We would like to thank everyone who read our second issue of URConnection; it was a great success! We are happy to publish our third issue, in which we proudly feature an undergraduate researcher, Eli Rivera as well as URC upcoming events and research highlights from various disciplines. We encourage students of every discipline and of every class level to participate in undergraduate research and get involved with our events! Our hope is to bring accessible information to you about research highlights on campus and ways you can get involved with research.

-Tran Phan and Isabelle Floyd (Your Peer Advisors)

### Research Highlights

**Trending in Fashionable Baby Names**

Hema Yoganarasimhan, an Assistant Professor and marketing expert in the UC Davis Graduate School of Management studies the pattern of popular baby names over many cycles starting from 1940. She examined how these names become popular and when they start declining. Read the article to find out more about the popular trendy names over generations and the results of the study. To read more, click here.

**Research Grant Awarded to Study Child Obesity in Central Valley**

Adela de la Torre, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and a professor in Chicano(a) Studies, who is a national expert on Chicano and Latino health issues, received $4.8 million federal grant to conduct a study called “Ninos Sanos, Familia Sana” (Healthy Children, Healthy Family). The study, taking place in the Central Valley towns of Firebaugh and San Joaquin, will help discover the best ways to help Mexican-heritage children in California maintain healthy weights. To read more, click here.

**TEDxUCDavis: ‘Pause or Press Play?’**

Want to hear from a chef and a chancellor, a politician and a physicist, engineers and dancers share “ideas worth spreading”? Check out the fourth annual TEDxUCDavis conference, schedule for Sunday May 4! This year theme is Pause or Press Play? “exploring the moments in life that require a call to action, and those moments where pause is due.” Speakers include Chancellor Katehi, several professors and student groups. To read more, click here.

### Upcoming Events

- **Provost’s Undergraduate Fellowship Deadline**
  Monday, May 5, 5:00 p.m.

- **Writing Fellowship Grants for Graduate School**
  Tuesday, May 6, 2:00-3:30 p.m.
  Multipurpose Room, Student Community Ctr.

- **Chancellor’s Award, Student and Faculty Award Deadline**
  Wednesday, May 7, 5:00 p.m.

- **Undergraduate Research Travel Awards**
  Thursday, May 8, 5:00 p.m.

- **Explorations: The UC Davis Undergraduate Research Journal Deadline**
  Thursday, June 12, 5:00 p.m.
Eli currently works in the evolutionary anthropology department with Dr. Richard McElreath. The project involves studying cooperation, conflicts and collective-action institutions in cooperative housing units in Davis, California. Eli investigates whether the role of governance institutions (i.e., wealth creation, administration, chore systems, conflict management, community building, monitoring/policing) in solving collective-action problems is affected by community turnover (i.e., old members moving out and new members moving in). Eli presented in the 25th Annual Undergraduate Research Scholarship & Creative Activities Conference.

Interview Questions

What are the benefits of getting involved in undergraduate research?
The research experience is different for all. The benefits from my research experience are that I was able to cooperate with professors, create and investigate a topic that I was interested in. Sometimes it's not all like this, but you can do research -- it's essentially learning a new skill, idea and practice. A great benefit from this whole process is setting aside your doubts and discovering the different styles of conducting research.

What was your process for finding the perfect research position?
My research journey at UC Davis first began with the notion of becoming the next Jane Goodall. I was able to pursue this goal after I found a graduate student in one of the anthropology upper-division courses who was more than willing to give me internship credit to measure and code rhesus macaque hair samples from the California National Primate Research Center. I found after a year of working on this project that I wanted to pursue work elsewhere. After a summer undergraduate research fellowship at UC Irvine -- where I investigated the cultural politics of the production and consumption of nuclear waste from Rocky Flats, Colorado -- I knew I wanted to work with a professor at UC Davis who works between sociocultural- and evolution- anthropology. I made a list of professors, some who I've taken courses with and some whose research interests (taken from the anthropology website) fit mine. My current research advisor happens to be the first professor that I emailed.

What have you gained from your research experience so far?
What I am gaining from doing this research project is a breadth of knowledge that I can apply to everyday life, such as being creative, interactive and generating new ideas. Moreover, the research experience has given me a mixture of uncanny and exciting projects. I discovered grant writing, poster presentations and real-world applicability from this process.

Do you have any tips for undergrads who are having trouble finding a professor to work with?
Some tips for undergraduates seeking research opportunities are to expand outside your department; you might find a professor whose research interests and timing works great. Also, don't give up, if you've been turned down a couple of times by professors (they're busy people) then ask them if they can direct you to other professors with similar interests. Lastly, talk to your professors, talk to your advisors, talk to your teacher assistants -- they get paid to do it and ask many questions regarding your research interests.

About Your Peer Advisors

Isabelle Floyd has been with the URC for two years. She is a fourth year pharmaceutical chemistry major and plans to attend graduate school to become a nurse practitioner. She has been involved with undergraduate research in the chemistry department in the past.

Tran Phan has been with the URC for three years. She is a fourth year, majoring in Neurobiology, Physiology, & Behavior. She has been conducting research in the Early Start lab and the One Minute Video project and she would love to share her experiences with students. She will be attending a post-bac program at San Francisco State University in June.

CONTACT

If you're interested in scheduling a one-on-one appointment, or you have an interesting story or tip to share about undergraduate research that you would like posted in one of our issues, please contact us:

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