Indiana University East awarded six scholarships for the 2012 Summer Research Scholar Program. Undergraduate students receive $2,000 to conduct a research project under the supervision of a faculty mentor.

Funding for the program is provided by the Indiana University Office of the Vice Provost for Research and is matched by funds from IU East. The competitive program has expanded from the first single award given to now include up to six students each summer.

All recipients will present their research findings during the sixth annual Student Research Day in spring 2013.

**Cori Burnside, Lewisburg, Ohio. “Olympus Corporation Financial Fraud Case Study.”**
Business administration major with a concentration in accounting and pursuing a minor in financial forensic investigations working with Anita Morgan, assistant professor of accounting.

Burnside will research the financial fraud uncovered at the Olympus Corporation. She will develop a case study that will be used in IU East courses that addresses fraud including courses in accounting, business ethics, and management.

Burnside is researching a Wall Street Journal article written about Michael Woodford, the new CEO of Olympus, who exposed financial fraud in the company’s accounting records and was subsequently fired in October 2011. Burnside said the completed case study will be submitted to a business education journal for publication.

“This research project will help me to understand what it would be like to become a certified fraud examiner through studying the Olympus case and attending the Association of Certified Financial Examiners conference,” Burnside said. “My expectation is that through this project, I will not only become more knowledgeable about my future profession, but also use it as confirmation that becoming a certified forensic examiner is what I have envisioned it as being. I am eager to take on this task and I am confident that the development of the case study will be beneficial to me in my future endeavors.”

Fine Arts major working with Ann Kim, assistant professor of fine arts.

In this project, Flora will combine her art, short stories and poetry in the exploration of the topic of gay marriage. She said this project is an extension of a painting she had presented at the 2012 Women and Gender Studies Conference. Two more paintings, “And Now a Message from Our Sponsors” and an untitled piece are a part of her summer project. She hopes the project will allow her to become further educated on Indiana’s LGBTQ community and its straight alliance, to learn of the actions it has taken, and what it will take to continue to achieve gay rights. The writings will reflect on her personal experiences and thoughts in regard to the gay community.
She added that she chose to work on this project after finding out that the definition of marriage will soon go on the ballot in Indiana. The bill was approved by the Indiana House and Senate but must pass again before being put on the ballot.

“If House Joint Resolution No. 6 is passed into Indiana’s constitution, it will define marriage as between one man and one woman, and would not recognize a marriage outside such conditions. This is not acceptable. Not only have my partner and I invested in the idea of a long future together, but so have thousands of gay and lesbian couples across the state of Indiana,” Flora said. “If marriage is so narrowly defined in Indiana and elsewhere, it will damage the future of gays and lesbians in regard to the person they are constitutionally permitted to love and marry, but also their physical and emotional wellbeing. Legalizing gay marriage would be the acceptance the LGBTQ community needs to finally criminalize the victimization our community has received for centuries.”

Robert Funkhouser, Richmond, Ind. “New Methods in Lamellophone Construction and What They Can Teach Us.” Humanities major who is also pursuing a concentration in music is working with Elliott McKinley, assistant professor of music.
For his project, Funkhouser is going to construct a lamellophone which is a percussion instrument sometimes known as a ‘thumb piano’. He will experiment with construction materials and tuning mechanisms. He chose the project because he likes to build instruments, play music, and because he thinks he can help to establish standard techniques in making thumb pianos.

“My project is an exploratory inquiry into the construction of lamellophones, more commonly known as thumb pianos. I am building a few instruments intended to answer a few questions about the potential of this type of instrument to take on a few different forms. I will use a variety of materials ranging from industrial supplies to cigar boxes,” Funkhouser said. “I hope to figure out whether or not sympathetic resonance is a realistic idea for thumb pianos, and to record all of my techniques in a standardized way.”

Misty Gray, Fountain City, Ind. “The Impact of a Home Literacy Workshop as it Relates to Literacy and Social-Emotional Development in Young Children.” Psychology major working with Denice Williams, lecturer of reading and early childhood education.
As a psychology major, Gray is interested in the psychological development of children. For this project, she will partner with the School of Education to implement a summer workshop program in home literacy for families with preschool-aged children. She is partnering with the IU East School of Education and Birth to Five of Wayne County in order to develop a summer reading workshop for parents and preschool children within Wayne County. This workshop will be geared toward empowering parents with tools and strategies to help their preschoolers continue to develop emergent literacy skills. Gray said her focus will be on the stages of social-emotional development of children in this age group and how it pertains to the way they learn.

“Children are amazing little beings and the way they develop and learn during their first five years is absolutely astonishing. Being able to work with children this age and their parents is an honor,” Gray said. “This summer is a pilot program with the emergent literacy workshop and I hope that by helping, I will be able to continue to help in future summers and to continue my community involvement with families of preschoolers. I am excited about understanding how the
social-emotional stages of preschoolers are connected to the way they learn to read, write, and communicate as well as what strategies can be developed in order to enhance their emergent reading skills in a way that is fun for the whole family.”


In this study, Skinner will use a fruit fly model to study the effects of a variety of environmental chemicals on gene expression in the Drosophila melanogaster (fruit fly). She will conduct various feeding assays to expose the flies to the chemicals and then send them for RNA expression testing to see which genes the chemicals increase expression or eliminate. Her interest in the way the human body works, and her future plans to attend medical school, drive the project.

“I choose to work on this particular project because we are affected by environmental chemicals every day. I would like to see what effect they have on our genes in the long run,” Whitton said. “Drosophila and humans have some similar qualities, therefore, we can study and learn what different environmental chemicals are causing harmful effects on fruit flies, and relate it to the human body. It is amazing how we can do research on these flies, and relate it to human health.”


This project will use films to generate discussions among adolescents about the life issues and challenges that all face, regardless of culture. Whitton will review an index of award-winning international youth films from iue.libguides.com/internationalyouthfilms, that have relevance to the themes of conflict, survival, gender identity, cultural heritage, family, friendship, “fitting in,” and/or “coming of age” to develop discussion questions and content information.

Whitton said his goal is to select films that are thought-provoking and engaging for adolescents and will help them develop perspectives different from those presented in mainstream U.S. media.

“This is a research project that combines my career goal and personal commitment to help adolescents gain varied perspectives on the challenges they face. High school can be an insular experience. By introducing students to world-views of young adults in other cultures, through the medium of film, they can enhance their understanding of problems and issues facing youth,” Whitton said. “I also have curiosity about cultures around the world and am interested in learning more about how film can convey meaning in multiple ways and the impact that may have on how adolescents in the U.S. view their lives.”