

ScholarBridge Reflects on Conference on Undergraduate Research Programs

By Michael Rauch, ScholarBridge CEO and Co-Founder

In June, ScholarBridge (www.ScholarBridge.com) had the privilege of serving as a Gold Sponsor at the *Conference on Undergraduate Research Programs: Building, Enhancing, Sustaining* in Norman, OK.

ScholarBridge is an established resource for undergraduate research program directors that facilitates the process of matching student researchers with mentors. The simple, yet powerful tool allows interested students to search and filter through a database of mentors and research opportunities across all disciplines on their campus as well as nationwide. Faculty are easily able to manage research profiles with capabilities to post research opportunities detailing necessary qualifications for different roles. Having been an active resource for over one year now, ScholarBridge works with twelve partner institutions, ranging in size and location from its pilot institution, Washington University in St. Louis, to the University of Kentucky, to Flagler College.

The conference was an ideal opportunity for ScholarBridge to learn about the challenges facing program directors nationwide. Two themes that were pervasive throughout conversations at the event were assessment and access. It is clear that program directors are facing more and more pressure to come up with methodology for quantifying their efforts: general participation statistics, the success of their students, the engagement of their faculty, and more. Furthermore, there is rising pressure to ensure that all students are gaining access to research opportunities as a potential jumpstart to their academic career. Numerous high quality sessions were held to discuss potential solutions to these major challenges facing program directors. CUR has been extremely effective in establishing panels of individuals and institutions that have made great strides in these areas.

By leveraging the power of technology solutions, ScholarBridge places particular emphasis on offering potential answers to these challenges. The ScholarBridge Administrative Portal is a tool available to partners that tracks pertinent undergraduate research metrics on a campus. For example, within the analytics hub on ScholarBridge, there is information regarding demographics of student researchers, popular research disciplines among students and faculty, and the connections being forged therein. On the whole, ScholarBridge is a resource that ensures greater access, as any student on a campus is able to build a student account, run searches for research mentors and opportunities, and even consider spending a summer or gap year at another institution doing research. There are currently thousands of students maintaining ScholarBridge profiles across the twelve ScholarBridge partner institutions.

ScholarBridge is excited to announce that a number of new partnerships were forged at the Conference on Undergraduate Research Programs! If you are interested in learning more, do not hesitate to contact info@scholarbridge.com.