September 2015

Welcome from the President

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Recommended Citation
Available at: http://uknowledge.uky.edu/kaleidoscope/vol6/iss1/1

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On many occasions I have expressed my unwavering support for undergraduate scholarship — the scholarly, creative, and research endeavors of our undergraduates beyond the regular classroom setting. Such scholarship is formally and informally supported by many individual faculty members, by departments, by colleges, and by the University through the many programs of its eUreKat office. The public face of these activities is the many departmental research days, the annual “Showcase of Undergraduate Scholars” (which I enjoy opening and attending each spring), and Kaleidoscope.

Kaleidoscope presents the cream of our students’ scholarly achievements. It is a refereed journal. Every submission to the journal has been vetted first by the student’s faculty mentor. It then must be recommended for publication by at least one additional faculty referee. Finally, it must undergo revision and editing in close consultation with the faculty editor of the journal. This process not only ensures the superior quality of Kaleidoscope, it provides an invaluable learning opportunity for the student authors. Very few undergraduates have the experience of writing for a refereed publication. Once again, I want to offer my sincere thanks to all of the faculty mentors and reviewers who give generously of their time to support and nurture our students. The excellence of the articles is undeniable proof of the value of the faculty input.

I should note that undergraduate scholarship at UK occurs across all disciplines, as illustrated by the range of subjects in this issue. We can read probing articles in the humanities, learn from studies and essays in the social sciences and law, and glimpse some of the cutting edge research carried on in the sciences and technology. In the biological and chemical sciences, I am pleased to see once again the contributions of the latest of UK’s Beckman Scholars. We take considerable pride in the fact that UK is one of the few Research I universities selected by the Beckman Foundation to administer Beckman Undergraduate Scholars Awards, and that the Foundation has recently recognized UK with a third three-year Beckman Scholars grant that will enable us to fund six more Scholars.

It is clear from many educational research studies that engaging in undergraduate scholarship has an extremely beneficial impact on a student’s education. The benefits include, among others, increased retention, higher grades, better learning, better placements in jobs and graduate schools, and closer relationships with faculty members that yield more personal advising and mentoring as well as greatly strengthened recommendations. I urge every undergraduate to take advantage of the mentored scholarly opportunities at UK, and I thank again all of the faculty members who make these opportunities both possible and beneficial.