

Put Student Research into Motion

Give the gift of hands-on research experience to undergraduates in the Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation.



It's fitting that, in a faculty based on the study of movement, Frances Sobierajski, '17 BSc(Kinesiology), found her most rewarding learning experience after stepping away from her desk.

"I was learning so much about research, but my education was missing a hands-on experience. I really wanted to get out there and make a difference," says Sobierajski.

She found that opportunity when she started working with assistant professor Margie Davenport's Program for Pregnancy and Postpartum Health, which is housed in the Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation.

Sobierajski soon went from analyzing data in class to conducting original research in the lab to improve the lives of women. While pregnant research participants used recumbent bikes, she learned how to chart their heart rate and blood pressure and analyze the results to better understand how movement impacts heart health. She even had the chance to devise her own research questions about physical activity and maternal health and present her findings at conferences.

"My time in the lab was the most rewarding experience of my academic career," Sobierajski explains. "Instead of just answering questions in a classroom setting, I was creating those questions and answering them on my own. I wasn't just learning from a textbook — I was actually helping generate new knowledge to benefit the community."

Ignite a Passion for Research

By supporting undergraduate research, you will give more students the opportunity to make a difference through the vital research happening at the university. Providing students with hands-on research experience allows them to benefit from faculty mentorship, to develop practical skills and to make a lasting impact in the health and wellness of communities.

"Thanks to Margie's support and guidance, I found that I had an aptitude for research and took pride in my work — I wasn't just doing it for a grade," says Sobierajski. "I think if more undergrads had the opportunity they would feel differently about research."

“I wasn’t just learning from a textbook — I was actually helping generate new knowledge to benefit the community.”

— FRANCES SOBIERAJSKI, '17 BSC(KINESIOLOGY)

In her second year in the lab, Sobierajski had the chance to contribute to Davenport’s cross-Canada project to update the national clinical guidelines for exercise during pregnancy — taking research into the community. These exercise guidelines will provide thousands of women across the country with the most current, evidence-based information, offering them the reassurance they need to make informed decisions during their pregnancy.

“Why are we doing this research? To improve the lives of women,” explains Sobierajski. “I’m excited about getting this research to the people who could benefit most.”

Inspired by her research experience, Sobierajski is now pursuing a master’s degree to focus on how research can inform health policy and create healthier communities.

Undergraduate Research Grants

By supporting undergraduate research, you make transformative student experiences possible and foster the next generation of researchers. Undergraduate research grants remove financial barriers and allow students to:

- Pursue original research beyond the classroom
- Benefit from faculty mentorship
- Conduct self-designed, individual or collaborative research projects
- Build a community with their peers through research seminars
- Help improve quality of life and health of communities

Goal: \$100,000 per year to fund 20 undergraduate research grants of \$5,000 each in the Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation.

Give to the Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation:



780-248-1891



Give2KSR@ualberta.ca

Research in Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation

Our internationally acclaimed scholars are asking big questions that address societal challenges to make lives richer and communities healthier. With your support, undergraduate students can make a difference to projects like these:

What are the health benefits of exercise for cancer patients?

Professor Kerry Courneya is leading a long-term study on the role of physical activity in reducing recurrence and increasing survival rates in breast cancer patients. His research is improving the lives of cancer patients.

How much physical activity do children require?

Associate professor Valerie Carson is investigating physical activity and sedentary behaviour among children under the age of five. Her research is helping to identify strategies for parents and child care providers to foster healthy, active habits in children.

How can we make physical activity more accessible?

Assistant professor Danielle Peers is conducting a national audit of opportunities, policies and barriers to participating in sport and physical activity for people who experience disability. The results will be used by parasport programs across Canada to better facilitate meaningful participation for all levels of ability.