library Research Workshop Series** (*page 8*). The next workshop, **Fantastic Faculty Mentors and Where to Find Them**, focuses on the early stages of undergrad and graduate level research on campus, so be sure to check it out (*page 9*).



Until next time,
Ross Sibley, Editor
(rhs2x@mtmail.mtsu.edu)



Undergraduate
Research Center

URC'S MISSION

The Undergraduate Research Center's (URC) mission is to be the central hub for communication about undergraduate research grant programs and other related opportunities on and off campus, to distribute university funds for undergraduate research and creative projects, and to promote dissemination of results through travel grants and by offering opportunities for students to present their research findings.



FEBRUARY IS **BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

We are honoring Black History Month by highlighting the historical and present-day disparities Black scholars face.

Accessibility to the practice of research holds various persisting hardships disproportionately faced by BIPOC students and professional researchers alike. While academia and research fields have progressed over the decades, there is certainly still improvement needed.

Systemic discrimination against Black students persists as a prominent issue today. Factors like the cost of higher education and responsibilities outside of school can limit Black students' capacity to partake in the opportunities around them.

Accumulated obstacles may prevent these students to know of, engage in, and excel in undergraduate research.

Countering these systemic disparities goes beyond its acknowledgement during Black History Month. It is necessary for all fields to recognize the injustices and infiltrate measures towards equity across scholarship.

At the URC, we value the importance of representation and intersectionality in undergraduate research. **We would love to highlight our fantastic Black undergraduate researchers!** Any and all Black undergraduate researchers interested in this are invited to submit their information at the link below.

Click [HERE](#) for your recognition!

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!



Jamie.Burriss@mtsu.edu
Phone: 615.494.7669

DR. JAMIE BURRISS

Dr. Burriss oversees the URC, the Student Organization for the Advancement of Research (SOAR), SOAR Ambassadors, 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.



Channon.Fults@mtsu.edu

CHANNON FULTS

Program Assistant

Channon was born and raised in Murfreesboro, TN. She graduated MTSU in 2006 with a Bachelor's degree in Interior Design and a minor in Human Sciences. Between working part time with the URC program and being a Mom she continues to pursue her interior design career as well. She is excited to be joining the URC team and is eager to be a part of helping enhance student education at her alma mater.

URC Student Workers



ROSS SIBLEY

Major: Biochemistry

SOAR Involvement:

President, Communications & Social Media Ambassador

Fun Fact: Ross was funded to present his research in the UK at the World Congress on Undergraduate Research.



SOPHIA ROBERTS

Major: Sociology

URC Involvement:

Research Assistant

Fun Fact: Sophia graduated in December 2023 with the Scholar Distinction in Undergraduate Research.

MTSU's 18th Annual

RESEARCH & CREATIVE ACTIVITY EXPOSITION

IMPORTANT DATES

FEBRUARY 1

- Deadline for T-shirt Design Competition | Apply [HERE](#)

FEBRUARY 1-15

- Classroom Pop-Ins | Sign-up [HERE](#)

FEBRUARY 5-16

- T-shirt Design Voting | Vote [HERE](#)

FEBRUARY 25 by 11:59pm

- Presenter Application Deadline | Register [HERE](#)

FEBRUARY 26

- Acceptances sent out via email

FEBRUARY 20 - MARCH 8

- Poster printing available



SCHOLARS WEEK 2024



MARCH

15

2024

STUDENT
UNION
BALLROOM



More Information

www.mtsu.edu/scholarsweek

SCHOLARS WEEK

Research & Creative
Activity Exposition

Call for Student Presenters

APPLY

here! 

Deadline: February 25th, 4:30pm



SCHOLARS
WEEK 2024

Call for Faculty Judges

We invite you to join us for the Research & Creative Activity Exposition on Friday, March 15th. Judges will be assigned 4-6 posters within their discipline and will use a rubric to score. Thank you in advance for your willingness to serve as a judge!



APPLY
here! 

Classroom Pop-Ins

We are excited to announce the opportunity for peer Scholars Week promotion presentations. This is a great opportunity to have our current undergraduate research students visit your class and give a quick 5 minute presentation on "What is Scholars Week, and how can you get involved?"

Sign Up Here 

SCHOLARS WEEK 2024

T-shirt Competition

VOTING TIME!

Submissions are in...go
pick your favorite!



**Voting is open to
ALL STUDENTS**

**Voting deadline:
February __**

**Competition winner receives a
Scholars Week Medallion, t-shirt with
your design, and recognition at
Scholars Week 2024**

**SCAN HERE or
VISIT
bit.ly/SWtshirt
TO VOTE**



GROUP LEADERS NEEDED

Event Details

- Friday March 15, 2024
- 10:30am-12:00pm
- During morning session at Scholars Week Expo
- Student Union Gallery Room

Lunch and Compensation are Provided!

READY to SOAR 2024

Join us for the annual **READY to SOAR** group discussion session, where we introduce local high school students to undergraduate research!

You will host a guided round-table discussion with HS juniors and seniors about your research journey, how you got started, and how it has impacted you.

The goal is to get students excited about research, clarify what research is, and guide them on how to get involved should they attend college.

Talking points will be provided, and involvement will count as active participation in SOAR



Sign Up Here!



For any questions, please contact **READY to SOAR**
Internal Project Coordinator Mina Abdulkareem
mka3s@mtmail.mtsu.edu



Walker Library



Undergraduate
Research Center

LIBRARY RESEARCH

WORKSHOP

SPRING 2024 SERIES

FANTASTIC FACULTY MENTORS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM

10:00-10:30am in LIB 264A

**FEB
20**

**MAR
19**

CONSIDERATIONS FOR PUBLISHING YOUR THESIS OR DISSERTATION

11:00-11:30am in LIB 264A

ESTABLISHING YOUR RESEARCHER PRESENCE THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

12:00-1:00pm in LIB 264A - LUNCH PROVIDED!

**APR
17**



Undergraduate
Research Center



Walker Library



FANTASTIC FACULTY MENTORS & WHERE TO FIND THEM

LIBRARY RESEARCH WORKSHOP SERIES

If you have the drive and ambition to pursue a research project but don't know where to start - we're here to help! Learn how to assess your research interests, uncover possible research topics, and find a prospective faculty advisor.

FEBRUARY 20TH, 2024

10:00-10:30AM

LIB 264A

RSVP HERE

SOAR STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

EDEN ANDERSON & LINDSEY TRAN



Congratulations to Eden Anderson and Lindsey Tran for their Acceptances to Attend the Prestigious University of Florida Health Cancer Center Research Showcase!

On January 31st, Eden and Lindsey had the opportunity to tour some of the cancer research labs, listen to poster presentations and a keynote speaker, and participate in Q&A sessions!



SHOW SOME
L♥VE ON
INSTAGRAM
[@mt_soar](https://www.instagram.com/mt_soar)



UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH GRADUATION DISTINCTIONS

LEVELS OF RECOGNITION:

Distinction in Undergraduate Research

- Students receive a dark blue, light blue, and white cord

Scholar Distinction in Undergraduate Research

- Students receive a dark blue, light blue and white cord AND a medallion (see image to the right)



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.

What is the Student Organization for the Advancement of Research? AKA "SOAR"



SOAR is our awesome student organization comprised of undergraduate students who are committed to developing and sustaining an active and successful undergraduate research environment at MTSU.

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.



JOIN SOAR!

LOOKING TO START YOUR RESEARCH JOURNEY?



Undergraduate
Research Center

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!

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CENTER AT MIDDLE
TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

RESEARCH GUIDE

HOW TO START YOUR STUDENT RESEARCH JOURNEY

Stories and Advice from Student Researchers

IN THIS GUIDE:

• When to Start.....	2
• Finding a Research Project.....	3
• Student Stories.....	4
• Helpful Advice.....	8
• URC: Here to Help	11
• SOAR Resources.....	12

Check Out Our STUDENT RESEARCH GUIDE

OUT NOW: THE URC RESEARCH GROUPS & LABS DIRECTORY

MTSU's outstanding Research Groups and State of the Art Laboratories, all in one place.

The URC is proud to announce our new directory. This resource will allow students to learn about excellent MTSU labs and research groups 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 or group's accomplishments, publications, and goals are detailed within the pages of this directory.

This directory contains descriptions, key skills necessary, 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*



[CLICK HERE](#)



INTERNSHIPS & RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

Check out the following opportunities for spring & summer research!

[ACRES: Advanced Computational Research Experience for Students - Michigan State](#)

- ACRES is a 10-week summer Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) in computational and data science hosted at Michigan State University. Research projects focus on applying computation to a variety of scientific disciplines, including computational chemistry, biology, astrophysics, mathematics, science education, and earth/climate sciences. Students will learn how to develop algorithms, models, and software for problems that require high-performance computing resources.

Apply by February 29th, 2024.

[Interdisciplinary Research Experiences for Undergraduates - Embry Riddle Aeronautical University](#)

- The participants will contribute to collaborative, interdisciplinary research projects relating to the Aerospace industry. Available research projects span a variety of methods and topics and aim to sustainably increase multidisciplinary research in aerospace engineering, chemistry, and applied space biology with the goal of improving future space materials science and human diagnostic technology. **Apply by March 8th, 2024.**

[Tennessee Environmental Network Show of the South \(TENSOS\) Scholarship:](#)

- The TENSOS scholarship is available for all students (undergraduate, master's, and PhD) who are studying within the Environmental field. The application process involves submitting an online application ([located here](#)) which includes a brief abstract of the research. Once the application process closes, a select number of students will be selected as finalist. Finalists are invited to attend TENSOS in Chattanooga, TN, from May 15-17, 2024 to present their research and have the opportunity to win a \$1,500 scholarship. Finalists receive complimentary conference admission and lodging which will also allow them to take advantage of an unprecedented networking opportunity with environmental professionals from Tennessee and beyond. Many of our scholarship finalists have received job offers because of their participation in the conference. **The application deadline is March 31st, 2024.**

Interested in more opportunities? [Click here](#) to explore more internship/research opportunities!

PAPER & PRESENTATION OPPORTUNITIES

Check out the following opportunities for papers & presentations!

Scientia et Humanitas - MTSU Honors College

- Scientia et Humanitas, a journal of student research, is now accepting original, unpublished undergraduate and graduate research for its 2024 issue. We accept articles from every academic discipline offered by MTSU including the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities. Eligible contributors are **all MTSU students and recent graduates, either as independent authors or with a faculty member.**
- Articles should be 10 to 30 typed double-spaced pages and may include revisions of papers presented for classes, conferences, or Scholars Week. Articles adapted from Honors or M.A. theses are especially encouraged. Papers should include a brief abstract of no more than 250 words stating the purpose, methods, results, and conclusion.
- To submit an article, check out our submissions page and our author guidelines. Articles may also be submitted directly to the editor at scientia@mtsu.edu.
- The submission deadline is **Monday, February 12.**

Check out the links below to explore other helpful resources!

[Internships and Research Opportunities](#)

[Student Journals](#)

[Paper and Presentation Opportunities](#)

[Student Resource Center](#)