UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH POSTER EXHIBITION

October 23, 2024

5:00 - 7:00 p.m

Wilbur Cross North Reading Room

Sponsored by the

University of Connecticut

Office of Undergraduate Research

Enrichment Programs

About Frontiers in Undergraduate Research

The Fall Frontiers Poster Exhibition is a multidisciplinary research forum showcasing undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative projects at the University of Connecticut. Fall Frontiers complements the longstanding spring Frontiers exhibition, providing an additional opportunity for UConn's student researchers to share their exciting work.

This is the twelfth fall event sponsored by the Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR). This year's exhibition includes 88 students presenting posters for 73 research and creative projects.

Students' projects span the disciplines and include both independent research and work pursued in collaboration with other undergraduates. The projects presented reflect the invaluable contributions of research mentors, including graduate students, postdoctoral scholars, staff, and faculty members. We hope you enjoy meeting our wonderful students and learning about their innovative projects.

About the Office of Undergraduate Research

The Office of Undergraduate Research is a resource for students interested in enriching their undergraduate experience through participation in research, scholarship, and creative activity. OUR guides students through the process of identifying relevant opportunities and coordinates several funding programs to support students and their faculty mentors.

Many of the Fall Frontiers presenters have received financial support for their projects from the OUR, which awarded over $650,000 in 2023-2024 in support of students' research and creative endeavors. These awards are funded by the Office of Undergraduate Research with generous support from the Office of the Provost, the Office of the Vice President for Research, the Deans of the schools and colleges, and private donations from alumni, parents, and other friends of UConn and undergraduate research.

12th Annual Fall Frontiers Poster Exhibition

Poster Exhibition

Wednesday, October 23, 2024
5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Welcome and Introductions

Micah Heumann
Director, Office of Undergraduate Research

Keynote Speaker

Daniel Schwartz
Vice Provost for Academic Operations

Sequential Listing of Poster Presentations

This listing of projects includes the undergraduate student authors and their faculty and staff mentors. Please note that this is not a comprehensive listing of mentors: many projects also reflect the contributions and mentorship of dedicated graduate students, post-doctoral scholars, and research staff members. An alphabetical listing of presenters is included at the end of the program.

1. Animated Quantum Physics for Middle School Demographic
Lee Ernest, Art - Illustration/Animation
Ava Poretta, Art - Illustration/Animation
Jordan Au, Theatre Design/Technology
Advisor: Vincent Tycer, Assistant Professor in Residence, Dramatic Arts
Advisor: Kenneth Thompson, Assistant Professor in Residence, Digital Media and Design

2. Singing into Accents: Intonation and Music
Nicolas Rodriguez, Digital Media and Design
Advisor: Jennifer Scapetis-Tycer, Associate Professor, Dramatic Arts

3. Intergenerational Memory in Literature
Abigail Boyer, English & American Studies
Advisor: Frederick Roden, Professor, English

4. Dialects in "A Grammar for Writers"
Isabella Blasi, Linguistics/Psychology
Emily Feest, English
Advisor: Frederick M. Biggs, Professor, English

5. Park Your Protest — Green Space in Victorian New York City
Hiis LaRose, Secondary History and Social Studies Education & History
Advisor: Mars Plater, Assistant Professor, History

6. Platicando Juntos: Mothers Learning How to Talk to Their Children About Immigration
Katherine Gutierrez, Political Science & Human Rights
Advisor: Sarah Rendon Garcia, Assistant Professor, Human Development and Family Sciences

7. The Prevalence and Treatment of OTC Drug Misuse
Jesslyn Cherian, Allied Health Sciences
Advisor: Nathaniel Rickles, Professor, Pharmacy Practice

8. The Role of Technology in Healthcare Education and Condition Management
Aren Popik, Cognitive Science
Advisor: Nathaniel Rickles, FProfessor, Pharmacy Practice

9. Addressing Self-Medication Implications: OTC Trends in Geriatric and Minority Communities
Grace Jos, Biomedical Engineering
Advisor: Nathaniel Rickles, Professor, Pharmacy Practice

10. More for Me or More for You: How Do Children Think About Fairness?
Eunice Kim, Psychological Sciences
Advisor: Felix Warneken, Professor, Psychology, University of Michigan

11. Religiousness as a Moderator of Relations Between Social Adversity and Wellbeing
Zuleydy Torres, Psychological Sciences
Advisor: Crystal Park, Distinguished Professor, Psychological Sciences

12. Relations between PTSD Symptoms Clusters and Pain within Recent Sexual Assault Survivors: An Examination of Racial Differences
Kayvona Brown, Psychological Sciences
Advisor: Crystal Park, Distinguished Professor, Psychological Sciences
Advisor: Renee Truman, Director, McNair Scholars Program/CAPS Research Scholars

13. Self-Reported Access to Oral Health Care and Perception of Oral Health from 2011-2020
Taylor Lordo, Molecular and Cell Biology
Advisor: Sharon Smith, Professor, Pediatrics
Advisor: Elizabeth Kline, Assistant Professor in Residence, Molecular and Cell Biology

14. Reinventing Mathematics Learning: An Exploration of Undergraduate Mathematics Learning Post-Pandemic
Morgan Balesano, Mathematics
Advisor: David McArdle, Assistant Professor in Residence, Mathematics

15. “Listening Neglect”: A Mixed-Methods Study of How Families Feel Unheard in Hospitals
Elizabeth Micolisin, Allied Health Sciences
Advisor: Alisa Khan, Assistant Professor, Harvard Medical School
Advisor: Marwa Elborki, Research Manager, Boston Children’s Hospital

16. Measuring Territorial Control of Non-State Actors
Kayleigh Budnick, Political Science & Statistical Data Science
Katerina Anikeev, Political Science
Sophia Stanganelli, Political Science & Human Rights
Advisor: Michael Rubin, Assistant Professor, Political Science

17. The Influence of Social Media on the Health of Pregnant and Postpartum Mothers
Zane Skarupski, Allied Health Sciences
Lucinda Felix, Allied Health Sciences
Advisor: Molly Waring, Associate Professor, Allied Health Sciences

18. Analyzing Caregiver Eye Gaze in Relation to Language Modality
Giovanna Doria, Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences
Advisor: Derek Houston, Professor, Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences
Advisor: Torri Ann Woodruff-Gautherin, Research Scientist, Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences

19. Visualizing Evoked Response Potentials as a Function of Distractor Sound Statistics
Celia Labbate, Psychological Sciences
Sanskar Shah, Molecular and Cell Biology
Advisor: Heather Read, Professor, Psychological Sciences

20. Retention, Illicit Drug Use, and Psychiatric Severity of Older Adults Compared to Younger Adults with Opioid Use Disorder in Buprenorphine Treatment
Jillian Bowen, Pathobiology & Animal Science
Advisor: Carla Rash, Associate Professor, Medicine

21. Harm Reduction Vending Machines in Opioid Overdose Prevention
Cailyn Fuss, Allied Health Sciences
Advisor: Megan O'Grady, Associate Professor, Public Health Sciences
Advisor: Marsha Murray, Clinical Research Assistant, Public Health Sciences

22. Developing a Shortened Version of the Modified Rhyme Test for Speech Intelligibility Assessment
Vangmayee Upadhyay, Allied Health Sciences
Advisor: Insoo Kim, Assistant Professor, Medicine

23. Conditioned Place Preference using Virtual Alcohol Cues
Nikole Rodriguez, Physiology and Neurobiology
Ava Williams, Psychological Sciences
Erin Curran, Psychological Sciences
Justin Guinta, Psychological Sciences, Sociology, and Individualized Major: Criminal Behavior
Lillian Perry, Psychological Sciences
Advisor: Robert Astur, Associate Professor, Psychological Sciences

24. The Epigenetic Regulator, DOT1L, Contributes to Disease Severity and Neuropathology in a Mouse Model of Globoid Cell Leukodystrophy
Erica Lavoie, Molecular and Cell Biology
Advisor: Stephen Crocker, Associate Professor, Neuroscience

25. The Role of RFWD2 in Anxiety-like Behaviors in Mice
Laya Ananthakrishnan, Allied Health Sciences
Advisor: Xin-Ming Ma, Associate Professor, Neuroscience

26. Automated Neuronal Spike Sorting using SpikeInterface in Python
Abhinav Swaminathan, Computer Science and Engineering
Advisor: Manuel Castro-Alamancos, Professor, Neuroscience

27. Novel Methods to Target Developmentally-Defined Neural Populations in the Dentate Gyrus of the Hippocampus
Anika Agrawal, Physiology and Neurobiology
Mannat Kadian, Molecular and Cell Biology
Advisor: Sebnem Tuncdemir, Assistant Professor of Neuroscience, Neuroscience

28. A Computational Explanation for the Transient Nature of Gamma Oscillations
Tarun Shriram, Biological Sciences
Advisor: Scott Rich, Assistant Professor, Physiology and Neurobiology

29. Rodent CNS In-vivo Injury Models and Gene Therapy
Anja Kearney, Physiology and Neurobiology
Advisor: Feliks Trakhtenberg, Assistant Professor, Neuroscience

30. Identifying Novel Upstream Regulators of the Hippo Pathway: X-Chromosome Screen in *Drosophila melanogaster*
Nadia Siddiqui, Physiology and Neurobiology
Advisor: Jianzhong Yu, Associate Professor, Physiology and Neurobiology

31. Modulation of Neuron-OPC Synaptic Interactions by Neuropeptide Y in a Hyperexcitable Hippocampal Model Induced by Gq-DREADD Activation
Shez Jakhro, Physiology and Neurobiology
Advisor: Akiko Nishiyama, Professor, Physiology and Neurobiology

32. Investigating the Effects of Polyphenols on Protein Disulfide Isomerase Inhibition and Mast Cell Activation
Krupal Patel, Molecular and Cell Biology
Advisor: Clinton Mathias, Associate Professor, Nutritional Sciences

33. Senescence-induced Changes in Calcium Homeostasis in Muscle Cells
Alexis Bates, Pathobiology
Advisor: Sangyong Choi, Assistant Professor, Nutritional Sciences

34. The Role of Macrophage Histone Deacetylase 9 in Alcohol-Induced Liver Disease
Jonathan Schmitt, Nutritional Sciences
Advisor: Ji-Young Lee, Professor, Nutritional Sciences

35. Oocyte Age and B Chromosome Transmission in *Drosophila melanogaster*
Annette St. Jacques, Molecular and Cell Biology
Advisor: Stacey Hanlon, Assistant Professor, Molecular and Cell Biology

36. Characterizing Viral-Host Protein Interactions that Result in RNA Transcription Readthrough
Nora Lippai, Molecular and Cell Biology
Advisor: Leighton Core, Associate Professor, Molecular and Cell Biology

37. Myosin L is Important for Survival in *Toxoplasma gondii*
Victoria Yi, Molecular and Cell Biology
Advisor: Aoife Heaslip, Associate Professor, Molecular and Cell Biology

38. Investigating the Role of ORF1 in the Transposition of the Centromere-enriched Retroelement *G2/Jockey-3*
Bianca Planeta, Molecular and Cell Biology & Anthropology
Advisor: Barbara Mellone, Professor, Molecular and Cell Biology

39. Role of RUNX2 in TGF-β1 Induced Fibroblast Activation
Tracy Doan, Allied Health Sciences
Advisor: Melanie Tran, Instructor, Nephrology
Advisor: Yanlin Wang, Professor, Medicine

40. Investigating Bacterial Glycan Utilization in the Accessory Nidamental Gland (ANG) of *Euprymna scolopes*
Kira O'Brien, Molecular and Cell Biology
Advisor: Spencer Nyholm, Professor, Molecular and Cell Biology

41. Effects of Hypoxia on Cellular Energetics in Murine Spleen T cells
Sidharth Masarur, Molecular and Cell Biology & Pathobiology
Advisor: Hamid Rabb, Professor, Nephrology, Johns Hopkins University
Advisor: Sanjeev Noel, Professor, Nephrology, Johns Hopkins University

42. Novel Mouse Model Containing Conditional *Hox11* Alleles Recapitulates Phenotype of Global Knockout
Ruupala Kalaiarasu, Molecular and Cell Biology
Michael Casanova, Physiology and Neurobiology
Advisor: Danielle Rux, Assistant Professor, Orthopedic Surgery

43. Defining the Substrate Determinants of a Salmonella aminoacyl-tRNA Deacylase that Prevents Errors in Protein Synthesis
Sharva Karthikeyan, Biological Sciences
Advisor: Oscar Vargas-Rodriguez, Assistant Professor, Molecular Biology and Biophysics

44. Impact of Inorganic Nitrogen Supplementation on a Fungus-Growing Ant Symbiosis
Emmanuel Hernandez, Molecular and Cell Biology & Physiology and Neurobiology
Advisor: Jonathan Klassen, Associate Professor, Molecular and Cell Biology

45. The Effect of Cinacalcet and Intravenous Sodium Thiosulfate Treatment on Long-term Clinical Outcomes in Calciphylaxis
Sydney Whittaker, Molecular and Cell Biology
Advisor: Sagar Nigwekar, Assistant Professor in Medicine, Harvard Medical School & Massachusetts General Hospital, Nephrology

46. Generation and Molecular/Phenotypic Characterization of Patient's Derived Cell Line of Very Aggressive Malignant Peripheral Nerve Sheath Tumor
Magdalena Swierczek, Molecular and Cell Biology
Advisor: Shatovisha Dey, Senior Scientist, Rudy L. Ruggles Biomedical Research Institute

47. Carbohydrate-induced Cytotoxicity Among Members of Klebsiella oxytoca Species Complex
Mantra Narayanan, Physiology and Neurobiology
Advisor: Adam Matson, Assistant Professor, Pediatrics and Immunology

48. Investigating *mEAK-7* RNA Splicing in Lung Cancer: Addressing Racial Disparities in Oncology
Olivia Amodeo, Molecular and Cell Biology
Advisor: Jennifer Freedman, Associate Professor in Medicine, Department of Medicine, Duke University

49. SARS-Cov-2 Detection through Wastewater Surveillance at the University of Connecticut
Nathan Shaw, Biological Sciences
Rebecca Abirached, Medical Laboratory Sciences
Advisor: Lisa Nigro, Assistant Research Professor, Institute for Systems Genomics
Advisor: Kendra Maas, Scientific Director, Microbial Analysis Resources and Services
Advisor: Rachel O'Neill, Distinguished Professor, Molecular and Cell Biology

50. Thiol-Functionalized Silk Biomaterials, A Study of Two Different Formation Methods
Sanjana Srinivas, Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering
Advisor: Kelly Burke, Associate Professor, Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering

51. Genetically Engineeering the CotA Laccase Gene of Bacillus Lichenformis to Target Degradation of Synthetic 17 alpha-ethynylestradiol
Mahathi Veluri, Molecular and Cell Biology
Jada Gist, Marine Sciences
Alyna Beardslee, Molecular and Cell Biology & Diagnostic Genetic Sciences
Mariella Petrovic, Molecular and Cell Biology
Advisor: Kate Castellano, Assistant Research Professor, Institute for Systems Genomics

52. Rapid Detection of the Toxin-Producing Algae, Alexandrium Catenella, Utilizing Loop-Mediated Isothermal Amplification (LAMP)
Mariella Petrovic, Molecular and Cell Biology
Alyna Beardslee, Molecular and Cell Biology & Diagnostic Genetic Sciences
Advisor: Kate Castellano, Assistant Research Professor, Institute for Systems Genomics

53. Effect of CD13 on Myofibroblast Recruitment and Caveolin-1 Expression in Implant-Induced Foreign Body Reaction
Andy Dong, Molecular and Cell Biology
Advisor: Mallika Ghosh, Assistant Professor, Center for Vascular Biology

54. Importance Sampling to Learn Vasopressor Dosage to Optimize Patient Mortality in an Interpretable Manner
Anshul Rastogi, Computer Science & Molecular and Cell Biology
Advisor: Dongjin Song, Assistant Professor, School of Computing

55. Measuring the Misplacement of Data from Multidimensional Scaling
Lucy Liu, Statistics
Advisor: Haim Bar, Associate Professor, Statistics

56. Watt's Up, NYC? An Analysis of Green Energy, Water, and Natural Gas Usage in 2021
Isabelle Perez, Mathematics-Statistics
Leon Nguyen, Statistical Data Science & Mathematics
Advisor: Elizabeth Schifano, Associate Professor, Statistics

57. Uncovering a Facile, Gram-Scale Synthesis of an Unnatural Amino Acid: A Gateway to the Chemoselective Neoglycosylation of Synthetic Peptides
Brandon Davis, Chemistry
Advisor: Mark Peczuh, Professor, Chemistry

58. Exploring the Impact of Black Hole Jet Feedback in the CAMELS Simulations
Rachel Cleveland, Physics
Advisor: Daniel Angles-Alcazar, Assistant Professor, Physics

59. Use of Real-time In situ Monitoring as a Tool for Comparison of Electrochemical Advanced Oxidation Processes for the Decolourisation of Azo and Indigoid Dyes
Taylor Koehler, Molecular and Cell Biology
Advisor: Nicholas Leadbeater, Professor, Chemistry

60. Exploring the Influence of Compression Speed on Deformation Behavior: A Nano-indentation Approach
Heqi Wu, Mathematics-Physics
Advisor: Barrett Wells, Professor, Physics

61. Optimization of Handheld Bioprinter Extrusion Control with a Stepper Motor System
Alison Powell, Mechanical Engineering
Advisor: Ali Tamayol, Associate Professor, Biomedical Engineering

62. Continuous Interleaved Sampling Based Sound Processing Strategy for an Auditory Brainstem Implant
Weiyi Zhang, Biomedical Engineering & Electrical Engineering
Advisor: Martin Han, Associate Professor, Biomedical Engineering

63. Extracellular Matrix Protein 1 Metabolically Regulates the Kidney Fibrotic Microenvironment
Riddhi Bansal, Molecular and Cell Biology
Advisor: Dong Zhou, Assistant Professor, Medicine
Advisor: Yuan Gui, Instructor, Medicine

64. Analysis and Visualization of Molecular Clusters in 3D
Harrison Perone, Mechanical Engineering
Advisor: Michael Blinov, Associate Professor, Center for Cell Analysis and Modeling

65. Synovial Microcirculation in Models of Osteoarthritis
Alexandra Marinescu, Physiology and Neurobiology
Advisor: Sanja Novak, Instructor, Center for Regenerative Medicine and Skeletal Development

66. Investigating Cartilage Healing Mechanisms in the TMJ (Jaw Joint) using a Clinically-relevant Pig Model
Rebecca Denhart, Molecular and Cell Biology & Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
Advisor: Caroline Dealy, Associate Professor, Craniofacial Sciences, Biomedical Engineering, Orthopedic Surgery & Cell Biology

67. Exploring the Location of Pedestrian and Cyclist Fatalities and Severe Injuries in Hartford
Wiktor Szwajger, Civil Engineering
Advisor: Davis Chacon-Hurtado, Assistant Research Professor, Civil and Environmental Engineering
Advisor: Niloufar Shirani, Assistant Research Professor, Civil and Environmental Engineering

68. Trends and Transport of Tropospheric Ozone from New York City to Connecticut in the Summer of 2023
Michele Iraci, Environmental Sciences
Advisor: Guanyu Huang, Assistant Professor, School of Marine and Atmospheric Science, Stony Brook University
Advisor: Zhe Zhu, Associate Professor, Natural Resources and the Environment

69. Copper Regulator CITF1 Crosstalks with Iron Regulator FIT in *Arabidopsis thaliana*
Alexandra Carabetta, Molecular and Cell Biology & Diagnostic Genetic Sciences
Advisor: Olena Vatamaniuk, Professor, Department of Plant Biology, School of Integrative Plant Science, Cornell University
Advisor: Ju-Chen Chia, Research Associate, Department of Plant Biology, School of Integrative Plant Science, Cornell University

70. Managing Microchromosomes in the Assembly of the Endangered Puerto Rican Parrot (*Amazona vittata*)
Anthony He, Molecular and Cell Biology
Advisor: Jill Wegrzyn, Associate Professor, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

71. Revealing Methylation Patterns in the Japanese Walnut Genome: A Step Toward Conserving the Butternut from the OC-J Fungus
Keertana Chagari, Molecular and Cell Biology
Advisor: Jill Wegrzyn, Associate Professor, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

72. A Tale of Two Tubeworms: *Riftia pachyptila* and *Tevnia jerichonana* Comparative Genomics
Samira Obbu, Molecular and Cell Biology
Andrew Deierlein, Molecular and Cell Biology & Pathobiology
Alan Rodger, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology & Anthropology
Sia Gbondo-Tugbawa, Statistics
Anthony He, Molecular and Cell Biology
Advisor: Jill Wegrzyn, Associate Professor, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
Advisor: Rachel O'Neill, Distinguished Professor, Molecular and Cell Biology

73. Phylogeny-based Taxonomic Revision of *Podostictina*, a Genus of Lichen-forming Fungi
Crystal Zhu, Biological Sciences
Advisor: Bernard Goffinet, Professor, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Special Thanks

The Office of Undergraduate Research wishes to thank the deans of the represented schools and colleges, the Office of the Provost, the Office of the Vice President for Research, and the generous donors to Enrichment Programs and to the Honors Program for their support of undergraduate research.

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Office of Undergraduate Research

Staff

Micah Heumann, *Director, Office of Undergraduate Research*

Melissa Berkey, *Assistant Director*

Jodi Eskin, *Program Administrator and Advisor*

Emily Schwab, *BOLD Program Director and Advisor*

Peer Research Ambassadors

Andrei Abarientos ’26 (CAHNR)
Riley Beckham, Dec. ’24 (ENG)
Naomi Benningfield ’25 (CLAS)
Anabelle Bergstrom ’25 (CLAS)
Michela Brown ’25 (CLAS)
Hansuja Chaurasia ’26 (CAHNR)
Hailey DeWalt ’26 (CLAS)
Alexis Elkinson ’25 (CLAS)
Fariha Fardin ’25 (CLAS)
Fraser McGurk ’25 (CLAS)
Malak Nechnach ’26 (CLAS)
Krithika Santhanam ’25 (CLAS)
Annette St. Jacques ’26 (CLAS)
Mariam Vargas ’25 (CLAS)

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