

NEWS FROM THE UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH CENTER

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MTSU students impress at annual research expo presenting projects from science, engineering to art, music **[+VIDEO]**

Greta Muller, MTSU senior in the Visual Arts Program, said she was surprised about the opportunity for art students to participate in research on campus while showcasing her impressive nine-painting collection at the recent Scholars Week student research event.

“I feel like many of us undergraduate students feel like most of research is focused on STEM (science, technology, engineering, math), and it was very encouraging to see that you can do research in more subjective fields,” Muller said.

Muller, along with students who completed the 167 other presentations, took part in the university’s 17th annual research exposition on March 24 at the Student Union’s second-floor ballroom, wrapping up a week’s worth of scholarly activity across campus. The event showcased the research and creative activity students have been working on throughout the year from the STEM fields to music, dance, philosophy and more. (Story continued on page 2.)

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.



Greta Muller, left, Middle Tennessee State University visual arts senior, presents one of her nine paintings from her art exposition to MTSU staff member Laura Clippard as part of the university's 17th annual Scholars Week student research and creative activity exposition on March 24, 2023, in the Student Union ballroom on campus. (MTSU photo by J. Intintoli)

"It's a very unique opportunity to meet people," said Muller, originally from the Eastern European region of Transylvania. "I just met a business owner who said they want to keep in touch, so it's like very tangible, the consequences."

Dominic Marcoaldi, senior in the **Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies**, investigated the philosophy of language and its impacts on communication. "For a student like me, I wouldn't be able to afford doing research without having programs like these," Marcoaldi said about funding and grant opportunities available through the **Undergraduate Research Center**. "It was also encouraging to think outside the box, think outside of your classes.... I think that's really, really valuable for students to keep the academic integrity but also keep the creative aspects alive."

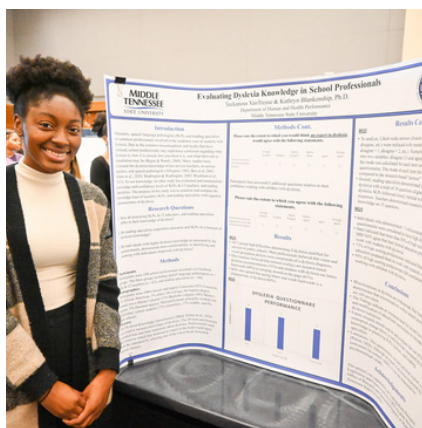
Marcoaldi, originally from Canton, Ohio, added that completing a long-form project helped better prepare him for graduate school.

[Keep Reading](#)

Middle Tennessee State University President Sidney A. McPhee, center in blue tie, listens to a student's presentation at the university's 17th annual Scholars Week student research and creative activity exposition on March 24, 2023, in the Student Union ballroom on campus. (MTSU photo by Stephanie Wagner)



THANKS TO ALL WHO PARTICIPATED IN SCHOLARS WEEK 2023! THE EVENT WAS A HUGE SUCCESS AND WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT OUR SCHOLARS WEEK COMMITTEE, AND OUR STUDENT CHAIR, CASEY TOMLIN.



VIEW THE POSTER COMPETITION WINNERS [HERE](#).
VIEW THE PROGRAM [HERE](#).

READY TO SOAR



The schedule of events included attendance to the 2023 Scholars Week, exploration of current engineering research with MTSU students, a session with faculty mentors, and participation in small group discussions with current undergraduate researchers who shared their experience with the collegiate research process, including how they found their mentor, lab, research project, and funding. Current undergraduates also shared how participating in undergraduate research has impacted their education and post-graduation plans.



A group of 13 seniors, who finished the BCA's senior capstone project, presented their own research at the exposition as well. When asked to reflect on the program, students reported that the experience provided a clearer understanding of what their future could look like if they pursue research in college, opportunities available for college research, resources that they can use for their upcoming capstone project, and ideas for their research project itself.



What is READY to SOAR?

The READY (Research Experience Activity Designed for Youth) to SOAR program provided 93 Blackman HS Collegiate Academy juniors and seniors a one-day research experience event, during which they attended a variety of activities designed to immerse them in undergraduate research. The program aims to help bridge the gap between high school students interested in research, and the introduction of undergraduate students to college-level research.

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



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

Why Join?

1. It is a super cool group of students!
2. Sometimes we have snacks. If we are really lucky, we get lunch.
3. We host fun and educational events.
4. You will meet other students who are passionate about research and creative activity at MTSU.
5. Lots of opportunities for growth and professional development.
6. The option to graduate with distinction in undergraduate research!
7. And many more reasons....

Thank You

FOR A SUCCESSFUL
SPRING MEETING!



UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH GRADUATION DISTINCTION



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 in the upper right corner)

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 Endorsement by 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 Endorsement by URECA faculty mentor.

Graduating in May?

Deadline to apply: April 28, 2023

Access the application [HERE](#).

It will take you about 5 mins to complete!

Seniors!!

Graduating this spring?
We would love to hear about your
post graduation plans!

To fill out our short survey,



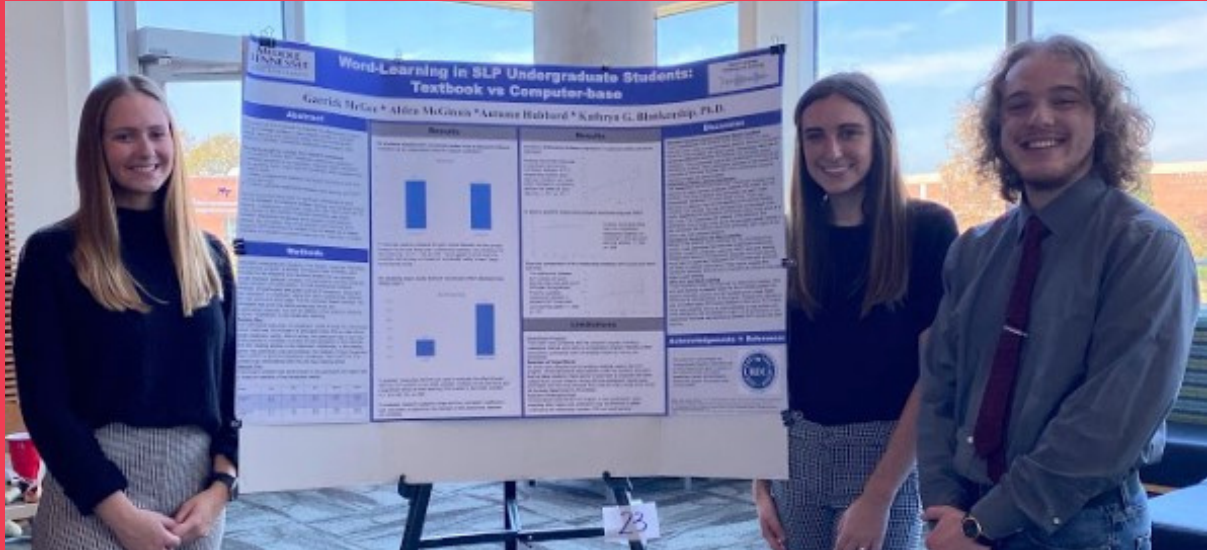
or scan the QR code on your device!



CONGRATULATIONS!

SUMMER URECA GRANTS

APPLICATION DEADLINE:
THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 2023 BY 4:30PM



*Want to get paid to do research
or work on a creative project?*

THEN CHECK OUT OUR
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AND
CREATIVE ACTIVITY GRANTS



To support our vision of nurturing a culture of research and creative activity at MTSU, the URC offers Undergraduate Research Experience and Creative Activity (URECA) grants to students three times a year. Awards range from \$500 for beginners to \$3,500 for experienced researchers.

Team applications are now being offered during the fall, spring, and summer semester. More information about the team structure can be found [here](#).

To learn more about URECA grants and how to submit proposals, check out our [website](#).

NEW!! Need assistance finding a mentoring or figuring out which level grant is best for you? Contact our Peer Mentor Scholar, Forum Patel. Forum can also help with proposal development, budget and justification, creating a timeline, and proposal review. More info on the next page about our new SOAR Ambassadors!

STUDENTS MAY
APPLY FOR THE
FOLLOWING
LEVELS:

Assistant - beginners,
one semester
project, \$500 stipend

Silver Scholar -
experienced student
researcher, one
semester project,
\$1000 stipend

Gold Level -
experienced student
researcher, 2
semester project (fall
& spring), \$2,400
stipend

Platinum Level -
experienced student
researcher, full-time
summer project, \$3,500
stipend