Research Week Showcases USD's Excellence
Monday, April 24, 2017

Research work is alive and very well throughout the University of San Diego campus. In classrooms, laboratories, centers and institutes, through published books and reports, and experiences within the community, USD students, faculty, staff and administrators are succeeding at a high rate.

From April 18 to 21, the university's Office of Sponsored Programs' third annual Research Week produced a campus-wide celebration of research activity that honors how external funding helps USD achieve excellence.

Beginning with the 27th annual Creative Collaborations, now a two-day showcase of faculty-student research projects, and recognition of USD's inaugural 21 faculty and administrators of OSP's “Million Dollar Club” for external research funding efforts, to school program open houses, facility tours and hearing from faculty, staff and current students about their projects, Research Week was a hit.

"Academic excellence is at the core of USD and Research Week celebrates our engaged scholars," said Traci Merrill, director of the Office of Sponsored Programs. "Students and faculty prepare all year to showcase their groundbreaking research and scholarly works, and this year's celebration was a resounding success."

Creative Collaborations

Wayne T. Cottle, a graduating senior chemistry and music double major, has participated in Creative Collaborations since his sophomore year. On Thursday, he displayed his research poster at Creative Collaborations and used it as a run-through for a national conference he attended and presented at in Chicago over this past weekend.

Titled, "Calineurin Homologous Protein Expression Drives Na+/H+ Exchanger 1 Dependent Tumor Survival Under Serum Deprivation," Cottle and Chemistry Professor and faculty advisor Joseph Provost's research work aids in the development of treatment modalities for non-small cell lung cancer.

Utilizing external funding secured by Provost to study this subject and Cottle receiving a Beckman Foundation Scholar award to work more effectively, the student enjoyed presenting at Creative Collaborations one last time.

"I think it's a great opportunity for students," Cottle said of the presentation experience. "Presenting at Creative Collaborations really helps prepare you for national meetings and to prepare you for the real world of presenting your research."
Cottle’s USD experiences via his cancer-focused research put him on a solid pathway post-graduation, as he’s going to be entering a PhD program at Johns Hopkins University this fall.

"I've been able to do research, learn how to ask scientific questions, and learn the tools to answer in a statistically significant way, in a socially significant way,” Cottle said. “Cancer is an easy topic to assign significance to, but going about how does cancer survive or how can we treat it in a methodical way, that's what the research does. It's not so much putting the hours in as it is learning how to solve the questions and what questions to ask."

Creative Collaborations, run by the Office of Undergraduate Research, gave the campus community and prospective students a chance see more than 230 research posters representing nearly 30 subject disciplines in the UC Forums, visit the visual art students' new exhibition artwork, Traffic 2017, in the UC Exhibit Hall, listen to English, Creative Writing and Alcala Review students read their published work at the La Gran Terraza Terrace and Engineering students present in Loma Hall.

Creative Collaborations wasn’t the only place to see USD’s vast research opportunities.

The Mulvaney Center for Community, Awareness and Social Action and the USD Changemaker Hub showcased its 2016-17 Impact Linda Vista Initiative projects; the USD Military and Veterans Program had a space to talk about the opportunities available for military-connected students at USD; Justice in Mexico presented its 2017 special report, "Drug Violence in Mexico: Data and Analysis Through 2016"; School of Business had a graduate open house and a student-faculty dialogue; the Kroc School of Peace Studies' open house was highlighted by faculty and staff who have released new books; Behavioral Neuroscience in Serra Hall and the Shiley Center for Science and Technology disciplines gave lab tours; the Humanities Center in Serra Hall showcased student projects from its innovative Digital Humanities courses; and two math-focused programs, a collaborative Mathigami origami project and presentations of applied mathematics senior student projects, were spotlighted.

**Million Dollar Club**

Research Week's April 18 kickoff reception celebrated all faculty, staff and administrators who’ve submitted grant proposals in the past year. But the fourth annual celebration of scholarly and creative achievements featured a new USD research honor.

Dubbed the “Million Dollar Club,” 21 faculty and administrators were the first to receive awards. The criteria included those who were lead principal investigators who submitted proposals through USD's Office of Sponsored Programs and were awarded external funds in excess of $1 million. This includes individual awards of over $1 million and multiple awards that when totaled together reached or exceeded $1 million.

"The 21 faculty and administrators have contributed to the development of sustainable solutions in our community; promoted peacemaking across the world; supported
undergraduate research; improved healthcare for diverse populations; prepared leaders in our schools and outstanding training for law students to provide service to low-income residents in San Diego communities. They've utilized external funding to improve the lives of children and youth with emphasis on child protection in foster care programs; support underrepresented students in higher education; support advancement of diverse female faculty; develop engineering Changemakers; support the Veterans community; advance research and analysis on drug violence in Mexico; and educate political and business leaders about climate change," said Andrew Allen, USD's vice president and provost.

These inaugural honorees, 11 women and 10 men who cover a cross-section of subjects, are: Dee Aker, Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice; Scott Anders, Energy Policy Initiatives Center; Rae Anderson, Physics; Lisa Baird, Biology; Lauren Benz, Chemistry and Biochemistry; Michel Boudrias, Environmental and Ocean Sciences; Michael Catanzaro, Office of Sustainability; Timothy Clark, Chemistry and Biochemistry; Cynthia Connelly, Beyster Institute for Nursing Research; Paula Cordeiro, School for Leadership and Education Sciences; Margaret Dalton, School of Law; David De Haan, Chemistry and Biochemistry; Robert Fellmeth, Center for Public Interest Law and Children's Advocacy Institute; Sally Brosz Hardin, Hahn School of Nursing and Health Science; Ming Huang, Shiley-Marcos School of Engineering; Peter Iovine, Chemistry and Biochemistry; Susan Lord, Shiley-Marcos School of Engineering; Chell Roberts, Shiley-Marcos School of Engineering; David Shirk, Political Science and International Relations; Marie Simovich, Biology; and Cynthia Villis, Institute of College Initiatives and TRiO.

— Ryan T. Blystone