

Media Contacts
Pati Urias
602.568.9763
psuprconsultants@gmail.com

Darcy Renfro
Science Foundation Arizona
602.682.2800
drenfro@sfaz.org

Science Foundation Arizona P: 602.682.2800
400 E. Van Buren St. Ste 200 F: 602-682-2890
Phoenix, Arizona 85004

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SCIENCE FOUNDATION ARIZONA RECEIVES STIMULUS FUNDS FOR COLLEGE, HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION PROGRAMS Funding to go toward “Engineering Pathways” and Graduate Research Fellowships

(PHOENIX, AZ) Governor Jan Brewer today announced she is dedicating \$3.1 million of her discretionary federal stimulus dollars to help Arizona train future engineers and attract the best science minds in the world. Awarded through Science Foundation Arizona (SFAz), the funds will be used to expand programs: \$1.5 million to replicate the Engineering Pathways program piloted at Cochise College and \$1.6 million to SFAz’s flagship program with the state’s three public universities to sponsor graduate research fellows (GRFs), students seeking advanced degrees in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) related fields.

Engineering Pathways Expansion - \$1.5 million

The Engineering Pathways program involves the creation of a pathway from high school to community college and toward industry certification and degrees to help support local 21st century employment needs, including engineering technicians and modern manufacturing. The funds will enable SFAz to expand the program to three rural sites: Arizona Western College in Yuma and La Paz Counties, Central Arizona College in Pinal County and Yavapai College in Yavapai County. Engineering Pathways allows high school students to work toward industry credentials and degrees before high school graduation and helps the community colleges design relevant programs that produce skilled workers to strengthen local economies.

“Our state’s young people are the future – they need access to programs that will help them get hands on experience and learning for the jobs of the 21st century, such as in engineering and technology,” said Gov. Jan Brewer. “Arizona needs more engineers and engineering technicians and we must provide students who show potential and interest with the resources to train for these in-demand fields that link to opportunity.”

“We are very pleased to have this opportunity to interact and engage with our local industry, which is key to ensuring relevance in all that we do in science, technology, engineering and math education,” said Glenn E. Mayle, president of Arizona Western College. “We believe this model will establish a solid partnership among our local industry as well as with the K-12 schools and universities.”

“I am pleased to support and look forward to being an active participant in the development, implementation and expansion of the Engineering Pathways model that will enable early college opportunities for high school students,” said Dennis Jenkins, president and CEO of Central Arizona College.

James Horton, president of Yavapai College, added, “I look forward to participating in this program that will lead to certification and degree options that support our local employers.”

Science Foundation Arizona Graduate Research Fellowships - \$1.6 million

SFAz's Graduate Research Fellowship program is one of the largest of its kind in the country, and is geared toward attracting the best and brightest students in key areas of strategic value to Arizona. The fellowships are awarded through each of the state's universities to top graduates in science, math and engineering. The universities sponsor the fellows for an additional three years, until the students earn their Ph.D.'s.

The stimulus funds will enable SFAz to co-sponsor an additional 40 GRFs statewide.

"Graduate students who focus on science- and engineering-related work are a vital part of the teams that conduct important research - and make incredible discoveries - in science and technology," said Dr. William Harris, President and CEO of SFAz.

A 2006 federal Bureau of Labor Statistics employment report projected that by the year 2016, nine out of 10 of the fastest growing jobs in the country would require significant training in science and math. Further, the study projected a 10-25% increase in STEM-related occupations.

"These programs help train students to fill workforce needs for Arizona's fast-growing technology industries, as well as strengthen the case for businesses to expand or come here," said Darcy Renfro, vice-president of SFAz and executive director of STEM Initiatives. "They are critical to our ability to link high schools, community colleges, and universities to real-world jobs to connect education and business in ways that will provide economic opportunities for everyone."

"Google" Internet search was created by graduate students Larry Page and Sergey Brin while the two were post-graduates at Stanford University; in the 1950's, James Watson and student Francis Crick conducted important work that led to the discovery of the structure of DNA. A pipeline of well-educated, research-oriented graduates with advanced degrees will be needed to fill the jobs of the 21st century economy, as well as also to attract high-paying, knowledge-based industries to the state.

Some of the work on which the GRFs focus includes research into disease proteins to design pharmaceuticals, cancer treatments, climate change and sustainability.

This project was supported by the Governor's Office of Economic Recovery and Science Foundation Arizona.

About Science Foundation Arizona: Science Foundation Arizona (SFAz) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization initiated in 2006 by the Greater Phoenix Leadership Inc., Southern Arizona Leadership Council and the Flagstaff Forty in conjunction with the executive and legislative branches of state government. SFAz serves as a catalyst for high-wage, knowledge-based jobs and economic diversity through administration and strict oversight of research, development and education grants to public education and other non-profit research performing institutions. For more information, visit www.sfaz.org.