



COUNCIL ON UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

2024-2025 Elections

Mathematical, Computing & Statistical Sciences 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 all candidates presented to be elected as representatives for this division.

This division will also be accepting write-In candidates for this election cycle.

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

- [Anthony Kapolka](#)
- [Hwayeon Ryu](#)
- [Preethi Santhanam](#)
- [Ridwan Noel](#)
- [Sooie-Hoe Loke](#)
- [Timothy Smith](#)
- [Violeta Vasilevska](#)

Anthony Kapolka, Wilkes University

Mathematical, Computing & Statistical Sciences Division Nominee

NOMINEE STATEMENTS

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

As a serving Councilor, I contributed to the development of the current CUR strategic plan and understand its value, particularly as it addresses many of the concerns of my home institution. In particular, the strategic emphasis on DEI aligns with our own assessment findings, which substantiate its positive impact on student academic performance and undergraduate research participation.

Although I am a Computer Scientist, my data science research is interdisciplinary—crossing into the Humanities—and accessible to undergraduates. In my previous role as First Year Foundations Director at Wilkes University (a position I held until Spring 2024), I was responsible for creating mentoring opportunities, learning communities, and both research-based and service-learning experiences for first-year students across all disciplines. We worked to normalize undergraduate research through initiatives such as culminating FYF course projects, which were presented at our Academic Symposium.

Currently, I serve as the co-chair for the 79th Annual Eastern Colleges Science Conference—a regional undergraduate research conference—which will be hosted by Wilkes University in 2025. This new role reflects my continued dedication to promoting undergraduate research opportunities and fostering interdisciplinary collaboration.

I remain excited to contribute new ideas to my CUR Division while learning from my fellow Councilors, as we collectively advance the mission of supporting undergraduate research across institutions.

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

I have actively promoted diversity and inclusion in undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative inquiry (URSCI) through multiple initiatives. In 2021, I led the Wilkes Faculty Retreat on First Year Foundations courses with a focus on DEI, emphasizing inclusive pedagogical practices. I also presented a case study of our DEI Assessment at the 41st Annual Conference on the First Year Experience to share insights on improving student engagement and success. For the past two years I have introduced a COIL experience for our first year CS majors, each working in a group led by a senior from Dr. BMN College of Home Science in Mumbai, India.

For the past year I have also taken on the role of Wilkes Campus Coordinator for the proposed Northeastern Pennsylvania Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (NEPA LSAMP) grant program at Wilkes University. This new alliance of eight higher education institutions—six four-year universities and two community colleges—across Northeastern Pennsylvania is led by the University of Scranton. The program has been recommended for funding and, when funded, will impact over 6,000 underrepresented minority students by enhancing pathways to STEM fields. A strong undergraduate research component is a core element of the program, providing students with opportunities to engage in meaningful research experiences and build critical academic and professional skills.

Through these efforts, I remain committed to fostering equity, access, and inclusion in undergraduate research, particularly for underrepresented students in STEM and beyond. I continue to support initiatives that integrate DEI into institutional culture while creating opportunities for all students to thrive in research and inquiry.

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

I bring a combination of leadership, interdisciplinary collaboration, and a strong commitment to advancing undergraduate research to this role. My experience as co-chair for the 79th Annual Eastern Colleges Science Conference, which Wilkes University will host in 2025, demonstrates my ability to organize networking opportunities and foster community through large-scale undergraduate research events.

As the former First Year Foundations Director at Wilkes University, I worked to integrate research-based learning into first-year courses across disciplines, culminating in student presentations at academic symposia. This experience has equipped me to support division members with educational content that promotes research engagement at all levels.

Additionally, my role as campus coordinator for the pending NEPA LSAMP grant reflects my commitment to equity and inclusion in research opportunities, aligning with CUR's values and strategic plan. My work spans interdisciplinary fields, including data science and the Humanities, making me well-positioned to encourage collaboration and create value for a diverse community of scholars.

I am excited to bring my experience and skills to support CUR members in building impactful activities and programs that advance undergraduate research and align with the organization's mission.

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?

During my previous term as Division Representative, I contributed to advancing CUR's mission through leadership, research, and service. I served on the CUR IDR Task Force, which repeated a 2013 faculty survey, collecting and analyzing national data on interdisciplinary undergraduate research. This effort culminated in conference presentations, including:

- "What Constitutes Interdisciplinary Undergraduate Research – From Data to Practice" (ConnectUR 2023 Online), and
- "Report of the CUR Task Force on Facilitating Methodological Diversity and Interdisciplinary Research in Undergraduate Education" (ConnectUR 2023, Duquesne University).

These presentations translated our findings into actionable practices for supporting interdisciplinary research at undergraduate institutions. The task force's final report provided valuable insights to CUR leadership and members.

I also served on the Mathematical, Computing, & Statistical Sciences Division's Inclusivity Award Committee, supporting initiatives that align with CUR's strategic focus on equity and inclusion. Additionally, as the division's representative to the National Advocacy and Strategic Partnerships Committee, I helped promote undergraduate research at a broader level by fostering collaborations and strategic outreach.

Beyond committee work, I contributed as an external reviewer for computer science programs at two CUR member institutions, assisting in program assessment and aligning undergraduate research practices with institutional goals. These experiences reflect my ongoing commitment to fostering undergraduate research, interdisciplinary collaboration, and inclusivity—core values that advance CUR's mission and strategic priorities.

Hwayeon Ryu, Elon University

Mathematical, Computing, & Statistical Sciences Division Nominee

NOMINEE STATEMENTS

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

My goal in mentoring is to train the next generation of STEM researchers and professionals by helping students to conduct highly interdisciplinary research in an inclusive, collaborative setting and to participate in the outreach activity in a team setting. As a highly active scholar, I equally value involving my students in research and my success in mentoring has resulted in much broad impacts beyond the classroom and Elon community.

Elon University is one of the nationally recognized liberal arts institutions, known for excellence teaching for undergraduates, experiential learning, and undergraduate research. Over the past five years (including the leave of absence for a year) since I joined Elon in 2019, I have mentored 18 Elon undergraduate students from various STEM majors (including applied mathematics, biochemistry, biostatistics, engineering, computer science) and diverse ethnicity groups (9 women and 5 from underrepresented groups). In addition, I have mentored three students at Wake Forest Univ. in a collaboration project with Elon students, supported by the Center for Undergraduate Research in Mathematics grant for 2021-2022. More recently, I have established my research group at Elon, supported by the 3-year NSF grant (2022-2025) on mathematical modeling of immune response to SARS-CoV-2 (role: Sole PI). Our group has given more than ten oral or poster presentations at both regional and national conferences including the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) and a national Math Biology conference at Virginia Commonwealth Univ. In addition, I have served as a faculty adviser for Elon Student Organizing Committee to host a regional, one-day, student-led STEM conference for undergraduates, called Integrating Research in Science (IRIS) at Elon in Spring 2023 (and again in Spring 2025). My accomplishments and extraordinary success in directing a group of students from diverse majors in collaborating an interdisciplinary project in mathematical biology has been widely recognized across the university.

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

Upon arrival at Elon in 2019, I first joined the Task Force on the diversity and inclusion. The main goal is to identify innovative practices or pedagogies for increasing the diversity of our majors and minors, to address barriers or obstacles to taking another or upper-level math/stat class for less-represented groups, and to implement a long-term plan for providing access to necessary technology or resources for all students who need special (specifically financial) assistance. Also, when mentoring the Elon student organizing committee for the regional conference (IRIS as mentioned above in #3), I have ensured to form the committee consisting of students from diverse backgrounds/majors/years to obtain successful collaboration experience and to foster the inclusive perspectives within the committee. Finally, when supervising a group of students in a highly interdisciplinary project, I actively foster the peer-mentoring system. It aims to cultivate supportive relationships among group members, sharing knowledge and experience and providing an opportunity to learn from different perspectives. My commitments to and a small accomplishment on promoting DEI are also demonstrated by the number of students from an underrepresented group I have mentored so far.

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

I am committed to supporting the CUR mission and vision by providing my knowledge, skills and experience so that we can advance undergraduate research together. First of all, due to the interdisciplinary nature of my research area, I have an abundant experience in mentoring students from diverse background to conduct a highly interdisciplinary research project. That said, I would love to share my experience in peer-mentoring among students with those who wish to learn how to do it successfully in the long term. Also, I would be happy to share my own knowledge of grant writing (as I currently serve as a Faculty Peer Consultant for External Grants at Elon as well as a sole PI of NSF research grant) with the CUR community, especially those who wish to obtain tips and insights regarding how to seek "a disciplinary research grant" from NSF or NIH as a PUI faculty. Finally, I anticipate my perspectives around DEI (as someone who has international background) can support the CUR to create and foster an inclusive UR community. I strongly believe all of my commitments and philosophy will enhance the CUR program/activities, which can result in a broad impact on the scientific society beyond 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?

N/A

Preethi Santhanam, Embry Riddle Aeronautical University

Mathematical, Computing, & Statistical Sciences Division Nominee

NOMINEE STATEMENTS

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

As an Assistant Professor at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, my involvement in undergraduate research is integral to my teaching and aligns with our mission to promote innovative thinking and hands-on learning. I aim to actively engage undergraduate students in research projects that explore critical issues in software security and privacy, enabling them to apply theoretical concepts to real-world challenges.

In my courses on Software Security and Cyber Intelligence and system Security, I emphasize the importance of understanding software vulnerabilities and their implications for user privacy. I guide students in projects that analyze the security of Android and web applications, focusing on identifying risks that could compromise sensitive information. This hands-on research experience not only enhances their understanding of cybersecurity principles but also instills a sense of responsibility to develop secure and ethical technology solutions.

Mentorship is a key component of my approach to undergraduate research. I work closely with students to help them design and execute their projects, fostering a collaborative environment that encourages creativity and critical thinking. This aligns with Embry-Riddle's mission to produce leaders who are not only technically proficient but also socially aware and engaged.

Additionally, I facilitate opportunities for students to present their research at conferences and symposia, enriching their academic experience and providing a platform to share their findings with the broader community. This exposure not only boosts their confidence but also emphasizes the importance of knowledge dissemination.

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

Promoting diversity and inclusion in Undergraduate Research Scholarship and Creative Investigations (URSCI) is very important to me as a new Assistant Professor at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. I believe that having a variety of perspectives in research leads to more creative and effective solutions.

To encourage students from different backgrounds to join research projects, I actively reach out to them through campus events and student organizations. I highlight the importance of diverse perspectives in fields like software security and cybersecurity. In my courses on Software Security and Cyber Intelligence, I include materials that represent various cultures and experiences. This not only makes class discussions richer but also helps students see the wider impact of their work.

I also focus on mentoring undergraduate students, especially those from underrepresented groups. With my experience mentoring students during my doctoral studies, I provide personalized support and create a welcoming environment where all students feel confident to share their ideas.

Additionally, I promote teamwork by encouraging students from different disciplines to work together on research projects. This helps everyone learn from each other and fosters a sense of inclusion.

I participate in university initiatives that aim to improve diversity in research, such as organizing workshops that focus on fair practices. I also advocate for showcasing diverse student research at conferences, which highlights the value of all contributions in our academic community.

Through these efforts, I am dedicated to creating a supportive and equitable research environment in URSCI at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

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

I believe my skills and experiences will greatly contribute to advancing undergraduate research as a CUR Division Representative. As an Assistant Professor at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, I have a strong commitment to fostering community and supporting undergraduate research initiatives.

Networking Opportunities

I plan to leverage my professional network to create meaningful networking opportunities for undergraduate researchers. By organizing workshops, webinars, and networking events, I can facilitate connections between students, faculty, and industry professionals, helping them gain valuable insights into various research fields and potential career paths.

Activities and Educational Content

With expertise in software security and cybersecurity, I can contribute to developing relevant educational content for undergraduate researchers. Drawing on my teaching experience, I aim to create engaging hands-on activities and collaborative projects that enhance students' skills and knowledge. This not only supports their academic growth but also prepares them for future challenges in their fields.

Creating Community and Value

I prioritize inclusion and collaboration in my work. By promoting diverse voices and perspectives in research, I can help cultivate a sense of belonging within the CUR community. I am dedicated to organizing events that celebrate diversity and provide platforms for all members to share their experiences and achievements.

Supporting CUR's Strategic Plan

By aligning my initiatives with CUR's strategic plan, mission, vision, and values, I will ensure that our activities promote the core principles of undergraduate research. My goal is to create a supportive environment where students can thrive, innovate, and engage in meaningful research experiences.

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 passion for undergraduate research and my commitment to fostering a supportive community to this role. Although I am new to this position, I can bring several relevant experiences and ideas that I believe will contribute positively to the CUR community.

Ridwan Noel, Texas Lutheran University

Mathematical, Computing, & Statistical Sciences Division Nominee

NOMINEE STATEMENTS

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

As the institutional representative of the Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR) at Texas Lutheran University (TLU), I actively advocate for and promote undergraduate research aligned with TLU's mission of empowering a diverse student body through academic excellence and career development. My efforts reflect TLU's commitment to promoting a more just world by providing students with opportunities to engage in meaningful research that integrates liberal arts and professional programs.

I have guided numerous student research projects, focusing primarily on artificial intelligence, machine learning, and software development. These projects have resulted in student-authored research papers and presentations at both local and international conferences. Notably, I mentored and accompanied two students who presented their work at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) 2023, further amplifying their academic and professional growth. By promoting a supportive and inclusive research environment, I help students explore real-world challenges while preparing them for advanced studies or professional careers.

In alignment with CUR's emphasis on undergraduate research, I strive to be a capable mentor, facilitating students' growth and helping them navigate the complexities of academic inquiry. I prioritize open communication to understand and address students' needs and challenges, ensuring their research experiences are impactful. Additionally, I collaborate with colleagues across disciplines to create interdisciplinary opportunities, reinforcing the collaborative spirit emphasized by CUR.

My work has strengthened the culture of undergraduate research at TLU, advancing the institution's mission by nurturing students' intellectual and ethical development. I remain committed to fostering transformative learning experiences that prepare students for success while contributing to CUR's broader vision of promoting excellence in undergraduate research.

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

Promoting diversity and inclusion in undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative inquiry (URSCI) has been a central focus of my efforts at Texas Lutheran University (TLU). As an advocate for URSCI, I intentionally create opportunities that empower students from diverse backgrounds, ensuring they feel supported and included in the research process. TLU's mission to empower a diverse student body and pursue a more just world inspires my commitment to fostering equitable access to research experiences.

In my role as a mentor, I have actively sought to involve students from underrepresented groups in my research projects, particularly in fields like artificial intelligence and software development where diversity is often lacking. By creating an inclusive environment, I encourage students to bring their unique perspectives to complex problems, enriching the research outcomes. Additionally, I help students overcome barriers to participation by securing funding, providing flexible scheduling options, and offering personalized guidance to meet their needs.

I advocate for research topics that resonate with students' cultural and personal experiences, allowing them to explore questions that matter to their communities. For example, I have mentored projects addressing ethical AI, bias in technology, and community-specific applications of machine learning, enabling students to connect their research to broader societal challenges.

Collaboration with colleagues across disciplines has allowed me to build interdisciplinary research opportunities that welcome diverse talents and viewpoints. Furthermore, I actively encourage participation in conferences and workshops that amplify underrepresented voices, helping students build networks and gain visibility for their work.

Through these efforts, I aim to ensure that URSCI at TLU is inclusive, accessible, and transformative for all students, enabling them to thrive academically and professionally while contributing to a more equitable academic landscape.

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

As a dedicated advocate for undergraduate research and the institutional representative for CUR at Texas Lutheran University, I bring a combination of mentorship experience, collaborative leadership, and a deep commitment to CUR's mission that will enable me to effectively uphold this charge.

I have promoted undergraduate research opportunities that align with CUR's vision of creating inclusive and transformative learning experiences. Through my work mentoring students in AI, machine learning, and software development, I have provided educational content, guided students in producing high-quality research, and facilitated their participation in conferences, cultivating a sense of academic and professional community. These experiences position me well to advance similar opportunities on a broader scale as a CUR Division Representative.

My ability to nurture collaboration among diverse stakeholders has been a cornerstone of my success. I have worked with faculty across disciplines to create interdisciplinary research opportunities and have facilitated connections between students, professionals, and academic networks. These skills will allow me to effectively organize networking events, workshops, and educational programming that create value for CUR members and advance the strategic goals of the organization.

Additionally, I am an experienced communicator, adept at identifying and addressing community needs. I prioritize inclusivity, ensuring that voices from underrepresented backgrounds are heard and valued. These skills will help me support division members and advocate for programming that reflects the diverse needs of CUR's membership.

Overall, my expertise in mentorship, collaborative spirit, and dedication to undergraduate research align with CUR's mission, vision, and values. I am eager to contribute to advancing undergraduate research by creating impactful opportunities that enrich the CUR community and empower its 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?

N/A

Sooie-Hoe Loke, Central Washington University

Mathematical, Computing, & Statistical Sciences 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 is deeply intertwined with both my academic role and the mission of Central Washington University (CWU). CWU is a primarily undergraduate institution, and we pride ourselves on creating transformative educational opportunities that encourage personal growth and success. To that end, I view undergraduate research as a cornerstone of the educational experience, and I am committed to providing students with the tools and opportunities to engage in scholarly inquiry and to create authentic relationships and a sense of belonging within the scientific community. I have worked with undergraduate students from across the country and have received more than half a million dollars in external and internal grants as either a PI or Co-PI to support at least 50 undergraduate students. All of my students actively initiated and took the lead on their own projects, with my careful guidance and mentorship. The end products of their work are a research manuscript and a presentation, both of which they can share with the broader mathematical community. These efforts help to create a sophisticated environment where students are not only consumers of knowledge but also active producers of knowledge. In summary, my work with undergraduate students reflects CWU's commitment to fostering an intellectually stimulating and supportive environment. It enhances their academic experience, cultivates essential skills for professional growth, and prepares them for leadership roles in a rapidly changing world.

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

I am strongly committed to promoting diversity, particularly in improving the recruitment and inclusion of students from underrepresented groups in STEM fields. About half of the undergraduate researchers I have mentored are women. In 2018, as the Co-PI of the National Research Experiences for Undergraduates Program (NREUP) grant, I mentored six students, all of whom identified as members of groups underrepresented in mathematics, in immersive research experiences. The REU was a success, with evaluation data concluding that our program is changing the habits of mind and mathematical practices of the participating students. As a first-generation college student, I strongly support the McNair Scholars Program and the Federal TRIO Programs. I have worked with McNair Scholars by mentoring them in research and providing support for their graduate school applications. Most recently, I was funded by the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM)-Simons Foundation grant to work with two undergraduate students who identify as members of groups historically underrepresented in the mathematical and computational sciences. While mathematical research is a main component of the program, I also served as a primary connection between the students and the broader applied math community. I believe these experiences demonstrate my commitment to advancing student success across various demographic groups.

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

I am excited to contribute to CUR by leveraging my skills in community building, mentoring student research, and networking to advance undergraduate research. As the Co-PI of a National Science Foundation grant (DMS-2050692), I organized three summer REUs at Central Washington University, where I also served as a research mentor for the students. A key component of the REU program is professional development, which includes preparing students for post-graduation careers and cultivating essential soft skills such as

communication and teamwork. In addition, every year I invited several colleagues to present their research, followed by an extensive Q&A session, providing students with valuable networking opportunities and insights into the mathematical community.

In 2018, I co-organized and co-led a regional workshop for faculty members interested in conducting undergraduate research. This workshop brought together research mentors from diverse backgrounds to discuss best practices for mentoring undergraduates. It facilitated valuable networking and collaboration, and the success of the event led to inquiries about hosting similar sessions in the future. In 2023, I co-organized two Pacific Math Alliance virtual panel sessions focused on REUs and career development, respectively. My responsibilities included identifying and inviting panel members and promoting these events to the broader community.

I am also deeply committed to advancing the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion in all research-related activities. As mentioned in the previous question, I prioritize promoting diversity and inclusion within my research programs and mentorship. Overall, I am confident that my experience in organizing events, directing REUs, and fostering inclusive environments will enable me to support CUR's initiatives and contribute to the growth and success of 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.

Timothy Smith, Embry Riddle Aeronautical University

Mathematical, Computing, & Statistical Sciences Division Nominee

NOMINEE STATEMENTS

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

I have served as a mentor for over 100 undergraduate students in their "senior math/data science" capstone project (AKA undergrad thesis) and have been an advocate in bringing research into the curriculum through various means such as introducing end of term class projects. Currently I have shifted to an admin role - chair of math, science & technology department at a campus that serves well over 15000 students yearly - and one of my current project goals are to guide the faculty within the department to revamp the curriculum as to introduce research activities for the students through various ways in their classes.

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

I have always ran my classroom in a way so that all people are treated equal and encourage others to look at the merit of an individual's work rather than allowing any bias to affect them; for example removing names from students work in peer review activities. I previously was involved in the McNair's scholar program as a mentor and this was one of the most enjoyable experiences in my career; this project gave me the opportunity to serve as a mentor to first generations students and observe the amazing transformation that education can have ones life, especially the amazing future job opportunities they had after graduation!

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

As a department chair I have a wide reach and will take every opportunity I can to advertise the good work of CUR, to both faculty & students.

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 currently serve as a representative and associate chair for MCS division and look forward to continuing the good work.

Violeta Vasilevska, Utah Valley University

Mathematical, Computing, & Statistical Sciences Division Nominee

NOMINEE STATEMENTS

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

Working at Utah Valley University (UVU), I have come to appreciate the value of scholarship combined with teaching when committing to work toward student success. UVU is primarily a teaching institution with a unique education dual mission (combining the rigor of a teaching university with the openness of a community college). Because of this emphasis, I have been involved in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) educational research, as well as in the pure math research.

My passion for teaching has motivated me to implement various active learning and student-centered approaches in class. For example, I started mentoring students in undergraduate research through Course-Based Undergraduate Research Experience (CURE) in my Graph Theory class. Outside of class, I have been mentoring students, especially female students, in undergraduate math education research through my outreach programs that I have been leading since 2007.

In addition, since receiving a grant in 2013 from the Center for Undergraduate Research in Mathematics (CURM), I have engaged many students in more traditional undergraduate research in diverse areas ranging from topics in pure mathematics to topics in math education. In addition to taking pride in mentoring my students to become math researchers, I am also a vivid advocate in encouraging students to participate in various activities (e.g., attending research seminars, conferences, meetings, etc.) that provide opportunities for them to hear, interact, and learn from other students presenting research, inspiring them to participate in undergraduate research themselves.

I have also been heavily involved with advocating undergraduate research on a university level, through my involvement with the Scholarly and Creative Undergraduate Learning Partnership Team (SCULPT). I currently serve as one of the SCULPT co-chairs and work on providing various opportunities for faculty in any aspect of undergraduate research as well as supporting students' undergraduate research by showcasing their efforts.

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

I'm a strong supporter of inclusion and diversity in education and UR, and constantly seek improvement through professional development (as evidenced by recent participation in the workshop Becoming a Math JEDI: Working for Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion).

My PhD is in geometric topology. However, working at UVU made me realize that I should change my topic of research to one that is more accessible and allows including a greater number of students in UR. Realization of this goal (that shaped my involvement with UR) was achieved by my participation in 2012 Park City Mathematical Institute Summer Session – Undergraduate Faculty Program on Geometric Group Theory & the 2015 Research Experience for Undergraduate Faculty program (in graph theory) at the ICERM. As a result, over the last 20 years, I have involved students from various backgrounds and diverse stages in their degree program in UR in geometric group theory and graph theory. In recent years, I have also implemented CURE in my Graph Theory class, allowing more students to take part in “baby” UR projects.

Receiving a CURM grant in 2013 marked the beginning of my strong commitment to UR. The CURM support was invaluable in preparing me for undertaking these tasks: from resources how to provide tailored mentorship and support system for students, to navigating research challenges with diverse group of students. As a result, I became a more rounded mentor and more inclusive while working with a diverse student body.

Also, I have worked passionately toward encouraging female math undergraduates to become involved in women-and-math activities and mentoring them in math education research that assess the change of high-school students' attitudes towards mathematics through outreach programs. As a result, many of them have been presenting at the Nebraska Conference for Undergraduate Women in Mathematics.

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

I have been actively involved in several organizations whose missions align well with the CUR mission and values: the UVU SCULPT (serve as a co-chair); SIGMAA-UR (serve as a secretary/treasurer, elected to be chair starting in January); MAA Committee on UR (2016-19 member and 2019-21 chair).

SCULPT is a "resource for faculty for teaching through inquiry-based learning, which includes research, scholarship, and creative activity inside and outside the classroom" (uvu.edu/sculpt). Together with the other two SCULPT co-chairs and the Advisory Board, I help with and coordinate the following activities: the annual Student Showcase; our monthly networking talk series on various aspects of UR through our Mentoring Community; the Mentoring Learning Circle; and the Mentoring UR Academy. In addition, I am responsible for our monthly SCULPT newsletter.

Moreover, I have worked collaboratively with the SCULPT Team to encourage collaboration, awareness, and skills development between faculty from all areas of campus and provide advice and support for creative and inquiry-related activities, including activities organized by other university entities. Furthermore, we encourage faculty and student participation in CUR workshops and the UCUR and NCUR conferences (and provide limited funding to attend those).

As part of the SIGMAA-UR team for the last two years, I have maintained the budget as well as worked collaboratively and contributed to organizing various UR events during JMM and MathFest (at least 2 events per conference).

As chair of the Committee on UR, I coordinated all UR activities: poster session at JMM and MathFest, invited student lectures, business meetings, etc.

I'm highly organized, have good time-management and organizational skills, work well individually and collaboratively as part of a team, and have good leadership qualities. If accepted and given an opportunity to be part of CUR, I would continue my efforts to promote, support, and advanced all aspects of UR.

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