Justin Urso  
Alright, perfect. So good afternoon everyone. Like thank you all for joining our online session here you have Doctor Mary Trip and Sara Evans from Excel and Learn that we'll be talking about a few of the opportunities offered to incoming students like to thank the speakers both for coming in and giving this talk this afternoon. So Doctor Tripp, we can start with you.

Mary Tripp  
Great. Hi everybody. So I'm doctor Berry trip. I work in the Office of Undergraduate Research and I run a program called Learn which is for incoming first year students. We also have a program for incoming transfer students but I understand you guys would be incoming first year students. The program is specifically to get students involved in research right from the first year they're in school. So most of the time.

Mary Tripp  
The research experiences at a university look a little different than they do. For example, when you do a research paper in high school or something like that, we get students into research spaces, into laboratories, into working with graduate students, working on research teams and on projects.

Mary Tripp  
Many of the research experiences that a lot of students come in thinking about are independent research projects, and generally that's not how most of the research is conducted at the university. Our work is a little more working with a faculty member and contributing to their research.

Mary Tripp  
So what we do is we get students acclimated to the research that's going on at UCF. We are one of the about 50% of the students who do research in their first year are members of the Learn program. We're pretty selective. We take about 36 students per year and it's a one year program. So the students stay in the cohort together, fall and spring semester.

Mary Tripp  
Students take classes together, so we are learning community as well. There's no required housing with our program, but we do have a lot of activities to get students to get to know each other. So we have some social activities as well that get our students connected to each other and we also have peer mentors. Those are undergraduate students who have been either through our program and are doing research and so they just kind of help guide our students through.

Mary Tripp  
What classes to take? You know how to acclimate yourself to the coursework, how things move along, what classes to take, when, what to do at midterms when you're loaded up with stuff so they do a lot of, like helping students getting used to being at a university setting at the speed that we move in. Some of our courses. So our program is only during the first year.

Mary Tripp  
After that, we have learned alumni and our learn alumni come back and they do a lot of service with our program, helping new students. So they come back and mentor, they come back and serve on panels. They tell students what it's like now that they've been through the program. So we have a strong connection with our students after the research experience.

Mary Tripp  
And the experience in our program as well. So we have me, I teach a course. The program has a one credit hour course in the fall and one credit hour in the spring that helps students get their research projects underway. And in our program, the students actually do develop a research proposal. We just had several of our F learn students in this cohort present the preliminary research that they have done.

Mary Tripp  
In at the Student Scholar Symposium, and in fact, one of our students are our first year student, which is really unusual. One, one of the Judges Choice Awards. So she's a physics student, and she did a great presentation, really impressed the judges, and she was up against a lot of upper level students. So it's pretty exciting when our students do well. And so we keep up with them. We try to make sure that everybody has a great experience. Students come back and tell us things.

Mary Tripp  
A student from a couple of years ago just told me that he got into vet school, which has been his dream, so we're super excited for Zachary and so we do keep in close contact with our students, so it's a nice little community. Our students end up kind of being roommates with each other. They build study groups together. They tend to stay connected because they know that the students in our program are serious, academically focused.

Mary Tripp  
They have goals, they keep each other motivated. Sometimes it's really hard to be motivated at the end of the semester, but they really do kind of support each other and keep each other motivated. That's what we like about the program. We have good evidence that our students do very well when they leave the program, that one first year experience helps with things like retention, graduation, especially in STEM fields. So we have a lot of connections to faculty and to graduate students across the university.

Mary Tripp  
I think that's a good overview. We're taking applications right now and I can give you more information and put some links in the chat too as well. But I think that's a good overview to start with and then I'll be always happy to answer questions to at the end.

Justin Urso  
OK, perfect. And then there if you wouldn't mind giving an overview of both Excel and GEMS.

Sarah Evans  
Oh, OK GEMS as well.

Justin Urso  
Perfect. Thank you. Uh, yes, that'd be perfect.

Sarah Evans  
I can do that. I did have a PowerPoint presentation. I don't know if you want me to share my screen with it. Looks like it's disabled for me.

Justin Urso  
Oh, I should be able to give me one second then.

Sarah Evans  
Sure.

Justin Urso  
Yeah.

Sarah Evans  
And as he is fixing that, I will say I'm recovering from a cold, so I sound a little horse. So if I stopped doing the presentation and and mute myself, it's it's not because I'm done talking. I might have to cough. So I will pre warn you all.

Justin Urso  
All right, now you should be able to share your screen now.

Sarah Evans  
Yes. So I see the button now.

Sarah Evans  
OK, let me do it that way. I've never shared before in Teams, so it's a little weird for me. So can everyone see my my PowerPoint screen?

Justin Urso  
Yes.

Sarah Evans  
Perfect. OK. So hello, I'm Sarah Evans. I'm the associate director for Excel and Compass. And then I'll also touch on we run a program, GEMS girls excelling in math and science out of our office as well. It is for female identifying students in the Excel program. And so I'll talk a little bit about those programs in this presentation. So like I mentioned, we are run from the Center for initiatives in STEM.

Sarah Evans  
And so we're basically the STEM education hub on campus, so the Excel Compass program is a program that is in the division of student success and well-being. And so we are supported by them, but is it is a collaboration between the STEM colleges. So College of Science, College of Engineering and Computer Science, College of Photonics and Optics, as well as College of Medicine. So we support those are our students in those colleges that we support, but it is coordinated by the Center for Initiatives in STEM. So it's a little confusing where at UCF, the Excel compass programs reside, but I work for the Center for initiatives in STEM and run the Excel Compass program from that office.

Sarah Evans  
Our office is really like I mentioned before, the STEM education hub. So we collaborate with the STEM colleges. We do K through 12 outreach as well as undergraduate success programs. We have another program in our office called the Math Launch Program. Those of you who are entering the College of Engineering and Computer science, potentially in the future, you might hear of this program when you come to UCF. We also work with faculty on research and grants and things like that. So we have a couple different buckets in our office.

Sarah Evans  
Attending to the stem disciplines I STEM basically is that collaboration for that support Excel was funded back in 2006 and really the reason Excel started was we were finding that students were not retaining and they're STEM major after the first year and definitely not graduating in their STEM major after a couple of years at UCF. So we wanted to fix that program that problem and so we developed the program. It's an interdisciplinary program, so we work.

Sarah Evans  
Again, with the STEM colleges, but also we have some of the CCIE, which is the College of Community Innovation and Education that helps us do some research efforts to show that our program is working the way it works and that we do well in that effort. And we also work with tracking, retention and things like that at the university too. Basically, our program is intervening in the students first year in college. We work currently with first time in college students, but we are expanding the program this year to work with transfer students and we give our students enhanced educational opportunities. We require that our students take math with our program and I'll talk a little more about our math courses.

Sarah Evans  
And and what they entail. But we also have a center tutoring center on campus for our students, for the that extra support. We are like, learn a learning community. So we are focused on making sure that all of the students are supporting each other as well as we have faculty and staff specific to our program that work with our students. And so they are a part of that learning community as well.

Sarah Evans  
I didn't mention this, but we do bring in 800 students into the program and so there are 700 students in our Excel program and 100 students in our compass program. Each year. Excel and Compass like I mentioned, are stem retention programs that basically emphasize a good foundation in math. Pump has has an extra step in this process. The difference between the two programs is really your decision in your major coming into UCF. So for our Excel students, You should be 100% committed to your STEM major, whatever that major would be.

Sarah Evans  
Pump is you're unsure that you might want to pursue a stem major. Maybe there are other majors that you're considering, and so the compass program is to support you in that major decision process. So that's kind of the difference between the Excel and Compass programs. However, we use the term synonymously. We say Excel/Compass program because really the same resources that we give to both the Excel and Compass students.

Sarah Evans  
Are are shared and they all take our math courses together. So if you look from right to left, you really can't see. Oh, that's a compass student. That's an Excel student. They are all together utilizing those same resources. The difference is the seminar course that the students take. So part of our program in addition to taking a math course with our program, you are required to do that in the fall and spring semester of the first year.

Sarah Evans  
Because again, that's where our interventions are occurring for students. We also have a program.

Sarah Evans  
Uh seminar for the Excel students, they do a one credit hour course in the fall and a one credit hour course in the spring where our compass students take a 3 credit hour career planning course just in the fall. So the program course that Excel versus Compass students take is slightly different, even though they're in those math courses.

Sarah Evans  
Any questions so far on just the differences between Excel and Compass?

Sarah Evans  
Look over here to the chat.

Sarah Evans  
Yeah.

Justin Urso  
And say Yep, guys feel free to unmute yourself, if you're able or you can type the questions in the chat.

Sarah Evans  
Absolutely.

Sarah Evans  
So I want to take the opportunity and just go a little deeper into what resources that I'm talking about, these enhanced resources and the things that we're doing our math course and what makes this different than just coming to UCF and taking math at UCF in the in the department. So I want to share a few activities that we do with our students. I mentioned that we recruit about 800 students into our program, 800 you're probably thinking, oh, that's a lot of students, but no, it actually isn't because in the College of Engineering and Computer science alone.

Sarah Evans  
There are like 10,000 students at UCF, so 800 is like a drop in the bucket. So we're really a specialized program and 800 students that UCF as a small number.

Sarah Evans  
I talked about the common chorus for our compass students. They take the STEM career planning explorations course and then our Excel students take STEM seminar one and two in fall. In spring we have cohort and math courses which means basically all of our students take a math course together.

Sarah Evans  
We have in that math course. Remember, our program is focused on math. So in that math course, we have STEM seminar reviews. So a part of the math course the students will have reviews and the STEM seminar course ahead of the math exams and they also have a tutoring center. They are required to put time into the tutoring center. That's very typical at any institution they have something similar at UCF in the math department. They have a similar process where they have to clock time in a Center for tutoring. So we do the same thing in our Excel program and basically that is preparing students to do better on exams and talking to each other. We have a couple different techniques in our courses. We have these unique recitation sessions which essentially you go to lecture two or three days a week and then you have a recitation session usually on Thursday or Friday.  
Sarah Evans  
Where it's a small group, so your lecture might be 200 students, but then the recitation sessions are no more than fifty students, and so in those sessions you can do more. one-on-one group work. You review practice problems with the instructor and things like that. We know that students may not retain in STEM because they are weak in math or struggle in math. And so really we're trying to provide those math courses as best as we can to the students to strengthen their prerequisites in those upper division courses.

Sarah Evans  
And so for that reason, that's why we have those common math courses that the students can take. We hand select our instructors to teach the math courses. And so we're looking for math department faculty members adjunct.

Sarah Evans  
Graduate teaching assistants. We have undergraduate learning assistants. We have undergraduate tutors. All of these unique individuals. We're looking for them to really want to support the students, and so we don't just select anyone. We are looking for a person that is really an advocate for student success, and those are the people that we want as instructors in our program.

Sarah Evans  
Tutoring is offered. I mentioned that earlier, so we have a tutoring center over in technology Commons too. I know for some of you who have never been to use the app, that might not mean anything to you, but we have about 100 capacity, so 100 students can fit in the center at once and we're looking to expand that. We're hoping to get a bigger tutoring center in the fall since we're going to have closer to 800 students in our program in the tutoring center.

Sarah Evans  
The GTA's, the graduate teaching assistants, the learning assistants, the LA and the tutors, our staff 65 hours a week to help with any math homework questions, practice problems that they have. In addition, we have.

Sarah Evans  
The study sessions we often have, evening study sessions, and then we have a living learning community with our programs so students can actually live together over a Nike 103. It's in the academic village and so we have 160 beds for our students and they can dorm together and in the evening, what's so great about our program is the center. The tutoring comes to Nike. So we move the tutoring in the evening over to the dorms by the students and they can get together.

Sarah Evans  
With the TA's that are in there and do practice problems, they have study session abilities, study groups, things like that, which is really awesome.

Sarah Evans  
Uh, we are essentially trying to build a network of support. So we talk a lot about networking. We talk about getting involved in research. We talk about internships in that STEM seminar course that I was discussing earlier and this all works really well because they have the shared courses that they can develop the relationships with.

Sarah Evans  
Umm, we have specialized advising in our program that's part of my job is. So I advise those undergraduate students that come through our program in the first year and then we also have an undergraduate research experience. It's an optional thing that students can do if they are interested in doing research during their second year. We're learning community, so there's lots and lots of social activities that we provide for our students as well. STEM majors are somewhat.

Sarah Evans  
Shy and so this is how we get some of them out of their shell, specifically with the girls excelling in math and science program GEMS. We do a lot of social and academic activities, networking with that group. It's a mentoring program. So the students who are first year are paired with an upper level female student that has been through the program and is working maybe a sophomore, junior, senior. And so they're working on upper level coursework and they're paired with a group.

Sarah Evans  
Of mentees that are coming in. And so we basically help them through that mentoring process, not only by giving them some academic help and social activities, but we also try to network with industry professionals or other faculty members staff at UCF to build again those relationships which are so important in that retention kind of like Doctor Tripp said, you know, that support system is really important.

Sarah Evans  
So are there any questions on kind of the ends and outs, the activities that we do in Excel to support our students?

Justin Urso  
We did have a few that we could ask now, so you kind of mentioned just then about the learning communities. Can you expand like more like what types like social activities that you guys might take part in?

Sarah Evans  
Sure. Yeah. So we, we do food you know, so we do have some social activities where we have an ice cream social, we have a pizza night, those sort of things we do video games, we do movie nights. So we do have those types of social activities as part of our compass program. There's some more structured social activities where we have a next steps event that we do with that particular program. And so they've gone through the career planning class.

Sarah Evans  
We hope that they're going to choose STEM as their major and so then we have a panel of students that are differing majors and the students can ask those students on the panel what are the next steps, what do I want to do next? I've declared my blank, major chemistry physics, you know, mechanical engineering. What should I be getting involved in next? And so kind of we have those networking events as well to direct students to different organizations clubs on campus, that would be helpful to their career path at UCF. So that's kind of the social activities that we are doing with our students.

Mary Tripp  
Yeah.

Justin Urso  
And then one more.

Justin Urso  
Could you explain on how the students are paired with the research lab during that second year research?

Sarah Evans  
Sure. Yeah. So we have kind of a more of a hand holding process. We have a database of right now, I think there's 120 faculty members in our database that are wanting to work with the Excel students. And so the students apply for the position. They have to have their resume up to standards and then they fill in kind of a quick what are your grades. They select faculty members that they're interested in working with. So the students can go through the database.

Sarah Evans  
And select a couple faculty members that they have research profiles in there, and then it's almost like a match.com. So that information will be sent to the faculty members, and if the faculty members are interested in the student, they'll come back and have an interview process with the student. And so the student, as much as the faculty member, they're interviewing each other to see if it's a good fit for the lab. And anyone who wants to participate in that research experience, we try very hard to make sure that they have one.

Sarah Evans  
This happens the spring semester of a student's second year, so that's the only time that we do the Excel research experience. If students participate in the spring, there is also extended research opportunities, sometimes even with funding, and so we have some external donors that might give us money to support students in continuing research. For example, we have Duke Energy has given us some funds that if a student is working on sustainable energy, project like that T.hey could continue working on that into their junior year. Yeah.

Justin Urso  
Excellent. Thank you. I think that covers any questions right now, so.

Sarah Evans  
Perfect. Awesome. So I think the last thing that I have for you is just, well, how do you apply to excel? So I know if some of you are seniors are application is open right now. If you're sophomore, juniors, the application opens around November each year. We are looking to keep the application potentially open year round. We haven't made a final decision on that, but you can always apply at any moment and you can go to our website to look at those details.

Sarah Evans  
And so I have the QR code there if that's easier, or if you have any questions, you can e-mail us at excel@ucf.edu. I also put the compass e-mail there if you're interested in more in the compass program. However, if you e-mail excel, I monitor all of those e-mail accounts so it would get to us eventually.

Justin Urso  
Perfect did have a question for both of you. So we have high school students ranging from 9 through 12th grade. So do you have any advice for some of our younger students, like what they can do, possibly to strengthen their chances of getting accepted into these type of programs?

Sarah Evans  
Doctor Tripp, do you wanna go first?

Sarah Evans  
Stop my share.

Mary Tripp  
Sure, sure. I'll go first. So we do. Ohh yeah, for sure. We do look at GPA, I think that's you know keeping your GPA up is really important. We will take, we don't have any specific requirements like you don't have to have done research you don't have to have taken certain college courses or you don't have to have an AA degree coming in. But we do have a number of students who have done dual enrollment who have AA degrees.

Mary Tripp  
And removing right into their majors. But we have a lot of students who are just starting out.

Mary Tripp  
We do ask for students with STEM degrees, but we will take psychology at this point as well, so we do take some social sciences, but it's like Excel, it's mostly stem degrees that we're focused on. And I would say it's really about kind of making sure that you have prepped your coursework so that you can, if you're going into engineering, really try to get enough math up under your belt so that you can get into ideally coke one your first semester. But you know, even kind of making sure that you're keeping up with math courses. And I think Excel would agree that that's kind of the big thing that we want to focus on is making sure that you have enough math courses so that you're not kind of stuck behind getting when you.

Mary Tripp  
When you start a lot of our students come in with some of their AP credits and those can be helpful too, to get you started. But I think really it's it's about GPA and then also we have some essays that we look at for students who we look for, people who are kind of committed to some kind of STEM degree, who have good reasoning for why they want to pursue a degree in engineering or degree in biomedical sciences.

Mary Tripp  
So we do look at those essays and we look for people who are doers, right. So who like to face challenges who are interested in kind of sticking with it and working hard. So we do have a lot of very motivated students in our program. Not that we won't take anybody. You know, there's lots of exceptions to that. But I would say most of the students who end up in our program and are really motivated students who do well. But we don't have any particular requirements except.

Mary Tripp  
You know, making sure you have a good GPA. What do you think, Sarah?

Sarah Evans  
Yeah. So to piggyback on a lot of that, Excel is less selective. We are basically wanting to help students who wanna be in that learning community. So if you're excited about your STEM major and you want to be part of a support system, come on in. If you are an independent worker and maybe you don't want to really socialize and have that learning community environment, I would say Excel compass is probably not for you.

Sarah Evans  
We do not have a certain GPA requirement. We used to have an SAT requirement that we have recently dropped. The only requirement we have is that you are college algebra ready, so the math courses that we teach within the program are college algebra is the lowest one that we will teach.

Sarah Evans  
And then it goes up to differential equations. So college algebra, pre calc, trig calc 1 calc 2, calc 3, differential equations so those that's our math sequence. The requirement again is that students are college algebra ready. And so there's a couple different ways that you can get college algebra ready dual enrollment classes for example AP credits from the 11th grade or 12th grade and then eighth IB math those sort of things this.

Sarah Evans  
The biggest thing that I would say, and I know Doctor Tripp said it is if you can be calculus one, ready as an engineer walking into UCF, you're golden. That's a good place to be. The thing that I see a lot on our Excel students applications is that they take no math their senior year and they're in statistics, AP stats. That's a red flag for me. So you want to make sure if you do want to do AP statistics also be taking a math course along with it. Do not skip your math your senior year.

Mary Tripp  
Uh huh.

Sarah Evans  
Coming into UCF, that's like the worst decision that you can make.

Mary Tripp  
Yeah.

Sarah Evans  
Oh and don't over enroll in AP classes and dual enrollment. The other thing is a lot of our students, if they bring in their AAD, sometimes there's not wiggle room until you get those math courses and those prerequisites out of the way in math and science, you can only take one or two courses. And so making sure that you have some courses that can buffer those prerequisite courses before you get into it or if you're going to do enroll, make sure that you're dueling and.

Sarah Evans  
Dual enrolling in the proper courses like for example, if you're going to be a chemistry major, you should be taking dual enrollment chemistry and making sure that you can transfer that into the university so that you're not behind, if that makes sense.

Mary Tripp  
Yeah, yeah. And I will say we run into that too. Like I, I don't think you have to push to get an AA walking at to UCF because you do want some general education courses to balance out. Some of those really difficult courses that you'll be taking. And I do see students who have an AA having a more challenging time as they start their first year at the university because it's a kind of just a different speed of learning. It's not necessarily harder, it's just goes really fast.

Mary Tripp  
So I would say, yeah, don't pressure yourself to get like a complete A and walk in the door with everything, everything, but just be well-rounded and make sure you have a backup.

Mary Tripp  
Yeah. Ohh and I don't even know what you're talking about. Uh, so dual enrollment a that's a good question. So some high school students will go to the local community colleges and take some courses, and that's called dual enrollment. And so at some point in your career, you might hear in high school about students taking dual enrollment courses. So they go take a few courses at the college to replace some of their high school courses.

Mary Tripp  
And an AA degree is an associates degree, which is a two year degree that you got from a State College. So some of our students have kind of skipped out on their last couple of years of high school and just went to to the local Community College and got that Community College experience which does move you ahead a little bit, but it also kind of like you miss out on some stuff too. So I would not push for that if I were you.

Mary Tripp  
Umm, I think enjoy high school. Do all the fun things too. And you know, like if you do take some AP classes, those Advanced Placement classes at your school, those can be really, really good and valuable to teach you, study skills, if anything.

Justin Urso  
Perfect.

Mary Tripp  
Umm. Let's see. Any other questions you have for us?

Justin Urso  
Yeah. And there's a leap 9th grade.

Mary Tripp  
Yeah, exactly.

Sarah Evans  
You got time, Hunter.

Sarah Evans  
Yeah.

Mary Tripp  
You got time. Just, you know, like take it easy, have fun, but do take math. Every year. I think that's where we find students are kind of falling behind a little bit, is really if they don't take their math and their science courses every year in high school, that's where you kind of get behind.

0:34:49.580 --> 0:35:0.510  
Justin Urso  
We did have another question for you, both of you. Each of you speak to like a success story of your programs.

Mary Tripp  
Yeah, Sarah, you wanna go first?

Mary Tripp  
Yeah.

Sarah Evans  
We we have a lot and I'm, I'm sure Mary does too, you know, the one that I think of off the top of my head is Loubensky Baine. And he is kind of our our golden child right now. He came in to excel, kind of nervous, wasn't sure he was quite ready for the college experience. And he actually really did well. And then he ended up joining our learning assistant team. So.

Sarah Evans  
In our calculus one class we have about 5 to 7 Las learning assistance and what the Las do is they support the teaching experience in they're doing practice problems and working with the students in a very atypical manner so.

Sarah Evans  
Our calculus classes are flipped classroom, which a lot of courses that UCF are moving in this direction because it's a better learning experience for the students. But it is also growing pains for the students because students are very used to a traditional instructor stands up, lectures. You take a quiz or test instructor lectures where the flipped classroom is you're kind of learning in the classroom and you're watching all the lectures and doing all the work on your own outside of the classroom.

Sarah Evans  
So it's it's kind of backwards. And so the learning assistants are there to support in that effort. Loubensky actually loved it, and so he decided to be a learning assistant. What his claim to fame is, is he actually has earned 2 fellowships at the University of Central Florida. No other student has actually gotten to fellowships, and so he is very excited about that. And he is an aerospace engineering major. I don't think I had had mentioned that. And he is actually looking for jobs right now. He is about to graduate. So I'll keep you posted on what he decides to do. But he's had a bunch of internships along the way. He's done.

Sarah Evans  
A research he participated in the URA, and so he is just taking advantage of everything and with the success stories, I think that's what makes students successful at any university is, you know, be intentional.

Sarah Evans  
Don't go too far ahead of of the thought process. You know kind of working the now, but also in terms of just being mindful of I'm taking advantage of the opportunities that are here you know be present and take advantage of those opportunities. And I think that's what makes our students successful and we have these success stories. I have a bunch of them. You can also visit on our website. I have a link with all the students and different success stories and you can read about different students.

Justin Urso  
Excellent.

Mary Tripp  
Yeah, yeah, I think I think similarly to Sarah, we have our, our kind of golden child right now is George Walters Mara who he's started out in FLEARN and he was.

Mary Tripp  
He started out in biomedical sciences. He was the 1st in his family to ever go to college, didn't know anything about this whole like, what is college experience? But he was the person. And I will reiterate this. He took advantage of every opportunity that came his way. And he kept his grades up. So he graduated with nearly a 4.0, which is, like almost miraculously impossible from UCF with biomedical Sciences degree. He got started in research. His first year continued in research. He applied for every summer fellowship, every scholarship. He did a number of research fellowships in at other universities, so he was paid to go to school over the summer and do research.

Mary Tripp  
He won a number of very prestigious national awards for his work, including a Goldwater which is a $15,000 scholarship, and he also won a huge scholarship that National Science Foundation GRFP we've had a number of learned students win that award, and that award is $120,000 to pay for Graduate School. So George is now able. He's at Stanford doing a PhD. That's a doctorate degree in biomedical sciences. And I I see came back to visit.

Mary Tripp  
Last summer and he said this is the first time in my life I've never had to worry about money. I can just buy my lunch and not have to budget and I can pay for all my school. And I'm what got him there was the intentionality taking advantage of opportunities. He was always a learner. When he came back, he did the same thing. He helped us as a peer mentor. He came back, he helped other students. And every time I spoke with him, he was wanting to learn more. And he presented himself as a learner.

Mary Tripp  
I'm not as I know everything already, but just I wanna learn. I wanna see what you can help me. You can teach me. And people are impressed by that.

Sarah Evans  
Yeah, yeah.

Mary Tripp  
Yeah. And aerospace engineering saying you can get that same, you can do the same thing in aerospace.

Mary Tripp  
Yeah.

Sarah Evans  
Now I network, I mean that's the important thing, especially at UCF because we're so big that a lot of these awards, you need letters of recommendation and things like that. And so if you're walking into the classroom every day and really not interacting with the instructor and and networking with faculty members, who's going to write your recommendations, who's going to get to know you? And I think that's how students also drive that success.

Mary Tripp  
Uh huh. Absolutely. Yeah, I will say I think we as a team, we all all of us who knew George in our office were like a three page letter of recommendation. That was just the most glowing recommendation we could think of. So so that he was able to win an award because we honestly seriously believed in him.

Sarah Evans  
Yeah.

Sarah Evans  
Yeah.

Mary Tripp  
Yeah, and get to know your teachers even go to office hours. A lot of students kind of when you're in a large class, you sit in the back and you're afraid to talk and you're afraid to speak up. But don't be afraid. Just be a, you know, approachable. And and it's OK for your shy we get that like STEM students are shy. We're OK with that.

Justin Urso  
Right. Any other questions for our presenters?

Mary Tripp  
Let me, umm I'll make sure you guys have the application for learn. We are taking applications now.

Justin Urso  
Perfect.

Mary Tripp  
And so we would love to have anybody apply that they want to.

Justin Urso  
We can add those to the site because we do have on our site the links to L.E.A.R.N., GEMS and Excel all posted on there.

Mary Tripp  
Oh, wonderful.

Sarah Evans  
Because that film one as well. And then let me get GEMS too. And COMPASS for that matter.

Justin Urso  
Yes.

Mary Tripp  
Yeah, exactly.

Justin Urso  
Yeah, because some of our students are joining this program purely to see if they are interested in engineering. So in that case then, you know, Compass would be great for them.

Sarah Evans  
Absolutely. Absolutely. The other thing that I'll shamelessly plug because at our office does K through 12 outreach. So we have summer camps in our summer that's run from our office and we do a camp connect, it's called and it's really for that exploration of engineering and computer science. And so faculty members each have a day or a half a day and we have about 80 to 100 students that come in for that camp and they do live demos, they do hands-on activities with the students and I can put, I can drop that link in the chat too if anyone is interested, just in the exploration because that's for high school students. It's for grades eight through 12, I believe.

Justin Urso  
And believe we're taking part in that, Doctor Vasu’s lab, I know we're doing at least Camp Connect Advanced I think.

Mary Tripp  
Right.

Sarah Evans  
Advance. Yeah. So we have Camp Connect 1, Camp Connect 2, you and then Advance. Advance is research-based, sothe students are paired in a research lab in the summer.

Mary Tripp  
Yeah.

Sarah Evans  
Which is pretty cool.

Justin Urso  
Uh huh.

Mary Tripp  
Very cool.

Sarah Evans  
So I will, I will find that as we are chatting.

Mary Tripp  
Yeah. And I I will say in engineering, the research is super cool that we have a number of students who are in aerospace engineering labs. And then we also have material science research going on as well. That's super cool about like kind of the the materials that you would use and either aerospace applications or and industrial applications as well. A lot of our engineering students in particular get internships and I know Sarah, you mentioned this as well. Those internships are with industry. I have two learn students who are mechanical engineering who one is currently at Langley working with NASA this semester. They called him up and said, hey, take a semester off and come do an internship at Langley. So he's doing research there. He was in a FLEARN the COVID year, so 2020-2021. And I just had another student tell me he got.

Mary Tripp  
Also, an experience at NASA, so he's moving to Virginia for this summer to do an internship at NASA. So we do have a lot of students who do NASA research and also other kind of internships as well. And you can get numbers of internships. So two of our students who came back this year to help us, Sonya and a ref are both first generation students. So they, you know, families didn't go to college, but they are on it. They've done internships from their very first summer.

Mary Tripp  
And done all kinds of really cool things, especially in engineering.

Justin Urso  
Right.

Justin Urso  
So, any more questions for our speakers?

Justin Urso  
If not, then I'd like to thank you both again. Genuinely, thank you so much for coming and giving this talk and explaining different opportunities that are available to the students as they progress into their collegiate career.

Mary Tripp  
Great. Thank you so much. Feel free to reach out to us.

Marley Albright  
Thank you both so much.

Sarah Evans  
Thank you for having uses.

Mary Tripp  
Yeah. And I monitor the learn e-mail just like Sarah monitors they excel e-mail so feel free to e-mail and just, you know, ask any questions you want.

Sarah Evans  
Yeah, absolutely.

Justin Urso  
Thank you both again.

0:45:47.290 --> 0:45:48.30  
Sarah Evans  
Appreciate it.

Mary Tripp  
Great. Thank you. Bye.

Justin Urso  
Yep, have a good night.