President Young's Message

What makes a research extensive university unique is a faculty that works on the cutting edge of its many different fields. At the University of Utah we take advantage of this resource by connecting our bright and talented undergraduates with top faculty researchers from more than 80 disciplines across campus.

When a student can work one-on-one with a faculty mentor on research or a creative project, a kind of education takes place that complements what happens in the classroom and moves beyond it to engage the learning process in direct and personal ways. The results of this research enhance both the University and the community. These results were very much in evidence during the first annual Utah Conference on Undergraduate Research (UCUR), a state-wide research symposium hosted by the University of Utah in February of this year.

While the success of UCUR is a tribute to the valuable research being done by undergraduates at institutions of higher learning across the state, the abstracts presented here represent the work of some of our most promising students, work that ranges from ground-breaking research on the frontiers of science to studies of the dangers of walking and driving while talking on cell phones. The quality is evident in the words of the students, themselves, as each abstract describes the research, scholarship, or creative project undertaken, the goals set forth, and the way in which those goals were achieved.

Whether through the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program, Bioscience Undergraduate Research Program, Honors Program, or individual research in a faculty lab, these students have become partners in creating the kind of extraordinary, individualized education that will mark the very best universities of the twenty-first century.

Michael K. Young
President