

Undergraduate Research Center



Undergraduate Mentor Spotlight

Dr. Karla Lassonde, Associate Professor-Department of Psychology, was recognized as the Outstanding Undergraduate Research Mentor of the Year (2013) by the Undergraduate Research Center. Dr. Lassonde was nominated for the award by Maria K. Almoite, an undergraduate member of Dr. Lassonde's research team. Maria said, "Dr. Karla A. Lassonde is the most dedicated professor I have ever met. Her passion and enthusiasm in research, psychology, teaching, and mentorship is extremely apparent...She did an amazing job familiarizing us with the project and mentoring us while allowing us to take the researcher role."



Dr. Lassonde's commitment to undergraduate scholarly activity is evident by her accomplishments. Since 2010, her research team has been awarded six Undergraduate Research Center grants, 10 students have presented at the MN Undergraduate Scholars Conference, 19 students at our Undergraduate Research Symposium, and 4 students at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research. Dr. Lassonde believes that undergraduate research is a high-quality investment for faculty and students that creates "good consumers of knowledge". She strives to create a sense of shared meaning with her students, by encouraging collaboration across research interests and activities. She hopes that the mentoring relationship will be a positive bond that will continue for years to come. She also provides guidance when it is difficult to see the meaning behind their work. Rather, "don't be discouraged if you don't see the end result yet since there are multiple ways it could unfold."

Dr. Lassonde views integrating research in the classroom as the next frontier since it can be difficult to help all students advance their research skills. This spring, Dr. Lassonde will be included in a pilot program to increase research opportunities in undergraduate courses, the URC Graduate Research Consultant Program. In her opinion, this is an effective way to support the next generation of students.