TO: Idaho SBOE HERC

FROM: Sonia Martinez, MPA, Undergraduate Research and Outreach Director

DATE: November 16, 2023

Regarding: ISU FY 23 Undergraduate Research SBOE HERC Funds Report

In FY 23, we implemented the FY 22 year plan, emphasizing the student-mentor relationship. Our guiding principle was to ensure the student received effective mentorship that would catalyze the student to develop critical thinking and creative inquiry skills. Because many first-generation college students are unfamiliar with research, we cast a campus-wide net of information to inform students about the paid undergraduate research opportunity, thus creating access for low-income, talented students. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, STEM majors are experiencing strong industry growth and the best return on investment. Further, the Council on Undergraduate Research finds that it dramatically improves academic performance, retention, and persistence (CUR, 2023).

We noticed the fruits of the undergraduate research experience cultivated from the student and mentor relationship. The students who participated in this grant cycle significantly improved their confidence, critical thinking skills, and scientific learning that they can apply in a workforce setting. To provide the opportunity to more students, we awarded grants to six labs with projects that included two to three undergraduate students with a total participation of fifteen students. Faculty who received awards were from various research fields in Biological Sciences, Anthropology, and Chemistry. Please take a look at the attached reports from the students and faculty on their successful research outcomes. With gained skill sets in the lab and field work, some participants were able to apply for other funding sources and continue their research in the Summer Research Experience, where they also participated in the Boise State Undergraduate Research Community via Zoom and the Idaho Conference on Undergraduate Research, ICUR. Still, other students report an inspiration to attend graduate school.

A total of $5,490 in travel funds were awarded to eight students to present their research at numerous national science conferences, including the Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology, the American Chemical Society, and the Society for the Advancement of Hispanic and Native American Students in Science, held in Puerto Rico. Two Anthropology students were guest panelists at the Western Literature Association Conference, where they spoke about their research to a national audience.

Students who participated in funded HERC Undergraduate Research had the opportunity to present their research at the ISU Undergraduate Research Symposium 2023. Thirty-two students presented posters to the campus community. Several participants received invitations to present their work at the BSU Idaho Conference on Undergraduate Research (ICUR) held in July 2023. Sixty individuals from Idaho State University participated in ICUR; twelve students presented research.

The ISU McNair program received $10,000 in funding for participants to attend conferences to make presentations and conduct research projects.

Five of the six recipients stayed slightly under budget, totaling $298.75, which was distributed to the lab that went over budget $481.08.

The attached files include the faculty and student experience reports and the student posters.