

# STEM Posters at the Capitol in Little Rock



Next scheduled event: February 11, 2015

“It is essential, if we want to continue to reap the benefits of science, to commit as a nation to preparing more young people for extraordinary careers in science.”

*Carol W. Greider, 2009 Nobel laureate in physiology & medicine*

The goal is to establish an annual or biennial undergraduate “STEM Posters-at-the-Capitol” event in Little Rock. Arkansas undergraduates will share original research in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and will provide personal, first-hand experiences from their institutions. The target audience includes constitutional officers, elected legislators, STEM policy experts, and the Arkansas general public. Events over the last three years have been very successful, highlights below.

This poster event offers a unique promotion of exceptional educational opportunities for Arkansans in technical-disciplines, *good news* about education in the state. It provides a personal lobbying effort for higher education from the students, those benefiting most from the experience. An annual or biennial science and math poster session at the capitol will help promote undergraduate STEM education in the state.

- Benefits**
- Promote undergraduate STEM educational opportunities in the state
  - Advocate funding for undergraduate STEM research experiences (ADHE SURF)
  - Increase retention/matriculation of students in technical degrees at Arkansas schools

- Likely sponsors**
- UCA Foundation (some support already secured for Feb 2015)
  - Arkansas STEM Coalition
  - Arkansas Academy of Sciences
  - Arkansas Science and Technology Authority

- Highlights From 2014 Posters at the Capitol**
- Over 100 students participated from around the state of Arkansas
  - 13 different Arkansas colleges and universities sent students from all STEM disciplines
  - Governor Beebe attended, met with many students, and learned about their work
  - Elected legislators met with students and learned about STEM educational experiences in AR

**Online & Social Media**

<http://faculty.uca.edu/wvslaton/ARposters/index.htm>  
Twitter: #ARPosters

- Feb. 11, 2015 Timeline for planning**
- Appeal statewide for student participants (Sep/Oct 2014)
  - Reserve luncheon venue (Union Station). Keynote: Dr. Tom Goodwin, Hendrix College
  - Collect abstracts and contact information from students (Nov/Dec 2014)
  - Students invite elected representatives by letter/email to meet them at the capitol (Dec/Jan)
  - Send final instructions/plans for student preparation (Jan 2015)
  - Schedule for Feb. 11
    - 9:00 – 9:30 setup in rotunda
    - 10:00 – 11:00 Session 1, 11:00 – 12:00 Session 2
    - 12:30 – 2:00 Luncheon at Union Station (posters removed by 2:30)

- Reference Sources**
- D. R. Howard “Poster Sessions at Your Capitol” *CUR Quarterly* Dec. 1998, p. 86
  - P. J. Pukkila, K. M. Whatley “Research in the State Capital: Helping Your State Legislators Understand and Appreciate Higher Education” *CUR Quarterly* Dec. 2001, p. 81
  - Murray State University “Starter Kit” <http://campus.murraystate.edu/services/ursa/>

*CUR*: Council on Undergraduate Research, Wash, DC based promoter of undergraduate research ([www.cur.org](http://www.cur.org))

---

**Organizer contact information** Patrick Desrochers, Prof. of Chemistry (501) 450-5936 office  
University of Central Arkansas  
Conway, AR 72035  
patrickd@uca.edu

---