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University of Dayton

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Two University of Dayton undergraduates won national awards for their research from the American Physiological Society.

Senior Michael Hudock, a biology major from Hudson, Ohio, and junior Elizabeth Kelsch, an exercise physiology major from Northport, New York, were selected among more than 100 students for the David S. Bruce Excellence in Undergraduate Research Award.
“Their achievement is really a testament to their hard work and the significant support for undergraduate research here at the University, including the University Honors Program,” said Anne Crecelius, assistant professor of health and sports sciences and advisor to the students.

Hudock and Kelsch presented their research to two panels of physiologists at the 2016 Experimental Biology meeting in San Diego.

Kelsch's project was on “The Impact of Acute Isocapnic Hypoxia on Reactive Hyperemia in Young, Healthy Humans,” which she said evaluated the effect of low oxygen exposure, similar to what someone experiences in high altitudes, on blood flow in the forearm.

Kelsch, a 2015 Berry Summer Thesis Institute scholar, said she never saw herself doing research before taking a class taught by Crecelius.

“It’s been really cool because research is such a big part of the University,” she said. “And because I’d never seen myself in this role, I didn’t really understand the prevalence of research and the opportunities there. Now I have this new door open to me of doing research and getting my master's in physiology potentially.”

Hudock studied the “Effect of Combination Ice and Compression Socks on Resting Calf Blood Flow in Trained Male Athletes.” He chose the topic for his honors thesis because of his background in triathlons.

“One of the products a lot of triathletes use are compression garments,” he said. “I never knew exactly what they did, so I wanted to study the actual effects.” Hudock, who plans to attend medical school after graduation, focused on one company’s products and found they did not increase or decrease blood flow as advertised.

He said he did not expect his research to win an award.

“I was shocked, but thankful. I put in a lot of hard work,” he said. “The thesis gave me an opportunity to pursue what I love and something that interests me. It also gave me a chance to foster my critical thinking skills.”

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