

Mentor's Name: Dr. Anthony Gabriel

Department: Geography

GRADUATE RESEARCH MENTOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

NOMINATED BY

Erin Dilworth

Dr. Gabriel is the chair of my thesis committee, and has been supportive of my ideas and academic values. He has always realized my full potential, and pushes me to see it too.

I have been a student my entire life, and am able to pick out professors who aid in student success, and those that merely follow it. Dr. Gabriel expects a lot out of his students, a quality I believe to be crucial in academic success. Besides being a strong thesis committee chair, Dr. Gabriel is also an excellent professor. Of all the classes I have taken at CWU, his are the most comprehensive and well organized. He takes pride in the structure and content of his classes, and that really comes through in his teaching style and attitude. During class, he is always open to questions and ideas, and is appreciative of student input.

Dr. Gabriel has provided me with a lot of knowledge and experience in specialized areas of Geography and Resource Management studies. I am mainly interested in the conservation and management of aquatic ecosystems, and through Dr. Gabriel's classes, field trips, networking connections, and his support in my thesis work, I have greatly expanded my knowledge in this area. Additionally, if it weren't for Dr. Gabriel's help in reviewing and editing my grant proposals, my thesis research on Marine Protected Areas in the Puget Sound may not have been possible. Because of my work at CWU with Dr. Gabriel, I will leave a more mature student and desirable professional.

I am always impressed with the amount of work that Dr. Gabriel is able to accomplish. Besides currently advising four graduate students and countless undergrads, he is also the Director of the Center for Spatial Information, and co-founder of the Geo-Ecology Research Group, where he is committed to many research projects outside of the University setting. Lastly, he has intriguing, comprehensive courses every quarter, for both undergraduates and graduates.

Because of Dr. Gabriel's commitment to, expectations of, and support for his students, he is a great candidate for the Mentor of the Year Award.

Mentor's Name: Todd Kroll
Department: Chemistry
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH MENTOR OF THE YEAR AWARD
HONORABLE MENTION

NOMINATED BY
Jennifer Groves

In my time working for Dr. Todd Kroll since September 2010, I have grown as a student, scientist, and individual. I have been exposed to many great opportunities thanks to his constant help and unwavering support. Here at CWU, Todd has brought my education to a whole new level. I was his first research student and started working for him immediately after he came to teach here. We worked very hard together to get the lab up and running, and I was accepted into the Science Honors Research Program. He gave me my own research project of the caliber of a master's thesis project, spent many hours in the lab teaching me techniques one-on-one, and spent a great deal of his research funding focusing on the success of my project. We worked at an accelerated pace, and I was able to present a poster in November 2010 at the prestigious Society for Neuroscience international conference, where the vast majority of presenters were PhD students and postdoctoral fellows. Attending this conference showed how much he believed in me to succeed and become an incredible scientist. We have had pitfalls and obstacles to overcome in the lab, and Todd has been available for help at nearly every moment of the day when I need it, but has also given me the freedom to be creative, learn, and grow as a scientist. He has been committed to my success and positively reinforces all my hard work in the lab and in writing my thesis. Over the past 2 years, Todd has made it incredibly clear how much he believes in me and has shown steadfast support in the steps I have taken to be successful in my future.

Todd undoubtedly deserves the honor of Mentor of the Year. He has invested so much time and effort into transforming me into an astounding student and scientist, as well as put a great deal of effort into helping each and every one of his research students. Not only does Todd work hard to support his students both professionally and academically, but he also cares about their well-being and is always there to help. This builds a type of friendship that leads to a very unique and fostering student-mentor relationship. I do not know of any other mentor who spends so much time in the lab and genuinely cares about his students. He also makes sure that the lab is a welcoming environment, as well as facilitates positive interactions between lab group members through quarterly social events. Todd likes to be on a first name basis with his research students to create a more comfortable work environment similar to what would be experienced in graduate school. Everything Todd has done for me has paid off with such an incredible reward; I will be getting my PhD starting this fall Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, and I owe my research advisor, teacher, mentor, and friend so much thanks for preparing me for this new adventure.

Mentor's Name: Dr. Stuart Boersma, Ph. D.

Department: Mathematics

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH MENTOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

NOMINATED BY

Mary Kastning

Dr. Boersma is the best candidate for Mentor of the Year for many reasons. He is kind, caring, intelligent, funny, and he has a gift for reducing the most complicated mathematics into simple, easy to understand pieces. Dr. Boersma encourages students by taking an interest in them, inviting them to take classes they may feel are too difficult, then congratulating them in any way that they excel; thereby boosting their self esteem and interest in the subject.

I have taken at least one class every quarter for about three years with Dr. Boersma. He took an interest in me, helped me enjoy mathematics even more, and is the reason I chose it as a major. For the last two years we have also had two independent studies. Each year I present one at SOURCE. He even encouraged me to present the first independent study at a national conference in New Orleans this year. I am so thankful he was there to get me through my public speaking fears, because it was amazing!

Dr. Boersma started me off by designing a plan of attack for the information we wanted to get through. After that, he set attainable weekly goals. If ever I had trouble meeting these goals he would help me navigate the problem, and taught me quite a bit in the process. As mentioned, he helped me with my presentation to the point that I was no longer afraid to present to possibly 5,000 mathematicians.

He has helped me mature in my thought process as well as in my appreciation for the field. I came into Mathematics as many do, thinking the only option was to teach. But he showed me there is so much more to Mathematics than teaching.

The thing that impresses me the most about Dr. Boersma is how much time he donates to the students and never complains about it. For example, I have had two full years of independent studies. I would have never known that he didn't get paid for all of the work that he put in to them. Also, he coaches the Mathematical Modeling teams in order to prepare them for the annual competition, which is another weekly meeting. He is active in the Math Club, and supports our every effort; even offering ideas and encouragement. He lent out his own supplies to help students prepare for the Putnam exam. Yet, possibly the most impressive donation of time would be this: Two years ago he created a special topics course called Cryptology, it comprises code making and code breaking. This course was so popular it was offered this year as well. In addition, he decided to create an undergraduate code breaking competition, namely Kryptos. Clearly, a lot of work went into the creation of this project, and the result was intriguing, addicting, and a lot of fun! For these reasons and more, I am proud to call Dr. Boersma my mentor and would love to see him awarded Mentor of the Year.