



Students First, Student-centered, Student Success

SUNO

SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY *at* NEW ORLEANS

CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

MAY 2024



ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

SU DAY AT THE CAPITOL



Dr. Christian Clement, as Director/PI of the LADH/CDC-Health Disparities SUNO-SUS OPH CEA, together with Dr. Rachid Belmasrour and Dr. Mostafa Elaasar, supervised ten SUNO students to present at the SU Day at the Louisiana State Capitol on Tuesday, April 9, 2024. Dr. Rachid Belmasrour and Dr. Mostafa Elaasar accompanied and ushered the Students into the Rotunda to successfully present their work.



Students: Garrett Ford and Amani Jenkins (Sophomore - Biology majors) made a Kresge Foundation-Oral presentation on Pulse Oxygen Sensors, also known as pulse oximeters. Pulse oxygen sensors are essential tools in modern health care. They are used to determine blood oxygen levels and heart rate non-invasively. Recent studies during COVID-19 have shown that these sensors may need to be more accurate for people with darker skin tones. This inaccuracy is due to the sensor's use of light. Some are absorbed when the light is read through, with darker skin tones absorbing more light. These inaccuracies can lead to individuals receiving the wrong medical care for otherwise treatable conditions.



Student: Garrett Ford (Sophomore - Biology Major) presented a poster on Radiation shielding. According to the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission (U.S.NRC), the average American receives a dose of 0.62 rem or 620 millirems each year, with a lethal radiation dose of 400-450 rem over a short period. Children and younger people are more vulnerable to radiation effects, as well as pregnant and people with weakened immune systems.



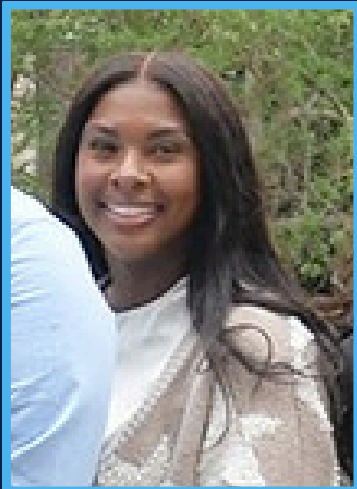
Alyra Youyoute (Graduating Senior-Biology/Math double major) made a poster presentation on Technology innovation (3-D printing, Robotics, Advanced Manufacturing). In summary, robotics is a branch of engineering and computer science that involves robot design, manufacturing, and operation. Part of our work is Robot Innovation in infrastructure that is not easily accessible. Infrastructure like underground pipelines, power gridlines, and National Critical Infrastructure. Robots have many uses, such as in hospitals to perform surgeries, they are also used to help with farming and agriculture production, and in nuclear powerplant technology.



Student: Daybriel Johnson (Graduating Senior-Biology/Math double major) made a Kresge Foundation-Oral Poster Presentation on COVID-19 Survey Analysis. The Chi-square test for independence is used to determine whether relationships between two categorical variables of human populations in the Covid-19 pandemic are statistically significant by using the row and column total in a contingency table from sample data (drawn to reflect demographics within the New Orleans city limits, greater New Orleans area, Outliers, and Louisiana).



Student: Anastasia Newton (Senior-Biology Major) also made a Kresge Poster Presentation. In December 2019, the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) virus, which is now causing the COVID-19 pandemic, appeared in individuals in China. This virus had a devastating impact on individuals, local communities, and the healthcare systems in the state of Louisiana. In December 2020, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the Emergency Use Authorization (EAU) for Pfizer-BioNtech's and Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine. Despite the illness's severity, Louisiana's adults possessed vaccine hesitancy. This research provides results of vaccine hesitance in adults based on gender, age, education level, and area of residency in Louisiana.



Student: Alayshia Payne (Sophomore - Nursing Major) made a poster presentation on Ascertaining data analysis accuracy in 1,943 COVID-19 vaccine recipients of diverse racial groups at a New Orleans East Primary Healthcare Center- The study population consisted of 1,943 individuals who visited the EXCELth, Inc., Primary Healthcare Center, New Orleans East, to receive Covid-19 vaccine from February 2020 to March 2023. The study group included the following racial groups: African American, American Indian/ Alaska, Asian, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and Caucasian. In this report, she presented a double-verified analysis of data on the 1,943 vaccine recipients. The analysis was dependable and suitable for further discussions on strategies for improving response to vaccination calls. African Americans were the largest racial group vaccinated in the community, at 90.2% of all vaccine recipients. Other races vaccinated included American Indian/ Alaska, Asian, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, Caucasian, and more than one race. This shows that the community is racially diverse and is suitable for studying the impact of vaccination on the outcome of COVID-19. We plan to extend the report to include the 2023-2024 fiscal year data.



Student: Amari Youyoute (Senior - Biology Major) presented a poster on antibiotic sensitivity of common secondary bacterial infections observed in COVID-19 patients. Bacteria, being prokaryotic microorganisms, can have varying effects on human health. When a person contracts a virus like COVID-19, their immune system weakens, making it easier for harmful bacteria to invade the body. These secondary infections often necessitate antibiotic treatment, either bactericidal or bacteriostatic, to combat the complications arising from COVID-19.

To assess antibiotic efficacy, the study examined common bacterial infections found in COVID-19 patients, such as *Enterobacter aerogenes*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, and *Bacillus cereus*.

The study revealed instances of antibiotic resistance among the tested bacteria. Various antibiotics, including azithromycin, have been used to prevent and treat bacterial co-infections and secondary bacterial infections in patients with viral respiratory illnesses like SARS-CoV-2.



Student: Troii Johnson (Senior - Biology Major) poster presentation was a study on Paxlovid, an outpatient treatment for mild-to-moderate COVID-19 in high-risk patients is explored. The FDA approved Paxlovid, along with molnupiravir (Lagevrio), as an oral antiviral. Analysis of medication usage by age, sex, and race revealed concerning disparities.

Several factors contribute to these disparities, particularly in communities characterized by high poverty rates and predominantly Black and Hispanic populations. Unfortunately, individuals in these areas often receive prescriptions that may not be optimal for their health.

Studies, such as one conducted by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, highlight the unequal distribution of COVID-19 treatments. Throughout the pandemic, Black and Hispanic individuals have faced significantly higher hospitalization and mortality rates compared to their White counterparts. Specifically, the study found that Black patients were 36% less likely than White patients to receive Paxlovid. In comparison, Hispanic patients were 30% less likely than non-Hispanic patients to be prescribed the antiviral medication.

These findings underscore the urgent need to address healthcare disparities and ensure equitable access to life-saving treatments for all individuals, regardless of race or ethnicity.



Student: Rayan Demery (Graduating Senior - Biology Major) made a poster presentation on the eco-physiological effects of copper [$\text{CuSO}_4 \cdot 5\text{H}_2\text{O}$] at varied concentrations of (2.5, 5, and 10) ppm on *Helianthus annuus* (Sunflower) and *Zea mays* (Corn), in replicates of three at the control and each concentration over the course of six weeks was studied in ambient conditions of the greenhouse.

The first group of plants (Phase-I) received Cu only, whereas the second group (Phase-II) received Cu and 600mg of MiracleGro fertilizer. We tested the hypothesis that phase II plants would experience a detrimental impact from the fertilizer and copper treatments compared to phase I plants. The seed germination, plant growth, chlorophyll concentrations, chlorosis, stomatal counts, necrosis, and biomass were studied.

Additionally, the data were collected on environmental factors like soil temperature and greenhouse temperature to find any correlations between various eco-physiological effects of Cu and fertilizer. Results showed that 10ppm Cu showed the highest growth rate in fertilized and nonfertilized corn among the different concentrations of Cu. The highest growth rate for fertilized and nonfertilized sunflower was in the 2.5ppm concentration of Cu. In addition, the chlorophyll analysis decreased over time in both nonfertilized and fertilized corn. On the contrary, the nonfertilized and fertilized sunflower chlorophyll content increased. Overall, the diverse concentrations showed different trends for nonfertilized and fertilized plants. The hypothesis was rejected because the immature fertilized plants showed harmful effects of the copper and fertilizer soil solution. Still, as they matured, they began tolerating the synergistic effects and showed signs of improvement.



Student: Naya Kendrick (Senior-Biology Major) made a poster presentation on the COVID-19 pandemic and how it altered the lifestyle of a significant number of individuals who were compelled to undergo quarantine in their residences and consequently relied heavily on the internet for studying, online teaching, official meetings, communication, entertainment, conferences, and work. She hypothesized that possibly the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a greater inclination toward internet addiction when compared to the pre-pandemic era. Internet addiction is a behavioral disorder characterized by excessive and compulsive internet use that interferes with daily life activities. The prevalence of internet addiction has been a concern for several years, with an increasing number of people spending significant amounts of time online.

Several studies provided evidence that the prevalence of internet addiction varies significantly across countries and cultures, with certain regions demonstrating higher rates than others. This review reveals a significant increase in the prevalence of internet addiction during the COVID-19 pandemic. The most notable discovery is that internet addiction has experienced a nearly threefold increase during the COVID-19 pandemic when compared to its prevalence in the preceding decade. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Nigeria had the highest recorded prevalence rate of internet addiction, which reached 88.1%. In contrast, Turkey had the lowest observed rate of internet addiction at 4.8%. Accordingly, she stressed the importance of enhancing our awareness to recognize internet addiction as a novel global syndrome that arises from progressively complex public health and psychosocial circumstances.

Connecting Minority Communities Chromebook Giveaway to SUNO Cybersecurity Students

Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO) received a \$3 million dollar grant from the Connecting Minority Communities Pilot Program. The SUNOConnects program distributed Chromebooks to Cybersecurity students on April 8, 2024. SUNO enhances technology through internet access and digital literacy in its classrooms and throughout Greater New Orleans.



2024 SUNO Research Conference

April 12-13, 2024, Dr. Atteia and his three students attended the 2024 SUNO Research Conference that was held at the SUNO library. The students presented an oral presentation entitled: “The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Prevalence and Severity of Internet Addiction: Current and Future Public Health Challenges” Rachid Belmasrour, Abd elmounaim Fillali, Naya Kendrick, Serene Stoudemire, Christian Clement, Mostafa Elaasar, Illya Tietzel, Bashir M. Rezk Atteia.



FORENSIC SCIENCE PROGRAM

Unlocking the Future: Galvez Middle School Delves into Forensic Science at Southern University at New Orleans

On April 8, 2024, Ms. Brooklynn Johnson, the Interim Chair of the Forensic Science program, and the dedicated members of the Forensic Science Club warmly welcomed 50 enthusiastic 8th-grade students from Galvez Middle School to the campus of Southern University at New Orleans. The day unfolded with an immersive exploration into the captivating world of forensic science as the Galvez students embarked on a thrilling journey through a meticulously crafted murder mystery ingeniously designed by the Forensic Science Club. Armed with curiosity and critical thinking, the young forensic scientist-in-training delved into the intricacies of fingerprint and DNA analysis, employing forensic techniques to crack the case.

Guided by the expertise and passion of the Forensic Science Club students, the Galvez students not only unraveled the mysteries before them but also gained invaluable insights into college life and the multifaceted realm of forensic science. With triumphant smiles and hearts brimming with accomplishment, the students transitioned seamlessly into a captivating campus tour, where they marveled at the historic black Greek organization plots and bore witness to the democratic fervor of student elections, immersing themselves in the rich tapestry of university culture.

The impact of this transformative experience resonated deeply with the Galvez students, leaving them inspired and eager to pursue a degree in forensic science at Southern University at New Orleans. Recognizing the significance of this engagement, their dedicated STEM teacher, Ms. Klieberg, extended a warm invitation for the Forensic Science Club to share their expertise at Galvez Middle School in Ascension Parish, ensuring that more young minds could partake in the exhilarating world of forensic science. Beyond its immediate impact, this immersive visit served as a beacon of exposure, shedding light on the esteemed Forensic Science program and the university, fostering a sense of connection and aspiration within the hearts of the next generation of forensic investigators. Indeed, this unforgettable experience left the Galvez students emboldened and encouraged, poised to embark on their academic journey with newfound zeal and determination.



STUDENT SUCCESS AND ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

The International Education Services (IES) joined with Career Services, SUNOMA, and the Counseling Center to present "The World is Yours: A Week of Culture, Careers, and Wellness." The collective efforts of IES, Career Services, SUNOMA, and the Counseling Center culminated in a week of enriching experiences and opportunities for students. Students toured SUNOMA, were introduced to potential career opportunities, and were exposed to ways to maintain their mental and physical health. During the "Been Around the World: Cross-Cultural Conversations" event, participants could taste different snacks, coffees, and teas from around the world.



On April 18, 2024, in honor of National Stress Awareness Day, The Counseling Center hosted its Inaugural Mental Wellness Day! This event was a day for staff, students, and faculty to set aside 3 hours to engage in mental wellness activities to nurture their mental health. Approximately 12 mental health vendors were present from various mental health agencies in the city and state, such as NAMI New Orleans, NAMI Louisiana, Metropolitan Human Service District, and Aetna, as well as several local mental health clinicians. Mental wealth coaches were present to facilitate yoga, boxing, and other mindfulness exercises. There was also a station for Art therapy. Many staff and students were able to create art that helped reduce their stress levels. The Office of Student Leadership and Engagement sponsored healthy smoothies throughout the duration of the event. The Counseling Center also debuted the new Shiftwave machine that will be placed in the upcoming ZEN room. Students, staff, and faculty could try the machine for 10 minutes. The Shiftwave machine sends waves throughout the body to help reduce psychological and physiological stress. Lastly, the Director of the Counseling Center concluded the event by conducting a burning ceremony.

All attendees, including the vendors, were able to participate. They gathered on the quad around a fire to write down things that had been stressing them or impacting their lives that were out of their control. After they wrote it down, she instructed them to place it inside the fire, let it burn, and let it go. Overall, there were approximately 65-70 attendees for this event. However, we look forward to an even bigger Mental Wellness Day next year.





**WE LOOK
FORWARD TO
NEXT MONTH'S
UPDATES!**

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