

Undergraduate Research Forum Luncheon Speakers

Our luncheon speakers, Mary E. Lewis and our MUITDC teams exemplify the fusion of learning and scholarship called for in a learning centered paradigm. These students recognize they have crafted a way of being in synch with the complex ways of understanding they have forged in partnership with the many dedicated faculty mentors who worked with them during their Miami experience.

Mary Lewis recently graduated from Miami University in December, 2007 with a double major in English Literature and Black World Studies and a minor in Political Science. She became involved in research during her sophomore year at Miami through the Student Achievement in Research and Scholarship (STARS) program. Her first project entitled, *The Origin of Race in America*, focused on the deliberate political and sociological creation of “race” during the early 1600’s in the United States as a means of dividing and controlling the increasing working population. Mary presented this research at the annual STARS conference at Akron University and at the Undergraduate Research Forum at Miami University.



Mary Lewis

Encouraged by the success of this first project, Mary pursued further research through her participation in the Undergraduate Summer Scholars program. Her topic, *Self Reflections from African American Women in the Academy and Law*, led her to conduct interviews with nine African American women in academic and legal fields. The majority of these women were among the first generation to integrate the American school system and work force during the Civil Rights Movement, and their interviews offer insight into their experiences and guidance for individuals facing similarly adverse situations today. Mary received a Dean’s Scholar Award and support from the University Honors Program to continue this research throughout the academic year. This year as a STARS student, Mary was awarded the Lloyd O. Brown Scholarship. This scholarship is named after the late Judge Lloyd O. Brown who served on the Ohio Board of Regents from 1984 to 1993. This coveted award provides financial support each year to one or two STARS students from the state of Ohio. This research also served as her senior honors thesis that she presented at the Annual STARS Student Research Conference and will present at the Undergraduate Research Forum here today.

Also during this past year, Mary had the opportunity to study abroad at Miami’s Luxembourg campus where she received support from the Undergraduate Research Award Program and STARS to conduct research on *German Feminism: Past and Present*. This resulted in a large poster presentation that was displayed at the STARS conference at Bowling Green State University. Mary is extremely grateful to Dr. Cheryl L. Johnson, Director of Women’s Studies, as she has guided all of Mary’s research throughout her time at Miami.