COUNCIL ON UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

# 2024-2025 Elections
# Biology Division: Division Representative Candidates

Position Purpose: The work of Divisions is done by Division Representatives who advance undergraduate research by providing networking opportunities, activities, and educational content. Their aim is to create and foster community and value within the organization. Representatives support the members of their division in activities and programs that align with the CUR strategic plan, mission, vision, and values.

Needed Qualifications:

- Capable mentor: Experienced guide and supporter of others looking to advance their personal growth and development in areas connected to but not limited to UR.
- Communication: Professional and effective communicators, experienced in difficult conversations and able to hear and disseminate community needs
- Collaborative Spirit: Team players making space for all voices to be heard, furthering the collective understanding of the group, and cultivating outcomes to best serve CUR and its membership

*There are 7 individuals running.*
*You may vote for up to 6 of the candidates presented to be elected as representatives for this division.*

Candidate information is presented on the following pages. Click on each candidate name below to be taken to their Information In the document.

# Ansul Lokdarshi, Valdosta State University

*Biology Division Nominee*

## NOMINEE STATEMENTS

### Please comment on your involvement in undergraduate research activities in the context of your institution and its mission.

At VSU, my role as a faculty member in the Department of Biology aligns with the university's mission to provide transformative education and foster hands-on learning. I mentor undergraduate students in research on the regulation of protein synthesis, helping them understand cellular processes and apply this knowledge in real-world investigations. My mentorship promotes critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving, key skills that support VSU's educational goals. I also encourage interdisciplinary collaboration, with students engaging in research teams across fields like computer science, chemistry, and plant biology. For example, I developed the Controlled Environment Box for Outreach and Training, a semiautomated plant growth device that brings fieldwork into the classroom.Since the start of my tenure in August 2021, our lab has published four peer-reviewed articles, including one with former undergraduate Teressa K. Akuoko as a co-author (Plant Signal Behavior, 2022). I especially, encourage students to present research work at conferences like VSU's annual symposium, the Southern Section of the American Society of Plant Biologists, the Georgia Undergraduate Research Conference, and the National Conference on Undergraduate Research, where many have earned travel and presentation awards. Beyond mentorship, I collaborate with colleagues to integrate research into the curriculum, developing research-intensive courses and offering independent projects through the Department of Biology's Directed Study course. VSU's mission to promote experiential learning is reflected in my classroom teaching, where I continue to support this goal by developing inquiry-based labs. As a Division Representative of Biology for the Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR), I plan to expand research opportunities and networks, ensuring undergraduate research remains a core part of VSU's mission to prepare students for leadership roles.

### In what ways have you helped promote diversity and inclusion in URSCI?

At VSU, a primarily undergraduate institution serving a large population of minority (55.7%) and first-generation (31%) students in southern Georgia, I am dedicated to promoting diversity and inclusion in Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, and Creative Inquiry (URSCI). Since joining in August 2021, I have recruited and trained 16 undergraduates from diverse cultural backgrounds, with approximately 70% being Hispanic and Black/African American females. Currently, my lab includes three graduate students (two females) and five undergraduates (three females), all actively engaged in various research activities. In the Biology Department, which consistently enrolls over 70% minority and first-generation students, I prioritize providing each student with a safe, supportive learning environment tailored to their individual needs and career aspirations. I empower these students by building their confidence, offering individualized mentorship, and encouraging their involvement in programs like the National Science Foundation-funded Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP), which supports underrepresented students in STEM at VSU. Through creating an inclusive lab culture and promoting visibility for minority students, I ensure that diversity and inclusion are fundamental aspects of URSCI at VSU. I work to make students feel valued, supported, and equipped to pursue their academic and professional goals, fostering a research community that reflects the diversity of our student body.

**How do you anticipate your skills will help successfully uphold the Division Representative charge?**

As a CUR Division Representative, I plan to leverage my experience and resources to advance undergraduate research by creating impactful networking opportunities, professional development activities, and educational resources. With funding from the National Science Foundation (~$0.5 million), I support undergraduate researchers by providing paid lab positions and covering costs for students to attend conferences. This funding not only allows students to fully engage in research but also provides critical exposure to professional networks and the broader research community.

To foster networking within CUR, I will encourage participation in events like the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) and regional conferences as discussed previously, which offers students the chance to present their work, connect with peers, and interact with faculty from other institutions. I also aim to organize similar networking opportunities within CUR, such as virtual research symposia, mentorship programs, and collaborative workshops, where members can share their expertise and explore potential partnerships.

Additionally, I plan to create resources that align with CUR's mission and vision, supporting faculty and students in developing their research and presentation skills. For example, I can organize webinars on effective mentoring practices and best practices for guiding underrepresented students in research. Through these efforts, I am dedicated to building a strong, inclusive community within CUR that empowers faculty and students alike to contribute to meaningful and impactful undergraduate research.

**If you have served a previous term as Division Representative (previously Division Councilor), are there any particular contributions during your previous term(s) that you would like to highlight?**

I have not served as a Division Representative previously and look forward to the chance of contributing.

# Eric Albrecht, Kennesaw State University

*Biology Division Nominee*

## NOMINEE STATEMENTS

### Please comment on your involvement in undergraduate research activities in the context of your institution and its mission.

Kennesaw State University (KSU) serves over 40,000 students and has been recently designated an R2 institution. One of its primary goals is to involve students in research. Over twenty students have participated in my laboratory as undergraduate researchers. My research mentoring activities have produced 2 published and 8 non-published abstracts. Seventy percent of the abstracts are regional or national presentations. Forty-three percent of the undergraduate students that have rotated through my laboratory are student authors of published manuscripts. I have obtained several internal and external grants that support undergraduate research activity. In collaboration with other researchers, my research group was awarded two Creative Activities and Research Experiences for Teams (CARET) grants (2014, 2021), which are internal undergraduate specific research grants funded through the KSU Office of Undergraduate Research. The acceptance rate for a CARET proposal is approximately 22%. The College of Science and Mathematics (at KSU) has a longstanding Mentor protégé program that provides monetary awards to cultivate undergraduate research. I have received a total of 7 Mentor Protégé grants totaling approximately $ 14,000 to support undergraduate research. Other mentored support includes external proposals written by undergraduate researchers Veronica Garbar and Giovanni Reyes, which resulted in extramural funding ($2,500 each) from the Microscopy Society of America. This is a nationally competitive award. Two awards were given in 2021 including Giovanni Reyes and another student from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). In 2023, I was awarded Kennesaw State University's Outstanding Undergraduate Research Mentor award.

### In what ways have you helped promote diversity and inclusion in URSCI?

My mentoring reflects the diverse undergraduate enrollment at Kennesaw State University. This is demonstrated by the fact that 57% of my undergraduate research participants are women. Encouraging minority students to engage in high impact practices such as directed research is a university level goal, which I have helped to achieve. I have worked with students with diverse racial (e.g., Hispanic, African American: totaling 29% of students mentored) and religious backgrounds (e.g., Muslim: totaling 10% of students mentored). When students enter my laboratory for research, they are typically enrolled in a research methods course and early in the semester we review the syllabus. To support diversity within the laboratory, I placed key statements in the course syllabus that reflect the attitude and atmosphere of the laboratory: 1) "To build an inclusive, supportive, and caring community of scientists". This is listed as the first of six course objectives. 2) Unity: "The Albrecht lab works to foster an environment that promotes scientific integrity, trustfulness, and inter-personal kindness. So, in all things, treat others how you would like to be treated." These statements are listed in the syllabus under the subtitle: Lab values.

Giovanni Reyes, Jasmine Carter and Abeeha Choudary represent specific examples, describing my diverse mentoring of students. Giovanni and Jasmine (minority students) recently graduated from KSU, and both are authors on published manuscripts. Jasmine was accepted into a Ph.D. program at University of Georgia and Giovanni is enrolled in the University of Incarnate Word School of Osteopathic Medicine. Abeeha Choudhary recently graduated as a Psychology major (non-CSM) and is a co-author on a published manuscript.

**How do you anticipate your skills will help successfully uphold the Division Representative charge?**

I have several resources that can advance the mission of CUR: 1) Access to students. I personally instruct and interact with over 100 students per semester. This platform will allow the delivery of educational material related to CUR so that students are aware of the organization. The key is to vocalize this early in a student's academic career so that they can connect with a faculty member engaging in research. I can help establish these connections. 2) KSU has a well-developed Office of Undergraduate Research. I will utilize this office and my position as a faculty member in the College of Science and Mathematics to encourage CUR membership, enrollment in CUR programs, and participation in the NCUR meeting. This will specifically involve the development of an internal CUR student award to travel to the NCUR annual meeting. This mini-grant will target KSU CUR members.

**If you have served a previous term as Division Representative (previously Division Councilor), are there any particular contributions during your previous term(s) that you would like to highlight?**

I have not served in this position previously.

# Lance Barton, University of North Carolina Charlotte

*Biology Division Nominee*

## NOMINEE STATEMENTS

### Please comment on your involvement in undergraduate research activities in the context of your institution and its mission.

For 20 years I was biology faculty at a PUI where I worked with over 80 students in my research lab. In my former department, we worked to define SLOs and assessment around UR as well as scaffolding research experiences and skill development throughout the curriculum. Currently, I serve as the Director of undergraduate research where I support UR across the entire University, building programs to support students and mentors to expand and enhance UR opportunities for all. As a budding R1 institution, UR is an important component in developing pathways to graduate school, diversifying ideas in research, and driving productivity for the research enterprise. My office is in the division of undergraduate education, so that means we retain a focus on education and the research process in our programs that maintains undergraduate education and mentorship at the heart of the UR experience.

During my career, I have taught 4 different CURE courses, mentored students on research projects, founded a campus-wide UR symposium, founded a center for UR, and am directing my second UR office. I have worked with multiple campuses to examine their biology curricula and intentionally integrate research into the curriculum and degree programs. I have regularly provided professional development resources for both mentors and students on my home campus, as a visitor for other campuses, and through professional societies. Through these experiences, I have worked with campuses of various sizes, foci, and missions to expand the quality and quantity of UR opportunities.

### In what ways have you helped promote diversity and inclusion in URSCI?

As a faculty member, I developed CURE courses, diversified the structures used to engage students in mentored research projects so that students were supported to engage in research in accessible ways, and routinely brought diverse scientific speakers to campus to share their research journey and career stories.

As a UR Director, I have developed bridge programs that engage underrepresented students with UR early, evaluated programs by recruitment demographics of applicants and mentored students, and promoted programs through focused efforts to increase awareness of UR and recruitment of applicants through organizations serving diverse groups of students. One goal has always been to bring alignment among all demographics for applicants, participants, and the larger student body.

To promote disciplinary diversity, I have standardized UR support structures and compensation across disciplines and worked to promote inclusion and reduce barriers for participation in programs and events. Examples include working towards a multi-media multi-disciplinary UR journal, partnering to provide faculty learning support across disciplines, and intentionally incorporating arts into symposium planning.

I believe that developing research skills during undergraduate education is essential to career preparedness and success. While a lofty goal, I continue to strive to work to realize this opportunity for all students.

**How do you anticipate your skills will help successfully uphold the Division Representative charge?**

Participating in undergraduate research changed the trajectory of my education and my career. From that first experience until today, I have advocated for more opportunities for learning through research for undergraduates. First as a mentor, then as an administrator, and eventually as a leader in CUR, I have collaborated and innovated in the UR space. I have unselfishly provided my ideas, resources, and support to others. I have built professional networks through disciplinary and multi-disciplinary professional societies. I have worked to expand the footprint of UR in all of these spaces while working to build welcoming communities of scholars that can both demystify research, while also emphasizing its value to education. I believe that I have a strong set of skills developed as an academic, a scholar, and an administrator that can help CUR realize its strategic plan and vision. I have benefited tremendously from my colleagues and our work within CUR. I wish to continue to contribute my time and talents to CUR's community as a collaborative space to fuel innovation and progress in achieving goals of increased access and support for undergraduate research.

**If you have served a previous term as Division Representative (previously Division Councilor), are there any particular contributions during your previous term(s) that you would like to highlight?**

While I may have entered administration in the last year, I am still a biologist at heart and view my work through the lens of a biologist. I continue to work with colleagues in Biology and volunteer my time with a colleagues' lab team composed of mostly undergraduates in applied physiology.

I am a previous Chair of the CUR Biology Division from 2020-2023, where I am proud of the work our division did even in difficult times. For example, during the pandemic, we pivoted to use funds normally designated for conference travel to support projects that could involve undergraduates even with remote learning. We continued to expand mentoring support for faculty looking for ways to enhance their teaching and UR experiences through CUREs (MIRIC). As a representative on a CUR-wide initiative, I helped lead the development of the student resource center to help students on campuses where the infrastructure for UR is lacking.

I have represented CUR through presenting professional development workshops at professional meetings and on various campuses around topics of mentoring, CUREs, UR assessment, and best practices for building skills in students. I have benefited significantly from my involvement with CUR and I continue to work as a representative to pay that forward for other members of this community.

# Malcom Schug, University of North Carolina Greensboro

*Biology Division Nominee*

## NOMINEE STATEMENTS

### Please comment on your involvement in undergraduate research activities in the context of your institution and its mission.

I am a Professor of Biology at University of North Carolina Greensboro (UNCG). UNCG has the most diverse student population in the UNCG system, minority serving and on the verge of being a hispanic serving institution. Biology is one of the two largest departments on campus. As a junior and mid-career faculty, I mentored large and diverse group of students in undergraduate research in my federally funded program focused on evolutionary genetics. This was the highlight of my job, and what drove me to enjoy my career. I then became involved in a campus-wide network focused on Rersearch and Instruction in STEM education (RISE Network), which I directed for many years. The focus was on bringing faculty across disciplines to create programs and find funding to integrate best practices in STEM education into the university mission. An enormous part of that involved getting students involved in undergraduate research.

### In what ways have you helped promote diversity and inclusion in URSCI?

All of my leadership responsibilities place equity and inclusion as a priority. Because UNCG is an MSI, 40% from minoritized populations, 70% women, 61% have high financial need, 50% are first-generation students, successful teaching at UNCG requires a focus on equity and inclusion for a highly diverse student population. My work as the Director of the UNCG RISE Network focused specifically on equity and inclusive education, infusing best practices including faculty and peer mentorship in research experiences, courses that infuse research into the curriculum, and training of faculty and graduate students in inclusive practices in higher education. I have been involved in three NSF S-STEM grant projects as PI, co-PI, Investigator, and research mentorship focused on students with financial need, most of who are also from minoritized communities. I was a co-PI on a NSF INCLUDES grant focused on helping students in the diverse population in Guilford County learn about STEM careers and programs. I am a co-PI on a NSF ADVANCE project that focuses on diversifying faculty and supporting women and those from minoritized communities to succeed. I also have regular training for all university faculty to raise awareness of challenges students and faculty from minoritized communities face and for professional development addressing issues like implicit bias. More recently I was trained by the CIMER Institute as a facilitator to offer program development for faculty research mentors, and undergraduate and graduate students in research. The focus of CIMER Training is on equity, inclusion, and culturally aware mentoring. Finally, the NSF LSAMP project I lead as the Program Director at the lead institution, is focused on broadening participation in the STEM disciplines. Most of the five institutions involved focus on faculty training and faculty lead peer mentoring in research as the primary mechanism for inclusive excellence.

### How do you anticipate your skills will help successfully uphold the Division Representative charge?

I think that my experience leading programs that focus on infusing best practices in equity and inclusion in higher education will be valuable to individuals and institutions who are interested or working on similar projects. I have nearly a decade in leadership roles focused on these issues and have crossed many hurdles and moved through many roadblocks. I have an understanding of how to support members who are working on projects. I am highly familiar with the literature in the field, can help raise awareness of funding opportunities, approaches to proposals, brainstorm and plan pathways forward for projects that are underway. I also like to learn and highly value being part of a community interested in similar vision and values. All of my work is

collaborative, crossing disciplines and I find that community building is the primary pathway to success. So I am excited about an opportunity to become a Division Representative where I can share my experiences and knowledge to those who are interested in the CUR mission, vision, and values.

**If you have served a previous term as Division Representative (previously Division Councilor), are there any particular contributions during your previous term(s) that you would like to highlight?**

N/A

# Michael Wolyniak, Hampden-Sydney College

*Biology Division Nominee*

## NOMINEE STATEMENTS

### Please comment on your involvement in undergraduate research activities in the context of your institution and its mission.

I am the Director of Undergraduate Research at Hampden-Sydney College. In this capacity, I plan symposia to showcase the work of students across the entire College as well as new initiatives to get the community more involved in and excited about the student research process. I also coordinate student travel to professional conferences and the College's summer research program. This work has exposed me to the culture of undergraduate research across multiple disciplines both within and outside of STEM and given me a unique perspective on how to design undergraduate research programming in a way that the entire College community may benefit.

### In what ways have you helped promote diversity and inclusion in URSCI?

Undergraduate research is only inclusive to all if is seen as accessible to all. In my work at Hampden-Sydney, I have designed programming to not only showcase the work our students are doing with their professors on original research but also to invite everyone with an interest in research to be able to make connections with professors and develop potential projects that can be done in the classroom or independently. I have also been a leader in the Course-Based Undergraduate Research Experience (CURE) movement both at Hampden-Sydney and nationally. The integration of CUREs in the curriculum is one of the most effective ways to bring equity and inclusion to undergraduate research as it democratizes the practice and makes its benefits available to all students, not just the few that culturally know how to navigate the process of starting a working relationship with a professor.

### How do you anticipate your skills will help successfully uphold the Division Representative charge?

I am a collaborative and creative individual. When I am presented with a problem, I am at my best when I am working with my colleagues to devise prospective solutions and coming up with forward paths that consider everyone's point of view. I also tend not to be comfortable with the notion of "that's the way it's always been done" and am always looking for ways to improve and refine existing initiatives as well as create new initiatives that allow for constant assessment and improvement of undergraduate research initiatives on campus or with CUR.

### If you have served a previous term as Division Representative (previously Division Councilor), are there any particular contributions during your previous term(s) that you would like to highlight?

I am the current Chair of the CUR Biology Division and have been a Division Representative since 2015. I founded the MIRIC initiative in the Division that is focused on mentoring CURE development amongst present and future life science instructors. I have also spearheaded new efforts to develop diversity and inclusion work in the Division through developing a National Science Foundation proposal from CUR (via Doane University) to the BIO-LEAPS program. I seek re-election to continue in these vital projects as well as to continue to contribute to developing novel ways to improve the culture of undergraduate research in the life science community.

# Saee Jadhav, University of California, San Diego

*Biology Division Nominee*

## NOMINEE STATEMENTS

### Please comment on your involvement in undergraduate research activities in the context of your institution and its mission.

My involvement in undergraduate research at UCSD has been deeply aligned with the institution's mission of advancing scientific knowledge and fostering an inclusive, research-oriented community. As a volunteer at Yaksh Lab, I actively contribute to ongoing research in pain mechanisms and analgesia, focusing on immunohistochemistry (IHC), tissue collection, and data analysis. Through these roles, I have gained a comprehensive understanding of laboratory procedures and played a part in expanding the scientific knowledge that forms the foundation of clinical advancements.

In addition to my lab work, I am passionate about mentoring my peers and fostering an environment where undergraduates, regardless of their backgrounds, feel encouraged to participate in research. By sharing my knowledge of lab techniques and guiding newer members through challenging protocols, I contribute to the learning environment that UCSD strives to provide.

UCSD emphasizes impactful, translational research, and my work directly contributes to this goal by helping develop insights into effective pain management strategies that could ultimately influence patient care. Furthermore, my participation in interdisciplinary collaborations within the lab helps bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical research applications, embodying UCSD's commitment to cultivating well-rounded, research-skilled graduates.

### In what ways have you helped promote diversity and inclusion in URSCI?

As an international student, I have faced unique challenges in navigating research opportunities, which has made me passionate about promoting diversity and inclusion within Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, and Creative Inquiry (URSCI). I am committed to creating a supportive environment for other students who may face similar barriers. By sharing my experiences and helping fellow students, especially those from underrepresented backgrounds, I strive to ensure everyone has equitable access to research opportunities.

My involvement with Saltman Quarterly as a Review Board member also contributes to diversity and inclusion in URSCI. This role allows me to support the dissemination of undergraduate research in an inclusive manner, highlighting diverse perspectives and promoting the contributions of students from various disciplines and backgrounds. I believe that promoting diverse voices in published research is crucial for cultivating a richer and more comprehensive academic community.

Moreover, in my current research setting at Yaksh Lab, I have actively worked to make the environment inclusive by providing guidance and assistance to peers from diverse academic and cultural backgrounds. I ensure that all members, regardless of experience level, feel comfortable seeking help and are encouraged to participate in discussions and laboratory tasks. My efforts align with UCSD's mission of fostering an inclusive and collaborative research community, where students from all walks of life feel empowered to contribute meaningfully.

## How do you anticipate your skills will help successfully uphold the Division Representative charge?

My background in undergraduate research, combined with my collaborative approach, makes me well-prepared to serve as a Division Representative at CUR. As a volunteer at Yaksh Lab, I have developed strong mentoring skills by guiding junior lab members through complex research protocols, such as immunohistochemistry and tissue collection. I believe that mentorship is at the heart of advancing undergraduate research, and I am committed to supporting my peers in achieving their academic and research goals.

I anticipate using my networking skills to foster meaningful connections within CUR and to create opportunities for students to engage with mentors and experts in their field. My prospective involvement in Saltman Quarterly as a Review Board member has given me experience in recognizing and promoting quality research, which I can leverage to support educational content development that is aligned with CUR's mission.

Moreover, as an international student, I bring a unique perspective that enhances my ability to foster an inclusive and supportive community within CUR. I am committed to creating opportunities for students from all backgrounds to be involved in research, which directly supports the organization's value of inclusivity.

My experiences have equipped me to advance the mission of CUR by connecting students with resources, creating educational content that promotes scientific inquiry, and ensuring that all voices are heard within the division. By collaborating effectively with others, I am confident in my ability to help uphold the responsibilities of a Division Representative.

## If you have served a previous term as Division Representative (previously Division Councilor), are there any particular contributions during your previous term(s) that you would like to highlight?

While I have not previously served as a Division Representative, I am eager to bring my experiences and skills to this role for the first time. My background in undergraduate research at UCSD, along with my involvement in Yaksh Lab, has given me the skills necessary to contribute meaningfully to advancing the mission of CUR. I have extensive experience in mentoring peers, fostering inclusive environments, and helping promote high-quality undergraduate research through my work as a lab volunteer and my prospective role with Saltman Quarterly.

I am committed to ensuring that my contributions as a Division Representative are impactful. My goal is to promote networking, educational activities, and community-building opportunities that will support the professional growth and development of undergraduates in the research community. I look forward to applying my background and passion for research to help support CUR's strategic plan, mission, and vision in my role as a Division Representative.

# Tara Phelps-Durr, Fort Hayes State University

*Biology Division Nominee*

## NOMINEE STATEMENTS

### Please comment on your involvement in undergraduate research activities in the context of your institution and its mission.

Fort Hays State University (FHSU) is a regional comprehensive institution with Master's Programs located in western Kansas. As the Biology Department Chair at FHSU, I provide resources and encourage biology faculty to engage undergraduate students in research. I led efforts in the Biology Department at FHSU to modify the tenure, promotion, and annual evaluation guidelines so that faculty are rewarded for mentoring undergraduate researchers and implementing course-based undergraduate research experience (CUREs). I am also the PI, and several FHSU biology are co-PIs, of a National Science Foundation funded project that aims to scaffold CUREs throughout the biology curriculum at FHSU.

I serve on FHSU's Undergraduate Research Experience Committee. As part of this committee, I review proposals to support undergraduate research, and evaluate nominees for faculty mentor awards. This committee also plans the spring undergraduate research day at FHSU.

I maintain an active undergraduate research program with 5-10 active researchers each semester. I have secured undergraduate mini-grants from the Kansas IDEA Network for Biomedical Research Excellence (KINBRE) and Undergraduate Research Experience grants from FHSU. Two of my students applied for and were awarded KINBRE Star Trainee funds that paid them and allowed them to purchase supplies for their semester-long research project. My students have presented at the KINBRE Annual Symposium for the past three years. They also presented at the 2024 Undergraduate Research Day at the Capitol in Topeka, KS, and at the 2024 NCUR meeting in Long Beach, CA. My undergraduate research students have been accepted into medical schools, dental schools, graduate programs, and are working for the Kansas Bureau of Investigation.

### In what ways have you helped promote diversity and inclusion in URSCI?

As a Department Chair and member of an Undergraduate Research Experience Committee I continuously evaluate and adjust undergraduate research advertisements and rubrics for research awards to ensure that under-resourced students and faculty feel welcome to apply and are not disadvantaged. I ensure that my department has travel funds so that under-resourced students and faculty can attend professional conferences and professional development opportunities.

The Biology Department at FHSU is working to intentionally embed CUREs throughout our curriculum. As part of the process, we discuss how embedding research experiences into the classroom provides access to undergraduate research by making it part of the courses students are already enrolled in. At FHSU, we have a lot of Pell-eligible students juggling to complete courses and work. Such students do not have time to participate in extra-curricular research experiences.

### How do you anticipate your skills will help successfully uphold the Division Representative charge?

I am currently a Biology Division Representative. In 2022, I convinced leaders at FHSU to support Institutional Membership to CUR. Since then, I have given several informational talks to my colleagues and students at FHSU describing the benefits of CUR and encouraging them to join CUR.

As the PI of an NSF grant focused on incorporating CUREs throughout a curriculum, I hired another CUR member to serve as a CURE consultant. I did this primarily to encourage my colleagues to build their professional network by engaging with CUR. My colleagues also have opportunities to travel to CUR conferences such as NCUR and ConnectUR to further interact with CUR members.

**If you have served a previous term as Division Representative (previously Division Councilor), are there any particular contributions during your previous term(s) that you would like to highlight?**

As a current Biology Division Representative, I have served as a reviewer for the Small Research Grants for several years. I have contributed to Mentoring the Integration of Research into the Classroom (MIRIC) and attended all sessions of each Annual Business Meeting. Finally, as previously stated, I've worked at my institution to promote CUR to faculty, staff, and students at FHSU.