

FOREWORD

Undergraduate research (UGR) programs provides a clear example of the professional value of UGR, and how engaging undergraduates in scientific research pays dividends that were previously unrecognized. Undergraduate research can be an effective vehicle for strengthening critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and preparing students for entry into graduate schools and professional school programs. UGR is being promoted at growing numbers of colleges around the country, facilitated and promoted over the years by the Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR). With effective UGR programs, students, under the guidance of their instructors, would engage in research that promote active learning, contribute meaningfully to class discussion, and present their scholarly work at conferences, and possibly publish the results of their work, often in collaboration with their instructors. Additionally, UGR is beneficial to faculty with its fresh perspective that results in a challenging bridge between publication and teaching.

Individual UGR programs are present at essentially all of the country's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Currently, there are more undergraduate research programs at public HBCUs compared to private HBCUs. However, those programs are generally insular and thus the expansion or portability of those programs across broader segments of the institutions tends to be quite limited, if at all.

The editors contend that a strong need exists for HBCUs to become more aware of and embrace the UGR initiatives that are taking place at their respective institutions, and more broadly share and promote the experiences across the curricula. HBCUs are leading producers of minority STEM undergraduates (HBCU-Levers, 2013); consequently, the purpose of this volume is to tell the story about the history, successes, challenges, and processes of UGR programs on the campuses of HBCUs.

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