Beckman Scholars Program at USC Chemistry
Guidelines and Requirements
(updated January 25, 2021)

The Beckman Scholars Program at USC Chemistry, funded by a generous grant from the Arnold & Mabel Beckman Foundation, supports exceptionally talented undergraduates to conduct in-depth, mentored research on topics ranging from human health to protecting and healing the environment and new energy discovery. Leveraging unique research and academic programs at the Chemistry Department and USC, the program aims to prepare Scholars for pursuing future advanced STEM studies and leadership roles in scientific research and innovation.

I. Award Information

(a) The Beckman Scholars Program at the University of Southern California is supported by a generous grant from the Arnold & Mabel Beckman Foundation. The program will support six Beckman Scholars within a three-year period, with at least one Scholar to be named per year, and a maximum of three Scholars to be named in any one of these three years, following this schedule:

Year 1: Summer 2021, Academic Year 2021-22, Summer 2022
Year 2: Summer 2022, Academic Year 2022-23, Summer 2023
Year 3: Summer 2023, Academic Year 2023-24, Summer 2024

(b) Subject to satisfaction of the terms of award, each student named as a Beckman Scholar shall receive an award in the amount of $26,000; $21,000 specifically for the Scholar and $5,000 for the Scholar’s Mentor (restrictions apply, see #3). Allocation of each Scholar’s Award funds are as follows:

1. **Student Stipend $18,200**: distributed as follows
   a. First Summer - $6,800
   b. Academic Year - $4,600
   c. Second Summer - $6,800

2. **Student Scientific Supply and Travel $2,800**: distributed as needed to support current research activities.

3. **Mentor Stipend $5,000**: distributed as needed during the associated Scholar’s award term to support the following, but not limited to:
   a. Scholar Mentorship Plan (SMP)
   b. Mentor Travel - to support attendance with Scholar at outside scientific symposia
   c. Scientific Supplies - related to the Scholar’s research
   d. Publication fees - for publishing in undergraduate and peer reviewed publications related to Scholar’s research
(c) Recipients of the Award shall carry the name “Beckman Scholar” alone and not in conjunction with any other name. In publications and promotional materials, please refer to the Foundation as: The Arnold and Mabel Beckman Foundation (referring to the Beckman Foundation is not correct), and to the award as: The Beckman Scholars Program or the Beckman Scholars Award.

II. Beckman Scholars

(a) Beckman Scholars must be citizens or permanent residents of the United States or its possessions. Scholars must be full-time students and remain in good academic standing, intending to pursue an advanced science degree or other scientific pursuits. Scholars must major in USC Chemistry (CHEM), Chemistry with Emphasis on Chemical Biology (CHCB), Chemistry with Emphasis on Chemical Nanoscience (CHCN), Chemistry with Emphasis on Chemical Research (CHRS), or Biochemistry (BIOC).

(b) Beckman Scholars are required to perform research activities part time (ten hours per week) during one academic year, and full time over two consecutive summers (ten 40-hour weeks each summer). Scholars will pursue their independent research project under the auspices of an approved full-time faculty Mentor.

Scholars should present their work at one of the annual on-campus events, for example, Chemistry Stauffer Symposium, Chemistry Summer Undergraduate Research Extravaganza, or USC Undergraduate Symposium. Scholars will attend the annual Beckman Symposium.

Working with their Mentors, Scholars are strongly encouraged to present their work at national and international meetings, as well as to publish their findings in peer-reviewed journals.

(c) Beckman Scholars will participate in training integrated with the Chemistry Department academic and research programs. For example, Scholars are encouraged to host a scientist to present a departmental seminar; enroll in CHEM 495, Beyond the Classroom: Research in Modern Chemistry; as well as participate in events hoste by Chemistry REU and other programs.

(d) Scholar Reports, due by Oct. 15 of the calendar year in which a Scholar’s funding concludes (e.g., Oct. 15, 2022 for Year 1 Scholars)

   (i) Report from each Beckman Scholar, submitted directly to the Foundation, independent of mentor review/revision. The report should include research findings; collaboration between the Scholar, Mentor, and Mentor’s lab; impact of the Award on career plan, and other program related topics.

   (ii) Scholar Value Statement: Describing Dr. Beckman’s contribution to science and the impact of his innovations as they relate to the Scholar, their research and new discoveries.

III. Mentors
(a) Mentors are responsible for the training of the Beckman Scholar, developing each into a future leader of scientific research and innovation, and imparting the foundational knowledge which is required for the pursuit of graduate level research.

(b) Mentor is to remain the Scholar’s Mentor for the duration of the Scholar’s term. Mentor will receive Mentor stipend for each Scholar mentored over the course of the three-year Award. Mentor stipend funds must be used by Mentor in relation to associated Scholar’s research for travel, scientific supplies, publishing in undergraduate journals, participating in symposia, etc.

(c) Mentor is to develop and support the Scholar Mentorship Plan (SMP):
   (i) Outlining the Scholar/Mentor relationship
   (ii) Detailing the collaboration between scholar, mentor, and mentor’s lab
   (iii) Defining the expectations of the Beckman Scholar, including:
      - Attendance at outside presentations/scientific symposia with the Mentor
      - Pursuit of increased undergraduate journal publication rates by the Scholar and Mentor
      - Outlining the anticipated results of the Scholar’s research

(*) The SMP is part of the Scholar Application and will be included in the initial report to the Beckman Foundation due May 15 of the calendar year when a Scholar’s funding commences (e.g., May 15, 2021 for Year-1 Scholar).

(d) Mentor Reports are due by Oct. 15 of the calendar year in which a Scholar’s funding concludes (e.g., Oct. 15, 2022 for Year-1 Scholars)
   (i) Report from each Mentor outlining his/her involvement with the program, the Scholar, and the results of the Scholar Mentorship Plan.
   (ii) Mentor Value Statement: Describing Dr. Beckman’s contribution to science and the impact of his innovations as they relate to the Mentor, their research and new discoveries.

IV Application and Scholar Selection

(a) Scholar selection criteria
   (i) A strong record of scholarship;
   (ii) Demonstrated interest in pursuing research (e.g., high-school or other prior experience, research at USC);
   (iii) Aspirations for pursuing STEM careers through advanced degree programs (e.g., Ph.D., M.D./Ph.D.);
   (iv) Quality of application package with emphasis on the collaboration between applicant/mentor and applicant’s ability to communicate.
(∗) The program recognizes that students have varying degrees of prior access to STEM education and will review the applications in a holistic manner.

(b) Application procedure and timeline
Reflecting the program’s emphasis on mentored research training, each applicant must identify a sponsoring mentor from the program-approved list to work with if the student is selected as a Beckman Scholar. Applicant should work with the proposed mentor to develop the application.

April 1, 2021: Applications are due on-line at http://chem.usc.edu/bsp/bsp2.html. Required materials are:

(i) Application Cover Page
(ii) Applicant: High-School Transcript
(iii) Applicant: USC STARS Report
(iv) Applicant: Personal Statement (1 – 2 pages). Applicants should describe their qualifications for the Beckman award, prior STEM experience and future STEM goals, and what they hope to gain from the BSP experience. Applicants are strongly encouraged to describe their individual backgrounds and unique experiences to demonstrate their commitment to STEM research.
(v) Applicant and Mentor: Research Plan (3 – 5 pages). This should describe the research project the applicant will undertake under the guidance of their BSP mentor.
(vi) Mentor: Scholar Mentorship Plan (as defined above)
(vii) A recommendation letter from a research mentor (current or prior) or science/math professor

April 1 -- 30, 2021: Initial Assessment. Applications will be reviewed by the BSP committee to select up to five finalists.

May 1 -- 15, 2021: Finalists Interview.

May 31, 2021: Scholar(s) announced and begin work with their respective mentors.