

The DEAN'S MESSAGE

Over the years, we have made a concerted effort to promote mentored undergraduate research in the College of Physical and Mathematical Sciences. With the help of generous donors and funds provided by the university, we have been able to pair students with a faculty mentor on projects that allow them to work one-on-one to conduct important scientific and mathematical research and gain a wealth of first-hand experience.

These research experiences provide our undergraduate students with a unique opportunity not found at many other universities and, ultimately, with a more comprehensive scientific education. As a result our graduates are better prepared to excel immediately in whatever path they choose—whether it be in graduate school, industry or elsewhere.

This mentoring program is made possible in part by the unwavering support of our alumni, donors and friends. Through their sacrifice, we are able to provide a first-class education to countless students from around the world—a shining group of individuals who will one day touch every part of the globe through their influence.

If you would like to see the outcome of this mentoring, I invite you to attend our 27th annual Student Research Conference on March 9, from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the Jesse Knight Building at BYU.

In just one day, over 360 students (about half of them undergraduates) will present the findings of their original research from the past year to an audience comprised of faculty, staff, family, friends, and community members.

This year, we are fortunate to have Microsoft, Goldman Sachs, Moxtex, and Adobe sponsoring the conference.

This is a wonderful chance for us to showcase the great work being performed here at BYU, and it also represents a terrific opportunity for the students to gain valuable experience presenting and explaining their research to an audience, further preparing them for their future endeavors.

We hope you enjoy the articles contained in this month's eNewsletter, and we hope you'll join us on the 9th for this tremendous educational conference. Thank you for your continuing support of the BYU community and the advancement of science and mathematics.

.....> **Scott Sommerfeldt, Dean**

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Seeing the stars elicited an enthusiastic response from the JMS students.

A VERY QUIET PLANETARIUM SHOW

Ten minutes before the Jean Massieu School of the Deaf (JMS) appreciation planetarium show began, the room was filled with complete silence. Was it anticipation for the upcoming demonstration? Not quite, though there was certainly a lot of that.

Rather, the room was abuzz with chatter and excitement, only you couldn't hear it. Hands and fingers flew in a flurry of motion as people communicated their excitement via sign language.

A great opportunity for the audibly impaired, the BYU Royden G. Derrick planetarium hosted a special show for students of the Jean Massieu School of the Deaf in Salt Lake City. The show was complete with closed-captioning and even a virtual translator on the screen.

David Oyler, the JMS science teacher who covered the event, was very excited about the planetarium show. "No other planetarium offers this kind of adventure," he said, "the experience here is just awesome."

The show taught about the formation of comets, planets, and stars in our solar system, and the response to the show was unanimous applause. Granted, that applause was made without actually clapping hands!

The planetarium plans on utilizing its varied capabilities, like this specially designed ASL program, and hosting events similar to this in the future. David Oyler and many other JMS students agree, they hope to be back soon.

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