Engaging Undergraduates & Your Faculty in Your Research Program
Strategies for Recruitment & Retention

Christina F Walsh PhD.
Student Engagement Coordinator
College of Agricultural Sciences
Oregon State University
Undergraduate Research – rarity to expectation

- UG research expansion in the last 10 years
- From lab sciences to across disciplines
- Multiple UG research program models
OSU UG Research Programs

Branch Experiment Station Experiential Learning Initiative (Summer $5000)

Beginning Undergraduate Researcher Support Program
Summer/Fall $1000 and Winter/Spring $750

Continuing Researcher Support Program
Year-round $700-$1700

Self-established Student/Faculty Mentor research opportunities – Varied compensation

URSA Engage – university wide UG support program
$750 for student/$250 faculty mentor

Department specific research support programs-varied compensation
Recruiting Faculty

- Presentations to departments rooted in literature
- College supported call for proposals
- Faculty peer pressure
- Additional staffing for project needs
- Tenure/promotion
- Awards/institutional recognition
- Fresh perspective which can lead to innovation
- Intrinsic benefits/personal satisfaction

“Many of the award-winning mentors said that their mentorship of undergraduate students actually enhanced their research productivity” (ideas from students, co-authoring with students) Hall, Walkington, Shanahan, Ackley, & Stewart (2018)
Recruiting Students

• Early awareness/messaging
• Visiting every START session
• Invite students to meet 1 on 1
  • Preparation for application
  • Developing connection to faculty
• Recognition and presentation
• Additional credits
• Compensation
• Design for First-Year & Transfer Students
Observations & Future Implications

• Incoming undergraduates are expecting these opportunities
• Increased awareness among faculty/creating these opportunities for UGs
• Tension between increasing competitiveness and opportunities for all
• Increased demand = need for more funding
• Establishing academic rigor – program requirements
• Growing reputation for quality UG research
• Assessment of last 4-years