Students show off their research excellence

The best of Sacramento State’s student research was on display Friday, March 6, during the annual Student Research Symposium in the University Union.

Sac State students undertake and accomplish a wide range of research projects, from tracking the development of heroines and female national martyrs since World War I to diverting biowaste into sustainable resources.

Research presentations took place on the first and second floors of the Union, including the Ballroom. Twenty-seven undergraduate students and 19 graduate students made oral presentations as either individuals or teams. Twenty-four undergraduate students and 23 graduate students made poster presentations as either individuals or teams.

The presenters were judged by faculty jurors. Those with the highest scores received the Provost’s Award for Research Excellence, which includes $500 for the students as well as $500 in professional development funds for their faculty mentors. Nearly a dozen oral presentations were selected to represent Sacramento State at the 29th annual California State University Student Research Competition, May 1-2 at CSU San Bernardino, where students from the 23 CSU campuses will compete for awards in the undergraduate and graduate categories.

“For many students, this may be the first time they have presented original research to an audience, either through a poster or oral presentation,” Deidre B. Sessoms, director of Faculty Research Development, said in previewing the symposium. “Whether preparing for graduate school or the work force, learning how to make this kind of presentation is key to success.”

A number of University officials attended the symposium, including Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Frederika “Fraka” Harmsen; Vice Provost James Prince; and David Earwicker, assistant vice president, Research Affairs.

Sessoms noted that conducting research not only contributes to students’ academic success, but the students also benefit from applying knowledge in their specific field and learning how that field works.

“They learn what counts as knowledge and how we solve important problems through creating new understandings,” Sessoms said. “These skills contribute to their all-around success as students, and in life.”

For more about the symposium, visit www.csus.edu/research/studentresearch/studentresearchsymposium.html. For media assistance, call Sacramento State’s Public Affairs office at (916) 278-6156. – Craig Koscho