For Immediate Release
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Hartman Receives Undergraduate Research Grant

The Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarly Activity (URSA) has awarded a grant in the amount of $400 to Bradley Hartman. URSA grants encourage collaborative research, scholarly, and creative experiences between undergraduate students and faculty, by providing undergraduates with financial support.

Hartman is a junior aquatic biology major in the Jones College of Science, Engineering and Technology. He will be conducting research alongside faculty mentor Dr. Everett Weber, Professor of Biological Science. Hartman is from Murray, Kentucky. His research is entitled “A Cost Efficient Method, in Conjunction with EPA Method 7474, of Detecting Mercury Contamination in Fish Tissues.” His project revolves around using a new method for determining mercury concentration in fish tissues. Many research organizations do not have an atomic fluorescence spectrometer that is crucial in the EPA Method 7474 of testing. Hartman’s research involves digesting biological tissue using the thermal digestion process, then determining the mercury concentration in the remaining water in the sample with BCM test strips. If successful, it would allow an increased number of organizations to accurately test mercury concentration of fish tissues while decreasing their cost by eliminating the necessity of an atomic fluorescence spectrometer.

“Brad is a smart, self-motivated student,” Dr. Weber said, “This research project has the potential to be presented at national meetings (American Chemical Society) as well as regional meetings providing him with exposure to potential employers and graduate schools.”

Hartman has submitted his project for presentation at Posters-at-the-Capitol held in Frankfort, Kentucky in February 2014. He also plans to present during Murray State’s annual Scholars Week celebration in April 2014. He is exploring other presentation opportunities with the American Chemical Society.

More information about the URSA program can be found online at http://campus.murraystate.edu/services/ursa/ or by calling (270) 809-3192.