UConn Students Begin the Hunt for Summer Research Opportunities

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The Office of Undergraduate Research hosted its first event of the semester on Tuesday, Jan. 20 teaching students how to navigate research opportunities on and off campus.

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The workshop, presented by Assistant Director of OUR Melissa Berkey, overviewed where to find research opportunities, how to stay organized during the application process and what programs are available at the University of Connecticut.

One available opportunity is the Health Research Program. In this program, undergraduate students will conduct research at UConn Health in Farmington. This program is geared toward students with interests in health or biomedical engineering. Students may not apply if they are graduating earlier than May 2027. Applications for this summer are due Feb. 16.

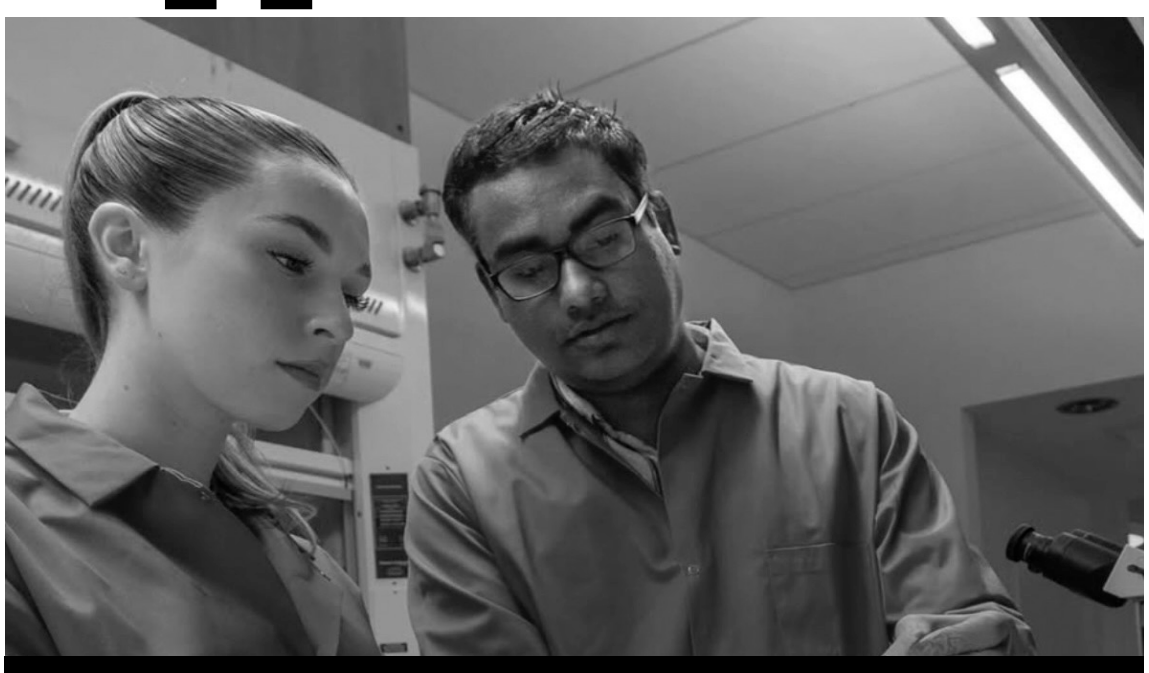
Students can also apply to the SHARE Virtual Summer Apprenticeship program — an experience in which students majoring in social sciences, humanities or the arts work on a summer-long research or creative project alongside a faculty mentor. This is an entirely remote position, and applicants receive up to $1538 for 90 hours of work over the summer. The application opens in early March and will close on Monday, March 30.

Berkey said that students can also develop independent opportunities by designing their own projects and asking a professor to oversee it.

OUR has a list of university resources that may fund these independent projects posted on its website. One resource is the Summer Undergraduate Research Fund Award, which is available to all undergraduate students at any of the UConn campuses. Students may receive up to $5,500 for the research or creative project. The deadline to apply is Monday, Feb 2.

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Peer Research Ambassadors Julia Armington and Breanna Bonner offered their advice throughout the presentation from a student perspective. Bonner, an eighth-semester student double majoring in human rights and an individualized major in media, policy and social movements, has been involved in OUR since her junior year when she was accepted into the BOLD Scholars program.



Two students are participating in research in the pharmacy lab at UConn's School of Pharmacy. They are focused on measuring the amount needed for each container.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @UCONNPHARMACY ON INSTAGRAM.

While Bonner always knew she wanted to pursue undergraduate research, she didn't anticipate the variety of opportunities available.

"I think a lot of people have a misconception that the only people who can do research are working on things in a lab," Bonner said. "But being involved in [research] has really taught me that there's people doing research in the arts, there's people doing research in singing, in theater... there's people doing research across all fields."

Bonner said she hopes workshops like the one on Tuesday teach students that it's important to continuously seek out opportunities. She also hopes to show students that research is more accessible than they may think.

Emily Bagan, a fourth-semester biomedical engineering student, came to the workshop to learn about the Health Research Program. She has already applied to a few research opportunities in hopes of securing a summer plan.

"There's a lot more research opportunities than I thought there was," Bagan said.

OUR's next session on finding summer research opportunities will be online on Friday, Jan. 30 from 4 to 5 p.m. Those interested can register at the link on the office's website to receive further meeting information.

The office is also hosting several events this semester on how to find a research mentor. The first is set for Thursday, Jan. 22 in McHugh 108 from 3:30 to 5 p.m. Students seeking one-on-one guidance on pursuing research can also schedule a meeting with an OUR advisor or a peer research ambassador on OUR's website.



Present-day photo of the UConn Health campus in Farmington, CT. The wide campus is home to many important health care practices.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @UCONNHEALTH ON INSTAGRAM