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The Campus Ambassador Program (CAP) was mentioned in this section of our last issue, and continues to be cultivated by our student editorial and marketing teams as a very important STEM outreach initiative. Last autumn, the effort was led single-handedly by student Monica Neeb, who had a minor in marketing/management and earned credit for this outcome. The CAP idea is meant to extend our network with carefully selected partner institutions. Monica started with the University of Detroit Mercy (UDM), and developed a CAP contract, formalizing the arrangement with UDM Biology Chairperson Dr. Stephanie Conant. This CAP partnership will allow Fine Focus resources (print journals & promotional materials) to be made available to faculty and students, as well as ensuring students at each partner institution are aware of publishing opportunities for undergraduates in microbiology research and facilitating submission of their manuscripts. Overall, the model of the CAP is meant to encourage high quality manuscripts from traditionally underrepresented students in the sciences, and to teach them the fundamentals of peer review. At the same time, the CAP partner universities will serve as feeder institutions for manuscripts in the long-term. In addition to UDM, we have initiated CAP arrangements for two international universities: the Technical University of Dresden (Germany), and the University of Akureyri (Iceland). Each Fine Focus CAP site will also have a heavy emphasis on general aspects of professional activities relevant to all areas of STEM, not just microbiology. We envision each CAP site to be best implemented as a recognized student organization on each campus.

Each Fine Focus CAP student organization will establish a constitution and by-laws (using the existing template at Ball State University Fine Focus as a guide), officers, and will be comprised of students from all STEM disciplines. Although the frequency and specific format for CAP meetings and activities will vary slightly at each institution, the activities could include:

- Cultivate new ideas on how Fine Focus might work with the American Society for Microbiology (ASM, our existing primary community partner) to promote diversity and inclusion in the sciences
- Promote the submission of eligible manuscripts to Fine Focus using print and other promotional materials (pens, business cards, pamphlets, t-shirts, and print journals) sent from Ball State University
- Negotiate the campus library at each institution to carry Fine Focus in the stacks.
- Work with student leaders and undergraduate researchers to advocate for resources, events, policies that support the practice of undergraduate research
- Work with their campus URO/URC to help deliver needed student programming
- Provide information on best practices in undergraduate research and creative activity to their department and campus leaders
- Meet with state and federal elected officials to advocate for undergraduate research at professional conferences in their discipline

If you are interested in learning more about how your institution could become a potential CAP partner, please get in touch with me; I would be happy to discuss additional details.

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We always welcome your suggestions and feedback by email at finfocus@bsu.edu

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