

Dear Participants and Guests,

Welcome to UMBC's 20th Annual Undergraduate Research and Creative Achievement Day (URCAD). I am reminded of Rainer Maria Rilke's (1934) "Letters to a Young Poet:"

Try to love the questions themselves, like locked rooms and like books written in a foreign language....It is a question of experiencing everything. At present you need to live the question.
(p. 31)

To dwell in questions is to engage in the science and art of discovery. Thus, in this quote, Rilke calls for us to engage our curiosity, intuition, and sense of wonder. There is excitement in discovery, in looking into things and finding something new or beautiful among things that have always been present. There is also an alluring sense of intrigue generated by the unknown or unexplained, and so discovery captures our interest and ignites our passion. There is a playful and artistic spark as attentiveness becomes a point of departure for imagination. These habits of mind are fundamental in the search for information, knowledge, truth, and beauty and they are evident in all that our students personify as researchers. Indeed, these traits are at the core of what every college graduate needs to know and be able to do in the twenty-first century.

This day, dedicated to research and creative activities, celebrates these habits of mind and our students' outstanding achievements. Whether listening to an oral presentation, discussing the process of inquiry or specific findings at a poster session, viewing an exhibit, or attending a performance, you will encounter new scholars who have identified problems worthy of investigation, posed significant questions, conducted disciplined inquiry, and analyzed their findings in the tradition of sophisticated researchers. I am confident that you will be stimulated, impressed, and to some degree awed by the complexity of thought and elegant findings presented. The origins of future intellectual triumphs are seeded in the work our students are sharing today.

Again, welcome to URCAD.

Best regards,

Diane M. Lee

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Rilke, Maria Rainer, and Franz Xavier Kappus. Letters to a Young Poet. New York: W.W. Norton, 1934. (p. 31)