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Students and faculty recognize research achievements at the inaugural Celebration of Student and Faculty Collaborative Research program, Oct. 20, at the Joseph P. Scartelli Atrium.

Since 2016, Radford University has seen publications in research, scholarship and creative activities by 32 faculty mentors and 96 undergraduate students, said Joe Wirgau, director of the Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarship (OURS) and associate professor of chemistry.

“The Office of Undergraduate Research & Scholarship (OURS) advances a sustainable culture of undergraduate research, scholarship and creative activities at Radford University,” as stated on Radford’s OURS website.

“This is a celebration of student-faculty teams that not only have successfully created new knowledge, but they’ve shared that new knowledge through successful publications, performances or showings of their work,” Wirgau said at the program. “I am well aware of both the challenging and rewarding nature of that work. I want to thank every single faculty, both here and in the program, who were able to create these transformative, high impact experiences for our students. I also want to thank the student researchers...They push me to be more successful, and they certainly have me think about things from a different viewpoint. Thank you for your hard work, your curiosity and working to make the world a better place.”

Wirgau gave thanks to many people for supporting OURS endeavors, but more specifically Mary Hagan in the Honors Academy and Jeanne Mekolichick, assistant provost for academic programs, for her tireless support of transformative high impact student experiences.

Wirgau mentioned he hoped this research celebration would be “a new and valuable tradition” for the university moving forward. Compared to Hemphill’s first inaugural State of the University Address and last weeks second annual Radford Gives Back (RGB) Community Service Project.

Jessica Mundy, OURS executive student assistant, said she is grateful for the many research

opportunities that she has embraced at Radford, including presenting at several conferences, being published and earning grants to further her studies.

“It is the continued support of faculty that has allowed me to do the research that I enjoy,” said Conner Philson, a student researcher. “Thank you for all the opportunities undergraduate research, and high impact practices have given me and all the other students. Not just the students here today, but the ones who are working on publications now, the ones who will be coming in as freshmen next year and for many years to come...We will continue to produce great publications and work and share the Radford University name in all the opportunities that are provided.”

Philson also mentioned of the many research and learning opportunities in which he has engaged in at Radford, including the Radford Amazonian Research Expedition (RARE) to Peru. Under the mentorship of Jason Davis, an Associate Professor of Biology, who is also researching automated animal data collection centers.

“The Radford Amazonian Research Expedition (RARE) provides undergraduate students with a unique opportunity to conduct original biological research in a primary Amazonian rainforest ecosystem,” as said on Radford’s website.

“Because of undergraduate research, I am a completely different person,” Mundy said. “My confidence has grown drastically, as well as my efficacy - my belief that I can do good things here. I’ve made meaningful friendships, and I’m doing valuable things with my time...This institution is my home now - one of my favorite places in the world.”

“You all [faculty] are so motivated, ambitious and everything I aspire to be when I grow up,” Mundy continued. “It is faculty and students like you who have made Radford so successful.”

For more information on research, travel funding, or more about OURS itself head to the office of Undergraduate Research & Scholarships in White 125 or Radford OURS website.

*A majority of information for this article was from (OURS reception showcases student-faculty research projects) a piece written by Mary Hardbarg, a public relations writer for Radford.