



i-ACES

{*inquiry-ACES: Highlights of Undergraduate Research in ACES*}

Dear *i-ACES* Readers and Prospective Contributors:

Scholarship has long been part of the undergraduate experience at the University of Illinois. In the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES), undergraduates are challenged with problems to solve rather than simply given answers to remember. By engaging ideas in an original, significant, and creative way, the process of inquiry expands theoretical knowledge, uncovers knowledge gaps, clarifies conflicting information, advances professions by applying knowledge in new, often multidisciplinary ways, and engages outside communities to help solve problems occurring elsewhere.

Students benefit educationally, professionally, and personally through the directed research experience. It fosters active learning; teaches with writing, technology, and peer interactions; and helps them discover the challenges – and rewards – of research. Undergraduates also gain guidance from their mentoring faculty whose experience and advice help students discover personal interests, develop intellectual independence, and provide effective career preparation. Inquiry generates involvement that in turn develops thinking, writing, and data analysis skills; all are important in life whether they become researchers or not.

But one important element of the undergraduate research process has until now been missing: sharing their scholarship with a community of peers and professionals. Although undergraduates generally recognize the importance of research and engage in it, some fail to appreciate that research is not complete until it is published or they lack opportunities to fully participate in the writing and peer review process. The goals of *i-ACES* are to recognize and encourage high quality undergraduate research and to provide a forum for students to directly participate in the writing, peer review, and publication process. By producing a formal and written sustained argument for publication in *i-ACES*, students not only publicly share their research, but also expose their work to potential graduate programs and employers.

i-ACES invites manuscripts from undergraduate authors based on their individual or collaborative research study. Several manuscript types are eligible for consideration: (1) Full research report, (2) Abstract only, (3) Working paper, (4) Literature review, (5) Research process reflection paper, and (6) Letter to the editor. As you review the articles in the inaugural issue of *i-ACES*, ponder the opportunity to share your work with future readers. We welcome and look forward to your contribution.

Sincerely,

Anton G. Endress
i-ACES Editor-in-Chief
University of Illinois