



## Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program

### THE POWER

The Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP) was established 1988-89 as an innovative program to improve the retention and academic success of diverse students by enabling first- and second-year students to participate in faculty research. Today, we provide over 1,300 first- and second-year students and community college transfer students each year with the opportunity to engage in over 1,100 cutting-edge research projects alongside faculty, research scientists, postdoctoral fellows, and graduate students in all academic disciplines and all U-M schools and colleges. Undergraduate research as a pedagogy engages students in immersive, engaged learning while integrating the teaching and research missions of the university to enhance undergraduate education. The program celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2019 and plans to enhance its existing work and develop new programs for both entering students and more advanced students in all fields. Over the past 30 years, UROP has served as a national model of access, diversity, and equity in undergraduate research with the most high-impact practice across institutions of higher education, according to the Association of American Colleges and Universities.



## THE OPPORTUNITIES

UROP is dedicated to creating valuable and memorable research experiences for undergraduate students. The demand for student research experiences continues to grow each year, and many students clamor to be part of our exciting research community. UROP also assists students with travel to a national or international research conference, summer research fellowships, access to specialized workshop training programs, and small research grants for student initiated projects. Studies show that undergraduates exposed to intensive research experiences learn valuable research skills, gain mentors and role models, and clarify their academic and professional goals, which serves them well in any career they choose to pursue.

## THE IMPACT

UROP needs continued funding for innovative programs that will give more students opportunities for research and experiential learning. Gifts for a community-engaged research program would enable more students to experience working in a non-profit or entrepreneurial setting that focuses on community development, thereby giving them hands-on experience and new perspective on career goals. Also, support is needed to advance our curriculum through special mini-courses and courses in conjunction with local research projects in Detroit and surrounding Michigan communities.

### **Undergraduate Summer Research Initiatives**

***\$300,000 annually / \$5,000 per student***

Although participating in undergraduate research during the academic year is a wonderful opportunity for students, time is limited to develop an independent project that can lead to publication, thesis work, or other outcomes. Also, there are students who are not able to take time during the academic year to conduct research. Summer research allows students to immerse themselves in a project, to benefit from more consistent faculty mentorship without distractions, and to get a glimpse of the life of the scholar researcher. Gifts to support summer research would also enable us to support more international research opportunities, either through existing exchange programs or new program models. Funding would support 50 to 60 students to conduct full-time summer research either at the University of Michigan or with U-M faculty collaborators around the world. The ability for students to experience intense and sustained academic engagement could lead to a wide range of outcomes, from more students completing honors theses to publication in peer reviewed journals to global research experiences and also clarification of interest in and goals for future graduate work.



## **Community-Engaged Research Program**

*\$150,000 to \$200,000 annually*

Funding for this program would enable us to develop new curricular initiatives to link classroom learning with community-engaged research opportunities in multiple sectors, including non-profits, governmental organizations, and even entrepreneurial ventures focused on community economic development. Working in collaboration with our community partners, we could enhance this program by developing courses and workshops to provide students with additional skills and knowledge that could be applied to their work in the community and also enhance their academic course work. Funds would be used for both course development to engage our community partners, housing stipends to enable students to reside in Detroit for our Summer Detroit Community-Engaged Research Program, and stipends for 25–30 students annually to conduct full-time summer research for community-based organizations in southeast Michigan, with a special focus on Detroit. Through these engaged learning opportunities, students would learn to apply and develop research skills in a real world context, conduct critical research to help non-profit community-based organizations and other organizations better serve their constituents, be exposed to professional needs and opportunities, integrate these experiences with their academic work, and explore future academic and professional pathways.

## **Michigan's Community College Summer Research Fellowship Program**

*\$150,000 annually*

Although many talented Michigan students begin their education at community colleges, the number transferring to U-M or any four-year institution to complete their degrees is low. Funding for summer research fellowships for community college students – which includes veterans, first-generation college students, those seeking training for new careers, and students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds – would help us to increase the number of students who transfer to U-M and complete their education successfully. Our program, which began 15 years ago and is the only one of its kind in Michigan, has been recognized by the Council of Undergraduate Research and the State of Michigan as an exemplary model. Additional funding would provide more opportunities for Michigan community college students to conduct research on the U-M campus up to one year prior to transferring, thereby increasing the likelihood that they will transfer and be successful at a four-year institution. Funds would support housing and stipends for 50+ students, as well as programmatic and staff support for peer advisors who are successful community college transfer students.



## Mini-Courses on Complex Research Problems

*\$50,000 to \$100,000 annually*

We know that undergraduate research can have a significant positive impact on student academic engagement and retention of diverse students, and can create pathways to graduate and professional school. However, many students, and especially those from under-represented backgrounds, often are not initially interested in research or do not see it as relevant to their long-term goals. Therefore, we plan to develop a series of research-based mini-courses focused on topics of interest to diverse student populations. The proposed courses would focus on topics such as obesity, poverty, economic development, urban issues, mental health, African and Latino Studies, and health care disparities, and would introduce students to researchers from across campus who are working in these areas. For example, the topic of obesity has been of great interest to UROP student researchers—24 of whom are conducting research on topics ranging from Exercise and Vascular Complications (Kinesiology), Health Care Policy Innovations (Economics), Cognitive Control and Decision-making (Psychology), Unraveling the Mystery of Childhood Obesity (Pediatrics), Adhesion Molecules in Obesity and Atherosclerosis (Medical School and MCDB). By helping students see the connection between research and community issues, they will become engaged in research and explore fields they may not have considered.

### **WAYS TO FUND YOUR GIFT**

Your gifts of cash, pledges, or appreciated securities change lives. Wills, estate, and planned gifts allow you to create a lasting legacy that will enable the best and brightest minds to experience a liberal arts education, solve problems in a changing world, and yield ideas and innovations that will make a difference in Michigan and around the globe.

---

### CONTACT INFO

#### **LSA Advancement**

*College of Literature, Science, and the Arts*

101 N. Main Street, Suite 850

Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

P.734.615.6333 // F.734.647.3061

[lsa.umich.edu](http://lsa.umich.edu)

[lsa.umich.edu/urop](http://lsa.umich.edu/urop)