Outstanding Student-Faculty Research Collaboration Award in Biology

Frequency of Award:  Annual

Award Amount:  Up to $15,000. The Department may request that the CSUN Foundation increase this limit in order to account for inflation.

Purpose:  To enable one Biology baccalaureate student and one tenured faculty member from the Department of Biology to collaborate on a scientific research project, relieved from some of the financial burden that can prevent success.

Submission Deadline:  March 15

Award Background:  The donors want to encourage faculty-student collaborative research, in particular by providing support for faculty who DO NOT have significant levels of extramural funding but are willing to commit themselves to work with and train students in research. This award is meant to provide financial assistance to one student-faculty team each year for the purpose of advancing their research goal.

Application Materials and Process:  Faculty members and students are invited to co-apply for the Outstanding Student-Faculty Research Collaboration Award.

A.  The sponsoring faculty member must write and submit an essay describing how the student will be mentored (i.e., the planned approach for developing skill in experimental science and the goals for student development). The faculty member must submit a budget detailing how the funds will be spent to support the research project.

B.  The student collaborator must write and submit an essay describing the science project proposed (i.e., the scientific purpose of the project, methods and probable timeline, and discussion of expected results). The student should also provide a contact address and phone number, and confirm the name of the faculty co-applicant.

Applications must include the two essays listed above and be submitted by the deadline via email to the Department of Biology with “Outstanding Student-Faculty Research Collaboration Award” as the subject line.

Selection Criteria:  This is a joint award, given to a team consisting of an eligible student and tenured faculty member.

The primary purpose of the award is to sponsor research by full-time, tenured CSUN Biology faculty members who have minimal to no extramural funding, as defined below, and their students as co-applicants.

- Eligible students must be baccalaureate candidates in Biology in good academic standing, with at least two semesters remaining before their graduation. These are the only requirements for the student applicant - no other criteria may be added or considered by the review committee.
For example, no consideration may be given to the career plans of the student co-applicant, beyond the intention to receive a baccalaureate degree in Biology, and no consideration may be given to other common ways of comparing students (such as GPA).

Eligible faculty must be tenured and have **less than $30,000** in extramural (i.e., not CSUN-originated) funding for any purpose (e.g., education, research, administration, or release time). These are the only requirements for the faculty co-applicant - no other criteria may be added or considered by the review committee. For example, for the purposes of judging applicants, no consideration may be given to whether a faculty member has or intends to submit a proposal for extramural funding, publish results, or attend a scientific meeting.

**Selection Process:**

The selection committee will make its award decision based on the two essays, as described above, judging them in terms of whether:

1. The scientific purpose of the project is clearly explained by the student;
2. The methods and probable timeline are reasonable and clearly explained by the student;
3. The expected results are explained and discussed by the student;
4. The faculty member explains his or her plan for developing the student’s skill in experimental science, during the course of the collaboration;
5. The faculty member explains how she or he will be an outstanding teacher and mentor to the student;
6. The faculty member explains how the budget is appropriate to support the research project. Eligible expenses include laboratory/field supplies, student salary, faculty summer salary, student and/or faculty travel, computer refresh, and other expenses.

The Chair will use either the existing Department of Biology Undergraduate Awards Selection Committee, consisting of at least three faculty members, to review applications and choose recipients, or may elect to form a special committee for this purpose, also comprised of at least three faculty. Any faculty member who is also an applicant must recuse him- or herself from the selection process.

**Award Notification:**

The Department Chair or designee will send award letters to each of the recipients and arrange for Award Certificates either to be mailed or handed in person at the Departmental Awards Ceremony, which occurs near spring commencement.

**Award Disbursement:**

The total award amount will be available to the faculty member for expenses related to the research project. Unlike other awards, students will not receive funds directly but may receive pay for work performed in conjunction with the research. Eligible expenses include laboratory/field supplies, student salary, faculty summer salary, student and/or faculty travel, computer refresh, and other expenses.