



2015-16

Student Staff

UROP Leaders



CRE Student Staff



CENTER FOR UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AND ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

2015-16 UROP Leaders

Alexa Pennavaria
Andrew Burk
Ashley Ward
Barbara Dietrick
Brad Ringler
Brian Menard
Casey Johnson
Cole Friedes
Daniel P. Hubbard
Danielle Luz
Darrell Kilpatrick
Elise Griffin

Ellen Waidner
Emily Raulerson
Erin Trumble
Gabriela Oliveira
German Montero
Jasmine Richardson
Jeffrey Edelstein
Jordan McKean
Joseph Accardo
Kelley Cunningham
Keval Patel
Liam Speranza

Mari Kyle
Melissa Gibson
Mitchell D'Sa
Nathan Seepaulsing
Nicholas Davenport
Reema Tawfiq
Samantha Grutzner
Shauna Gillooly
Taylor Crosby
Thuy-Linh Pham
Valentina Saracino
Victoria Sunnergren



Not pictured: Cole Friedes, Darrell Kilpatrick, Joseph Accardo, Kelley Cunningham, and Nathan Seepaulsing.

Alexa Pennavaria



- **Major:** Anthropology
- **Minor:** Museum Studies
- **Class of 2016**
- **UROP contribution:** She sincerely adores passing along the joys of research to younger students.
- **Research focus:** Alexa's research currently focuses on the trochlear angle of the humerus as a possible determination for biological sex using a collection of hunter gatherers from the Windover collection at FSU and several collections held in Tübingen, Germany.
- Connect with her via email: amp13s@my.fsu.edu

Andrew Burk



- **Major:** Music Education
- **Minor:** Political Science
- **Class of 2017**
- **As your UROP leader,** he hopes to be a home base for his students during their time in the program so that they always have someone to turn to when things are going well or poorly.
- **Accomplishments:** During his time as a UROP student, Andrew assisted Dr. Crew in the College of Social Sciences and Public Policy with his book, The 2012 Elections in Florida. He was responsible for writing a chapter in the book regarding the state senate races that took place during the year 2012.

Ashley Ward



- **Major:** Food and Nutrition Sciences
- **Minors:** Biology and Chemistry
- **Class of 2017**
- **Past UROP experiences and research:** Ashley joined UROP her sophomore year and it changed what college meant to her. Through UROP she discovered so many great opportunities our university has to offer, and she learned to take advantage of these opportunities. She recently received an Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity Award for her current research on proteins that reorganize our DNA.
- **As a current UROP leader,** she wants to inspire and guide students to do what they love and find how to make the absolute best of it.
- Connect with her via e-mail: alw13b@my.fsu.edu

Barbara Dietrick



- **Major:** Biological Sciences
- **Class of 2016**
- **Past UROP experiences:** She started research as a freshman in the UROP program and now, as a senior, teaches a section of UROP.
- **Current research:** Barbara has been working in Dr. Timothy Megraw's laboratory in the FSU College of Medicine since her freshman year. She recently finished her Honors thesis in July 2015 on the Determination of the Genetic Network of Microcephaly Disease and is continuing her research to culminate her work as a publication.
- Connect with her via e-mail: bad12c@my.fsu.edu

Bradley Ringler



- **Major:** Biomathematics
- **Minor:** Biology and Chemistry
- **Class of 2016**
- **As a current UROP leader,** he wants to expose students to the exciting world of undergraduate research. As a past UROP student, it allowed him to kindle a passion for research, and wants to share research with the FSU community.
- **Also,** Brad is involved in MedLife and Phi Eta Sigma, while also planning to attend veterinarian school in the future. His exposure to UROP led him to pursue research in the field of veterinarian medicine.
- Connect with him via e-mail: bsr13@my.fsu.edu

Brian Menard



- **Major:** Psychology
- **Class of 2017**
- **As a current UROP leader,** he wants to go beyond guiding first and second year students through their assistantship. He wants to connect students to resources on campus that will contribute to their college experiences in an impactful way. He views his leadership as an opportunity to provide students with the means to pursue their passions long after the program ends.
- **Current research:** Brian is currently conducting research in Dr. Kofler's Children's Learning Clinic (CLC) because of UROP. The CLC is a research lab in the psychology department that studies childhood ADHD, functional outcomes of the disorder, and potential treatments for it. His UROP leaders not only made securing an assistantship a smooth process, but continued to provide support and guidance even after successfully completing the program.
- Connect with him via e-mail: bm13e@my.fsu.edu

Casey Johnson



- **Major:** Biological Sciences
- **Minor:** Chemistry
- **Class of 2016**
- **As a UROP leader,** he wants to inspire students to go out and achieve things that they never even dreamed of. He wants to shine as a prime example of how research and this wonderful university can aid in the path to greatness.
- **UROP background and current research:** Casey was a member of the first transfer UROP section and worked the 2014-2015 year in Dr. Wu-Min Deng's *Drosophila* lab looking at the Notch-Dependent Pathway of Cell Proliferation. This year as a UROP leader, he is working with Dr. Geoffrey Thomas in the Department of Anthropology looking at the possibility of using teeth as tools in the skeletal remains of the Windover population, a group of individuals thought to be 8,000 years old.
- Connect with him via e-mail: cj13h@my.fsu.edu

Daniel Hubbard



- **Majors:** Psychology and Sociology
- **Honors:** 2015 Truman Scholar
- **As a UROP leader,** he wants to enable his students to pursue their research interests with an enhanced ability to articulate their motivations, relevant past experiences, and projected career trajectories. Furthermore, he wants to empower his students to constantly strive for just more than they believe they can reach.
- **UROP background and current research:** As a UROP student, Daniel worked with the Bruno Chiurliza gathering data for a project that assessed the ability to manipulate one's pain tolerance and fear of death. Currently, he is completing his Honors thesis on Army suicide and assisting Dr. Doug Schrock on a comprehensive qualitative assessment of veterans and their transition into universities. In the near future, he is looking forward to organizing data for a QI project on spinal cord stimulator treatment with Walter Reed's pain clinic.
- Connect with him via e-mail: dph14d@my.fsu.edu

Danielle Luz



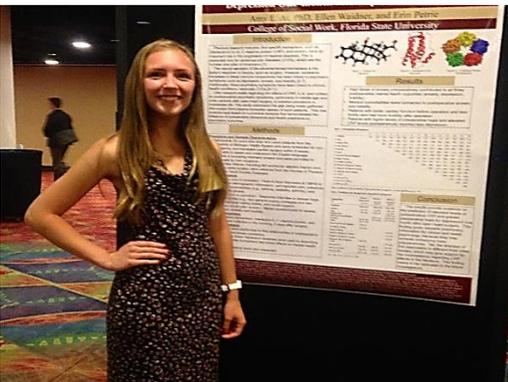
- **Majors:** Biology and Psychology
- **Minors:** Chemistry and Mathematics
- **Class of 2016**
- **Past UROP experiences:** She participated in UROP during her sophomore year and won the MRCE in the spring. After presenting at the President's Showcase, she went on to become a UROP leader for her senior year.
- **Current Research:** Danielle's research is within developmental psychology, where she focuses on how individual differences affect how children learn.
- Connect with her via e-mail: dal12@my.fsu.edu

Elise Griffin



- **Major:** Family and Child Sciences
- **Minor:** Psychology
- **Class of 2016**
- **As a UROP leader,** she wants to encourage her class to continue with research after the UROP experience and also be there to guide and advise her students in all aspects of life at FSU.
- **Research background:** Last year, Elise completed research in the UROP program with Dr. Gunjan in the College of Medicine studying the molecular links between childhood and adult glioblastoma formation. Currently, she serves as the President of the Honors Student Association.
- Connect with her via e-mail: eng13b@my.fsu.edu

Ellen Waidner



- **Major:** Spanish
- **Minors:** Biology and Chemistry
- **Class of 2016**
- **Her UROP experience was one of the defining aspects of her freshman year.** It gave her a variety of experiences that she never would have thought possible. When the year was over, Ellen knew she wanted to be a part of making that experience possible for students just like her. She wants to make the experience in UROP as valuable to current students as it was for her.
- **Research background:** Ellen was a student in the UROP program during her freshman year at Florida State (2013). She worked in the lab of Dr. Amy Ai, studying the effects of different medical issues on psychological disorders. Through this experience, she presented at the FSU Undergraduate Research Symposium and the 35th Annual Society of Behavioral Medicine Conference and was co-author on a published abstract.
- Connect with her via e-mail: emw13@my.fsu.edu

Emily Raulerson



- **Majors:** Chemistry and Applied Mathematics
- **Minor:** Physics
- **Class of 2016**
- **Current research:** Emily is investigating inorganic membrane growth, including implications for origin-of-life studies in Dr. Oliver Steinbock's group.

Erin Trumble



- **Majors:** History and Anthropology
- **Minors:** Japanese, International Affairs and English
- **As a UROP leader,** she hopes to give her students the tools that they need for a more successful undergraduate career. It is important to her that they leave the class with a better understanding of their goals and how to achieve them.
- **UROP and research background:** During UROP, Erin was able to explore various methods of research and was made aware of the opportunities available to her as an undergraduate at FSU. She decided to continue working with the professor that she conducted her assistantship with and has begun doing independent research on the *onna-bugeisha* in the Boshin War.
- Connect with her via e-mail: ekt13b@my.fsu.edu

Gabriela Oliveira



- **Majors:** Marketing and Psychology
- **Minor:** Hispanic Marketing Communications | **Class of 2017**
- **As a UROP leader,** she hopes to not only make a lasting impact on her students throughout their academic career, but their life beyond research. She believes it's an incredible opportunity as an undergraduate to ask questions and find answers that may improve our community as well as to apply skills outside the classroom.
- **CRE involvement and research:** Gabriela was a UROP student in the past which has allowed her to become involved as a UROP leader and the Global Scholars Program. As a UROP student, she worked with Dr. Chapa in the School of Communications and Information. In fact, she currently still works with her in researching the cognitive reactions to fear appeal advertising on young adults across ethnic groups.
- Connect with her via e-mail: go13b@my.fsu.edu

German Montero



- **Major:** Biochemistry
- **Class of 2017**
- **As a UROP leader....** he wants to recreate the incredible advising that his UROP leaders provided for him, and facilitate similar experiences for his students and make sure they have the optimum undergraduate experience that he could have ever aspired for.
- **Research background:** Attaining a deep admiration for academic research, German wanted to translate that experience into Florida State University and after attending all of Sir Harry Kroto's lectures, he was awestruck to acquire a UROP assistantship within his lab. He works in studying the application of carbon fullerene materials, such as carbon nanotubes, in the creation of light, thin, and flexible batteries eventually hoping to design a rechargeable battery that is both thin and malleable.
- Connect with him via e-mail: gam13b@my.fsu.edu

Jasmine Richardson



- **Major:** Social Science
- **Class of 2016**
- **UROP goals:** Her personal contribution as a current UROP leader is to reflect more in depth on her experience on learning about the evolution theory of leadership. Discovery and exploration will help her continue her journey throughout this process as she engages with more individuals and understands their aspect of identifying diverse leaders.
- **Research background:** Jasmine's past UROP experience has been amazing as a research assistant and UROP leader. She had the opportunity to research with Dr. Guthrie on Diverse Leader Identity. From this research, she has been more engaged and competent about the evolution of leadership. Engaging in the field of leadership has led her to explore different leader roles and opportunities on campus.
- Connect with her via e-mail: jl14e@my.fsu.edu

Jeff Edelstein



- **Major:** Business | **Minor:** Music
- **Class of 2017**
- **LinkedIn:** <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jeffedelstein8>
- **Past UROP experiences:** He joined UROP in Fall 2014, through which he began his involvement in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies (ELPS) as a research assistant.
- **Current research:** Jeff is continuing his work within the Department of ELPS and in the process of leading a paper on his team's findings regarding the fears and concerns students on the autism spectrum have about postsecondary education. He will be continuing the research he began in the summer of 2015 through a MRCE grant on music ensembles and individuals with autism this year as he begins his Honors in the Major project.
- Connect with him via e-mail: je13g@my.fsu.edu

Jordan McKean



- **Major:** Biology | **Minor:** Chemistry
- **Class of 2016**
- **As a UROP leader....** She hopes to challenge her students to think critically not only about the role of research in the world, but also about their role in research at this institution and beyond. She hopes that through open discussion, her students learn to engage in creative, academic thinking that will fuel their future endeavors in research.
- **Research interests:** Jordan is currently working in Dr. Deng's lab in the King Life Science Building where she researches the Notch signaling pathway in *Drosophila* and how defects in this pathway contribute to tumor growth. In the past, she worked on research with Dr. DuVal and this research involved studying parental nesting behavior in Carolina Chickadees.
- Connect with her via e-mail: jam12@my.fsu.edu

Keval Patel



- **Majors:** Chemical/Biomedical Engineering
- **Class of 2017**
- **He became a UROP leader....** to help students transition into the world of research and help them realize the endless opportunities they have the same way his UROP leaders helped him.
- **As a UROP student....** Keval assisted Dr. Teng Ma with his research studying the scalable expansion and thermal release of adult human mesenchymal stem cells on Micro-Carriers.
- Connect with him via e-mail: ksp13d@my.fsu.edu

Liam Speranza



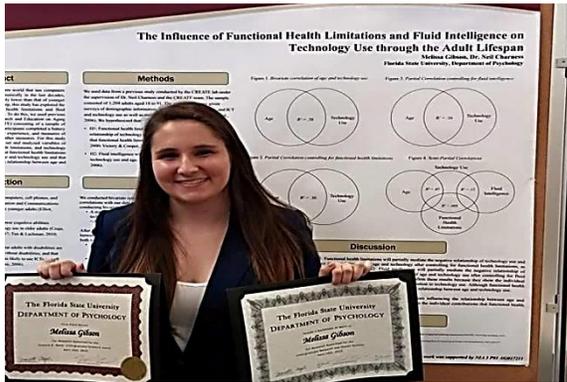
- **Major:** Biochemistry
- **Minors:** Mathematics, Biology, Chinese, and Spanish
- **Class of 2016**
- Learn more about him on LinkedIn.
- **Current Research:** Liam is defending an Honors thesis under Dr. Igor Alabugin in physical organic chemistry with a focus in bio-orthogonal cell imaging applications.
- Connect with him via e-mail: ws11f@my.fsu.edu

Mari Kyle



- **Majors:** Studio Art & Advertising | **Minor:** Computer Science
- Learn more about Mari and her undergraduate accomplishments: <http://www.fsu.edu/profiles/kyle/>
- **As a UROP leader....** She hopes to encourage students to pursue the Honors in the Major program and direct their own research projects as she did. She found that when students direct their own projects, they have the opportunity to explore their interests in a way that they previously may not have had the opportunity to.
- **Current research and involvement:** Mari is currently a UROP leader and is exploring the field of interactive media and entertainment technology. In addition to UROP, she is the Secretary of the College Leadership Council for the College of Fine Arts and the PR/Outreach Chair for the Student Council for Undergraduate Research and Creativity.
- Connect with her via e-mail: mmk12@my.fsu.edu

Melissa Gibson



- **Major:** Psychology | **Minor:** Child Development
- **Class of 2016**
- **LinkedIn:** <https://www.linkedin.com/in/melissanicholegibson>
- **Interesting fact:** Melissa's passion for research was sparked when she was a UROP participant as a sophomore. Since then she has worked in three research labs in the Psychology Department and completed an Honors thesis, and hopes to inspire a similar passion for research in her students this year as their mentor and leader.
- **Current research:** Melissa is currently working as a DIS student in the Anxiety and Behavioral Health Clinic and after graduation in Spring 2016, hopes to work as a research assistant before applying to Ph.D. programs in Clinical Psychology.
- **Connect with her via e-mail:** mng12@my.fsu.edu

Mitchell D'Sa



- **Majors:** Economics and Statistics
- **Connect with him on LinkedIn.**
- **As a current UROP leader....** He wants to help fellow students get the most out of their education at Florida State by connecting with faculty on important research projects and developing skills that will better prepare them for graduate school or the workforce.
- **Research background:** In Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 Mitchell was a research assistant through UROP to Dr. Lara Perez-Felkner in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies researching gender and ethnic inequality in STEM education. He is currently working on an Honors in the Major thesis on how currency exchange rate fluctuations affect international soccer transfers.
- **Connect with him via e-mail:** md13e@my.fsu.edu

Nick Davenport



- **Major:** Biomathematics | **Minor:** Computer Science
- **Class of 2017**
- **As a UROP leader....** He hopes to serve as a valuable resource to his students. He wants to not only be relatable and passionate, but successful in guiding his students through the incredibly rewarding process of conducting undergraduate research.
- **Research background and internship:** Nick was a UROP student during the 2014-2015 school year where he began working alongside Dr. Schepkin at the National High Magnetic Field Laboratory. He continues to assist in researching sodium MRI techniques in naïve and resistant glioma cells at 21.1 T. Additionally, he is interning with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Black Bear Management Program during the Fall 2015 semester.
- **Connect with him via e-mail:** nd13f@my.fsu.edu

Reema Tawfiq



- **Major:** Exercise Science / **Class of 2016**
- **To learn more about Reema:** <http://fsu.edu/profiles/tawfiq/>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CBYmfV0zk0Y>
- **As a UROP leader and role model**, she feels it is her responsibility to empower her students to excel in research and academics. She teaches her class in aims of shaping the UROP students into independent thinkers, academic scholars, and inquisitive researchers.
- **Research background:** Reema joined UROP her second year at FSU and was given the incredible opportunity to serve as a biomedical research assistant in Dr. Myra Hurt's lab. Over the years, she has learned various biomedical techniques that helped her in completing an Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity Award summer research project. She is currently completing an Honors thesis studying the regulation of a transcription factor, Yin Yang 1 (YY1), through the phosphorylation of serine 247.
- Connect with her via e-mail: rkt12b@my.fsu.edu

Samantha Grutzner



- **Major:** Exercise Science | **Minor:** Psychology
- **Class of 2016**
- **Research background:** Samantha was a UROP student Fall 2013-Spring 2014 and became involved in research in FSU's College of Medicine under Dr. Antonio Terracciano and Dr. Angelina Sutin studying topics of Successful Aging. She continued that research throughout her junior year, collecting data and analyzing various trends found in certain communities of individuals who have demonstrated significant longevity.
- **Current involvement:** She is currently not involved in research, but dedicates much of her time to being a personal trainer at FSU's Leach and FMC facilities and a Feature Twirler for the FSU Marching Chiefs.
- Connect with her via e-mail: smg11g@my.fsu.edu

Shauna Gillooly



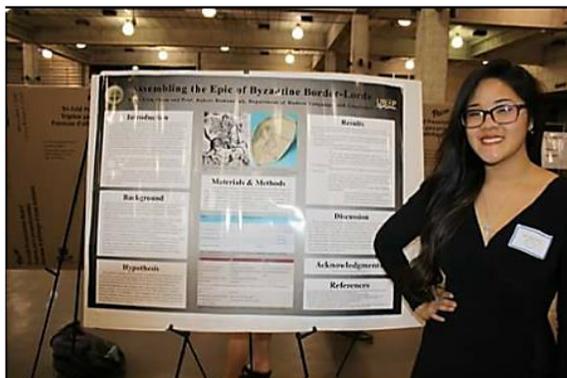
- **Majors:** International Affairs and Spanish
- **Minors:** Communication and Public Administration
- **Class of 2016**
- **UROP experiences:** She started in UROP her freshman year, and as an assistant to Dr. McDowell, she worked on the topic of Conflict in South Asian Media, which culminated in a paper that she wrote, titled, *A Media Framing Analysis: The Coverage of Rape in Indian and Western News Sources*, which has been accepted for forthcoming publication.
- **Current research:** Shauna is currently working on an Honors in the Major thesis, examining indigenous social movements in Peru, Guatemala, and Brasil, and the impact that social movements have on modern-day Latin American democracies. Her research includes fieldwork from a month she spent in Peru this summer.

Taylor Crosby



- **Major:** Art History
- **Minors:** Law and Philosophy
- **As a UROP leader**, she hopes to impact students by promoting the value and intrigue of research, while demystifying any perception that research is either boring or too difficult for undergraduates. Her ambition is to publicize the program and its significance so that more students will wish to investigate and help solve the world's problems.
- **Research background:** Taylor began her involvement in research by participating in UROP, where she served as an assistant to Department of Art Professor Kevin Curry on his research entitled "The Socioeconomic Impact of Art in Public Spaces," in which she created a virtual map of the public art in the community as well as worked with 3D printing. Currently, she is completing an Honors in the Major thesis under Department of Art History Professor Paul Niell entitled "Reform Landscape: Aesthetic Change in Lima Following the Earthquake and Tsunami of 1746," which explores the later colonial period and the Spanish House of Bourbon's attempt to intensify political reform through aesthetic change made necessary by the destruction caused by the natural disaster.
- Connect with her via e-mail: tlc12b@my.fsu.edu

Thuy Pham



- **Majors:** Anthropology and Environmental Studies
- **Class of 2017**
- **As a UROP leader**, she wants to teach students how to be leaders and teachers of their own through their experiences, whether it be in academia or in the work force. It is imperative for advancement as academic leaders to not only build up disciplined students, but to also build excellent leaders and teachers, who would then build up others to follow and exceed in their footsteps.
- **Current research:** For the past year up to now, Thuy has been working with Professor Romanchuk in the Modern Languages and Linguistics Department on the last remaining Byzantine Epics, *Digenis Akritis*, and analyzing how its motifs becomes more or less fairytale or epic-like between several Greek and Slavic translations.
- Connect with her via e-mail: ttp13@my.fsu.edu

Valentina Saracino



- **Majors:** Psychology and Biology
- **Class of 2017**
- **As a UROP leader....** she wants to instill in her students a passion and genuine curiosity for knowledge by helping them take what they are learning beyond the classroom.
- **UROP experiences:** As a past UROP student, the program made Valentina feel more immersed into the culture and breadth of knowledge available at Florida State University. In the past, she has engaged in various areas of research in clinical psychology in topics such as anxiety and depression.
- **Current research:** Valentina is doing research in neuroscience and is in the process of beginning an Honor's thesis.



Victoria Sunnergren



- **Majors:** Art History and Religion
- **Minor:** Museum Studies
- **Class of 2016**
- **Past UROP experiences and research:** Victoria was part of the first UROP class during her freshman year. Since then, she has completed two individual DIS projects and a MRCE project. She is now teaching UROP for the second year, and loving every minute of it. She is also working on her Honors in the Major thesis on the Development of Artistic Autonomy in Southwestern Native American Artwork.