

**STEAM Talk, Season 2 Episode 5.**

**Let's Talk about the Office of Student Research**

**With guests Dr. Gina Hunter, Dr. Noelle Selkow, and Dr. John Bauer**

**Timestamps:**

**0:00; Introductions**

**2:47; Dr. Gina Hunter's background and research**

**3:56; Dr. Noelle Selkow's background and research**

**6:03; Dr. John Bauer's background and research**

**7:55; What is the Office of Student Research?**

**9:17; How did the Office of Student Research Start?**

**13:06; Gina's role in the Office of Student Research**

**18:49; Noelle's role in the Office of Student Research**

**23:08; John's role in creating the Office of Student Research**

**24:00; How do students get involved in the Office of Student Research?**

**25:25; Noelle's advice for new students with research interests**

**27:12; Image of Research Contest, John and Noelle discuss how it got started and what it is about**

**27:18; Gina explains the significance of the contest to the Office of Student Research, and how important it is to showcase interdisciplinary work happening at Illinois State University.**

**33:41; Additional comments about Illinois State University students involved in research.**

**36:25; Additional advice for students wanting to get involved on campus**

**41:43; Guests share what their Image of Research would look like if they had to submit a photo.**

**44:12; Thank you's and plugs for student resources available.**

**00:00**

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**Courtney:** Hello, this is Courtney!

**Kara:** And this is Kara, and welcome to episode five of STEAM Talk.

**Courtney:** Hey Kara, what did you research when you were getting your PhD at Illinois State?

**Kara:** I researched undergraduate research experiences, and how those experiences influenced participant understanding of science, mathematics, and engineering,

**Courtney:** Oh wow, so, if you had to summarize your research into one photo what would that photo look like?

**Kara:** I think it would be a spider web, because I was really focused on a lot of the connections between experience and knowledge, but also connections between science and technology and engineering. So, it would be this spider web of all these interconnected things and maybe just some really fun science things in the background, like test tubes, and petri dishes, and mathematics equations, things like that.

**Courtney:** That sounds like it would be a very hard choice to summarize it in an image. Wouldn't you say?

**Kara:** That's a really challenging prompt, but each year students from all disciplines are encouraged to submit their own photo to the Image of Research Contest at Illinois State University.

**Courtney:** Absolutely, and that's what's so impressive about these participants in the contest, is that they're able to convey all of these complicated ideas that they're presenting in their research into one single image. And that of course is done through the Office of Student Research at Illinois State University. Our guests today all play an integral role in this office and this contest. We have Dr. Gina Hunter, the Director of the Office of Student Research and Associate Professor of Anthropology. Dr. Noelle Selkow Dr Noel Selkow interim director of the Graduate school and Associate Professor in the School of Kinesiology and Recreation, and Dr. John Bauer, professor of chemistry and previously served as the associate director of research and graduate studies. We met over Zoom to talk about their roles, history of the office, and excitement towards student research on campus. So let's jump on in with the Office of Student Research!

**Kara:** We're going to start today by just having you guys tell us a little bit about your journey to Illinois State University and your current research projects so let's go ahead and start with Gina. Tell us about your journey to Illinois State and your current positions here on campus.

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**Gina:** Thanks. Well, first, thanks for doing this. This is really fun. It's fun to be here. Thanks for the invitation. I've been on campus for about 20 years now, which is hard to believe. My research is generally today in the area of food anthropology, so I have a book on edible insects coming out later this year. I do kind of food sustainability local food movements, that kind of stuff. And so in addition to the book I have a project with Professor in politics and government **Dr. Noha Shawkie**. And together, we have a project about the slow food movement, the *international* slow food movement. And then I have a kind of another area that I publish in which has to do with student research actually, it's through the ethnography of the university. And so, a cultural anthropologist and look at the university, kind of as a cultural anthropologist would and I have research with students about that. I started in this position as Director of Student Research - I'm the inaugural Director of Student Research - About three years ago when the office was formed.

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**Kara:** All right. Noelle, can you tell us a little bit about yourself and your background on campus.

**Noelle:** I started as an assistant professor in the School of Kinesiology and Recreation. My background is athletic training so I'm actually a clinician, I was a practicing athletic trainer. And as I was going through schooling work I thought I would work in a collegiate setting and be an active athletic trainer and as I was going through my master's work at the University of Virginia, one of my mentors was moving into a faculty position. Our research interests, which I'll get to in a minute, aligned and he kind of asked me to stay on as a doctoral student so that sort of opened up my eyes to research and how a clinical athletic trainer could be a research faculty and then really teach students then how to be an athletic trainer. So, my area of interest revolves around the use of ice for athletic injury so something that's very, very common, it's actually probably overprescribed, so something we really don't even think about, "just put ice on it, just put ice on it." But for other injuries, we might not think just so freely of doing those other treatments, because we know of the negative they can have. And then, as I've been here, I've advanced some technology to look at actual blood flow during an ice treatment. That's why I use diagnostic ultrasound, so similar to what you would look at for a pregnancy. We can look at skeletal muscle and so we look, I look at that. I've really been active involved in having students involved in my research, and so many of them have actually gone on to pursue their PhD programs. And then while here I've sort of always been involved in the graduate program of athletic training. The way that graduate programs are sort of overseen are with graduate coordinators, and I ended up moving into a role as the graduate coordinator for the school of Kinesiology and recreation so that was overseeing eight sequences. And then, about two years ago, I was asked to take on an interim role in the graduate school as there was some change in administration and so I've been in that role since, as they will be looking for a permanent position here with the search in the fall.

**Courtney:** That's excellent. Your research is amazing so far I mean, I think everybody was a little blown away when you're describing it for sure [laughs]. And finally, we have John. Would you like to tell us about yourself and your history with Illinois State University?

**John:** I've been in ISU for 28 years now, which again, it's hard to believe that it's been that long. I grew up in a family where my parents were teachers, and so I always thought I was going to be a faculty member or a teacher of some sort. But then in undergraduate, I started doing some research as an

undergraduate, which really kind of turned me on to research and things you could do in my field in chemistry. Long story short, I ended up somehow in North Carolina, at the University of North Carolina and stayed there and worked in industry for a couple years while my wife finished her PhD in chemistry as well. And, again, long story short came to ISU 28 years ago, I thought we would be here for a couple years and move on. But, it was like the perfect place for us. So I worked through the ranks and did quite a bit of research as a faculty member, again, somehow ended up being chair of the department. And then a VP for research. I was an administrative roles for the past 11 years. So my research has tapered off a little bit I used to do Micro chemical imaging using electro chemical probes. But this past year I've been mostly focused on setting up a COVID testing lab on campus, which that's been quite an adventure. So, I feel like I don't really have any research going on right now but doing a lot of lab work and getting the lab setup.

**Kara:** Well, that's so important for us on campus to have that support.

**Courtney:** Yes, thank you for your participation in that it's a very important thing to have during this terrible pandemic.

**Kara:** We brought you guys all together today to talk to us about the Office of Student Research and as Gina mentioned earlier. It's only about three years old? Did I hear that right? (yep!) We just want to know more about what is the Office of Student Research?

**Gina:** The Office of Student Research! I'll let John talk about how it got started, but I see it as having three main tasks on campus and one of them is just to facilitate; to get more students involved in research. I think that's the main thing is to create opportunities for students to become involved in research and to just have, you know, summer research opportunities, on campus research opportunities, to get them interested in research so that they explore also off campus opportunities. I think that's the number one objective. And then another thing is just to highlight the great work that's happening here. We have a lot of excellent student research. And so, kind of highlighting what our undergraduate and graduate students are doing, that's another big part of it. And then to also just be the point on campus that is a place on campus that's the voice for the value of student research. So, I sit on a lot of committees where Gen Ed reform, or other things, to kind of be the voice for the value of student research and to get it infused into the curriculum and into our campus culture. So I really think of it as kind of having those three main features.

**Kara:** Awesome. How did we go about starting this new Office of Student Research? John you want to talk a little bit about what inspired this start of this office?

**John:** So, as a chemistry faculty member you know students are doing research, all the time in the department. It's same in biology and physics and a lot of the STEM areas. It's very normal for people to do as part of their undergrad. When I went to the research office. One of the first things I did was, went to the annual meeting of the Council of Undergraduate Research in Washington. And I was just totally blown away by not only the fact that most of the universities represented there had Undergraduate Student Research offices, but there was like, all kinds of research going on in other fields besides just STEM disciplines. So, it really like broadened my view of student research because I knew we were doing it at ISU, but it was disheartening to see that ISU didn't have an organized presence for student research and so many other universities did.

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I still remember at the banquet there was a lunch presentation, a collaboration between English, Sociology, Art, and something else maybe with Anthropology. But it was about this multi-like dance. The dance in there was this dance presentation about Dave the Potter, who was a slave who was a fantastic potter and became really well known for his pottery work. I just saw this collaboration between these really very different areas to bring together a research project. It was just, boom! It blew me away. I went to another presentation about Humanities and how they could do projects with the National Archives, so there was an internship where you could do remote research, or you take items from the National Archives. And turn it into research projects about what was happening at that particular time by analyzing this signs, store signs, and all of these different kinds of things. I was just kind of blown away by the level of organization that most universities had around research in addition to just the sciences, and I thought at ISU we value the undergraduate experience. We should do a better job of organizing it, and so that became one of my one of my goals in the role is to start this office. And I would just like to say too, that one of the people I talked at that conference, said that that their university, which was similar to ISU, was very intentional about **not** calling it the Undergraduate Student Research Office, because many of the things that such an office advocates for is also relevant to Graduate Students, and so I kind of took that to heart and wanted to make sure that this was an inclusive office of undergraduates and graduate students as well.

**Kara:** That's awesome. I actually presented at the last Bi-annual Conference of CUR.

**John:** (chuckling) So, I should have said bi-annual, as soon as I said annual, I was like, yep, every other time.

**Kara:** (chuckling) It's such a neat organization and we'll put a link in the show notes to it. It really highlights the power of student research, and how to increase that involvement with it, and so it's wonderful how you can just go to a conference and you instantly have these new ideas that pop up and inspire change that can benefit the entire student body here at Illinois State so thank you for sharing that.

**John:** I should note too that ISU is an institutional member of the Council of Undergraduate Research, so anybody can join for free, and have access to all the resources.

**Kara:** That's awesome. That's a great resource for everybody.

**Gina:** And they have a section that's for students that were students can put their profile in the CUR database, and it's used by graduate schools for recruiting and other things so it's also a resource for students on campus.

**Courtney:** That's excellent. So now we're going to start talking about your personal involvement in the Office of Student Research. We'd like to know about your role now specifically. So, let's start with Gina again.

**Gina:** I saw the call for applicants to take on this role and I'm a faculty member, and it's just a part time shift in responsibilities for me to take this on. I still teach and, and, you know, I think there's a couple of different things first it appealed to me just because as a student, as an undergraduate, I really. I so wanted to be involved in research and in anthropology we do get the opportunity to work in labs in, you know, in the archaeology and biological anthropology areas but I was a cultural anthropologist and the idea of going abroad and doing ethnographic research in some other country that just appealed so

strongly to me and I ended up going to Brazil, and actually doing my dissertation research in Brazil, but as an undergraduate I so wanted to have those experiences. The mission of the office is near and dear to my heart. But then also I had about 10 years of experience being a co-director of the **Ethnography of the University Initiative** which was a multi campus initiative that was started at the University of Illinois where I did my PhD and it was a collaborative across the campus of faculty would infuse their course curriculum with research with primary ethnographic or survey or other kinds of research about the university, and we had disciplines as diverse as Art History and Kinesiology and Market Research, Sustainability Studies, I mean it was all across campus and it brought faculty together under this umbrella of how do you look at the university as a research topic. And we had plenty of folks from education and higher ed studies and it was kind of this collaborative and it was so fruitful both pedagogically as professors talking to other professors about how to do research with students in their classrooms, but then it was also very rich for the students who would have a twice a year conference where they would present their results, and there was a huge archive, where we collected over 1000 student projects. The students are really producing research that is meant for an audience outside of the classroom and they could draw upon previous student research so it really was an authentic research experience, and I had a vision of what an Office of Student Research could do in terms of collaboration across campus promoting student work and so I was really excited to become a part of this new Office of Student Research on campus. I applied, and I was lucky enough, among all the wonderful people at ISU, to be chosen for the position.

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**Kara:** As the director, what does that entail? What are your responsibilities or how do you support the Office of Student Research.

**Gina:** Right now I have a 50% time, so I have two course releases, essentially, what that means to be the office, and right now the office is basically me, and I have a graduate assistant, Patrick. Patrick Gyimah-Danso is his name and he's an Econ student actually, and he's wonderful and he makes all these fabulous spreadsheets for me, consolidates data, and does a lot of other wonderful things. It's basically he and I right now. So, essentially, like I said, it's contributing to kind of social media presence and articles and putting on activities like the Image of Research at Illinois State. But also the URSP, the **Undergraduate Research Support Program**. That gives funding for students to do research in the summer, and then during the academic year two separate competitions. It's literally creating those opportunities. I partner with a bunch of different offices on campus to create opportunities for students. So with the **Center for Civic Engagement**, we have a project right now. With the **Innovation Consulting Community**, we have a project about design thinking happening right now, so a lot of different collaborations across campus. And then also, I'm on a bunch of different committees, as I said, such as the Executive Committee for General Education Reform, we have a High Impact Practices Committee on campus, and I sit on that to talk about the value of undergraduate research. I'm doing work behind the scenes, so to speak, with those types of committees to advance student research on campus.

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Commented [KB7]: <https://civicengagement.illinoisstate.edu>

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**Kara:** That's a lot of reaching across campus, which is fantastic.

**Gina:** Yes, it is. yeah.

**John:** We had, last year, bigger plans, we were going to have an exhibition at the Art Gallery, sometime in the middle of March, and then we were talking about having the speaker in the fall and everything kind of got a little put on the backburner with the pandemic.

**Gina:** It's hard for everybody, and it's really hard for a new campus, or a new office that's just getting started. Because it's like, you're still creating the path, and so there's no path exactly to follow. It's like where do you go? There's been a lot of things happening, but I think that hopefully next year, we will be able to just realize some of the plans that I initially had that were going to be year two plans, but now we're going to be more like year four plans.

**Courtney:** We can't wait to see a normal on track year for you guys because it sounds excellent everything you have planned for sure.

**Kara:** Yeah, we can't wait for normal on track year for everybody. (laughs)

**Courtney:** (laughing) Everybody, (laughs) I mean, true.

**Kara:** Alright, Noelle, do you want to tell us a little bit about how you got involved with the Office of Student Research and your current role or connection to the Office of Student Research?

**Noelle:** Research at the graduate level, not that it's different, but it is different, it tends to be housed more within departments, so students really building a connection with the faculty member, research interests sort of align. However, there are students who sometimes maybe feel a little lost or they may not be getting the best direction. I think having some centralized, physical space again, when we can sort of have that. Um just to talk to people or know what different opportunities are available printing a post or publishing for journals and opportunities to present that research and I think, I think that's where graduate students fit into the office of student research is that it's a space. You know, again, I think visions that we have that just haven't been able to come to fruition but a mentorship program with undergraduate and graduate students, that's kind of housed, essentially, that again, I don't think you necessarily have to have the same content area. It depends on just being able to bounce off ideas off of one another. Editing publication materials and things like that you can have a relationship there. Gina and I share our graduate student Patrick, and so that's a connection between our offices to help share some resources of the Office of Student Research, we can hopefully expand what that symposium looks like and I know Gina and I have some ideas that we've bounced around that it's just kind of sitting down and really thinking what that's going to look like.

So I think there's going to be a lot of really unique opportunities that will be able to expand how our students are able to present, as John was talking about his conference, you know, seeing somebody doing pottery. It's very hard to show pottery in a poster, or some of those traditional research, sharing of ideas and that's what's great about the initiative that Gina is doing with the image contest, but it's also going to allow us to expand, I think, again our symposium and how we can showcase student research. My involvement really is more just being a partner and a collaborator with Gina and the Office of Student Research, and how can we help promote initiatives or share and bring graduate and undergraduate research together. Also, while recognizing the different needs for both of those populations. But again, just really, how can our offices, together showcase the wonderful and unique research, I mean our students, they're doing some great projects. And they may or may not be aligned with some faculty, so they are coming in, and they're developing their own ideas. And that's the

advantage, I think, of being at a place like Illinois State where you can have these very independent projects. Students can develop their ideas and they're supported and there's mechanisms to support them in a lab, or there's resources to help pay for something, they can travel to conferences and really get those experiences. Where out of smaller schools, they may not have that, or even at a larger schools, when you're sort of in a lab working under somebody else, you might not get the spot light shone on you, and I feel here we *really* want to showcase the involvement our students are doing. And that's something that I think we do really well together. To collaborate on, for both our undergraduate and graduate students.

**Gina:** I would add there, that a lot of the work that I do, and that the office does is with faculty. Because, most faculty have both graduate students and undergraduate students working with them in their labs or on their projects in their field schools in the summer. It's, you know, it's usually a team that is faculty, grad students, and undergrad students. so. I have faculty who are just interested in mentorship and the difference between mentoring graduate students and undergraduate students. And, so, we have a teaching and learning community that talks about that. I've done some CTLT workshops in the summer course-based undergraduate research. We've talked about you know bringing graduate students in as mentors for undergrads and things like that, so we usually are, a team, and it is undergraduates graduate students and faculty. And the office is just kind of a support for all of that.

**Courtney:** And John Would you please tell us about your role up the office of student research, and your journey to it?

**John:** My role was, I guess, creating the office and then putting together a search committee to find the right director and then after that, I guess my role was to enable and stand back and let gina do her work. My current role since I stepped out of the position and back to faculty, I don't have. I don't really have anything to do with it, now, but it's really heartening to see that it lives on it's not dependent on you. I can't wait to see what it does over the next few years.

**Courtney:** Excellent. So, I have a question before we get to the Image of Research Contest, that I think it's the perfect question to ask because, last week I just got accepted into grad school here at Illinois State in the Communications program.

**Kara:** Woohoo!

**Courtney:** So as a new grad student, what do I do to get involved in the Office of Student Research and how can you help me?

**Gina:** Well that's a great question, and I think this would apply to any student. You'll do, actually, two things. First, if you have specific questions, you can just email me @ student research (dot) Illinois State (dot) edu. (gina@studentresearch.illinois.edu) But, a lot of students get involved in research by simply being inspired by their faculty members. Talk to your faculty members, that's how you find out about a lot of things. Hopefully in the Fall, if it works out, we're going to have something called the Student Opportunity Center, which is a web-based application, which helps students to search across the nation for all kinds of opportunities to do summer research or experiential learning, internships, etc. And so, hopefully if that gets purchased on time and implemented that will be available to all students in the fall. But, I think just visiting the student research website, it's a student research (dot) Illinois State (dot)

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edu (studentresearch.illinoisstate.edu), and then contacting my office contacting, me for with specific questions about research is one way to go.

**Courtney:** Excellent. I can't wait to email you this fall. And I can't wait to see how many other students will email you guys and get more stuff on the run with the projects. That's awesome.

**Noelle:** And if I could add to that, I think an important thing too is, as a new graduate student, or really any student if you have research interest. It's really important to communicate those to faculty within your department, because it's not what, in my opinion, if a student comes to me to say I want to be involved on some research, I'll find something I'll connect you with a student I'll connect you with another faculty member, and it's not that I don't advertise those things, but it's sometimes hard depending on how large a program is. Communications is going to be a larger program, but I think expressing those interests knowing that, as a graduate student, you more than likely have to do some sort of research as a culminating project it's part of our requirement. Being able to know what faculty may have similar interests you, it's really aligning to make sure that you're getting the mentorship that you need. So, expressing what you might be interested in early, you might be able to be involved in more than one project, or again, just giving you some different experiences. So, don't be afraid to reach out to your department as early as you can. Saying, 'I have an interest in research, how can I sort of get started.'

**Courtney:** Great! That's great advice for both me, and anybody at Illinois State. I would say, just talk with your instructors and get a conversation going about your interest I know that's always been my favorite part of school is just getting to know my instructors and kind of their journeys and education what they do with their careers. So, I'm excited to learn more about that. Thank you so much.

**Kara:** Alright so we're going to jump into the Image of Research Contest at Illinois State University. You can go on to the Office of Student Research website and look at the finalists, but we want to know more about the Image of Research Contest, John you want to talk a little bit about how this idea got started, John and Noelle, when did we start this contest what was the inspiration behind it.

**John:** This is another one of those things that wanted to do for a long time. I think NC State, North Carolina State, had one of the first ones where you can still go see their galleries and just some fascinating images, and the fact that I did like chemical imaging and I made kind of what I think are cool images of data. And I kind of like art. So, I thought, and one of the other things I noticed when I go to different campuses? Lot of times a conference room will have something in the conference room, like some data, with a little explanation of what it is and I thought, "Oh it'd be cool to have some images that we could hang around the campus just to show the kind of work that's going around on campus." Noelle can fill in. We were shooting the breeze about what we could do and, and I'll let her take it from there.

**Noelle:** So, the Council of Graduate Schools hosts two conferences a year, in summer and winter, and I was at one of those conferences. And, they do these little flash talks, so they're very short presentations talking about different initiatives on campus, and this was one of them. A research and images contest. And, again, like John, I also am attracted to art and I was like, how cool would it be to display research in a very different mechanism? And, as John mentioned in his office he has a picture, I think the one is really cool data. And so I kind of said, 'Oh, kind of like something on your wall, you know we could have students present data and just really cool way.' That got us kind of back, okay well let's let's pursue this and it was, the Office of Student Research was getting ready to sort of the launch publicly, and what the

initiative type event or what event could we have to really spotlight the Office of Student Research and really get people to understand what it is. So, we brought Gina in on board and we worked with the University Galleries, and I can let Gina expand more on this.

**Gina:** I had seen this at the University of Illinois, and when they mentioned it, then I started looking online and it's in a lot of universities, even not in the US you know in Alberta and in Australia, there's all these other competitions but I was already familiar with it and I thought, what a perfect program to be the first kind of initiative for the Office of Student Research. First, it would be undergrads and graduate students that would be across campus and I really wanted to promote the idea. We bounced around different names I think for the Office of Student Research and because at other universities, it's called like, Research and Creative Activities or Research and Innovation and, there's lots of different names, and, we just settled on research in part because I formed an advisory board right away the first year. And when we debated what exactly the office should be called. We didn't want to exclude anybody from the humanities, or from the Fine Arts, and sometimes when people think research, they think about lab work right, or they think about social science research but they don't think broadly about inquiry, but it was the artists actually who were really firm in saying, "Hey, you know what, we do research too and often weren't not included," so I really wanted to make one of the goals of my office to be that larger known notion of research as any kind of systematic inquiry that's done in line with whatever the discipline is, and every discipline has their standards of inquiry and evaluation and dissemination and what kind of big 10 umbrella, I thought the Image of Research was the perfect way to represent all different kinds of research from all across campus. I think it's really fulfilled that because we've had entries from students from every college, or almost all the colleges, we've really incorporated students from all across campus, and it lets students marry creativity and research activities.

**Courtney:** I appreciate that the arts were a consideration for you when developing this for sure because there is a lot of wonderful, amazing projects going on in the Wonsook Kim School of Fine Arts.

**Kara:** And a lot of times even in the STEM fields, creativity is forgotten. Or, at least in the general public right? Like, they don't equate creativity with STEM. But, even in science, technology, engineering, and math, there is a lot of creativity involved. And there is a lot of opportunity to think about art within those spaces too. It's just such a neat, connection-combination between putting the art within the STEM as well as providing inclusivity it to all colleges across campus that do research and do inquiry inline with their discipline.

**Gina:** And it's a great way to represent that research to a broader public, because not, you know, many people can't attend a graduate students thesis defense or dissertation defense, or they're not going to read the dissertation or the thesis or even maybe the academic publications, but to have a single image, and a brief description of what that image represents in terms of a students research, and then you know I mean it's just it's accessible. It's appealing and it usually creates a lot of questions so you know it just provokes questions in people's minds of what is that you know that's being represented or where did that come from and so I think just looking at this year's finalists there's, you know, we see our students doing research in Bangladesh and in, in Brazil, and we see lab work and microscopy and we see painting, you know, it's just like it's from all these different areas and it's really great to be able to display that also outward to the general public.

**Kara:** Anything else you guys want to share about the Image of Research contest before we start to wrap up the interview?

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Commented [KB11]: Lots of "you knows" here. Perhaps remove one or two??

**John:** I was just gonna mention, I think I said I was looking around it, like for example, in NC states, this morning and I was impressed with our gallery, our finalists because they're not all like lab and microscopy and data visualization. In fact, most of them are not right. That kind of surprised me initially, but I think it's a cool thing, it says a lot about the good work going on at ISU and points to the success of Gina's efforts to broaden it beyond just STEM. It's great to see you at the broad representation. So, I'm thrilled to see that.

**Gina:** For the first year, we had such grand plans, we had and we just worked so hard that first year to all of us met with Kendra Paitz in the [University Galleries](https://galleries.illinoisstate.edu), and we were going to have a pop-up exhibit there, so we were, you know, so just took a lot of work to set the guidelines to get students to submit imagery that was of the right size, so the technical specifications of the images themselves editing the, the abstracts, getting everything, ready so that we could both print, like a booklet of the abstracts, and print, physically, the images and mount them on poster boards, or have them printed on posts. There was a lot of technical stuff that went into this discussion of how we were going to have an exhibit at University Galleries, which was then going to travel to Milner Library on the second floor where they have their exhibit, and it was going to travel to the physical space of University Research Symposium. And, and to Research Award Ceremony, I mean we just, you know, it was a traveling exhibit. We spent a lot of time planning that, and it was literally a week, I mean I had everything but the cookies ordered for the reception. We had everything ready. And that's when the University shut down, and all of that, and we had to suddenly switch to online. And so this year, I know you know we thought about, "Well, maybe we could do the Milner Library," but we didn't know when we were planning, you have to plan months in advance and we didn't know what the Spring would hold, so we, just announced winners and the library is open, but we didn't know that that we were going to be back and, and what that situation was, hopefully next year, and in future additions, we can have a University Gallery space or other spaces on campus, and really get those images out so that more people can see them in more environments.

Commented [KB12]: <https://galleries.illinoisstate.edu>

**Kara:** Do you have any advice for students wanting to get involved with research on campus.

**Gina:** Number one thing is to talk to your faculty as Noelle said before. Faculty will know about research opportunities, so I think just talking, you know, if you have a GA, or a TA and your class, talk to the GA about it talk to if you're an undergraduate. Talk to your peers about it you have to really let everybody know that you're interested and then the faculty on our campus are really wonderful in trying to include students in research and helping students to get access to research opportunities. I, my office gets questions all the time from high school students who are interested in doing research it's the squeaky wheel gets the grease right so you got to be a little squeaky.

**Kara:** Get your voice out there, go ask some questions, go talk to some faculty on campus! All right, any other advice you want to throw out there?

**Noelle:** Yeah, and I think, you know how you phrase that conversation I would go into that conversation with maybe some ideas you. You may have done a little bit of homework, so to speak, you know, it's one thing to say, I'm interested in research, and then it's another thing to say, I read this really fascinating article is this something feasible we could do here? How could I take this, or explain why that research topic is important to you. I think the other thing and something that we're, we're wanting to expose students to is, how do you do research with, say social justice or environmental concerns or politics or anything that's going on in the day to day. So as we know, with a pandemic you know that's certainly derailed a lot of students, mentally, physically you couldn't do your research you couldn't travel, you

maybe couldn't do your data collection, but how you use that environment maybe as a way to maybe you do divert a little bit in your research, or your writing so that you can include what's really passionate to you, maybe outside of your research as well, but how do you bring in almost like writing in a stressful environment. And so we're trying to provide students some of that, but I think there's a lot of ways to have that conversation. But I think going in with some general directions just going to help the faculty guide you the best that they can. So that's another piece of advice.

**Kara:** Yeah, it, almost opens up, it was almost a trial run to see. Yeah, biology was my major, so, you know, do I like a wet lab or, or do I like field work and it gives you those opportunities to see what's out there in your discipline to really find, maybe a career future career path for you that maybe you didn't see before.

**John:** I would maybe even back up a little bit and try to talk to the sophomores and juniors out there who are maybe not listening to the podcast because they're not interested in research but just considering, what is research and why would I care about research, it's easy to get to be a senior. And you're in this field that you spent four years in and suddenly think well what am I supposed to do or maybe this isn't as fun as I thought it was well, if you do research, if you do create new knowledge in your field that's when it becomes really fun and exciting. And so, I guess I would just encourage students, if you haven't even thought about research, again like Gina said, talk to your faculty, your grad students, other students that, can really make a difference by doing research, whether it's social justice or chemistry, it's worth taking the time to do something beyond just your coursework.

**Gina:** I hope we can get more entry level courses that have research components to them, or where we, we have the capacity as a university to offer more of that because a lot of people just haven't thought about doing it and they realize that they have a passion for a topic once they're involved hands-on like John says that's the thing that becomes fun. And so, if we have as a campus, if we have opportunities for students to do the work, do that kind of research hands-on work early on, in within the Gen-Ed program, let's say, then they can maybe discover a passion. They can show there are some students who think, who perform really great on exams are not the same people who think really creatively in terms of research questions and so it becomes, It's a different endeavor and it's very, it can be very inclusive and very inspiring to a lot of students to want them to continue on to maybe choose a different major then decide to go on to graduate school or find a research-oriented job.

**John:** I think it'd be awesome to have it in the Gen-Eds, because I was on a Senate committee with students and we were talking about research integrity. Integrity of the research. To them, research is just go into the library and looking up references for a term paper. Right. And like no, no, no, that's not what we're talking about. We're not talking about plagiarism on your source that we're talking about ethics and research where you actually create new knowledge so, I think, exposing people to that, that early, early time in their college careers, is critical.

**Kara:** All right, we're gonna end with one fun quick question. If you could wrap up your research or your position on campus and one image, what would that image look like.

**Gina:** That is a really hard question, gave me new respect for all of the students who over the past couple of years have submitted images to the Image of Research competition. So, of course, thinking about, I have a lot of images in my book that is coming out on edible insects and when you think about insects and you think about edible insects, not usually the, I mean, for a lot of people that's just, do you

know so it's either scary or disgusting or something so I didn't want to, I don't like those images, the one insect that maybe is not is, you know, it's like the PR the ideal PR representative for the world of insects is maybe a honeybee you know everybody loves honey, that's the that's the insect product that most people enjoy. And so, kind of connecting that to my job I mean I maybe an image of a be full of pollen, you know, bringing because I want to like fertilize things across campus and make stuff happen is, for the, for the community of other little bees. So, that's my image.

**Kara:** Noelle, what would be your picture?

**Noelle:** So as I mentioned, I do research with ice for athletic injury. So, a common picture we use is the iceberg. The tip of the iceberg is probably what we really know as far as effective treatment in the area of Sports Medicine and then everything underneath the water is just this area of unknown. I really look at taking a step back to see, okay why did we even put ice on to begin with, like, what is it doing physiologically? So really trying to answer those basic questions. That would be my picture, would be an image of an iceberg.

**Kara:** John, what about you, What about your image?

**John:** Well based on these last few months, this won't work on the podcast, but somebody pointed out that this picture behind me that my wife, painted like 10-15 years ago. It's like the coronavirus, so that would be maybe, but I don't want that to be my image. I would go back to, and it's going to be kind of a cop out but one of the, you know, I do like data visualization. So, I think some of the work that I did is doing this chemical imaging because I like vibrant colors and real data. So, I would take one of the images that we recorded that are like chemical microscope. So that would be my image.

**Kara:** Well thank you guys for your time. Are there any other organizations you want to highlight we will put links in the show notes to a lot of the stuff we talked about the Council of Undergraduate Research, Office of Student Research here at Illinois State campus, Graduate School website as well, but are there any other things that we haven't talked about that you just want to give a quick shout out to,

**Gina:** I mean there's a lot of research related for students who are interested in research, there's I think it's called research guru, there's some other sites.

**Kara:** We'll link to that. Perfect. Well thanks to you guys again for stopping by!

**We'd like to thank our guests today Dr. Gina Hunter, Dr. Noelle Selkow, and Dr. John Bauer for joining us to talk about the importance of supporting student research on campus. We commend them for all of the work they do. If you want to get involved on campus, check out our website for show notes. Our site is [steamtalkpod.bluberry.com](http://steamtalkpod.bluberry.com), you can follow STEAM Talk on twitter, instagram, and facebook @ STEAM Talk Pod**

**As always, thank you for joining us for another episode of STEAM Talk, join us next time as we continue talking about the Image of Research Contest at Illinois State University. The next episode begins a series of interviews with students who submitted and placed in the competition! Be sure to subscribe so you won't miss out.**

**see you next time!**