



For Immediate Release

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Cherry Receives \$500 Undergraduate Research Grant

Devin Cherry was recently awarded a \$500 grant from the Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarly Activity (URSA) for his proposal entitled "Answering Paleoecological Questions Regarding Fossilized Trilobite Remains Through Collection and Laboratory Preparation."

Cherry, a junior environmental geology major from Murray, Ky., will be researching trilobite fossils found at the Parsons Quarry in Parsons, Tenn. Complete trilobite fossils are found at several sites. Trilobites, which are extinct arthropods, left an extensive fossil record with some 17,000 known species spanning the Paleozoic period. However, no complete trilobite samples are known to have been found at the Parsons Quarry. Cherry's research will attempt to discover the reasons behind the lack of completed trilobite samples at the Parsons Quarry.

Dr. Lara Homsey, Assistant Professor of Geosciences, will serve as Cherry's faculty mentor on the project. "He [Cherry] has always impressed me out of class with his interest in geology in general, and fossils in particular. He has been collecting fossils across the U.S. for many years and is always eager to talk about his finds and relate them to his coursework," Homsey said of Cherry.

Cherry plans to present his findings at MSU's *Scholars Week*, which will take place April 20-24, 2009.

More information about the URSA program can be found online at <http://campus.murraystate.edu/services/ursa/> or by calling (270) 809-3192.