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TRAINING AND EDUCATION:

“Summer Research Experience Provides Unique Opportunities for Faculty and Students”

Anne Messer, Wadsworth New York State Department of Health, Albany, NY

Supported by the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, National Institutes of Health

GRANT DESCRIPTION

This project created two summer jobs at the New York State Department of Health for an undergraduate and a young faculty member from Utica College (a non-research-intensive school) to expose them to cutting-edge scientific research. The project used a Huntington’s Disease model in fruit flies to test the therapeutic potential of combinations of an engineered antibody with small molecule drugs.

SCIENCE AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

The award fostered research on neurodegenerative disease in a new setting, integrating participants within an interdisciplinary departmental research experience for undergraduates at the institution. Similar undergraduate experiments at Utica College are highly probable because these experiments can be accomplished in that setting and may accelerate the research proposed in the parent grant by screening new compounds.

RESEARCH IMPACT: IN THEIR WORDS

“With increasing student enrollment numbers in biology and a budget crisis that limits new faculty hires, our teaching demands are only increasing. The eight weeks that I dedicated to research experimentation this summer provided me with an invaluable opportunity to grow as a scientist and teaching professional. The knowledge that I gained from this summer will enhance my ability to teach about the *Drosophila* as a model organism to my students, allow me to incorporate novel experiments into my courses and will be beneficial as I apply for grants in support of my future research projects at Utica College.”

–Faculty member’s summary of her summer research experience



Utica College faculty member Julie McLear Friot mentored student Margaret Wright as part of the Summer Research Experience program at the New York State Department of Health. According to NIH, “Nationwide, ARRA funding supported approximately 5,100 research and training positions last summer for high school and college students, as well as college educators.” *Photo used with permission of Julie McLear Friot.*

The Society for Neuroscience (SfN) is the world’s largest organization of scientists and physicians devoted to advancing understanding of the brain and nervous system. Since its inception in 1969, the Society has grown from 500 members to more than 40,000.