



ANNUAL REPORT

Presented by



OSCAR

Office of Student Creative
Activities and Research

20

23

STUDENTS AS *SCHOLARS* *RESEARCHERS* *ARTISTS*



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OSCAR student newsletter.

A NOTE FROM OSCAR DIRECTORS

Dear friends of OSCAR,

Academic year 2023-2024 was a fantastic year for us. We had a large group of students attend the first in-person NCUR in several years. We were able to launch our new website and presented the revisions on our summer seminar series. We trained a new group of OSCAR Peer Leaders who have been helping students with proposals, visiting classes, and tabling at orientation and admissions events.

32 students at NCUR

This is the first year that the National Conference on Undergraduate Research was held in-person post-COVID. OSCAR traveled with 32 students who presented their research and creative projects at the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire. Students' presentation ranged from discussing communication between breast cancer cells to mapping the location of terrorist activities to understanding how students read the news. Karen, Julia, and the Mason students had a fantastic time interacting with 3,600 students and faculty from across the globe.

Summer seminar series combined with social events

Every summer, OSCAR offers a seminar series and social events for students in the URSP and STIP programs, and any other undergraduate student doing summer research at Mason. Pre-COVID, the seminar series was in person, meeting several times over the summer. During COVID, the seminars were virtual. Virtual seminars had several advantages, including allowing students to work remotely and still attend seminars, and schedule flexibility for the students. However, the cohort aspect of summer programming was missing. In summer 2023 we combined both approaches, offering the seminar in-person on Wednesday evenings followed by a social event and on Thursday on zoom with no social event. This approach worked well. Students who wanted the social aspect attended in person and students who could not attend in-person, attended on zoom. We are continuing to revise the seminars and social events and look forward to offering new opportunities this coming summer.

Rewrote mission statement

The OSCAR team collaborated on a revision of the vision and mission statement to go along with the new website. As a team we were able to craft a student focused vision statement that gets to the core of OSCAR to remove all barriers so that every undergraduate student who wants to do research can. Research equity is something that OSCAR has been focused on for the last few years, but it was important to articulate the mission to remove research barriers.

New website

This year, after several months of writing, editing, and rewriting, OSCAR unveiled their new student-friendly website. The website is organized with user-friendly tabs, so that information about funding, Celebration, OSCAR, and how to get involved with OSCAR are all in their own sections. New to the website is a link to a dashboard with OSCAR student statistics, and student stories are sprinkled throughout the website.

Looking forward to next academic year,



DR. JESSE GUESSFORD

THE DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM INITIATIVES
UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION



DR. KAREN LEE

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF OSCAR
UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

VISION

OSCAR's vision is to remove the barriers so that every undergraduate student who wants to do a research or creative project can.

MISSION STATEMENT

OSCAR connects undergraduate students with structured opportunities to do research and creative projects by encouraging students to be researchers and artists, by offering funding programs, and by creating presentation opportunities, so that all students can participate in authentic research and creative experiences.

387
Students

Participated in OSCAR programs in 2023

**Students in All
Mason
Colleges**

Participated in OSCAR programs in 2023

1128
Students

Enrolled in 131 RS
Classes

72
Events

Over the course
of 2023

Students as Researchers and Artists:

- Research and Scholarship (RS) Intensive Classes
- OSCAR Peer Leaders
- Outreach to students, departments, and research centers
- Summer Seminar Series

Funding programs include:

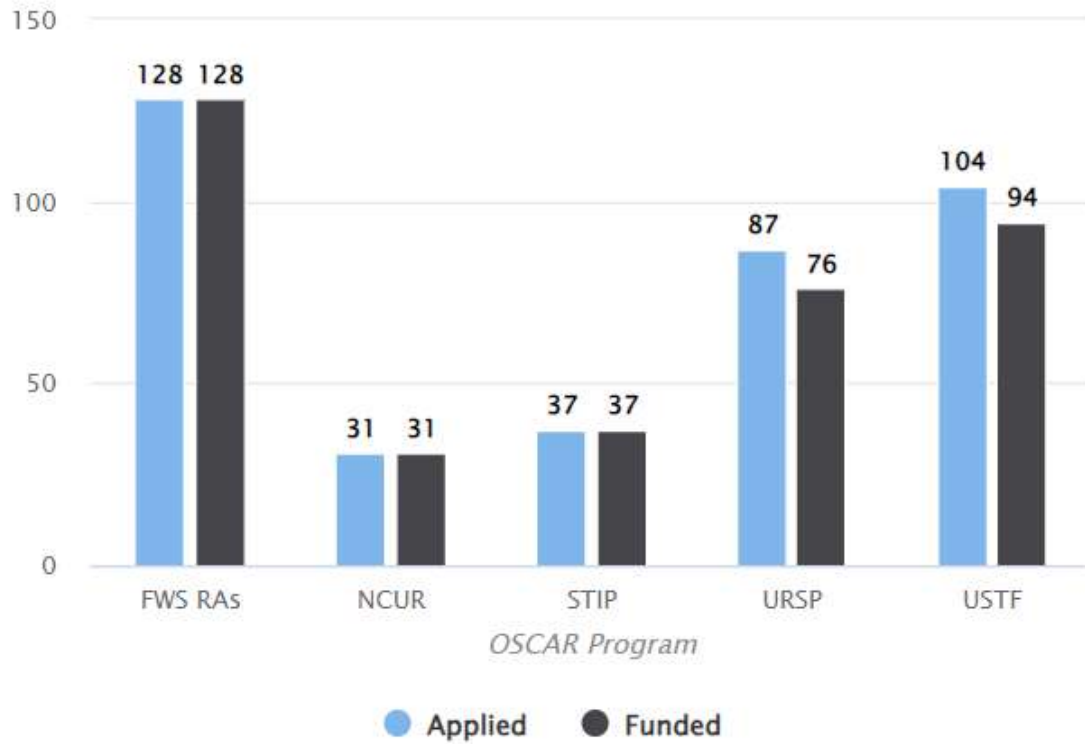
- Undergraduate Research Scholars Program (URSP)
- Summer Team Impact Project (STIP)
- Federal Work-Study Research Assistants (FWS RA)
- MINI Grants
- MICRO Grants

Opportunities to Share include:

- Celebration
- Undergraduate Research Travel Fund (USTF)
- National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR)
- RS Classes



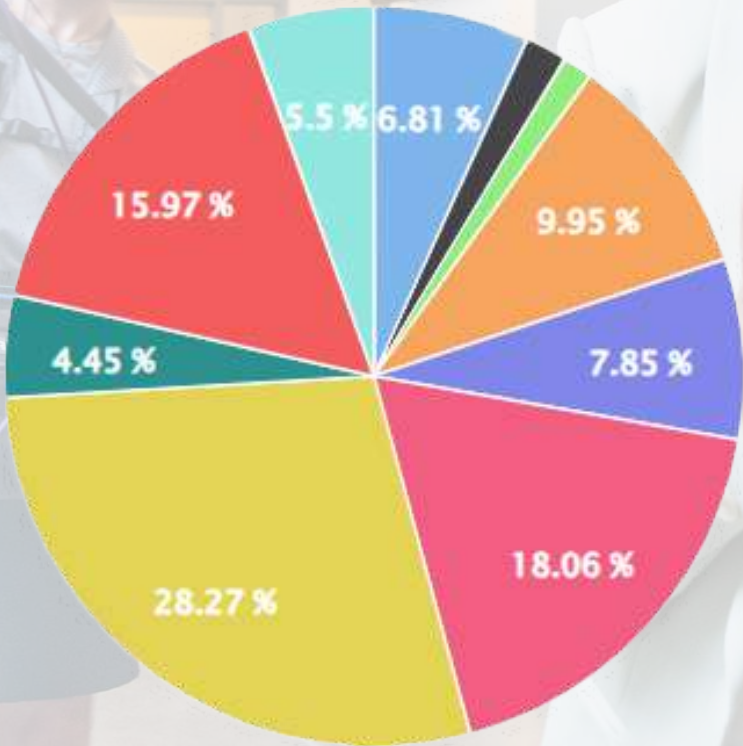
2023 Funded Projects



2023 Funding per Program



INVOLVEMENT BY COLLEGE



CEC
Schar
Provost
CHSS
CEHD CVPA **CPH**
Carter
CCB
COS

| Student College Short Name | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| ● | Schar |
| ● | Provost |
| ● | Carter |
| ● | CVPA |
| ● | CPH |
| ● | COS |
| ● | CHSS |
| ● | CEHD |
| ● | CEC |
| ● | CCB |

OSCAR OUTREACH



18

**OSCAR SPONSORED
WORKSHOPS AND
SEMINARS**

15

CLASS VISITS

39

**OTHER CAMPUS EVENTS
ADMISSIONS EVENTS
ORIENTATION
TABLING/PANELS**



OSCAR 2023 EXCELLENCE AWARDS



Cicely Motamedi
2023 Student Excellence
Award Recipient
NCUR 2023
URSP 2022
RA 2020

During the fall 2022, Cicely, wrote up a journal publication on her summer work, which has recently been submitted to Physical Review Applied. She is a skilled writer with a clear voice and an organized way of thinking. Not only did she work on writing this semester, but she mastered the more theoretical aspects of her research, modifying the Bloch equations for her particular experimental parameters and mapping that on to the complex analysis required for her data. Cicely also wrote her own data analysis code, encompassing both time-domain and frequency-domain data, for the research.

Dr. Martin has mentored 2 students this year starting with engaging in a research project to presentation at a regional conference. He is an excellent example of how faculty can integrate undergraduate students in their scholarly pursuits and all involved have a positive experience. Due to his interest in educating and mentoring students, there are now 2 more students who have a unique research experience that will positively impact their future endeavors.



Dr. Joel Martin
2023 Mentoring Excellence Award
Recipient

To see all winners:

<https://celebration.oscar.gmu.edu/category/winners/excellence-award/>

OSCAR 2023 EXCELLENCE AWARDS



Shaffer, a 5th-year Ph.D. candidate in the Cognitive Behavioral Neuroscience program, has been honored with this award for her exceptional dedication to mentoring and training undergraduate and younger graduate students.

Lindsay S. Shaffer
2023 Mentoring Excellence
Award Recipient
(Graduate Student)



Dr. Ahn was my mentor and professor as an undergraduate student. Taking his class as my capstone was one of the greatest adventures and experiences I've done. Doing the OSCAR research for PGF regarding soil organic matter and organic carbon taught me so many great lessons. I want to say thank you to Dr. Ahn for being so enthusiastic about environmental science and encouraging us to do hands-on experiments to write our academic research. He continues to be a great support for us to publish our research. Thank you, Dr. Ahn for everything you do for us! We appreciate you.

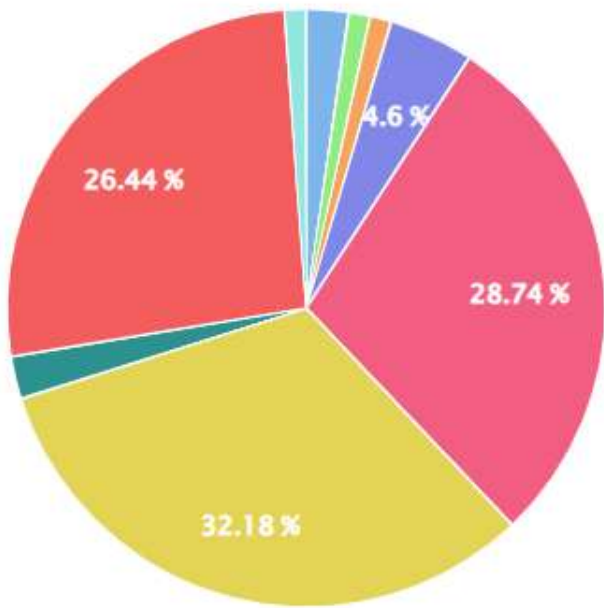
Student Quote



Dr. Changwoo Ahn
2023 Sustaining Faculty Mentoring
Excellence Award

OSCAR PROGRAM UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOLARS PROGRAM (URSP)

URSP Funding Amounts by College 2023



Student College Short Name

- Schar
- Provost
- Carter
- CVPA
- CPH
- COS
- CHSS
- CEHD
- CEC
- CCB

57
Mentors

87
Projects

\$214,274

**TOTAL 2023 URSP
FUNDING**

| Student College | Total Funding |
|---|---------------------|
| Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution | \$6,000.00 |
| College of Education and Human Development | \$7,500.00 |
| College of Engineering and Computing | \$69,064.00 |
| College of Humanities and Social Sciences | \$50,096.00 |
| College of Public Health | \$5,500.00 |
| College of Science | \$70,114.00 |
| College of Visual and Performing Arts | \$1,500.00 |
| Costello College of Business | \$1,500.00 |
| Schar School of Policy, Government, and International Affairs | \$3,000.00 |
| Sum | \$214,274.00 |

STUDENT PROJECT

What influence does reforestation have on landscape identity? A case study of the Kjarnaskógur Woods.

Steaere, a self-proclaimed environmental enthusiast and activist, traveled to Akureyri after discovering its proximity to one of Iceland's most successful reforestation projects, Kjarnaskogur. The body of work Steaere created explores the influence of reforestation on distance perception and landscape identity.



Nadya Steaere

Department: Arts

URSP 2022

NCUR 2023



“

Working with these materials has sparked several questions on the relevance of found objects and earth-based media in the contemporary art field as well as its place in coming to terms with globalization and inevitable environmental change”

OSCAR PROGRAM SUMMER TEAM IMPACT PROJECT (STIP)

15 MENTORS LEAD

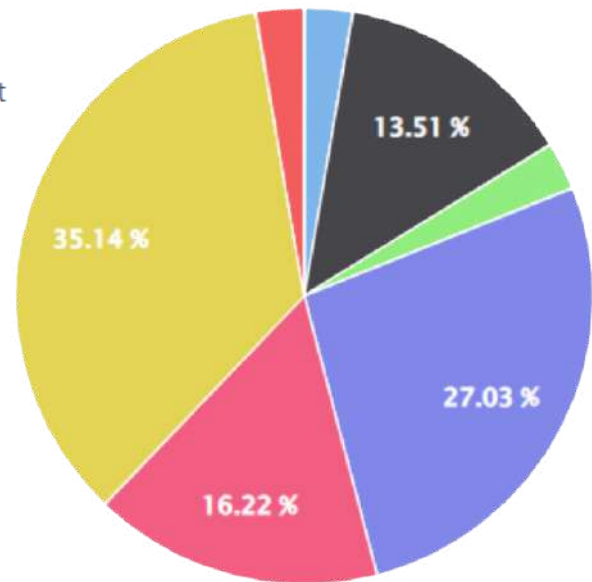
5 FUNDED STIP
PROJECTS WITH

37 STUDENTS

\$285,998
TOTAL 2023 STIP
FUNDING

Students by College

- Schar
- Provost
- Carter
- CVPA
- CPH
- COS
- CHSS
- CEHD
- CEC
- CCB



| Project Title | Total Funding |
|---|---------------------|
| Indigenous Environmental Mapping and Resilience Planning Project (Continuation from Summer 2022) | \$44,000.00 |
| Life at the Watering Hole - A One Health Approach to Disease Surveillance in Laikipia County, Kenya | \$72,999.00 |
| Mapping Inequality through Land Ownership and Land Use Change in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia | \$30,999.00 |
| Reclaiming Silenced Histories | \$69,000.00 |
| Reducing Inequalities in Domestic and Sexual Violence Services in Fairfax County | \$69,000.00 |
| Sum | \$285,998.00 |

Total Funding by Project

Life at the Watering Hole - A One Health Approach to Disease Surveillance in Laikipia County, Kenya

Department: College of Public Health

Mentor: Michael Von Fricken, 2023, STIP

This project aims to provide an international research experience focusing on vector-borne disease (VBD) ecology, surveillance, and epidemiology. Through collaborations with partners at the Mpala Research Centre, Smithsonian Institution, and Walter Reed Biosystematics Unit, we provided hands-on training for students to participate in ongoing funded efforts supported by the Department of Defense. STIP allowed us to include students in exciting field research, where they received hands-on lab and field training using cutting edge surveillance technologies.



Peyton Beaumont
Community Health | College of Public Health



Student Quote



Nisa Bertas
Biology | College of Science

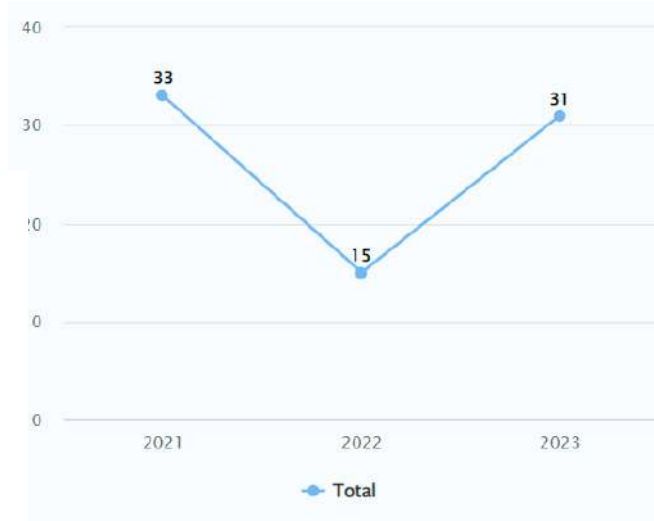
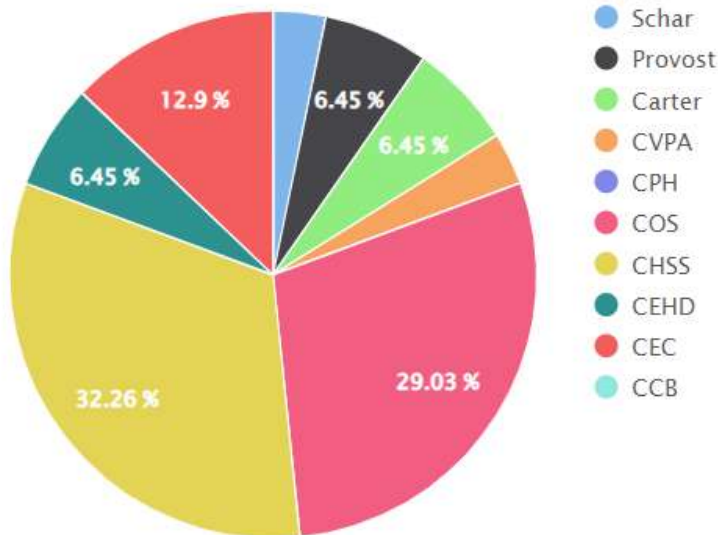
Our main goal is to see if we can detect any water borne pathogens. It's to create a protocol for future prevention here in Impala. These results will definitely impact the local community of Impala by helping them prevent any future outbreaks."

OSCAR PROGRAM NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH (NCUR)



2023 NCUR Total Projects by College

Student by College



Number of NCUR participants



NCUR 2023, EuClaire, Wisconsin, Apr 13 – 15, 2023

31

**STUDENTS
PARTICIPATED IN
NCUR 2023**

\$37,000

**TOTAL 2023 NCUR
FUNDED AMOUNT**



Elizabeth Fortson

URSP 2021
URSP 2022
STIP 2023
NCUR 2023
OSCAR Peer Leader 2021-2024



NCUR was a great opportunity to meet people from other schools doing interesting research and at the same time present my research. It was great to see something that I had worked so hard on get recognition and finally be presented in a scholarly setting. I really enjoyed my time and plan on doing more conferences in the future!”

OSCAR PROGRAM

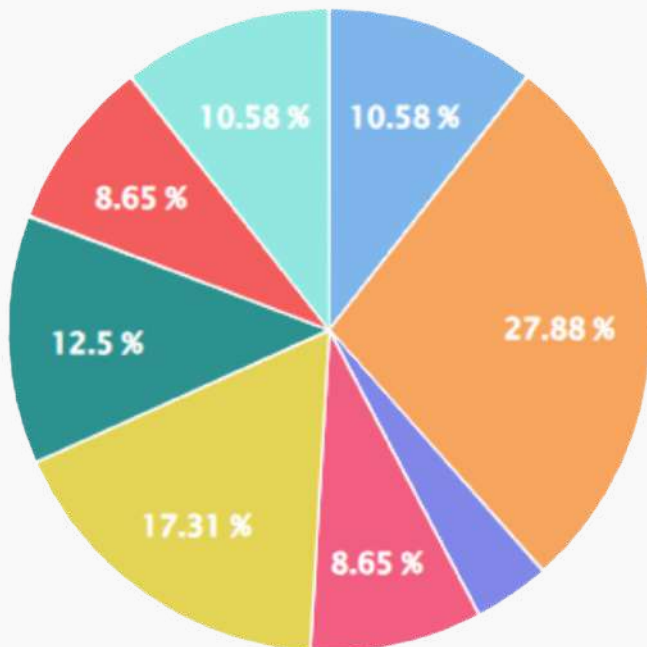
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT TRAVEL FUND (USTF)

104
STUDENTS
TRAVELLED WITH
THE SUPPORT OF
30 MENTORS

| Student College | Total Funding |
|---|--------------------|
| College of Education and Human Development | \$1,670.00 |
| College of Engineering and Computing | \$3,100.00 |
| College of Humanities and Social Sciences | \$8,860.00 |
| College of Public Health | \$1,362.00 |
| College of Science | \$4,850.00 |
| College of Visual and Performing Arts | \$14,700.00 |
| Costello College of Business | \$3,600.00 |
| Schar School of Policy, Government, and International Affairs | \$6,600.00 |
| Sum | \$44,742.00 |

\$44,142

TOTAL 2023 USTF FUNDING



Student by College

- Schar
- Provost
- Carter
- CVPA
- CPH
- COS
- CHSS
- CEHD
- CEC
- CCB



The Mason Jazz Vocal Ensemble, directed by Dr. Darden Purcell, is the award-winning vocal group of George Mason University.

JENerations Jazz Festival Orlando FL, 2023

Department:
Reva and Sid Dewberry Family
School of Music



The Mason Jazz Ensemble, directed by Jim Carroll, has performed at the Jazz Education Network/JENerations Jazz Festival.

The Mason Jazz Vocal Ensemble and the Mason Jazz Ensemble performed at the JENerations Jazz Festival as part of the Jazz Education Network annual conference in Orlando, Florida, January 2023. After a 30-minute presentation, the vocal group enjoyed a clinic by vocal educator, Michelle Malliot and bass vocalist in The Manhattan Transfer, Trist Curless! The jazz ensemble enjoyed a clinic by world-renowned American Jazz pianist, composer and arranger, Marcus Roberts!

OSCAR PROGRAM RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS

128
STUDENTS
WORKED WITH

\$287,999

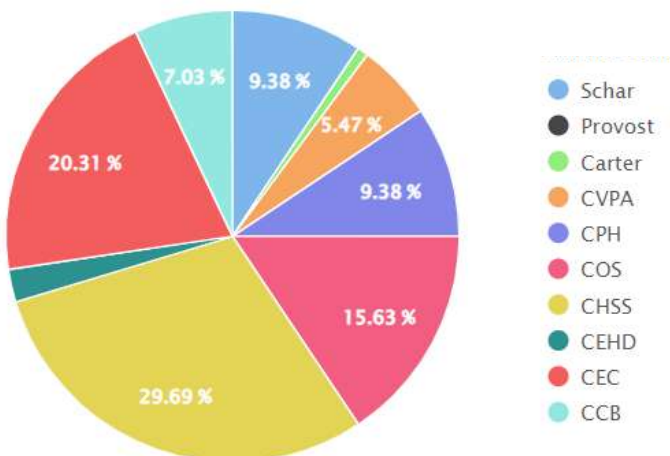
**TOTAL 2023 RESEARCH
ASSISTANTS FUNDING**

54

**MENTORS COMPLETING
RESEARCH PROJECTS**

Research Assistants
Total Projects by College

School by College



Research Assistants Funding Amounts by College

| Student College | Total Funding |
|---|---------------------|
| Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution | \$3,000.00 |
| College of Education and Human Development | \$9,000.00 |
| College of Engineering and Computing | \$66,494.00 |
| College of Humanities and Social Sciences | \$92,250.00 |
| College of Public Health | \$30,000.00 |
| College of Science | \$55,500.00 |
| College of Visual and Performing Arts | \$17,500.00 |
| Costello College of Business | \$22,000.00 |
| Schar School of Policy, Government, and International Affairs | \$30,505.00 |
| Sum | \$326,249.00 |

PLAY Lab: Dr. Thalia Goldstein

Department: Psychology

The Play, Learning, Arts, and Youth (PLAY) lab (formerly known as the Social Skills, Imagination, and Theatre Lab) is a research lab in the Applied Developmental Program in the Psychology Department at George Mason University and conducts research on children's play, imagination, engagement in the arts, and social development.

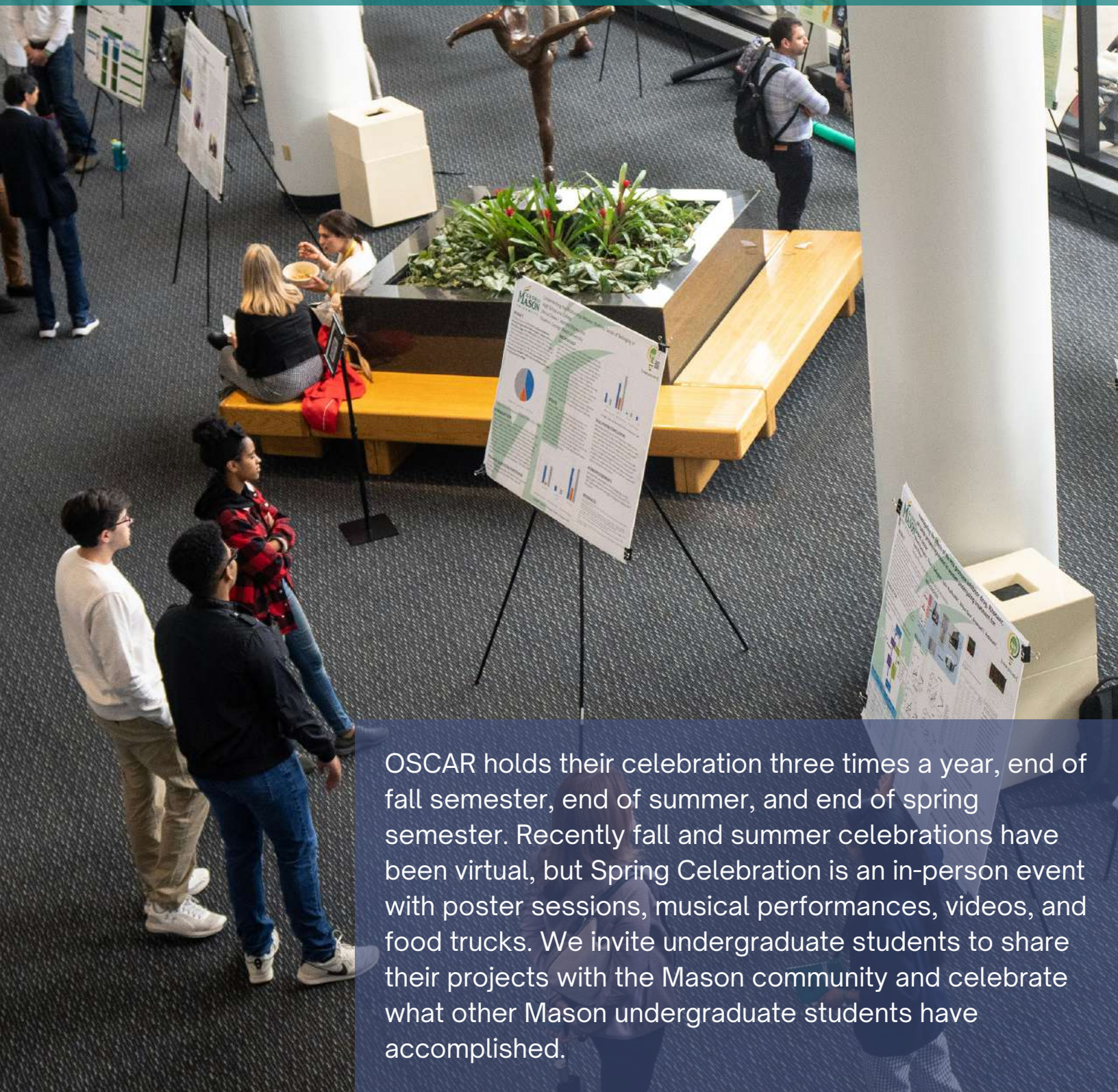


“

Working in SSIT lab has been a rewarding experience and a supportive environment”

Aija (Gloria) Han
Pictured: Third Left

OSCAR CELEBRATION OF STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP AND IMPACT



OSCAR holds their celebration three times a year, end of fall semester, end of summer, and end of spring semester. Recently fall and summer celebrations have been virtual, but Spring Celebration is an in-person event with poster sessions, musical performances, videos, and food trucks. We invite undergraduate students to share their projects with the Mason community and celebrate what other Mason undergraduate students have accomplished.





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