

Welcome to WISE RP—*Chris Bass WISE RP Director*

As the **Women in Science and Engineering Residence Program** kicks off its eighteenth year, I'd like to wish a warm welcome to all of our new and returning students. This year we received a record number of applications seeking admission to the WISE RP. We admitted one hundred five first-year students hailing from seventeen states and three countries; 75% from the state of Michigan; and a nearly 50/50 split between LSA and Engineering students. Student interests range from informatics, actuarial mathematics, and astronomy to chemical, civil, and biomedical engineering, to name just a few. In addition, we have forty sophomores returning to the WISE RP this year to serve as program board members and peer mentors. Rounding out our program we have four outstanding resident advisors who will be helping build an innovative and cohesive community.

On our professional staff we have **Beth Gibney** beginning her fifth year as the WISE RP associate director. Beth is responsible for all of the day-to-day operations of the program, including meeting one-on-one with every first-year student during the fall term. Her office is located in 136 Jordan (near the Mosher laundry room). Beth is passionate about

student development and facilitating student success so she is an outstanding resource for our students. **Valerie Munson** is our administrative assistant and her office is located in 168 Jordan. Val has been at the University of Michigan for twenty-seven years (which must mean she started when she was five!) so she is an incredible resource for everyone – please use her expertise to assist you; if she doesn't know the answer, she knows who does. We also have a graduate student assistant, **Lauren Steinberg**, who will be assisting with our program board and peer mentor program, and an undergraduate assistant, **Elise Wojewoda** — a former MRC student — who is also helping us out in ways too numerous to list! I am beginning my eighth year as the WISE RP and MRC director. I teach UC 107 in the fall term and I work on many of the larger issues relating to the program and collaborate with units across campus. In the winter term I teach a class on ePortfolios for interested WISE RP and MRC sophomores. Please take time to get to know our WISE RP staff because we're all committed to your success at Michigan. Let's have a great year together!

Our WISE RP 2010-2011 Student Profile:

First-Year Class

In-State: 73%
Out-of-State: 25%
International: 2%
LSA: 46%
Engineering: 50%
Kinesiology: 1%
Nursing: 3%

Second-Year Class

In-State: 75%
Out-of-State: 23%
International: 2%
LSA: 48%
Engineering: 52%

Students hail from seventeen different states, such as Colorado, Iowa, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, California and Florida.

STEPS: A Community Experience—*Meghan Karriger & Jordan Hall*

At the start of each fall semester all WISE RP students, whether first-year student, peer mentor, program board member, or resident advisor, walk to Burns Park to attend a community-building program called STEPS. The students are split into

small groups and asked to participate in different challenge activities. These include Raging River where students are given a limited number of small boards and must cross a distance without having any board lose human contact and Toxic Waste where stu-

dents are given a bucket of stones and, using a given device, must transport the container to another bucket and dump the stones without touching either bucket or surrounding area. By working through each task and overcoming the obstacles presented, students learn what is necessary to succeed, whether it's making it through the day, passing an exam, or choosing a career. By working through each problem, stepping outside of comfort zones, and completing the tasks, the students in WISE RP build a sense of everlasting community with those around them and leave with new life experiences that can be used to succeed no matter what the challenge may be.





“The Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) was a stimulating intellectual, as well as, social experience.”

Research Experience for Undergraduates—*MaryPat Beaufait*

This summer, I traveled to Hokie-land: Blacksburg, VA, home of the Virginia Tech campus. The Hokie, VT’s mascot, is apparently some kind of turkey. I had applied for and was offered the opportunity to participate in an REU (Research Experience for Undergraduates) program at VT. The 10-week REU program was sponsored by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Electrical and Computer Engineering department at VT. Fifteen students from across the United States and Puerto Rico formed six groups to do research on Cognitive and Wireless Communications. My project involved creating a reconfigurable component for the Software-Defined Radio, which is a communication device in which the physical layer functionality has been emulated by software. Cognitive radios are an essential technology for dynamic systems such as first response systems use by police, fire, and emergency services. Systems that require quick learning and

adaptation will benefit significantly from the ongoing work in cognitive communications. For the first few weeks of the program, we were introduced to various areas of cognitive communications, including digital and analog communications, Fourier transforms, and other electrical engineering topics. After choosing our topics in week four, we had five intense weeks of research work before writing our final papers and presenting to VT faculty and staff and some first responders in the final week. The VT faculty members I interacted with were all extremely helpful and approachable, and they plan to stay in communication with us REU students as we apply to and enter graduate programs.

The REU program at VT was a stimulating intellectual, as well as, social experience. I interacted academically with engineers from multiple universities and fields. My peers consisted of a fellow electrical engineer from the University of Arizona and a biomedical engineer from the

University of Pennsylvania. The program sponsors scheduled group activities, so everyone in my REU program went hiking in the Cascades toward the beginning of the program, and we also had a game day (bowling/ping-pong/darts/air-hockey) at the Student Rec Center at VT. In addition to these sponsored activities, we frequented the movie theaters and shopping malls nearby, as well as planning our own Wii tournaments and Texas Hold’Em poker nights. We made sure to have lots of fun and stay active while completing our research projects during the time frame we were given. My experience in VT this summer was extremely rewarding, both academically and socially, and I encourage any EECS students in WISE RP who are interested in a good learning experience in a new environment to apply next summer!

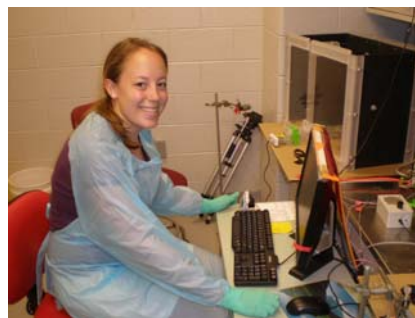
MaryPat, a former WISE RP student, is a junior studying electrical engineering.

WISE RP Summer Research Fellowship—*Kristin Kops*

This summer, I received a summer research fellowship through the WISE RP, which was made possible by a generous donation to the program. I had the opportunity to work full-time in the Becker Lab here at the University of Michigan. The Becker Lab is a behavioral neuroscience lab run by Professor Jill Becker, a professor in the Department of Psychology. My major is BBCS (Brain Behavior & Cognitive Science) so working there has provided me with a good opportunity to get my feet wet in field of neuroscience.

As a part of the Becker lab, I have been involved in two different projects. One project investigated the self-administration of cocaine in rats. The other project looked at female sexual behavior in rats with a focus on the lordosis reflex. I have gained so much knowledge and experience during my time at the Becker lab, and I am so thankful to be a part of such a hard working, enthusiastic team. Before this summer, I had never really thought about doing research for my career, but now I know I would really enjoy it!

With the help of the summer research program, I have earned the respect of the post-docs in the lab and will be continuing to work in the lab until I graduate in two years. I may eventually be working on my own project in the lab with the help of my post-doc supervisor, Jennifer Cummings, and doing a senior thesis. I am so grateful for this wonderful opportunity.



Kristin, a former WISE RP student, is a junior studying Brain Behavior & Cognitive Science.

The Out-of-State Experience—*Meital Haas*

When I was looking at colleges, I was sure my dream school was a small university that was close to my home in Massachusetts. To my surprise and delight, I ended up at the University of Michigan, a school that's over a thirteen-hour drive from Boston and boasting over 40,000 students.

My initial reactions to U of M were positive, but I couldn't help but feel a little homesick. While my newly-made friends swore they did not have a "Midwestern accent," I continued to swear that I would never call soda "pop." As much of an embarrassment as I feel it is to admit now, I didn't even know what a Buckeye (Ohio State's mascot) was, until a kind soul shared that I was to always speak in disgust of it in the future. With the help of my friends and the WISE RP community, I was taught the

appropriate fight songs, introduced to the appropriate wind and snow attire, and lent the ever-present hand (especially when people explained where in Michigan they were from.)

I still feel the innate connection to the Northeast that I have been brought up with, but I also now have a strong love and connection to Ann Arbor, Michigan. Although I cannot drive home for a weekend simply because I feel like it or I need to switch up my wardrobe, I love the weekends I spend at school and celebrate holidays and special occasions in new ways, creating traditions and calling home to make sure they still miss me.

Adjusting to an out-of-state school is hard, and I cannot claim to have mastered all of the challenges. But my advice to you is as follows: The WISE RP

community is a great way to make your new home (potentially far away from your other home) a lot smaller and more manageable. The almost hand-picked friends that the WISE RP provides are always there to lean on and they can become as close as family. My friends and I even called our nightly dinners "family dinner," waiting for everyone to be done with activities before heading down to the dining hall. Chances are your friends, although they may be from Michigan, are going through very similar changes in adapting to a new school. Embrace them; embrace Michigan; embrace BLUE.

Meital is a WISE RP second-year student studying chemical engineering. She also serves as Peer Mentor.



"The almost hand-picked friends that WISE RP provides are always there to lean on and they can become as close as family."

WISE RP Program Board—*Emily Carpenter*

When you first arrive at a big university like the University of Michigan it can be very overwhelming. The WISE RP is a great way to make the university feel just a little bit smaller. In addition to having second-year students who serve as Peer Mentors, we also have a community Program Board. There are eight of us in the community who are here to plan many of the events and activities we have within WISE RP. This past year, we had fun activities including Game Show Night, Taco and Movie Night, the WISE RP/MRC Winter Formal, scavenger hunts, and cookie decorating. The Program Board also organizes aca-

demical and multicultural events and programs. These events are the best way for you to meet all of the other students in the WISE RP.

The Program Board meets once a week to discuss and plan our events. These meetings are open to anyone who wants to suggest new ideas for fun events or help with the planning. Coming to these meetings is a great idea if you have good ideas or if you are thinking about joining program board next year.

You'll find that the WISE RP Peer Mentors are a wonderful resource. But don't forget about Program Board members! We are also sophomores and are

always here to answer questions and help however we can.

The best advice I can give our new WISE RP first years is to take advantage of the program. Talk to your Peer Mentors, Program Board members, and resident advisors. Be open to new people and keep your door open—you will have no trouble making some of the best friends you will have at Michigan right here in WISE RP.

Emily is a WISE RP second-year student studying computer science.



Women in Science and Engineering Residence Program

200 Observatory
168 Mosher Jordan
Ann Arbor, MI
48109-2035

Phone: 734-936-6536
E-mail: wise-rp@umich.edu
www.lsa.umich.edu/wiserp/



WISE RP first-year students enjoying our annual STEPS program on September 3rd.

Peer Mentorship in the WISE RP—*Sita Syal*

My name is Sita Syal, and I am one of the thirty-two peer mentors in the WISE RP this year. We are here to make the transition to college a little bit easier. U of M is a daunting place, filled with killer classes, expensive textbooks, a gladiator-sized football stadium, and a bunch of buckeye-hating maniacs – who wouldn't be nervous?! Peer mentors are second-year students who have successfully dodged the curveballs that are thrown at freshman. Our peer mentors showed us the tricks of the trade last year, so we are here to do the same for our mentees!

Peer mentors get to do all sorts

of cool stuff, like email their mentees before school starts, help them move in, and decorate their doors for their birthday (or half-birthday). Fun activities like mentor-mentee movie nights, cooking parties and board game nights have also been known to occur. More than anything, a peer mentor is a friend to their mentee, someone they can rely on, and ask them about anything. It's challenging to get used to U of M, but being part of the WISE RP community and having a peer mentor can make the transition easier.

Here are some super-duper tips I have based on my experiences:

- Find a couple good places to focus on studies.
- Ask your peer mentors questions – we love it!
- Be patient with yourself – it takes time to adjust to college life.
- DON'T step on the M in the diag – you will fail your first blue book test! Ahhhh! Not that I'm superstitious or anything :)

Last but not least, learn the U of M fight song – I'll give you a hint: "Hail to the Victors..."

Sita is a WISE RP second-year student studying chemical engineering.

Annual Alumni Dinner—*Chris Bass, Director*

Every year the MRC and WISE RP hold an alumni dinner as the capstone event for the year-long Returner Enrichment Program (REP). REP exposes sophomore students to many of the unique challenges that they encounter, and assists them with building skills to successfully navigate the sophomore year and beyond. One of the

key skills we focus on is networking with professionals. Our annual alumni dinner at Cottage Inn brings together past MRC and WISE RP students, who are now professionals in many different fields, and places them by area of interest with six to eight current students so that our students can practice their networking skills.

It's become one of our most popular and successful events that both alums and current students enjoy. It's also a great way for us to tap into the many alums who are in our area and are anxious to stay connected to the WISE RP.

ePortfolios in WISE RP—*Chris Bass, Director*

More and more students at the U of M – and across the country -- are creating electronic portfolios, or ePortfolios. It's somewhat difficult to describe in writing what an ePortfolio is but it's probably easiest to think of it as a greatly enhanced resume that's a visual and textual representation of activities students have been engaged in while at the U of M and beyond. More importantly, the *process* of creating an ePortfolio helps students discover what they've actually learned from their experiences and it's that "tacit knowledge" that provides the cornerstone of their ePortfolio. Two years ago, the MRC and WISE RP were selected as pilot sites for the U of M

ePortfolio project. The ePortfolio staff came to the communities for four monthly training sessions that resulted in each student creating a portfolio. **This initial pilot involved eighty students and was by far the largest pilot site on campus.** While the overall experience that year was positive, we felt that students would get a much more fulfilling experience if they opted in on the project and they got more feedback from peers and program staff along their journey. Thus, this past year students could choose whether or not they wanted to create an ePortfolio. **In all, thirty students from the MRC and WISE RP opted in and**

were divided into two sections. Margie Webb --one of our former MRC students who had created an ePortfolio the prior year -- helped me facilitate bi-weekly sessions during the winter term. Together, we all embarked on an ePortfolio journey that culminated in a well-attended showcase of their work in April. This year, we hope to be able to offer the class for credit. **To see our students' truly amazing portfolios, go to our website www.lsa.umich.edu/mrc and look for the showcase link on the homepage.** MRC sophomores will get more information about ePortfolios in their REP sessions this fall.



The mission of the WISE RP is to recruit, support, and retain a diverse population of students in the science, mathematics, engineering, and technology fields; to link students with resources and opportunities that will support their academic and personal pursuits; and to develop relationships among students with similar interests while building a community based on mutual respect and affirmation of diversity.