Psychology Professor Creates Fund to Award Student Research

USC Aiken's Dr. Ed Callen, professor of psychology and chair of the Psychology Department, recently established a fund to provide an annual monetary award for outstanding student research in the field of psychology.

Describing the origination of the "Callen Psychology Research Award," Callen explained, "I have been a long-time supporter of undergraduate research on our campus, and I've known that the research our students do here is on par with any other school in the region." His point was demonstrated in 2007, when a student research project conducted by former psychology student Krystle Duckett, under Callen's direction, received a Magellan Scholar Award from the University of South Carolina (USC). It was the first award to be made by USC to a student on any other campus besides Columbia. Duckett's research project won first place at USC Discovery Day in 2007.

With Callen as the driving force behind establishing an event on the USC Aiken campus to honor student research, in 2008 the University held its first Annual Research Day to showcase undergraduate research across all disciplines. According to Callen, "After last year's Research Day, seeing all of the excellent research being done by our students, I decided to make a personal commitment to support that work and establish a fund to provide an annual monetary award to a psychology student in recognition of outstanding research."

The first recipient of the Callen Psychology Research Award was Krista Lange. Lange, a psychology major entering her senior year in the coming fall "has been extremely active in research," said Callen. Lange is a student in the Honors Program, a leader of the campus' chapter of Psi Chi - the National Honor Society in Psychology, and she has served as a Psychology Department lab assistant for the past two years.

Lange has co-authored three presentations at professional conferences in the field of psychology and recently placed first for her presentation at the South Carolina state psychology conference. One of Lange's projects, which investigates variables involved in the reinstatement of fear, received another award in the poster presentation category at the 2009 USC Aiken Research Day.

Lange and Callen recently began a new project studying an animal model of anorexia.