WISE Rings in 15th Anniversary with Special Event and 2013 REWU Presentations

By: Ashley Duvelius

In honor of its 15th Anniversary, the Summer Research Experience for Women Undergraduates (REWU) Program concludes the immensely successful 2013 Summer Program with a special celebration in addition to the annual student presentation session.

This year, UC’s Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) Committee is pleased to celebrate the 15th anniversary of their Research Experience for Women Undergraduates (REWU) program as they conclude yet another successful summer. The 15th anniversary event is to be held on Wednesday, July 31, 2013, in the CEAS Library (in Baldwin Hall) from 5:30-8:30 pm.

The following day, August 1, 2013, program participants will discuss and display their research findings at a special presentation session from 12:00 noon-4 p.m. in room 427 ERC.

The REWU summer program is a 12-week program that engages female students in research projects with faculty in a wide variety of disciplines—some choose to explore research unrelated to their given major.

The WISE REWU Program is sponsored in part by the Offices of the Provost and the Vice President for Research, and the support and cooperation of several departments in the Colleges of Arts & Sciences, Engineering and Applied Science, Pharmacy, Nursing and Medicine. The program encourages the participation of talented young women in the science, mathematics and engineering fields, with a goal of exposing these talents to diverse areas of research early in their education and to encourage the pursuit of advanced studies in these fields.

The REWU program is a full-immersion program and the students were required to work full-time on their research project. Each participant worked closely with an experienced faculty advisor/researcher on ongoing research projects. They were involved in interpreting the results of the research, deriving conclusions, and preparing and presenting a technical paper. A stipend of $4,500 was provided to each student to carry out her research, and to provide for a more successful experience.

This year, 22 young women delved into the opportunity to perform undergraduate research alongside UC’s leading scientists and engineers in a wide range of fields. Some of the disciplines explored were: Astrophysics, Biology, Biomedical Engineering, Botany, Chemistry, Dietetics, Electrical Engineering, Mathematics, Mechanical Engineering, Nursing, Pediatrics and Physics.
In addition to the benefit of conducting research as an undergraduate, some students were able to constitute this research as one of their normal co-op experience semesters.

**Urmila Ghia**, PhD and Chair of the WISE Program, explains, “Participation in research projects is a significant factor in increasing student retention, and in encouraging talented students to excel.

In the beginning, the program didn’t have a vast array of disciplines for students to choose from. But now, nearly every science unit across the campus participates in REWU. We’ve had a total of 287 women throughout the years, making our program an overwhelming success.

I would like to acknowledge and specially thank the department heads, mentors, and university administration who have provided the program with continued supported and contributed largely to our success—we simply couldn't have it without them.

Together, we have encouraged and guided these talented and dedicated young women to realize that they are indeed the bright future of the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields.”

The REWU 15th Anniversary Celebration is to be held on July 31, 2013 from 5:30-8:30 p.m. in the CEAS Library. The evening kicks-off with comments offered by several distinguished university figures who aided the program in its initial stages.

Some keynote speakers are: **Sandra Degen**, Interim Chair of the Department of Molecular Genetics, Biochemistry & Microbiology; **Howard Jackson**, former Vice President of Research; and **Anthony J. Perzigian**, former UC Provost.

Guests will then enjoy dinner followed by additional presentations about the program and the college.

The following day, on Thursday, August 1, please join WISE for a presentation session which will be held from 12:00 noon-4 p.m. in room 427 of the Engineering Research Center (ERC).