

USRI Student Comments and Pictures



Diane Chen – USRI mentee with Lei-Shih Chen

My experience this past year working with Dr. Chen has greatly broadened my views on all the roles a researcher undertakes. Often times when I think about research, I picture scientists wearing lab coats working with chemicals, but I have come to learn that research encompasses so much more than that. Assisting with Dr. Chen's Colorectal Cancer Prevention workshops, I understand now how research also includes education and communicating with participants. From my experiences helping out at the workshops, I can see how much effort Dr. Chen and her research team invest in their participants and their determination to see their project succeed. Research is not only about the numbers, its also about being passionate about the work you are doing to improve the lives of the people affected by your study.

Ashley Rose – USRI mentee with Sloane Milstein

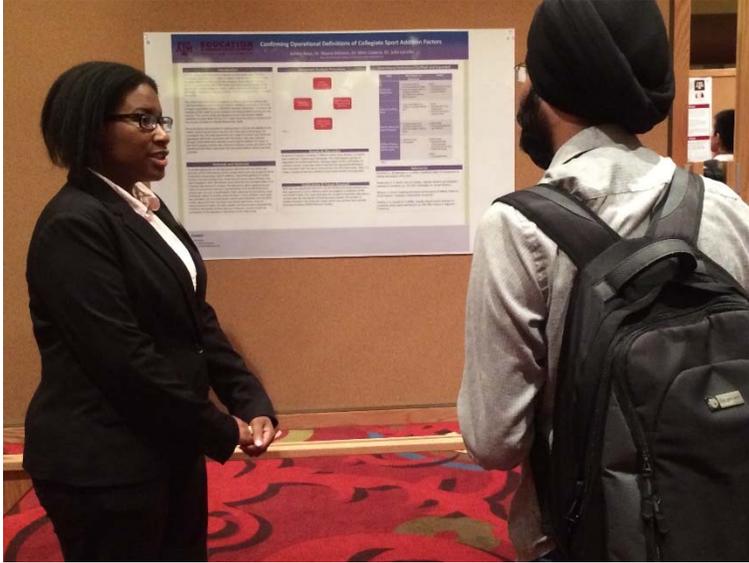
With this being my second year in USRI, I have really seen how staying committed has really made thing a lot easier. The first year I did not entirely understand the applications of the research we were doing but as time went on, I was able to see the importance of what we were doing. This year Dr. Sloane Milstein and I intended to validate her Collegiate Sports Addition Process (CSAP) model. However, we discovered that there were smaller steps that need to be take in order to start the validation process. The focus then became to attempt to validate the operational definitions of the sports addition factors that she had identified in her previous study. In the end, we were able to validate the operational definitions successfully and I had the opportunity to present my findings at Student Research Week.

This is my last year at Texas A&M and doing research, working another part time job, and having a degree-required internship was very stressful to say the least. I had plenty of reasons and opportunities to put this research on the back burner during my last semester, but I simply could not. Last year I was student presenter at the Dean' Developmental Council meeting and I stressed the importance of undergraduate research and how it is something that more undergraduates should engage in. The work is challenging but I really do believe that I am a better student, a better communicator, and better learner because of it. This experience has helped me step out of my comfort zone and work towards something that is greater than myself. Once my time is at Texas A&M is over I will definitely recall the times I had while being involved with undergraduate research.

Devyn Rice USRI mentee with Mary Margaret Capraro - Being able work with a faculty mentor on research has been the best opportunity I've had at college so far. This is my second year with the program and I believe that my growth through it is extraordinary. This year I really got to become my own person with research. I have gotten to participate on various projects within STEM education. This year I got to work in the field for the first time as well as attend a SERA as my first non-A&M conference. With the guidance I have received I also won second place at Student Research Week. This experience has also been the biggest factor on my personal growth through college so far. I have had to work in groups and teams and being the least experienced member and still being respected on the same level as everyone else has been amazing and given me the opportunity to reach my fullest potential.

Hope Harrod USRI mentee with Julie Thompson - I have been fortunate to work under Dr. Julie Thompson for the past semester. Through the Undergraduate Student Research Initiative I have learned more than I would have in class alone. This experience has made me a more rounded student and I encourage other students to participate in undergraduate research. I have been able to approach Dr. Thompson for work related questions but also to ask her about topics my professors have discuss in class. Under Dr. Thompson's mentorship not only have I grown as a student but I have also seen first hand the importance of research and continuing to educate yourself on new ideas that are being presented. I believe through this experience I have become a more influential educator as I have been exposed to current research that I can use to help my future students succeed in all of their endeavors. I have loved being a part of the Undergraduate Student Research Initiative and look forward to continuing to grow as a future special educator.

USRI Faculty Comments and Pictures



Ashley Rose – USRI mentee with Sloane Milstein



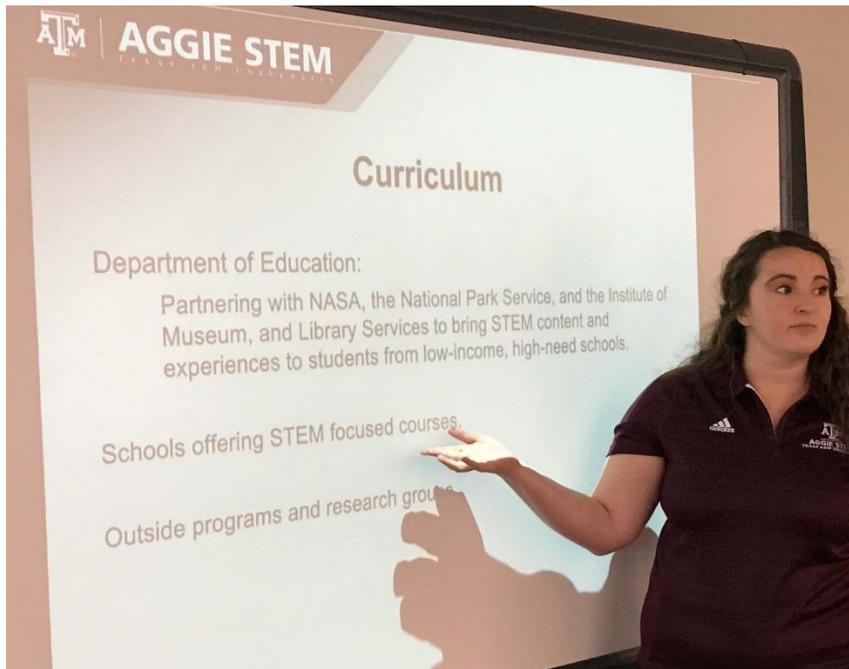
Greta Swift – URS Pilot Program

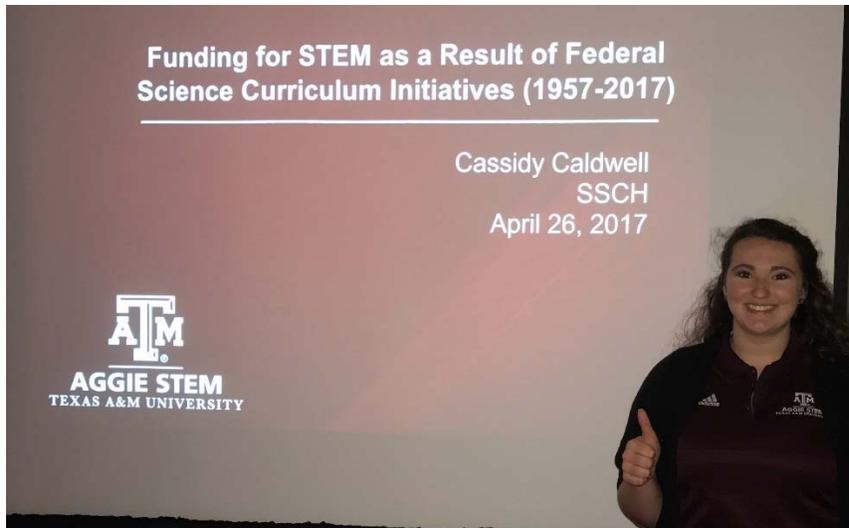
Sloane Milstein (HLKN) - Including undergraduate researchers Ashley Rose (2 years) and Greta Swift (1 year) has assisted in laying the ground work for the next stage of my research initiatives. As a Academic Professional Faculty (or clinical... not sure what we are calling ourselves these days), I have a 10% research obligation, which in a course of a week equates to only a few hours each week that I can set aside to do my research activities.

Currently I am working on 2 manuscripts from the first stage of this research project. From the initial stage a model emerged and it will need to be validated. The undergraduate researchers are assisting

with two elements triangulation, both providing a pilot of their individual elements and presented their during Undergraduate Research Week.

Once the manuscripts are submitted and I can move on to the next phase, these two students will have provided me with a body of work to start from.





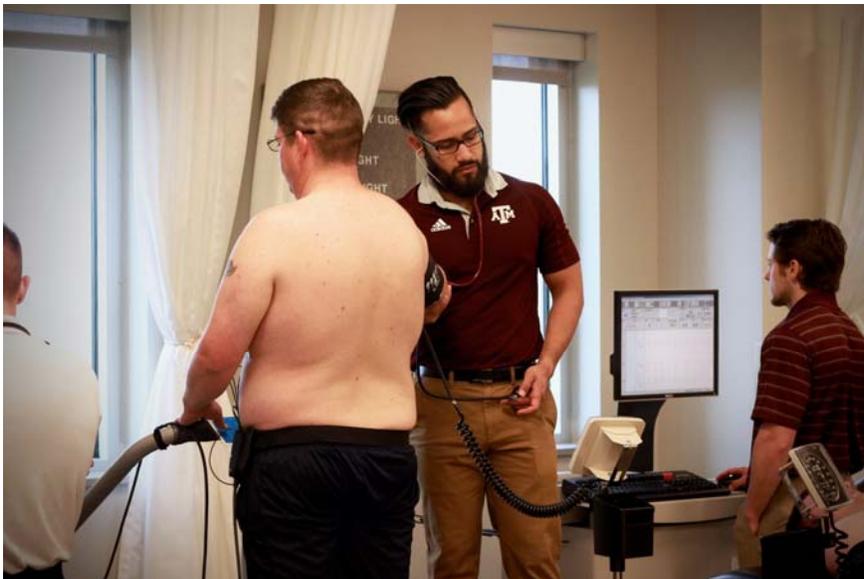
Cassidy Caldwell – USRI mentee with Robert Capraro

Robert Capraro (TLAC) - Having an undergraduate research assistant provides an immeasurable enhancements to both the quality and quantity of the research we produce. Cassidy has been engaged in the production of research and is a valuable member of our research team. She collaborates with the professors and the graduate students on topics of interest to her and that are relevant to her future career, middle school mathematics teacher. When she graduates she will possess unique insights into education, best practices, and catalyzing teacher practices that are typically reserved for those pursuing graduate degrees. She continues to be an asset to our research team to me personally. Her presence has enriched my work and her question often strike at the heart of what we do, and those questions keep us all grounded in how important our work is to kids, families, teachers, and to Texas A&M eventually being able to recruit the best quality students.



Brian Sejin Kim – USRI mentee with Li-Jen Kuo

Li-Jen Kuo - Brian has been an integral member of our research team. He has participated in every phrase of this project - IRB review, stimuli screening, protocol development, participant recruitment, assessment administration and data entry. With his interest in working with children with ADHD, he has also developed his own research project and studied how a student with ADHD thrived in our Chinese and Korean after-school program. He presented his research on *Supporting Children with Diverse Needs: A Single Case Study* at the student research week.





Matthew Espinoza – USRI mentee with Steve Martin

Steve Martin - Matt has been a tremendous asset to our lab these past 2 semesters. We have been actively involved with the USRI program since 2010 and are hopeful to continue in the future.

We have been able to spend more time and train our USRI students in some different aspects of our lab operations that we don't normally get to do with our typical undergraduate classes.

The students are actively involved in the data collection process and at the same time are learning valuable skills that they can apply in the workforce once they leave. We have had previous students that were hired at the Cooper Clinic based on the training that they received during their time with the USRI program. We will be sad to see Mat leave but hope to continue with this great program!



Devyn Rice – USRI mentee with Mary Margaret Capraro - At Student Research Week Devyn presented on "Experiences of Teachers and Students at STEM Summer Camp" and won second place for the Undergraduate Oral presentation in her category.

Mary Margaret Capraro - I am very proud of Devyn and how she has taken on research while working on her undergrad courses. Besides this research which she presented at SRW (won 2nd place) she has also participated with me at Snook Elementary. She has been involved in standardizing the reliability of the rubric we used for scoring the pre and post tests and implementing the interventions in problem solving and problem posing in a 4th grade classroom for 7 weeks. Next year she will be leading a research team under my supervision to examine cognitive development of adolescents immersed in STEM learning activities



Andrea La Porte USRI mentee with Fuhui Tong

Fuhui Tong - I am very appreciative of this initiative supported by the college to engage Ms. La Porte in my research projects. She is outstanding and has been working on the projects for 3 years in a row. So my reflection is based off a collective counts over the past 3 years. I started with training her on data imaging software (teleform) and introducing her to the various components of research with human subjects. She then learned the proposal and how to check accuracy of data entry. Once she became familiar with the software and gained experiences on data entry, she started delving into more in-depth process involved in the data processing. She is detail oriented, well-organized with a strong level of commitment and sense of responsibility. Given the macro scale of the project that she was mainly assigned to, her assistance is highly regarded by the research team. Starting year 2, she was given more tasks on assisting the testing training, and consent process that put her in direct contact with school districts. I trained her on all the IRB-related regulations and best practices handling sensitive and confidential information. Toward the end of year 2 and into year 3, the range of her assignment is expanded, including carrying out testing procedures, handling paperwork (consent forms) for testers, organizing pre- and post-assessments, communicating with designated elementary schools and keeping track of testing materials (manuals, protocols, classroom rosters, and ensure accuracy of teleforms with regard to student information) on a day-to-day basis. I believe such an intensive and extensive level of exposure to funded research projects put Andra at an advantage when she is competing with her peers in applying for advanced degree programs. As a matter of fact she was admitted into an advanced degree program in Boston. She shared with me the great news and was very grateful for the opportunity that we have provided her. Another advantage is that she didn't work alone. In fact, I encouraged and required her to work with our project staff, graduate students, and other student workers for peer mentoring on various aspects on the process of conducting large-scale research projects. She turned out to be a great team player, which is an important characteristic for teamwork in any context. I believe Andrea's understanding of, and experiences with research (including testing and assessment, scoring, data processing, consent, training, etc.) outstands that of some of our entry-level graduate students.

In summary, I strongly support this initiative to be continued for faculty to have an opportunity to work with undergraduate student, who will benefit tremendously.