

# CURC 2026 Award Winners

## Best In Show

### Community Engaged Learning Poster

**Elijah Currans and Adrianna Steffen**

College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, Warner College of Natural Resources  
“*Community Engagement in Action: Ensuring Everyone has a Seat at the Table and a Voice in the Choir*”

Mentors: Danyel Addes, Maggie Clark

### Oral Presentation

3-way tie

**Kianna Walz**

College of Agricultural Sciences

“*The Thoroughbred Theory: Influence of Breed on Performance at the 5\*L Level of Eventing*”

Mentor: Carleigh Fedorka

**Mabel DeGrandpre**

Warner College of Natural Resources

“*Examining Cookstove Use Pemba Island, Tanzania*”

**Torin Monthathong**

Warner College of Natural Resources

“*Weather has no effect on parental attentiveness or hatching success on Hawaiian gallinules (‘Alae ‘Ula, Gallinula galeata sandvicensis)*”

Mentor: Caitlin Wells Salerno

### Research Poster

2-way tie

**Sophie Kamprath**

College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences

“*How to Catch a Chemical: First Electrochemical Detection of Lorlatinib*”

Mentor: Romana Jarosova

**Sami Kupfner**

Walter Scott, Jr. College of Engineering

“*Microscopic visualization of novel Cyanobacterial biofilms for bioproduction: bringing secretome-altered Synechocystis to the human eye in dual color*”

Mentor: Darcy Hunstiger

## Performing Arts

### **Jacqueline Urquidez and the All Strings Attached Group**

College of Liberal Arts

*"All Strings Attached Performance"*

## Visual Arts

*2-way tie*

### **Lyd Paulsen**

College of Natural Sciences

*"Intertwined: The Threads Between Ecocide and Genocide in Palestine"*

### **Clare Fesker**

College of Liberal Arts

*"The Digital Handmade: Fiber Art at the Intersection of Craft, Design and Technology"*

## Documentary Film

### **Maren Unwin**

College of Liberal Arts

*"And My Soul Shall Be Healed: Reclaiming Christianity through the Transgender Experience"*

## Written Work

### **Melissa Chavira-nieto**

College of Health and Human Sciences

*"Memo y su frijol"*

Mentor: Yaneli Munoz

## Excellence in Energy and Climate Research

2-way Tie

### Lucas Toth

Warner College of Natural Resources

*“The Efficiency of poly(lactic acid) Butanolysis”*

Mentors: Claudia Boot, Nhat Minh Tu Nguyen

### Annie Hartshorn

College of Natural Sciences

*“Quantifying Uncertainty in Methane Emission Measurements”*

Mentor: Alexandra Taylor

## Social Impact Award

2-way Tie

### Tina Blugel and Sav Crisler

College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences

*“Blooming Threats: Assessment of Harmful Algal Blooms in Urban Ponds of Fort Collins, Colorado”*

Mentor: Olivia Arnold

### Jesse Wolf

College of Liberal Arts

*“Beneath the Surface: Child Labor and Policy Failure in the Mines of Potosí, Bolivia”*

Mentor: Mario Jimenez Chacon

## College Honors

### **Raiyaa Huntress**

College of Agricultural Sciences

*“Hop latent viroid: First report of vector transmission in hemp (Cannabis sativa)”*

Mentor: Punya Nachappa

### **Sophie Renner**

College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences

*“Sex Based Differences in the Gut Microbiome of Felines”*

Mentor: Macy Ricketts

### **Kacy Baumgart**

College of Business

*“Understanding Bot Adoption in GitHub Issues: A Project Level Analysis of Open-Source Software Communities”*

Mentor: Zisu Wang

### **Nathan Kelley**

College of Health and Human Sciences

*“The Impact of Arm Swing on Movement Strategy During the Sit-to-Stand Test”*

Mentor: Isaac Bast

### **Caitlyn BucknerBackstrom**

College of Liberal Arts

*“How the Evolution of Hand Anatomy in Human Ancestors Led to Symbolic Thought”*

Mentor: Kimberly Nichols

### **Sophia Serwold**

College of Natural Sciences

*“Comparative genomic analyses of chronic wasting disease-associated polymorphisms in cervids from novel, isolated clusters in North America”*

Mentor: Joseph DeFranco

### **Uziel Beltran, Braedon McGuire, Joseph Muhlenhaupt, Julia Moreno, Victoria Entwistle, William O'Brien, Zaqueo Carchi Easterly**

Walter Scott, Jr. College of Engineering

*“Canine Exoskeleton”*

Mentor: Anura Jayasumana

### **Brittany Bobb**

Warner College of Natural Resources

*“Assessing the Economic Value of Ecosystem Services Across Land Cover Types within the High Plains Sentinel Landscape”*

Mentors: Cole Crossett, Jennie Anderson, Thomas Lawrence