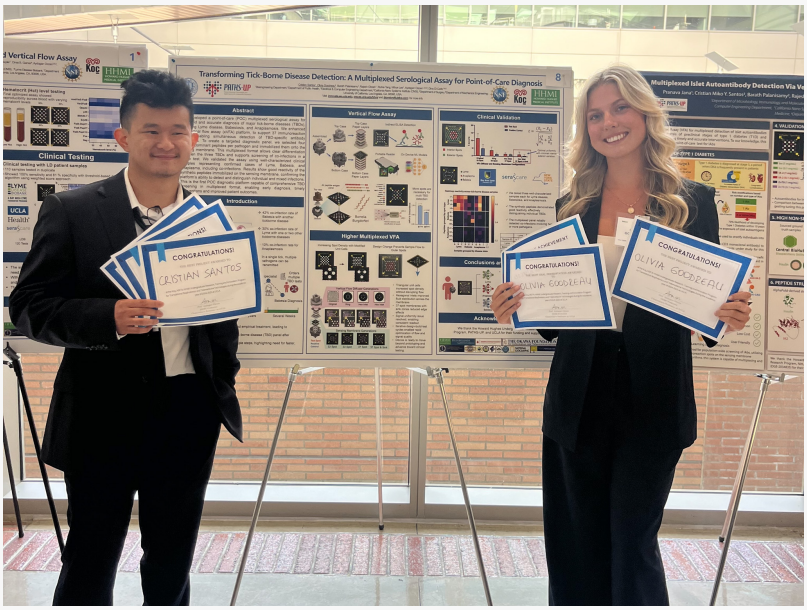
UCLA Undergraduate Students Win Top Honors for Lyme Disease Detection Research

UCLA undergraduates' innovative Lyme disease detection project receives top recognition at Undergraduate Research Symposium.



UCLA Undergraduates Cristian Santos and Olivia Goodreau awarded for innovative Lyme disease detection tool.

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, September 11, 2025 / EINPresswire.com/ -- UCLA undergraduates Olivia Goodreau and Cristian Santos were awarded both Best Oral Presentation and Best Overall Presentation at UCLA's prestigious Undergraduate Research Symposium for their innovative project on Lyme disease detection.

Their research, titled "Development of a Point-of-Care Lyme Disease Detection Test Using a Single-Tier Whole Blood Assay," was selected as one of only 30 projects presented out of more than 200 submissions—an impressive recognition of both the project's scientific merit and its potential real-world impact.

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>
> *Olivia Goodreau*

This groundbreaking diagnostic test aims to provide rapid, accurate detection of Lyme disease at the point of care, addressing a major gap in current diagnostic methods that often lead to delayed or missed diagnoses.

"For Olivia, this research is personal," said Denise Erwin, Vice President of Operations at the LivLyme Foundation, the nonprofit Olivia founded as a teenager to support children with tick-borne diseases. "This project is one of the main reasons she chose UCLA, and these honors are a testament to her passion and persistence in driving

innovation in Lyme disease research."

"I've lived with the consequences of delayed and inaccurate Lyme disease testing," said Olivia Goodreau. "That's what drives me every day. Winning these awards means the scientific community sees the urgency and promise of this work—and that gives me hope for the millions still suffering without answers."

"This project has been about more than just data—it's been about delivering hope," added Cristian Santos. "We wanted to create something that could truly make a difference in people's lives, and we're honored that our work was recognized in such a meaningful way."

The annual Undergraduate Research Symposium is one of UCLA's premier academic showcases, featuring outstanding student-led research across disciplines.

"We established this annual undergraduate research program at UCLA to provide our students with hands-on experience in developing cutting-edge research technologies aimed at addressing some of the most pressing global challenges," said Dr. Aydogan Ozcan, Chancellor's Professor at UCLA & Howard Hughes Medical Institute Professor.

The research program is organized by Dr. Aydogan Ozcan, Dr. Dino Di Carlo, and Dr. Omai Garner Labs at the California NanoSystems Institute at UCLA, with support from the PATHS-UP Engineering Research Center, the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, Koç-UCLA Translational Research Center, and the National Science Foundation (NSF).

The recognition of Olivia and Cristian's project signals growing momentum in the field of tick-borne disease research and the promise of improved diagnostics for patients worldwide.

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