

Letter from the Editor:

Change is inevitable. How we meet the challenges of a changing environment is what defines us as people; change is the driving force behind our continued growth and personal development. For me, this process of change has brought me to the end of my time here at Indiana University, and these years have certainly been a life changing experience. I wish to thank the numerous faculty members in the departments of psychology and anthropology that have gone out of their way to help me find and exploit my new passions and skills, and who have opened doors for me that I never knew existed.

In the last two years, it has been my pleasure to serve as the editor of the IU South Bend Undergraduate Research Journal and to have been a member of the IU South Bend Publications Board. I hope I have been helpful in the evolution and publication of this journal. In addition, during this time I have also served as the student representative for the Student/Mentor Academic Research Teams (SMART) grant committee, and I wish to thank the other members for the opportunity to be involved in determining these awards and their continued personal support.

This year, the Undergraduate Research Journal is proud to announce the winners of the SMART Undergraduate Research Awards. IU South Bend prides itself on the abundance and diversity of research completed each year by its undergraduate students, and these awards are meant to honor undergraduates from across the campus who have distinguished records of research. This year's winners in the categories of Natural Sciences and Social Sciences are Elaina Breznau and Caitlin Worm.

Elaina is graduating this year with a Bachelor's degree in Biology, and has been awarded numerous grants and awards for her work in sequencing genes to identify unknown species of *Fusarium*, a plant fungal pathogen. Elaina has pursued many independent research opportunities at IU South Bend, and has worked as a research assistant in the Biology department. Elaina is also working with Dr. Deborah Marr in preparing a paper for submission to a national peer-reviewed publication.

Caitlin is also graduating this year, with a Bachelors degree in Political Science and a Certificate in International Relations. Caitlin has also been awarded several grants and scholarships, including the Anti-Defamation League Travel Grant which has allowed her to travel to Israel to pursue her interest in the societal security threats posed by Israel's non-Jewish immigrants. Caitlin has also shown extensive involvement in presenting her findings at national conventions and symposiums.

Congratulations go out to these students for their exceptional work and good luck to all the graduating students of IU South Bend this year. May your future be as exciting as your time here at IUSB!

Darryl R. Ricketts
Editor, Undergraduate Research Journal