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## **CUR Announces Institutionalizing Undergraduate Research Workshop Participants**

*The City University of New York, Great Lakes Colleges Association and the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education Round out the Selection Process*

Washington, DC- The Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR) was awarded a \$999,500 grant from the National Science Foundation to improve the quality of undergraduate science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education at state college and university systems and private and public consortia. Nancy Hensel, executive officer of CUR, said "We are very excited about what CUR can achieve with the support of the National Science Foundation. In addition to enhancing the academic experience for thousands of students, undergraduate research can also lead to innovation, discovery, and economic development and job creation." Today CUR is announcing those selected to participate in their second round of workshops that will help to further the development of undergraduate research programs on an expanded number of campuses throughout the country. After a highly competitive selection process, CUR is proud to announce that the City University of New York, Great Lakes Colleges Association and the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education are the selected awardees who will participate in the second phase of this project. They will be following the Council on Public Liberal Arts Colleges, California State University System and the University of Wisconsin State System who recently participated in customized workshops for their campuses.

As with the previously selected awardees all participants will work to build and enhance a culture that supports undergraduate research both at the institutional and system/consortium level. The workshops will assist participants in articulating goals for institutionalizing undergraduate research, as well as developing strategies to achieve these goals on each campus. Mitch Malachowski, professor of chemistry at the University of San Diego and co-principal investigator on the grant added, "Undergraduate research is one of the most powerful educational experiences students can have. It helps move them from studying a subject to becoming an active participant. This grant will allow us to display to institutions the wonders of undergraduate research and strategies – and to overcome the challenges. Our goal is to support campuses that are committed to achieving more active forms of learning." During the workshop participants will also be developing an integrated approach for initiating and sustaining faculty-student collaborative or mentored undergraduate research across the system/ consortium.

Avrom Caplan, Associate University Dean for Research at CUNY is proud to be recognized by CUR for its initial programmatic and curricular efforts to embed a culture of undergraduate research across its complex urban university system. We anticipate that the Workshop Program for State Systems and Consortia will help CUNY to develop a system-wide integrated approach to increasing the number of students who commit to careers in STEM fields.

Gillian Small, CUNY's Vice Chancellor for Research, echoes the excitement noting that "enriching the undergraduate research experience at CUNY is fundamental to student success and we are delighted to have received this award to help us to achieve our goals.

Rick Detweiler, President of the Great Lakes Colleges Association, describes the CUR workshop as an invaluable opportunity to bring academic administrators and STEM faculty together with experts in STEM education to explore solutions to challenges in providing rewarding STEM research opportunities across the consortium. He stated, "Undergraduate research is well-established on all GLCA campuses, particularly in extensive summer programs. Each campus has committed significant resources to support students as they develop expertise with the full cycle of 'prepare – research – publish.' But we are keen to improve in some areas of this cycle and to see more STEM majors benefit from participating in an undergraduate research experience. We are very pleased to have the opportunity to work with CUR to make advancements in these areas."

Dr. John C. Cavanaugh, Chancellor of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education acknowledges that "by institutionalizing UGR, PASSHE seeks to enhance the way students learn, faculty teach and courses are delivered to optimize student success, specifically in STEM. The hoped-for outcome is that the project will enhance the integrity and quality of academic programs in STEM, and subsequent access and success of undergraduate students, through faculty-student collaborative and mentored research experiences.

He also notes that "through active participation in research, students can develop career skills and a lifelong habit of constantly seeking knowledge. UGR is at the intersection of the interests of students, faculty, the universities and the System. For students, UGR results in expanded knowledge and interest in their chosen discipline; for faculty, research is a passion and is furthered by working with engaged students; for universities, UGR enhances student retention and graduation rates. This improvement in retention and graduation rates, particularly in STEM areas, fulfills a strategic goal of PASSHE."

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**Council on Undergraduate Research:** The Council on Undergraduate Research ([www.cur.org](http://www.cur.org)) supports faculty development for high-quality undergraduate student-faculty collaborative research and scholarship. Over 600 institutions and 7000 individuals belong to CUR. CUR believes that the best way to capture student interest and create enthusiasm for a discipline is through research in close collaboration with faculty members.

**The City University of New York (CUNY)** team will be overseen by system administrator Avrom Caplan, PhD, Associate University Dean for Research. CUNY will have teams from eleven campuses

participate during a Spring 2012 workshop that will broaden participation in undergraduate research in STEM fields, and create an institutional culture that recognizes the importance of undergraduate research by integrating research into current pedagogical practices. It's anticipated that accomplishing these goals will lead to increased retention and graduation rates, greater student academic success overall, and will also result in more students pursuing careers in STEM fields.

**The Great Lakes Colleges Association (GLCA)** will have ten teams participate in the workshop program during the summer of 2012. The workshop will emphasize ways to expand undergraduate research opportunities, promote system wide reporting of research results and improve on the collection, evaluation and use of assessment data across the system. Simon Gray, GLCA Program Officer for New Directions Initiative and Associate Professor, Department of Mathematics and Computer Science at the College of Wooster is the system-wide administrator who will oversee the project.

**The Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE)** will have fourteen campus teams participate in the workshop program during the fall of 2012. The workshop will be designed to help PASSHE achieve a system-wide culture that integrates undergraduate research more deeply and broadly across universities and improve STEM education. As well as transform students and the learning environments by linking theory and application of knowledge. Marilyn J. Wells, PhD, MPH, System Liaison for Strategic Initiatives for the Office of the Chancellor will serve as the system administrator for this project.