After traveling over 900 miles to beautiful Ithaca, New York, three Freshman Fellows’ experiences went above and beyond what they had expected. Ithaca College of New York hosted the National Conference for Undergraduate Research, Amanda, Niki, and Brianna submitted two abstracts to NCUR and received the acceptance letter for both on January 12th. Time went by fast as they finished coding, evaluating, and sorting all the information for their studies.

Their first poster titled, “Tribal School Success with a K-12 Writing Assessment Program” demonstrated students’ improvement in writing based off a series of assessment tests over the past four years. By including graphs on the poster interested by passers were impressed with the 63% increase that was concluded by the study. The second poster was a gender study from an elementary classroom science lab. Titled “Role Preference in Same Gender and Co-Ed 7th Grade Science Inquiry Groups” the poster had people stop in their tracks when they noticed the conclusion had majority of females in the co-ed class desiring the leadership role and the majority of males in the co-ed class desiring the data collector role.

Brianna, Niki, and Amanda discovered many different areas of research on the NCUR trip in 2011. After presenting their two posters to many graduate, undergraduate, and professors, they went off on their own to see other students’ presentations. Going from poster presentations to oral presentations, they listened to presentations from all academic areas. Niki listened to literary theory papers for novels that she had read and learned how to construct a theoretical paper for English, her major, through this experience better than any classroom she has been to. She hopes to take what she has learn a construct an A+ paper for her Literature final this year.
Brianna went to all of the poster sessions for NCUR. She walked through the two rooms of about 30 posters each and stopped at all the posters that related to her interests and major as well, plus others that were just plain fascinating. Her favorite one of the whole trip was the poster of bringing agriculture into inner city schools—her own career goal. Through talking to the student presenting, Brianna has gotten experience networking and an opportunity for an internship next summer.

Amanda went to oral presentations for psychology, her newly switched major. She listened to presentations and saw research of psychology and English. What she liked the most was psychology research, which helped her fall more in love with her new major. All in all, the experiences at NCUR were an eye-opening and inspiring success. All the students including Brianna, Niki, and Amanda did amazingly and learned more than they could have hoped for.

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