

AGU Awarded Grant to Establish Program on Engaging 2-Year-College Students in Research

Students at two-year colleges are a critical part of the future Earth and space science workforce, and undergraduate research experiences provide a hook to retain and ultimately to graduate students in the field. AGU education and public outreach staff were awarded a planning grant by the U.S. National Science Foundation Directorate for Geosciences (Opportunities for Enhancing Diversity in the Geosciences award 1201578) to help launch a new initiative concerning these issues. This new initiative, titled Unique Research Experiences for Two-Year College Faculty and Students (URECAS), will begin with a planning workshop this summer (11–13 July) that will bring together faculty from 2-year colleges, 4-year colleges and universities, and representatives from professional societies and federal organizations to learn more about how to support 2-year-college faculty and students engaged in Earth and space science research and to discuss the development of a program to strengthen the role of 2-year-college Earth and space science students in the future workforce.

The goals of this workshop are to help all the participants as well as the community to gain a robust picture of the successes in and barriers to engaging 2-year college students in research and for the participants to learn ways of overcoming these barriers from the presenters and one another. In particular, the workshop will help the following:

- Identify and develop a community of 2-year-college Earth and space science faculty who are engaged in research experiences and programs with their students.
- Determine model programs and best practices within the community that make these research experiences and programs successful for both faculty and students.
- Identify barriers to successful faculty and student research experiences and programs.
- Connect faculty who want to engage in research experiences with their students to national and local resources that can assist them in being successful in these endeavors.
- Highlight and develop collaborations that will allow 2-year-college students and faculty to attend and present their research at the AGU Fall Meeting in the future.

AGU expects to be able to fund about 30 workshop participants. For more information and to apply, visit <http://urecas.agu.org/>. The application deadline is 2 April 2012. If you have questions, please contact the authors.

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