

## 'The Professionalization of Students'

Honors Program Research Symposium benefits careers before they begin

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24 honors students and 24 undergraduate students who received undergraduate research scholarships presented their research posters at last week's Honors Scholars and Undergraduate Research Poster Symposium.

By: Danni Francis

Last week the J.N. Andrews Honors Program and the Office of Research & Creative Scholarship hosted their annual Honors Scholars and Undergraduate Research Poster Symposium in Buller Hall, featuring 24 honors students and 27 undergraduate students, many of whom received undergraduate research scholarships. The symposium provides the opportunity for Honors thesis scholars and other undergraduates engaged in significant research projects to have their work recognized.

“Undergraduate research mentored by scholars is a way we can help the professionalization of our students as they are preparing to go to graduate school and follow various career paths,” says Monique Pittman, professor of English and director of the Honors Program.

Pittman mentored Alaryss Bosco, senior political science major and English minor. Bosco's research integrated both her political science and English backgrounds.

"My research into Machiavelli and Shakespeare's Henry V provides a meta-awareness of the fragility of the power structures in the world today," Bosco says. "Dr. Pittman is an excellent mentor and had me on track. She is incredibly motivating and an expert in Shakespeare and Shakespeare on film. It was an honor to work with her."

Undergraduate researchers come from all fields and majors. Adrienne Magsipoc, senior biochemistry major and biology minor, investigated how to synthetically modify Nile Blue A, a common biological stain, to create liquid crystalline derivatives and probe the differences between unmodified Nile Blue A and liquid crystalline Nile Blue A. Desmond Murray, associate professor of chemistry, proved instrumental in Magsipoc's research.

"The Honors poster session provided an opportunity for me to discuss my research with like-minded scholars," says Magsipoc. "I enjoyed the direction of Dr. Desmond Murray, and appreciated his ability to inspire the students who work under him. I have Dr. Murray, Dr. Pittman and the Honors program to thank."

Shenika McDonald, senior political science and pre-law major, analyzed the work of Congressional men and women in her research titled, "Race Representatives: Why Black Members of Congress Matter." Marcella Myers, associate professor of political science, mentored McDonald.

"Both the descriptive characteristics and policy efforts of black members of Congress make them the best equipped to effectively represent black America," says McDonald. "This has been a very enlightening and fulfilling experience and I am thankful to the J.N. Andrews Honors Program and my advisor for allowing me to conduct such meaningful and relevant research."

Saharsh Dass, senior biology major and math and chemistry minor, reflected on his experience preparing for the symposium. Dass studied under Shandelle Henson, chair of the Department of Mathematics and James Hayward, research professor of biology emeritus.

"I loved preparing for it," says Dass. "The poster session helped me achieve a higher level of learning. Being able to discuss my work with an interdisciplinary audience really provided insight into what I researched. I found it to a really rewarding learning experience."

The Honors Thesis Symposium, where researchers will formally present their work, will occur on Friday, April 8, in Buller Hall from 1:30 to 5:30 p.m. For more information, email [honors@andrews.edu](mailto:honors@andrews.edu).

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