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# Summer

# Office of Undergraduate Research at Mizzou

# 2008

# Newsletter

Issue No: 8

July 23th, 2008

## Notes from the Field

As our summer program is coming to a close, we wanted to let you share some of your own reflections on the summer. Here is what some of you had to say, and photos of you in action:

### Lessons Learned

- Patience and determination are the two key factors when it comes to research.
- I learned that experiments look much easier to perform on paper than they actually are. I am doing an animal project that seems like it is going to take forever, but on paper it seems so simple.



- I learned that no matter how bad you mess up, it is always worse to try and fix it yourself than admit your mistake and have to have your post-doc call the company that designed your assay.
- One of the most memorable moments of the summer that I had was sitting in the lab pipetting in the hood and I realized that I could see myself growing as a person and scientist; I knew at that point I could see myself doing research in the future.

### HAPPENINGS THIS WEEK

Monday, July 27th

Evening Seminar  
"Telomeres: The Secret of Long Life?"  
Dr. Joel Maruniak, Biological Sciences  
6 -7 pm, Monsanto Aud. LSC

Tuesday, July 28th

MUURS BBL 12 – 1 LSC 121

Evening Seminar  
Two "Great Lectures in Neurosciences"  
6-7 pm, Monsanto Aud LSC

Wednesday, July 29th

No activities

Thursday, July 30th

The Forum  
11-12 pm Poster Set-Up

1-1:30 pm--Program (Monsanto)  
1:30-3:30 pm FORUM  
5 pm--PICNIC

Friday, July 31st

Wrap-up Meeting  
8:30 - 11 am Rm. 121 LSC

UMEB Float Trip on Meremac 7 am

- I had never really made friends with students my age from another country. Becoming friends with the Koreans was a great experience. They are so much fun to be around.

# On Sustainability and Conservation: UMEB Students visit Tyson Research Center and the St. Louis Botanical Gardens. Here's what they had to say:

As far as the Tyson Research Center is concerned, one memorable experience was seeing and hearing about their ecologically-friendly “green building” that really showed promise for future designs and technology to allow people to become essentially energy independent in their homes. Although, I thought it was interesting how some of the ideas used, like using local wood materials and collecting rain water, are actually very old concepts that are no longer common place today but were once used extensively. It seems like a blend of new technology and old-fashioned common sense.

~Andrew Cave



I spoke with a few graduate students from Washington University that told me about all the travel they got to do for their research projects, which is something I hope to be able to do in the future.

~Emily Tewes

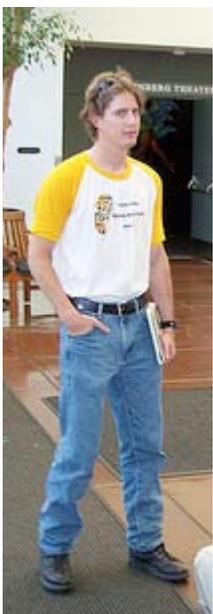
I thought it was interesting how some native plant species are considered rare or uncommon not because of mankind's influence, but because they were always uncommon. I also thought it was interesting how changes in the ecological structure can lead native species to act as invasive species to areas that they hadn't previously occupied.

~Andrew Cave

Currently, there are 250,000 known species of plants. Yet there are approx. 400,000 species of plants on the planet. We still have a lot of plants to discover!

The sustainable building and the fact that it only needed 1/18th of an inch of rain every 2 months for it's water supply.

~Megan Johnson



# So you're smart...but are you Missouri smart?

What Missouri city has a ship-shaped Titanic museum? It's Branson!

Last Week's Answer: The Exorcist

## Letters of Recommendation



So now you've put your blood, sweat, and tears into a summer's worth of research. You have an abstract and a poster and maybe even a publication for your efforts. Is there anything else you could hope for? Yes, a glowing recommendation from your mentor would be a capstone for your summer and your portfolio.

A good letter from faculty can be the deciding factor in an application that is close to the cut-off.

Stay in touch with your mentor so that when you need a letter of recommendation for an application you have the ties to ask for one. All you need to do is send them an email every so often and let them know what you have been up to. Phone calls never hurt either. If you can relate something in your current life to the work you did with them, all the better.

Stay in touch, because as you move forward academically and professionally your network of contacts will be one of your most valuable assets.

### Letter of Recommendation Tips:

- Give your mentor plenty of time to write your letter, 4-5 weeks is appropriate

Provide them with a packet of important information.

- What is the deadline and where should they send the letter? Include an addressed and stamped envelope.
- Send your current resume a list of relevant classes you've taken and your grades.
- Make sure they know what the recommendation is for.

- Remind them of the dates you worked in their lab and the title of your project and any other projects you have worked on since then.
- A description of your work and volunteer experience
- a description of your professional goals.

### REMINDER: Wrap Up Meeting

If you are funded through the Office of Undergraduate Research, you are required to attend! We need you to fill out our five-year contracts as well as summer checkout info and two online questionnaires. This will be Friday, July 31st, between 9:00 to 11 am in 572 LSC. Please allot at least 45 minutes--the latest you should show up is 10:15!

## GOODBYE SUMMER



WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM

## WHO DO I CONTACT?

**For questions about logistical and travel topics:**  
Pam Monroe | 882-5976 | monroep@missouri.edu

**For questions about mailing lists and attendance:**  
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# MUURS

MU Undergraduate Research Scholars

## Weekly Quick Tip: Effective Poster Presentations

*Determine the most important message*

Although viewed by some in the scientific community as inferior to other forms of communication in the greater science and engineering community, the poster is an extremely powerful form of communication at professional conferences. Advantages of poster presentations over oral presentations include the length of the time allotted for discussion of posters at professional meetings. Most oral presentations unless they are invited plenary presentations are limited to about 15-minutes. Poster sessions on the other hand often allow for two or more hours of discussion with interested visitors. In addition, at most meetings multiple oral sessions are scheduled to run simultaneously in small rooms allowing for a very limited audience. Poster sessions often take place in large rooms and accommodate hundreds of presenters. Consequently, there is greater potential exposure of your work to the greater scientific community in poster presentations.

Source: <http://www.webguru.neu.edu/communicating/poster/>

## Let's Talk UMEB

### Words from Aldo Leopold...

"Our grandfathers were less well-housed, well-fed, well-clothed than we are. The strivings by which they bettered their lot are also those which deprived us of [Passenger] pigeons. Perhaps we now grieve because we are not sure, in our hearts, that we have gained by the exchange. The gadgets of industry bring more comforts than the pigeons did, but do they add as much to the glory of the spring?"



It is a century now since Darwin gave us the first glimpse of the origin of the species. We know now what was unknown to all the preceding caravan of generations: that men are only fellow-voyagers with other creatures in the odyssey of evolution. This new knowledge should have given us, by this time, a sense of kinship with fellow-creatures; a wish to live and let live; a sense of wonder over the magnitude and duration of the biotic enterprise.

Above all we should, in the century since Darwin, have come to know that man, while captain of the adventuring ship, is hardly the sole object of its quest, and that his prior assumptions to this effect arose from the simple necessity of whistling in the dark.

These things, I say, should have come to us. I fear they have not come

Source: <http://gargravarr.cc.utexas.edu/chrisj/leopold-quotes>.

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