



American Indian Science & Engineering Society
PO Box 9828, Albuquerque, NM 87119-9828
Phone (505) 765-1052 Fax (505) 765-5608 www.aises.org

INCREASING AWARENESS OF COMPUTING DISCIPLINES IN AMERICAN INDIAN /ALASKAN NATIVE POPULATIONS

Our demonstration project (AISES BPC/DP) plans to broaden the participation of American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN) students in the computing disciplines; a group that is woefully underrepresented in computing. This project will examine and test factors that are critical to achieving this objective.

- How can AISES effectively use its extensive set of programs to reach and increase the participation of AI/AN postsecondary students in computing disciplines?
- What is the impact of undergraduate research opportunities on recruitment and retention of these AI/AN students in computing majors?
- What impact does participation in undergraduate research opportunities have in encouraging and preparing AI/AN students to attend graduate school?

The ultimate goal is to increase the number of AI/AN students majoring in computing disciplines, working in a computing career, pursuing graduate education in the computing fields, and ultimately attaining a Ph.D. in a computing discipline. An overarching objective of the AISES BPC-DP project is to inform BPC-Alliance projects that want to include American Indian/Alaskan Native participants.

AISES partners with the University of Michigan, Johns Hopkins University, the University of St. Thomas, and other higher education institutions to use the undergraduate research opportunity as an integrating context for attracting and informing AI/AN students to careers in computing; an approach that has not been evaluated for AI/AN populations. The program will be structured to maximally expose the students to a research opportunity that is versed in computing theory, applications, and role models. This will expand the students' academic and professional horizons, and provide them with a mentoring support network; and ultimately inspire more American Indian students to complete baccalaureate and graduate degrees in computing disciplines.

The students that have participated in the project stated that the research experience has enriched their undergraduate program, helped plan for graduate school, and gave relevance to career selection. It is interesting to note that American Indian students are motivated by projects that can contribute to serving the needs of native communities; especially the community with which they identify.

BPC-DP: CENTER FOR AMERICAN INDIAN RESEARCH
OPPORTUNITY IN COMPUTING (**CNS-0540468**)
DR. DWIGHT A. GOURNEAU, PI/PD (507) 252-9809 DWIGHT@AISES.ORG
