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**DSU recognizes student excellence at annual Academic Research Showcase**

**CLEVELAND, Miss. —** Delta State University proudly recognized the outstanding achievements of 20 graduate and undergraduate students during the annual Academic Research Showcase, celebrating their dedication to academic inquiry and innovation.

Organized by Fawn Ussery, director of library services, and hosted by the Office of Academic Affairs and the Roberts-LaForge Library, the showcase provided a platform for students to present their individual research projects in a poster session format. Held on the second floor of the H.L. Nowell Union, the event allowed participants to display their research and engage with the university community.

Undergraduate winners included Dajanae Prout, a senior Psychology major from Gulfport, who earned first place for “The Impact of COVID-19 on Undergraduate Utilization of Counseling Services at Delta State University.” Olivia Pharr, a senior Environmental Science major from

Charleston, received second place for her project, “Vehicular Collisions with Raptors in the Mississippi Delta,” and Keveon Beavers a senior Music major from Horn Lake received a Special Recognition Award for “Exoticism in Verdi’s Opera *Aida*.”

Graduate student winners were led by Jacob West Gray from Olive Branch, who is pursuing a Master of Arts-Liberal Studies with a History concentration. He received first place for “Election of 1912.” Alexis Hartley, from Hazelhurst, a student in the Master of Science, Natural Sciences program, earned second place for “Creating Animations and Videos to Aid in Teaching Chemistry.”

“This year’s Academic Research Showcase was truly special, as it brought together a remarkable range of disciplines—from humanities, fine arts, and music to chemistry, biology, and counselor education,” said Ussery. “Our students demonstrated not only their deep knowledge but also an inspiring passion and creativity that enriched each field represented. Their work is a testament to the power of research across disciplines—and the exciting future ahead.”

The Academic Research Showcase reflects Delta State’s commitment to fostering a culture of academic excellence and providing students with opportunities to engage in meaningful research endeavors.

For more information about the Office of Academic Affairs at Delta State University, visit [www.deltastate.edu/academics/academic-affairs](https://www.deltastate.edu/academics/academic-affairs/). For more about Roberts-LaForge Library, visit [www.deltastate.edu/library](https://www.deltastate.edu/library/).

Cutline: Dajanae Prout, a senior Psychology major from Gulfport, earned first place among undergraduates during the 2025 Academic Research Showcase.

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**About Delta State University:**Delta State University is a four-year public institution whose nearly 2,700 students come from most U.S. states and more than 45 countries. Acknowledging its beginning as a teacher’s college, the University sustains excellence in teacher education while continuing to expand offerings in traditional as well as unique fields of study. Programs such as those available through the Delta Music Institute, the Commercial Aviation Department, and the Center for Interdisciplinary Geospatial Information highlight the University’s commitment to meeting the evolving needs of the students it serves with world-leading, industry-acclaimed programs. Situated in the heart of the Mississippi Delta, Delta State offers top-notch academic programs in business, arts, sciences, nursing, education, and more. DSU Athletics has won 14 national championships, 70 conference championships, and 37 regional titles.

Dajanae Prout, Psychology, senior, Gulfport, MS

Olivia Pharr, Environmental Science, senior, Charleston, MS

Keveon Beavers, Music, senior, Horn Lake MS

Jacob West Gray, Master of Arts-Liberal Studies, History, Olive Branch, MS

Alexis Hartley, Master of Science, Natural Sciences, Hazlehurst MS