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Budding Research Careers

University of Dayton

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A $201,600 grant from the national Clare Boothe Luce Program of the Henry Luce Foundation will provide additional science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) undergraduate research opportunities for women at the University of Dayton.

The grant will support the research of eight students during their second and third years of school, including summer, with an eye on preparing them for graduate study and careers in research or academia. Students will perform 10 hours of research per week during the school year and 20 hours per week during the summer. Each student will receive up to $25,200 in support.

"Early and consistent engagement in research is crucial in developing and preparing students for graduate school and careers in research and academia. The Clare Boothe Luce Research Scholars program will provide recipients with resources and support to engage in sustained, meaningful research experiences," said Nancy Martorano Miller, associate director of research in the University Honors Program, which will manage the program. "Plus, the University of Dayton will provide faculty and peer mentors, assistance with applying to and securing scholarships for graduate school, resume development and networking opportunities to build a community of support through their careers."

Examples of possible research opportunities include working on solutions to balance, gait and mobility problems in the elderly with associate professor of mechanical engineering Kim Bigelow or safety of nanomaterials with assistant professor of chemical and materials engineering Kristen Comfort.

"The University and Clare Boothe Luce program share the goal of increasing the participation and success of women in the sciences and engineering," Provost Paul Benson said. "We have, for years, been committed to diversity and inclusion across campus, especially in STEM fields in which women continue to be significantly underrepresented."

In the last 10 years, the percentage of undergraduate degrees in the physical sciences, math and computer science earned by women at the University of Dayton increased from 28 to 40 percent.

At the University, the Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) Integrated Learning-Living Community, Women in Engineering Program, the Women in Engineering Summer Camp and the School of Engineering Diversity in Engineering Center, among others, have contributed to progress in this area.

Also, since 2008, the University has been a part of the National Science Foundation-funded LEADER consortium, a partnership with three Dayton-area universities to improve the recruitment and retention of tenure-track women STEM faculty.

The Clare Boothe Luce Program, the single most significant source of private support for women in science, mathematics and engineering, has supported nearly 2,000 women nationwide since 1989.

For more information about the Clare Boothe Luce program at the University of Dayton, contact Nancy Martorano Miller, associate director of research in the University Honors Program at nmiller1@udayton.edu or 937-229-4278. For interviews, contact Shawn Robinson, associate director of media relations, at srobinson@udayton.edu or 937-229-3391.