



LAUREN CASHMAN

Class of 2016

Major: Biological Systems Engineering;
Minor: Biomedical Engineering

My project with Dr. Bickford was investigating photo thermal therapy using gold-gold sulfide nanoparticles, and particularly how that could elicit

anti-tumor immunity. In PMDI with Dr. Muelenaer, my project is the development of a system for wireless temperature monitoring for malnourished infants in low-resource hospitals, because malnourished infants present high risk for hypothermia.

Why do research? Undergraduate research has taught me so much about both autonomy and collaboration. It takes lots of trust from professors to allow students to be innovative with their ideas and funding, and it has taught me to perform confidently in that trust and to produce some creative engineering.

student testimonials

Class of 2016

Major: Political Science; Minors: Public & Urban Affairs and English (Creative Writing)

My project explores the link between menstrual hygiene management and education, essentially the issues caused by poor sanitation infrastructure. I started my research in Southern Nigeria, and I carried out interviews with young women to understand their menstrual needs, and where they think infrastructure needs to be improved. I'm currently in Senegal with my research team "Toilettes Ecolo" trying to create sustainable toilets for public schools in rural Northern Senegal.

Why do research? Research has helped me learn how to communicate cross-culturally, and to present information in a sensitive yet relevant manner. It has exposed me to the interrelated nature of issues across the world like right to education is related to the right to sanitation. I think it is important to become well-versed in issues of underserved in the world.



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contact us

104 Burruss Hall
800 Drillfield Drive
Blacksburg, VA 2406

undergraduateresearch@vt.edu

<https://www.facebook.com/OURVT>



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Jim Stroup
Logan Wallace





OUR mission

The mission of the Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) is to promote, enhance, and expand undergraduate research opportunities at Virginia Tech. The Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR) defines undergraduate research as "... an inquiry or investigation conducted by an undergraduate student that makes an original intellectual or creative contribution to the discipline," (CUR, 2014).

The Office of Undergraduate Research facilitates the engagement of undergraduates in authentic research experiences in all areas of scholarship. The office offers services and support in finding research opportunities, promoting dissemination of student research, providing data and programmatic support for grant-sponsored undergraduate research programs, and ensuring compliance with university and federal regulations and policies.



research opportunities

Multicultural Academic Opportunities Program (MAOP)

MAOP Undergraduate Scholars Program

Students with financial need and a strong academic record receive financial support by fulfilling program requirements. Open to Virginia residents only.

MAOP Undergraduate Summer Research Internship (SRI)

A 10 week summer research internship combining GRE preparation and personal development seminars. Open to students who are U.S. Citizens and Permanent Residents.

Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation

Underrepresented students receive the support they need to successfully complete science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) degrees and prepare for graduate programs by participating in undergraduate research. Open to any student at Virginia Tech in a STEM major.

VT Fralin Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF)

The Fralin SURF program is a 10-week training program provides motivated Virginia Tech undergraduates the opportunity to engage in full time (approx. 40 hrs/wk) research and related professional development activities that mirror graduate training. The weekly research and professional development seminars, periodic social events, and a final symposium prepare students for graduate school. Selected students will receive a \$4,000 stipend.

Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) National Science Foundation

The Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) program supports research by undergraduate students in areas funded by the National Science Foundation.

REU Sites are based on independent proposals to initiate multi-student projects. REU Sites may be based in a single discipline or interdisciplinary research opportunities with a coherent intellectual theme.

REU Supplements may be included as a component of proposals for new or renewal NSF grants, agreements, or requests for ongoing NSF-funded research projects.



presenting research

Presenting and defending research results are important aspects of the research experience.

There are many undergraduate research symposia each year. VT also sends a delegation of 8-12 students to the ACC Meeting of the Minds undergraduate research conference. Many students also apply to present their research at national professional meetings, with their faculty mentor as the sponsor. Funding may be available to alleviate travel to costs.

Presentation spots are limited so there is a competitive process for selecting presenters. Conference locations may be on campus, local, regional, national or international.

There are opportunities for students at every stage of their academic career, and you should start looking for opportunities at least one semester in advance.

