NEW MEXICO ALLIANCE for MINORITY PARTICIPATION

New Mexico AMP CURRENTS
March-April 2008

Las Cruces' first commercial photovoltaic system is now in operation in Las Cruces, and two New Mexico AMP students from Luna Community College were involved in the research and installation of the project. Andrew Montaño and Mario Perez, both from Luna Community College, worked on the project last summer while participating in the Summer Community College Opportunity for Research Experience (SCCORE) program with mentors Robert E. Foster and Luis Estrada of the Institute of Energy and the Environment (IEE). The 6-kilowatt photovoltaic system was recently dedicated by Governor Richardson and is now operating on the roof of the Southwest Environmental Center on the Las Cruces Downtown Mall. The solar system generates over 11,000 kilowatt hours of electricity annually.

The Summer Community College Opportunity for Research Experience (SCCORE) program will be held at NMSU for community college students from July 6-August 8. In the program, students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines live on campus and serve as apprentice researchers on a faculty member's research project. Participants also attend a 1-credit hour university-level course for which they earn credit. In the program, students receive free room and board, paid university registration and course enrollment fees, and a student stipend of $1500. Applications will be accepted until all positions are filled. For more information, please call (575) 646-1847 or 646-5212.

Brady Rocks, Bridge to the Doctorate Cohort III participant, who graduated in fall 2007 with his Master's in Mathematics and is currently in the NMSU Mathematics Ph.D. program, was accepted to the Ph.D. Program at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. Brady received a full-tuition scholarship from Washington University, in addition to a university fellowship of $19,500. Congratulations, Brady!

Danielle Miranda, NMSU student who hails from NMSU-Alamogordo and who participated in the SCCORE and Undergraduate Research Assistantship (URA) program at NMSU, has been accepted to the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center Internship Program for 2008. This will be the second internship at the Center for Danielle, with her focus this time on Gardisal vaccine production with mentor Dr. Denise Galloway. Dr. Galloway's research made headlines around the globe recently, proclaiming this vaccine as a new weapon in the war on cancer, a vaccine that may block most cervical cancers. Dr. Galloway laid the groundwork for the new vaccine by developing virus-like particles that could aid in the detection of HPV antibodies and infection.

Dr. Paola Bandini, long-time faculty mentor for New Mexico AMP's research programs, mentored a team who participated in the GeoChallenge Student Competition in New Orleans, Louisiana from March 9-12, 2008. The competition was held during the GeoCongress, a conference organized by the Geo-Institute of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). In the competition, student teams compete by designing and constructing a miniature reinforced earth (MSE) wall with specified materials. The NMSU team, composed of two civil engineering undergraduate students and two graduate students, was selected by an evaluation committee based on a design report. One of the students on the team, Jaime Rodriquez, previously participated in the Computer Science, Engineering, and Mathematics (CSEMS) program.

Another participant of the CSEMS program, Theodore (Ted) Mansfield, was inducted into the NMSU chapter of Tau Beta Pi Engineering Honor Society, along with eight other engineering students. The selection for the society was based on academic performance and exemplary character. Ted was also selected for this summer for The Engineering Cities Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) program at Drexel University, a National Science Foundation (NSF) program that provides cutting edge summer research opportunities in the emerging field of urban engineering.