Research Days 2016

Student Presentations – Oral, Poster, and Illustrated Papers – and Departmental Research Symposia will highlight activities on campus April 19-22

The best way to find out what is going on in undergraduate research at UNA is to attend Research Days!

Abstracts are now being accepted from students who want to present: the submission form is online at http://alabamageography.org/researchdaysubmission/.

For a schedule of events, please see page 4.

The low hum of a 3D printer signals that something is different in the basement of Collier Library.

UNA’s Quality Enhancement Plan office has created the appropriately named “Thinkspace,” a new collaborative area complete with SMART Boards, whiteboards, monitors, two 3D printers, a 3D scanner, and other tools for brainstorming creative solutions, team problem solving, and research meetings.

Dr. Lisa Keys-Mathews, director of the QEP, encourages everyone to check out the room. “We’re so grateful that Dr. Melvin Davis [dean of Library and Educational Technology Services] and our colleagues in Collier provided a place for Thinkspace. We hope it will be a great addition to the library and will benefit students, faculty, and staff.”

QEP will host an Open House for the university and the community to view the room and its amenities on Thursday, March 17, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., with the official ribbon cutting scheduled for 3 p.m.
Math student earns prestigious graduate fellowship at Auburn

Congratulations to math major John Carr who has been awarded a Graduate Teaching Fellowship in mathematics at Auburn University. John has been actively involved in undergraduate research with Dr. Mark Greer since Fall 2014.

John always enjoyed math, even as a child growing up in Sheffield, but he also has a passion for music and in high school wanted to become a band director. A different academic path led him to study software engineering at Auburn before realizing he missed music too much and he transferred to UNA to study instrumental music education. But then tutoring for local students led him back to mathematics, and he decided that he would earn a second undergraduate degree, this time in math, as the first step in pursuing a Ph.D. in mathematics and eventually teaching math at a collegiate level.

According to John, the support of UNA’s mathematics department has been invaluable. “I can’t count the number of times I have been to professors—professors I wasn’t even taking a class from—just to ask them a random question about a mathematical concept,” he said. “The support from everyone in the department has helped me get to where I am today, and I believe they are all prime examples of extraordinary faculty members that the rest of the university should hold in high regard.”

John also cited the influence of his research mentor, Dr. Greer. “He has always gone far beyond the normal expectations one would have for a research adviser and helped me refine my mathematical skills in such a way that I am confident that I am prepared for the rigors of mathematics graduate school,” John said. “Without Dr. Greer, I wouldn’t be half the mathematician I am today.”

Math research talks by John Carr


2. Groups, Quasigroups, and the Sudoku Property, Regional Undergraduate Mathematics Conference, Lee University, Cleveland, Tenn., February 7, 2015.


9. Complete Graph Decompositions and P-Groupoids*, 2016 Zassenhaus Group Theory Conference, Adelphi University, dates TBA.

(*Indicates upcoming talk)
Math/CS Undergrad Research Team to present at NCUR2016

UNA’s Math/CS Undergraduate Research Team will present their original research at the 30th Annual National Conference on Undergraduate Research, NCUR2016. UNA math and CS majors John Carr, Elly Couch, Chuck Chiriaco, Katelyn Payton, Cole Marlar, and Tyler Yasaka will present their findings. Their faculty mentors Dr. Mark Greer, Dr. James Jerkins, Dr. Cindy Stenger, and Dr. Jason Watson will accompany them.

Student presentations were selected from over 4,000 entries.

NCUR2016 will be hosted by the University of North Carolina Asheville, April 7-9, 2016. The three-day event will feature research and art presentations by students from 390 colleges and universities representing 42 states and seven countries.

The mission of NCUR2016 is to promote undergraduate research scholarship and creative activity done in partnership with faculty or other mentors as a vital component of higher education.

UNA alum Ethan Cagle recently returned to campus to serve as a judge at the 93rd Meeting of the Alabama Academy of Science. Ethan, a grad student at University of Alabama-Birmingham, graduated in 2013 with a major in professional chemistry, minoring in mathematics. Ethan was very active in undergraduate research at UNA according to his research mentor Dr. Cameron Gren, and he presented at various meetings including UNA’s own Research Day.

GEOGRAPHERS IN THE NEWS

Connor Martin won first place for his poster “A Vehicle for Development: Historic Streetcar Systems and Economic Growth” at the University of Tennessee Geography Symposium held in Knoxville, Tenn., on February 5-6. Connor also presented his research at the Alabama Academy of Sciences meeting with graduate students Robby Thompson and Md Abu Sayed.

Other presenters from UNA at the Tennessee conference included graduate student Dan Wanyama and undergraduate Anh Nguyen, who both gave oral presentations (pictured here with Connor and their professor Dr. Michael Pretes). Dan’s research concerns climate change and impact on agriculture in Bungoma County, Kenya. Anh’s research is entitled “Evaluating Urban Features of Cities and Towns in the Southeastern States.”
2016 RESEARCH DAYS

ORAL PRESENTATIONS
Wednesday, April 20
Stone Lodge
8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
10:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon
1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

POSTER PRESENTATIONS
Tuesday, April 19
GUC Atrium
9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

ILLUSTRATED PAPERS
Tuesday, April 19
GUC, Room 200
8:30 a.m. – 10 a.m.
10:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon

UNIVERSITY THREE-MINUTE THESIS
Tuesday, April 19
GUC Performance Center
3MT Finals Competition
5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

DEPARTMENTAL SYMPOSIA
will be held April 19-20 in the Stone Lodge, the Loft, and Collier Library Basement. Contact individual departments for specific time and place.

MILITARY HISTORY SYMPOSIUM
is scheduled for April 21-22, and will include student presentations as well as military scholars’ presentations of books and relevant topics. Contact the Department of Military Science for more information.

WWW.UNA.EDU/UG-RESEARCH