Mentoring Undergraduate Researchers, with Special Emphasis on African American Students

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Presentation Outline

1. What “counts” as undergraduate research?
2. What are the outcomes for African American students?
3. How can faculty mentor and motivate undergraduates to pursue original research?
4. How can faculty help undergraduates find outlets (e.g., publications or conferences) for their research?
5. Why should any faculty engage in such an endeavor?
What “counts” as undergraduate research?

- 1. Early and active involvement in systematic investigation
- 2. Probing contested questions
- 3. Engaging in empirical observation
- 4. Using cutting-edge technology
- 5. Developing an excitement to investigate important questions
What are the outcomes for African American students?

- 1. Strong positive effect on persistence
- 2. More likely to enter medical or law school
- 3. More likely to enroll in graduate school
- 4. More likely to engage community activism and advocacy
- 5. More likely to serve as editors of law reviews
- 6. More likely to graduate as valedictorian

Ryan Ridley, MD

Dr. Ridley is a proud graduate of Howard University, where he graduated Magna Cum Laude. As an undergraduate, Ryan conducted research at top institutions including the University of California, Berkeley and the University of Washington in Seattle where his work was published in the Journal of Undergraduate Research in Engineering. Dr. Ridley earned his medical degree from UTMB in June of 2006. Dr. Ridley completed his residency in Otolaryngology at the University of Texas Medical Branch in June of 2011.
How can faculty mentor and motivate undergraduates to pursue original research?

1. Believe that “Putting Students First” is not merely a slogan
2. Be ready to put in the long hours
3. Be caring
4. Be a good listener
5. Be supportive
6. Be ready to give the needed push
7. Be cognizant of the thin line between being a friend and being too friendly
How can faculty help undergraduates find outlets for their research?

- 1. Get on the listservs and mailing lists of conferences and journals geared toward undergraduate research---there is a snowball effect
- 2. Get the students involved in putting together a list of such conferences and journals
- 3. Get on the listservs of campus offices that engage in undergraduate student development programs
- 4. Read the university news bulletins
- 5. Develop contacts with like-minded professors at other universities
Why should any faculty engage in such an endeavor?

- 1. Love for your students
- 2. Love for your university
- 3. Love for your people
- 4. Love for the profession
- 5. Love for humanity
- 6. Love for yourself
- 7. Love for Yaweh/Allah/God (SWT)

***As Bob Marley would say “One Love”***
Final Words

- ãm hetep hru (Hieroglyphic transcription)
- English = In Peace Always