

The Student Center for  
Research, Creativity, and Scholarship  
presents

The

Advance Leaf Awards

for

Excellence in Undergraduate  
Research, Creativity, and Scholarship

April 3, 2025

**ADVANCE**  
STUDENT RESEARCH  
EXPERIENCE

The Quality Enhancement Program of UL Lafayette



UNIVERSITY of  
**LOUISIANA**  
L A F A Y E T T E

**Student Center for  
Research, Creativity  
and Scholarship**

# The Advance Leaf Awards

The Leaf Award celebrates students who have achieved excellence while completing a Student Research Experience (SRE) or disseminating information about a SRE they have worked on. The Advance Student Research Experience (ASRE) Program at UL Lafayette defines a SRE as a sustained effort by a student to apply subject knowledge, skills, and abilities to a project that is valued by the discipline. The Student Center for Research, Creativity, and Scholarship (SCRCs) houses the ASRE program, which supports the increase of undergraduate students' productivity and success through engagement in research, innovative projects, and creative endeavors.

Folklore at UL Lafayette begins at new student convocation when students are given an acorn lapel pin for good luck as they begin their academic endeavors and University engagement. There is speculation that good luck comes from rubbing the acorn in the hand of the Edwin Stephens statue, UL Lafayette's first president. In 1901 he planted the first of the famous century oaks on our campus. While attending UL Lafayette, students can participate in many co-curricular activities including scientific research, engineering competitions, honors thesis, artistic or scholarly presentations, or performances. Excellence in student engagement is recognized in many ways across campus. Students or student organizations can be awarded through Ragin Recognition; they are awarded an Oakie. The mighty oak is a symbol of elegant strength that endures over time and provides shade and rest for those who sit under it. Furthermore, it is the leaves that provide the shade. It is the leaves that feed the tree allowing it to grow. It is hundreds of leaves that make the mighty oak, mighty, like the hundreds of students who make UL Lafayette the elegant, and strong R1 Research institution that it is.

The academic endeavors of the students who receive the Leaf Award challenge and inspire the faculty and illuminate the possibilities for the future to the staff and administration. They grow and develop into amazing professionals, and they participate in the continuous building of a strong, elegant institution, that is UL Lafayette.

# Special Thanks to

## **B.I. Moody III College of Business Administration**

Jill Lemaire, Assistant Dean for Student Services  
Lisa K. Bowles, Senior Instructor Hospitality Management  
Becky Dubois, Master Instructor Hospitality Management  
Isabelle Ducote, Graduate Assistant Hospitality Management  
Angel Littlejohn, Information Systems and Multimedia Labs Manager

## **HMGT 407: Event Planning & Management Students**

Under the direction of Lisa K. Bowles, the HMGT 407 students planned the Leaf Awards Ceremony. The class worked closely with Advance staff to plan, design, and execute this event. The following students participated in the event by assisting with set up & breakdown, serving food and beverage, offering hospitality, and keeping a clean environment.

Matthew Coker	Kaitlin Harris	Emmy LeBlanc
Elizabeth Crouch	Faith Hayes	Javon Payne
Allie Devillier	Margaret Herndon	Samantha Stryker
Charlee Griffin	Emily Kellogg	

## **HMGT 316: Culinary Fundamentals Students**

Under the direction of Becky Dubois and Isabelle Ducote, the HMGT 316 students planned and prepared the food and beverages for this event.

Mya Broussard	Dae'Ja Harris	Madisan Milam
Nick Dallimore	Bailey Hudson	Makenzie Morea
Kaleya Dixon	Emily Kellogg	Jackson Priest
Paris Dupre	Magdalyn Landry	Keynell Smith
Charlee Griffin	Emmy LeBlanc	Trinity Taplin
Evan Guidry	Parker McNeas	Zach Wilson

## **Student volunteers from the following courses also helped serve this event.**

HMGT 201 Introduction to Hospitality  
HMGT 351 Restaurant Management  
HMGT 408 Facilities Management

## **School of Music Students**

Music provided by the UL Lafayette Student Jazz Combo 1.  
Logan Turner, guitar  
Evan Smith, bass  
Hunter Landry, drums

## **School of Architecture & Design Students**

Under the direction of Thomas Cline and Keegan McClain, the following students produced the Leaf Award plaques.

Dexter Bounds	James Scheuermann
Nhu Lam	Ray Taix
Cameron McBride	Hal Wyatt

# Special Thanks to

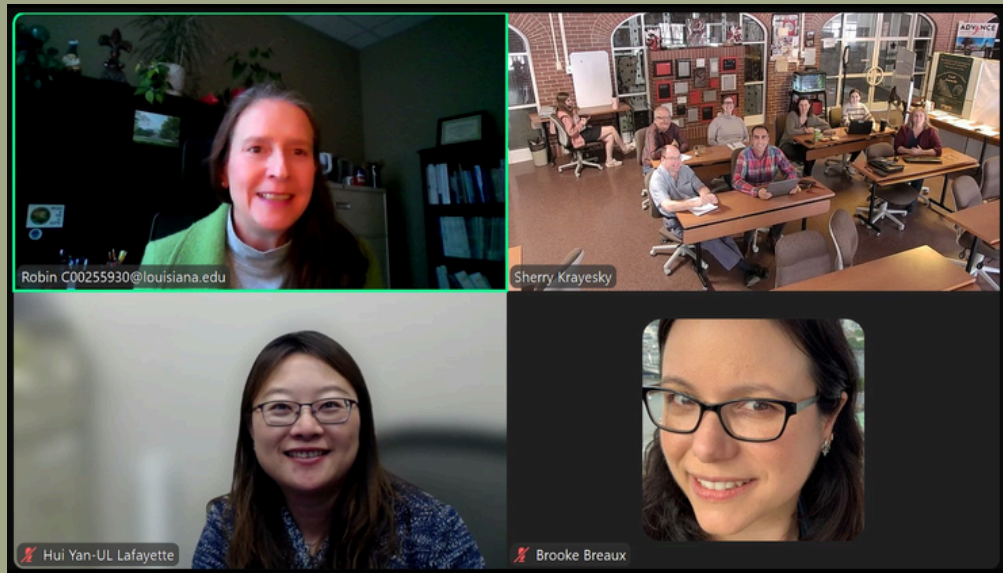
## Selection Committee

These faculty and staff members worked diligently to review 54 nominations to select 38 winners.

Brooke Breaux  
Jessie Broussard  
Ciara Crochet  
Daniel DiCaprio

Todd Henry  
Farzad Ferdowsi  
Paul Leberg  
Sophie Plouviez

William Schmidt  
Robin Schneider-Broussard  
Zachary Stein  
Jessica Thibodeaux  
Hui Yan



**Dr. Joseph Savoie, President**

**Dr. Jaimie Hebert, Provost**

**Dr. Dianne Olivier, Associate Vice President  
for Academic Affairs**

## Faculty Mentors

### SCRCS Staff

Sherry Krayesky-Self  
Todd Henry  
Jessie White  
Jessica Thibodeaux  
Mollee Helmick  
Temitayo Olufunmilakin  
Zohaib Hassan  
Jacques Laughlin  
Olivia Hebert



# Advance Challenge Coins

The challenge coin is given to faculty and staff who have worked tirelessly in conjunction with the Student Center for Research, Creativity, and Scholarship to encourage, assist, and support undergraduate students with their research endeavors.

## **Advance Advocate Challenge Coin Winners**

**Dr. Sophie Plouviez**, Assistant Department Head of Biology. Dr. Plouviez blazed the trail for other departments to follow in being one of the five departments to pilot the ASRE Pathways program. She advises both her faculty and students to collaborate within the program and has encouraged more than 100 students in her department to join the ASRE Pathways program.

**Dr. Farzad Ferdowsi**, Associate Professor in Electrical & Computer Engineering. Dr. Ferdowsi is a strong supporter of the Advance office and has won multiple grants to support student research. He continuously encourages students to participate in research and dissemination. He participates in all Advance events, including the Undergraduate Research Conference as a moderator and judge.

**Dr. Christine Briggs**, Director, Graduate Coordinator, and Associate Professor in Education and Human Development. Dr. Briggs is a major advocate for undergraduate research and is the newest Louisiana Council on Excellence in Undergraduate Research (LaCOEUR) president. Her dedication to her students as educators is truly shown in the research dissemination course she teaches.

**Tiffany Ellis, Andrea Broussard, and Olivia Peltier**, the Advance Research and Instruction Librarians. This dynamic trio is designated as the Advance Librarians. They have been incredible collaborators providing time, space and their expertise for events and workshops, and helping Advance students reach their full academic/research potential.

**Amy Windsor**, Director of Social Media and Engagement. Amy is one of the faces behind UL Lafayette's social media presence. Social media is the lifeblood of this generation, and our office would not be as prevalent as it is today if it were not for her work. Her posting, tagging, and sharing of all our events and news gives SCRCs an ever-growing audience to encourage.

**Heidie Lindsey**, Associate Dean of Students, Director of Student Engagement and Leadership. Heidie has collaborated with Advance from the start. Without Heidie's persistence in selecting a software package with a lens toward the future, the ASRE Pathways program would not be tracked as successfully as it is.

# Advance Leaf Award Nominees

University Faculty and Staff nominated 51 undergraduate students; with some students being nominated twice. There are currently 13,432 Undergraduate Students enrolled at the University. All students nominated for the Leaf Awards are exceptional.

## **B.I. Moody III College of Business Administration**

Sophia Dinh  
Terrell Turner

## **College of Education & Human Development**

Emma Bacilla  
Kya Coleman  
Juliana Courville  
Mary Claire Duffy  
Mackenzie Edmond  
Emma Haley  
Haylee Holt  
Myah LeJeune  
Abbey Poirier  
Emily Richard  
Grant Romero

## **College of Engineering**

Houston Akridge  
Katherine Ashurst  
Louis Pizza  
Mia Reyes  
Shella Sonnier  
Gavin Speakman  
Kory Trosclair  
Blake Waguespack  
Chloe Williamson  
Sarah Wraight

## **College of Liberal Arts**

Cassidy Boudreaux  
Karly Daigle  
Ella Garlington  
Sydney Guidry  
Andrew Kern  
Ian Robicheaux

## **College of Nursing & Health Sciences**

Aseel Ghani  
Tia Miller  
Omaree Peltier  
Dexter Walker

## **College of the Arts**

Margaret Dunn  
Megan Ivey  
Daniel Trevino-Medrano

## **Ray P. Authement College of Sciences**

Londyn Bardash  
Hallie Blondiau  
Paul Curry  
Princess Ezevillo  
Moiz Fazal Ur Rehman  
Dev Gautam  
Kinley Glass  
Ramudhi Kariyawasam  
Joseph Kolb  
Waylon Saragusa  
Jonas Schmidt  
Kelly Sonnier  
Hayden Smith  
Samantha Watson  
Scott Whitman

# Awards in Business

This category covers research methods in Business, Accounting, Economics, Finance, Hospitality Management, Insurance and Risk Management, Management, Management Information Systems, Marketing, Professional Land and Resource Management.

## **Sophia Dinh**

Mentor: Laura Guichard Latiolais  
B.I. Moody III College of Business – Accounting

## **Terrell Turner**

Mentor: Sarah Skinner  
B.I. Moody III College of Business Administration – Economics

# Awards in Computer & Informational Sciences

This category covers research including disciplines of Computer Science and Informatics. This category may also be appropriate for Health Information Management, or Engineering.

## **Jonas Schmidt**

Mentors: Sercan Aygun, Abu Kaisar Mohammad Masum, & Reeti Pradhanang  
Ray P. Authement College of Sciences – Computer Science & Mathematics (double major)

## **Shella Sonnier**

Mentor: Magdy Bayoumi  
College of Engineering – Electrical Engineering

# Awards in Creative Work and Media Production

This category covers research which culminates in a Creative or Multimedia Work in areas such as Architecture & Design, Performing Arts, Visual Arts, Broadcasting, and Moving Image Arts.

## **Megan Ivey**

Mentors: Kiwana McClung, Kari Smith, & Adam Feld  
College of the Arts – Industrial Design

## **Daniel Trevino-Medrano**

Mentor: William Geoff Gjertson  
College of the Arts – Architectural Studies

# Awards in Education

This category covers research methods in Art or Music Education, Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, Middle School Education, Secondary Education, Curriculum design, Teaching, and Kinesiology.

## **Emma Bacilla**

Mentor: Jeremy Foreman  
College of Education & Human Development – Kinesiology

## **Emma Haley**

Mentor: Min-Seok Choi  
College of Education & Human Development – Elementary Education Gr 1-5

# Awards in Engineering & Technology

This category covers research methods in Engineering, Technology. Disciplines represented include Chemical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Engineering Technology, Mechanical Engineering, Petroleum Engineering, and Computer Science.

## **Katherine Ashurst**

Mentors: Elizabeth Boyd & William Holmes  
College of Engineering – Chemical Engineering

## **Houston Akridge**

Mentor: Farzad Ferdowsi, Kouhyar Sheida  
College of Engineering – Electrical Engineering

# Awards in Health

This category covers research methods in health sciences. Disciplines represented include Nursing, Health Information Management, Exercise Science, Kinesiology, Health Services Administration, and Pre-Dental Hygiene.

## **Paul Curry**

Mentors: Francois Villinger & Ritwij Kulkarni  
Ray P. Authement College of Sciences – Biology

## **Aseel Ghani**

Mentor: Tierney Beebe  
College of Nursing & Health Sciences – Health Information Management

## **Tia Miller**

Mentors: Jeanne Cartier & Tricia Templet  
College of Nursing & Health Sciences – Nursing



# Award in Humanities

This category covers research methods in the Humanities (in both traditional and digital forms). Disciplines represented include such fields as Organizational Communication, Public Relations, English, History, Modern Languages, Mass Communication, and Strategic Communication.

## **Cassidy Boudreaux**

Mentors: Emily K. Sandoz, Kari Smith, & Wesley Malvini  
College of Liberal Arts – Psychology

# Awards in Life Sciences

This category covers research methods in life science. Disciplines represented include such fields as Biology, Microbiology, Environmental Science, Botany or Agricultural Science.

## **Waylon Saragusa**

Mentor: Karl H. Hasenstein  
Ray P. Authement College of Sciences – Biology

## **Kelly Sonnier**

Mentor: Craig McClain  
Ray P. Authement College of Sciences – Biology

## **Hayden Smith**

Mentor: Courtney Poirier Chicola & Rodney Yantis  
Ray P. Authement College of Sciences – Environmental Science

# Award in Math & Statistics

This category includes students performing mathematical and statistical research, but it also includes work completed in any other field that applies unique or exceptional mathematical or statistical applications to the work.

## **Scott Whitman**

Mentors: Leonel Robert Gonzalez, Bruce Wade, & Habib M. Ammari  
Ray P. Authement College of Sciences – Mathematics

# Awards in Performing Arts

This category covers research which culminates original or extraordinary performances in Music, Theater, Dance, Performing Arts or Moving Image Arts.

## **Margaret Dunn**

Mentor: William Plummer

College of the Arts – Music Education Gr K-12

## **Cassidy Boudreaux**

Mentors: Emily K. Sandoz, Kari Smith, & Wesley Malvini

College of Liberal Arts – Psychology

# Awards in Physical Sciences

This category covers research methods in physical science or related projects. Disciplines represented include such fields as Geology, Physics, and Chemistry. This category may also be appropriate for Math or Engineering.

## **Londyn Bardash**

Mentor: Tolga Karsili

Ray P. Authement College of Sciences – Chemistry

## **Samantha Watson**

Mentor: Febee Louka

Ray P. Authement College of Sciences – Chemistry

# Awards in Social Sciences

This category covers research methods in the Social Sciences. Disciplines represented include such fields as Anthropology, Human Development and Family Science, Communicative Disorders, Criminal Justice, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Speech Pathology & Audiology.

## **Sydney Guidry**

Mentor: Hung-Chu Lin

College of Liberal Arts – Psychology

## **Ian Robicheaux**

Mentor: Mark Rees & Mike Rodgers

College of Liberal Arts – Anthropology

# Awards in Community Impact

This award is given to students who are completing original work that benefits Louisiana, The University of Louisiana at Lafayette or the Local community surrounding UL Lafayette.

## **Kory Trosclair**

Mentor: Daniel Gang  
College of Engineering – Mechanical Engineering

## **Andrew Kern**

Mentors: Liz Skilton & Anna Osland  
College of Liberal Arts – Sociology

## **Louis Pizza**

Mentor: Sharon LaHood & Ipshit Idirs  
College of Engineering – Engineering & Technology Management

# Awards in International Impact

This award is for excellence in work that impacts countries outside the United States  
This award will also be given to work that increases collaboration between countries or people from varying countries.

## **Katherine Ashurst**

Mentors: Elizabeth Boyd & William Holmes  
College of Engineering – Chemical Engineering

## **Haylee Holt**

Mentor: Aimee Gros  
College of Education & Human Development – Kinesiology

# Awards in Diversity & Social Justice

Applicants in any of the other categories have the option of also submitting their project for consideration in the Diversity and Social Justice category. These submissions could utilize humanities or scientific methodologies, involve creative work or literature reviews, but should relate in some way to the overall theme of Diversity and Social Justice.

## **Emily Richard**

Mentor: Min-Seok Choi

College of Education & Human Development – Elementary Education Gr 1-5

## **Joseph Kolb**

Mentor: Courtney Poirier Chicola

Ray P. Authement College of Sciences – Environmental Science

# Awards in Exceptional Performance in Dissemination

This category awards exceptional performance in dissemination of student research experiences (SREs), written or oral communications as well as performances and presentations were considered.

## **Abbey Poirier**

Mentor: Megan Breaux

College of Education & Human Development – Elementary Education Gr 1-5

## **Hallie Blondiau**

Mentor: William Schmidt

Ray P. Authement College of Sciences – Biology

## **Ramudhi Kariyawasam**

Mentors: Karen Smith & Jackie Barua

Ray P. Authement College of Sciences – Biology & Chemistry (double major)

# Provest Awards

This award is for work that is interdisciplinary or work that displays excellence across other award categories.

This award also honors students who have completed exceptional research or creative/scholarly works despite challenging circumstances.

## **Cassidy Boudreaux**

Mentor: Emily K. Sandoz, Kari Smith, & Wesley Malvini  
College of Liberal Arts – Psychology

## **Paul Curry**

Mentors: Francois Villnager & Ritwij Kulkarni  
Ray P. Authement College of Sciences – Biology

## **Katherine Ashurst**

Mentors: Elizabeth Boyd & William Holmes  
College of Engineering – Chemical Engineering

## **Hallie Blondiau**

Mentor: William Schmidt  
Ray P. Authement College of Sciences – Biology