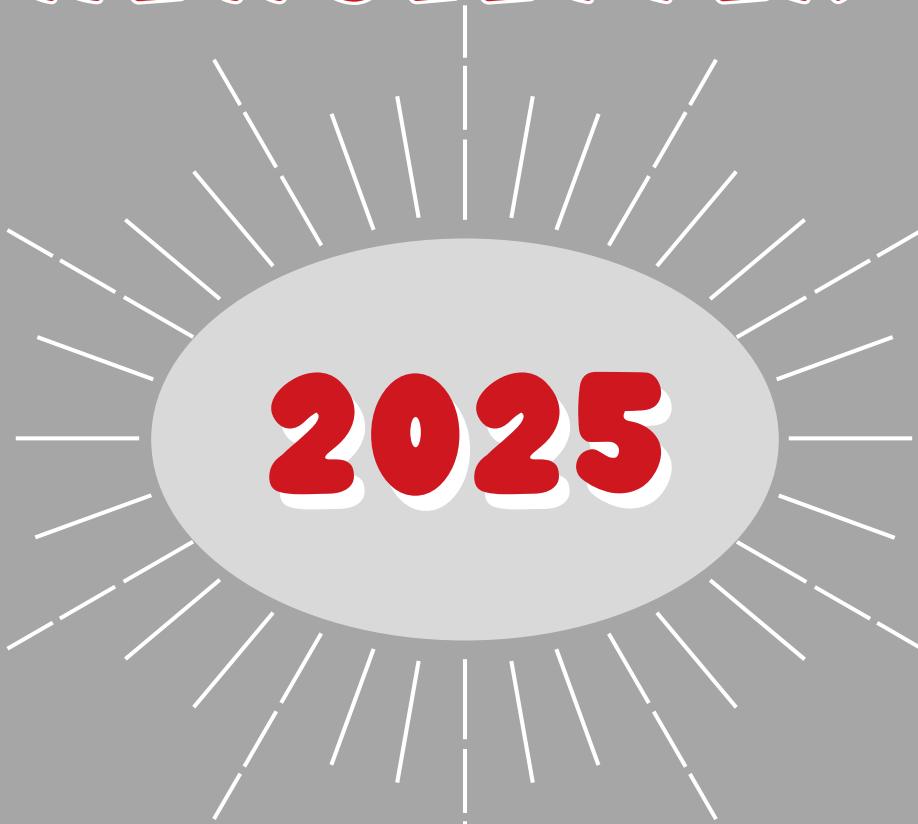




# RESEARCH IN MOTION

*The*  
**Student Center for Research,  
Creativity, & Scholarship**  
*and*  
**Advance Student Research Experience**  
**NEWSLETTER**



2025



UNIVERSITY of  
**LOUISIANA**  
LAFAYETTE®

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

**ADVANCE**  
STUDENT  RESEARCH  
EXPERIENCE

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The Quality Enhancement Program of UL Lafayette

# FROM THE DESK OF LEADERSHIP

I am so pleased that you are taking time to read our newsletter and explore all the great things that we have accomplished here at the Advance Student Research Program. Each month we had exciting events, from our Leaf Awards where we reward undergraduate research excellence and extraordinary faculty mentorship, to our tabling events where we invite more students to participate in the great opportunities that our program offers.

The staff here at the Student Center for Research, Creativity, and Scholarship and I all wish every student a successful academic year. Our goal is to support every student, faculty, and staff that are engaging in research here at UL Lafayette. Your success is our success.

Please feel free to come by our office to learn more about us or visit our website. We invite you to enter our office as a student and leave as a scholar.

*- Sherry Krayesky-Sell*

Thanks for stopping by! The ASRE Pathways became effective in the 2023-2024 academic year with 5 departments. We consistently added departments each year and now have 90% of degree granting programs with an active ASRE Pathway effective for the 2025-2026 academic year. We currently have around 370 students signed up to complete an ASRE Pathway in the respective majors. This number has increased 185% since enrollment opened Fall 2023. That is due to the hard work put in by the Advance team, faculty, and staff who are championing this program, and the students looking to further their engagement with their chosen field. We have had 101 students complete their ASRE Pathway and graduate from UL Lafayette.

Last semester our office hosted a friendly competition between the colleges to determine who could sign up the most students in Spring 2024 and the competitive spirit rose quickly! The College of Sciences claimed victory in first place with 38 students signing up, the College of Engineering took second place with 28 students signing up, and the College of Liberal Arts claimed the third-place spot with 20 students signing up. The College of Sciences took home the trophy and have the title of reigning champions for the 2025-2026 academic year. From what I hear, the College of Engineering is vying for that win this year.

*- Jessica Thibodeaux*

# FROM THE DESK OF LEADERSHIP

I am happy to share information about our ASRE Workshops. These workshops are open to all students, and they are approved for credit for those in the ASRE Pathways program. Visit our [ASRE Workshop webpage](#) for more information.

If you would like to present a workshop, please review this [rubric](#) to create your workshop. Then email the details of your workshop to me at [jwhite@louisiana.edu](mailto:jwhite@louisiana.edu).

We also have multiple research opportunities for undergraduate students.

Be sure to check out our [Research Opportunities webpage](#).

**Faculty & Staff**, if you would like to add a research opportunity to our webpage, please email the details to [advance@louisiana.edu](mailto:advance@louisiana.edu).

*- Jessie White*

I am pleased to help manage funding made available by the Advance Program for faculty and students in support of research experiences. When students have the tools that they need to succeed, everyone wins. Enhancing students' experiences here at UL Lafayette is our goal.

For the 2024-2025 academic year, the Advance Program distributed approximately 46 grants. Final accounting indicated that over 4,935 undergraduate students were supported by the Advance Program Grants. Our grants also impacted 42 graduate students.

We look forward to issuing a new round of grants for the 2025-2026 academic year to further enhance student research experiences. We also look forward to welcoming you to our office. If you have any needs, I am pleased to address them.

*- Todd Henry*



# UNDERGRADUATE SPOTLIGHT

**Sydnei Henson**

**Visual Arts**

**College of the Arts**

My journey as an undergraduate student has been greatly enriched by my exploration of art and cultural history, particularly through the lens of Clementine Hunter. By delving into her life and work, I gained insight into how her unique perspective as a self-taught Black folk artist emerged from the challenges of early 20th-century plantation life in Louisiana. This research highlighted the importance of resilience and creativity in the face of adversity—themes that resonate across various disciplines.

Engaging with Hunter's art allowed me to appreciate the elements of design and visual hierarchy, which in turn enhanced my analytical skills and critical thinking. It fostered a deeper appreciation for the stories that are often overlooked in traditional art narratives, reinforcing the idea that every piece of art carries the weight of personal narrative and collective experience.

This research not only broadened my academic knowledge but also provided meaningful context for my own creative expression and understanding of cultural identity.

*-Sydnei Henson*



**2025**

# UNDERGRADUATE SPOTLIGHT

Izamary Lara

Chemistry

**Ray P. Authement College of Sciences**

Izamary conducts research in two different laboratories, one working on anticancer compounds (Dr. Massoud Laboratory), another with stable isotopes tracking plant stress (Dr. Schubert Laboratory). She states that participation in research has impacted her experience as a chemistry major. “Academically, I created bonds with professors in and outside of my department. They helped me get through things like organic chemistry, calculus, physics, and plain exhaustion. They helped see me through when I was on the brink of burning out and would email me even on the weekend to make sure, I was taking time for myself, coaching me through different study methods to succeed in their classes. Now those same professors serve as mentors who are helping me through the graduate school application process to eventually obtain my PhD in Analytical Chemistry to one day start my own generic pharmaceutical company that offers cheaper and better alternatives to current day medications.” Izamary also served as an RA in Corona Hall, Peer Mentor, College of Sciences senator for Student Government Association (SGA) and SGA President, Vice President for the Advance Student Research Ambassadors.

*-Izamary Lara*



2025

# UNDERGRADUATE SPOTLIGHT

## Frank Clavelle Architectural Studies College of the Arts

Frank Clavelle III is an undergraduate architecture student working alongside Dr. Donggyu Lee. His study titled “Designing for Connection: Reimagining Campus Architecture for Student Mental Health”, explores how architectural design features of university structures and buildings can enhance students’ mental health and emotional well-being. This research is motivated by the idea that campus design can be a powerful, tool for positive mental health support, and that integrating green, biophilic, and human-centered design elements into academic spaces is essential in creating healthier learning environments. The design study is aimed at rethinking how campus spaces can be created and adapted to better promote mental health and wellbeing; a space intentionally designed to foster wellness and positively influence the daily lives of students, staff, and the wider community. Along with his research, Frank is very active in his community. He completed a Congressional Internship with the Black Caucus Foundation, and is a member of the Honors Program, Black Male Leadership Association and Student Government Association.

*-Frank Clavelle*



2025

## ***Posters at the Capitol***

Seven UL Lafayette students presented work at the first Posters at the Capitol event, on June 9, 2025, hosted by Louisiana Undergraduate Research Association (LaURA; [lauranews.org](http://lauranews.org))



Student Presenter: **Ethan Adams**

Poster Title: The Presence of Microplastics in *Tillandsia usneoides*

Hometown: Houma, LA

Authors: Ethan Adams, Hallie Blondiau, Ava Thibodeaux, Madison Maier

College: Ray P. Authement College of Sciences

Department: Biology

Student Presenter: **Maxwell Boutte**

Poster Title: Modular and Resilient Cubesat Power System Design

Hometown: Lafayette, LA

College: Engineering

Department: Electrical and Computer Engineering

Student Presenters: **Debra Crawford**, **Hannah Sonnier**

Poster Title: "No Tax on Tips" - The Implications of Newly Proposed Tax Legislation

Hometowns: Thibodeaux, LA & Lafayette, LA

Authors: Debra Crawford, My Le, Bethany Webre, Hannah Sonnier

College: B. I. Moody College of Business Administration

Department: Accounting

Student Presenter: **Sydnei Henson**

Poster Title: Clementine Hunter: Folk Art Inspiration from a Louisiana Plantation

College: Arts and Design

Department: Visual Arts; Graphic Design



Student Presenter: **Abbey Poirier**

Poster Title: Breaking Barriers: Dismantling the School-to-Prison Pipeline Through the Use of Positive Behavior Interventions

Hometown: St. Martinville, LA

Authors: Abbey Poirier & Ronald Dore'

College: Education and Human Development

Department: Elementary Education Gr 1-5

Student Presenter: **Ian Robicheaux**

Poster Title: Remote Sensing Applications in Identifying High Probability Archaeological Locales on the South-Central Louisiana Coastline

Hometown: New Iberia, LA

College: College of Liberal Arts

Department: Anthropology

Student Presenters: **Edie Bollich**, **Gracie Becker**, **Torey Smith**, **Anna White**, **Emily Wilcox**

Poster Title: BURNOUT: The Silent Epidemic Supporting Nurses' Mental Health

Hometowns: Youngsville, LA University:

University of Louisiana at Lafayette

College: Nursing & Health Sciences

Department: LHC Group • Myers School of Nursing

**NEW**

# Louisiana Undergraduate Research Association (LaURA)



**Our staff has worked closely with the UL System and our counterparts at LSU to create the first organization focused on undergraduate research in the state of Louisiana.**

**LaURA's purpose is to unite faculty, staff, administrators, and industry professionals across campuses and disciplines to advocate for access and opportunity for all undergraduate students in Louisiana. Providing more students with the opportunity to participate in this high-impact educational practice.**

**To learn more and join, visit**  
**[lauranews.org](http://lauranews.org)**



# FALL 2025 AT A GLANCE



*Upcoming events to Look Forward To:*

**10.30.25 – Academic Resources Trick-or-Treat** ☀

Student resources from across campus will gather in the library to share their resources and treats.

**11.14-15.25 – Undergraduate Research Conference** ☀

This state-wide conference is full of exciting presentations and discussions showcasing the amazing research, creative, and scholarly projects of undergraduate students!

**Workshops** ☀

Multiple student workshops are scheduled for the Fall Semester. Workshops are approved for students participating in the ASRE Pathways program, to earn co-curricular credit. All students are welcome.

**Tabling Events**

- September 18, 2025: Moody Hall
- October 23, 2025: Fletcher Hall
- November 6, 2025: Rougeou Hall

**Stop by to learn more about our programs and resources!**

**The fall semester is full of fun, and opportunities to get involved.**

**Follow our Instagram for announcements.**



# RESEARCH REWIND

looking back on Spring and Summer 2025

February

**2.17.2025** – 41 undergraduates attended our Research Recruitment Event and REU Workshop.

**2.18.25** – Congratulations to Alia Sonnier, recipient of the Dupré Library Arts Fellowship! @

**2.20.25** – Students gained hands-on experience at our Zotero Workshop.



Mark  
YOUR  
Calendar  
for  
**Student Workshops!**  
Approved by  
**ADVANCE**



# March

**3.12.25** – Time Management Workshop for undergraduates.

**3.18.25** – “What Else Can I Do with My Degree?” panel with professionals and alumni.

**3.24.25** – Research Café with Dupré Library – research support + breakfast treats.

**3.26.25** – Graduate Assistants and Student Worker represented us at Engineering Technology Day.

**3.28.25** – Team members Sherry Krayesky-Self, Todd Henry, Jessica Thibodeaux, and Jessie White presented at the Louisiana System for Our Future Conference.



# April is Research Month

**3.24-28.25** - Engineering and Technology Week included several undergraduate students presenting their work.

**4.3.25** – Leaf Awards celebrated undergraduate research, creativity, and scholarship.

**4.4.25** - Biology Undergraduate Research Symposium took place.

**4.10.25** – Graduate Assistant Zohaib Hassan recognized at Honors Convocation.

**4.10-11.2025** - UL Lafayette Student travel to Nicholls State University for the University of Louisiana Systems Academic Summit.

**4.15.25** – University Library launched Institutional & Data Repositories; Tia Miller and Omaree Peiter presented NCUR research.

**4.15.25** - Psychology Undergraduate Student Showcase.

**4.28-30.25** – Undergraduate Research Showcase featured student projects.



# May, June, July

**5.2.25** – Celebrated pathway completers with medals and Wall of Honor photos. Congrats, graduates!

**5.13.25** – Advance joined the STEM Extravaganza, connecting local high schoolers with STEM opportunities.

**6.9.25** – Students presented research at Posters at the Capitol in Baton Rouge.

**7.9.25** – Sign-up for ASRE Pathways returns with an added touch of fun to our office—hopscotch on the floors!



**5.2.25**



**5.13.25**



**6.9.25**



**7.9.25**



# August



**8.4.25** – Congratulations to the participants of the TExBioMed Summer Institute! Led by Principal Investigator and Program Director Dr. Gabriela Wilson, this 12-week research training program is strategically designed to meet the future needs of the informatics workforce and ultimately expand the talent pool. Thirteen UL Lafayette undergraduates worked with faculty mentors on research projects, gaining academic and career guidance while connecting with peers, researchers, and industry leaders. Kudos to all scholars and mentors for their hard work!



**8.22.25** - Advance celebrated with the class of 2029 at New Student Convocation. Welcome to all incoming first-year students!



# Leaf Awards 2025

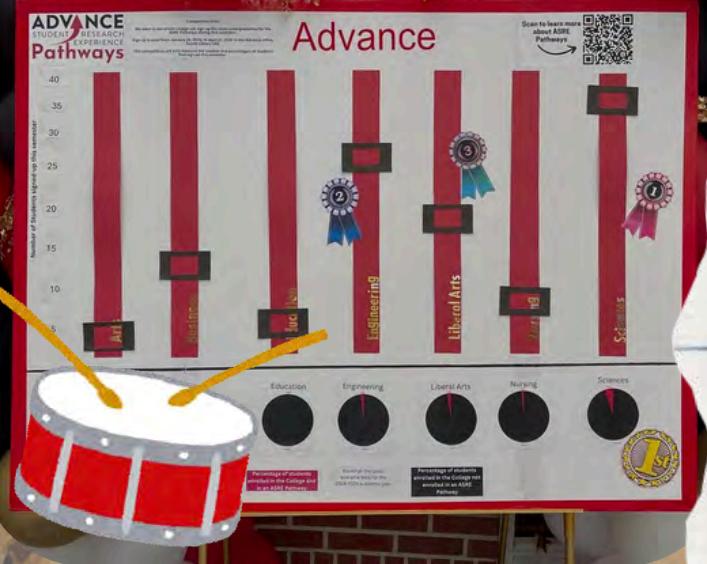
The 2025 Advance Leaf Awards celebrated 38 undergraduate students for excellence in research, creativity, and scholarship. Chosen from 54 nominations across all colleges, the winners demonstrated how student research enriches both their academic journeys and the broader UL Lafayette community. A signature tradition of the awards ties to UL Lafayette's century oaks: just as hundreds of leaves give the oak its strength, the students honored embody the collective growth and vitality of the university. This year's ceremony also recognized faculty and staff with Advance Challenge Coins for their dedicated mentorship and support of undergraduate research. In the words of the program, "The academic endeavors of the students who receive the Leaf Award challenge and inspire the faculty and illuminate the possibilities for the future." Planned in partnership with students from Hospitality and Event Planning courses, the event highlighted not only research excellence but also collaboration and community spirit.



# 2025 Golden Leaf Award Winner

**The Golden Leaf Award recognizes the UL Lafayette college with the most Advance student participation.**

# RAY P. AUTHEMENT COLLEGE OF SCIENCES



# THE DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY HAD THE MOST ADVANCE STUDENT PARTICIPATION DURING THE 24/25 ACADEMIC YEAR

# The Graduate Corner



Zohaib Hassan is a Computer Science master's student at UL Lafayette with strong interests in machine learning, AI, and robotics.

Alongside his studies, he works at the Advance Student Research Office, where he manages web and social media marketing. He also brings several years of digital marketing and SEO experience, blending technical expertise with creative growth strategies.



Temitayo Olufunmilakin is a PhD student in Earth and Energy Sciences. He earned a Bachelor of Technology in Pure and Applied Physics from a prestigious university in Nigeria. He also earned a Master of Science in Applied Mathematics from Austin Peay State University. Temitayo has consistently demonstrated academic excellence and a commitment to research.

Temitayo's commitment to fostering academic growth and his proven leadership abilities makes him as a valuable asset to the SCRCs team.



Mollee Helmick is a Clinical Mental Health Counseling master's student in her final semester and will be graduating this December. She is passionate about working with children through the use of play therapy. At the Advance Student Research Office, Mollee serves as the Event Coordinator, organizing tabling events across campus. Outside of her studies and work, she enjoys playing tennis and pickleball, cooking, and reading.

# The Undergrad Corner



Jacques Laughlin is a Psychology major with a minor in Political Science. He plans to get a PhD in Neuropsychology. Jacques enjoys writing short stories and poems in his spare time, along with modding video games.



Olivia Hebert is a highly motivated Accounting major who has a big passion for food and lots of dessert of the chocolate variety. She also has a big love for the color pink, and heavily enjoys writing poetry when the perfect moment happens to strike.



Mykala Walker is a Biology major with a concentration in Microbiology. She is a sophomore with the goal of graduating with her Masters. She loves shoes and her favorite color is purple. She enjoys painting and conversations about conspiracy theories.