Graduation Day: Celebrating Student Success

by NOAA CREST Staff

This issue highlights the success and achievements of NOAA CREST Scholars, faculty and supporters as the 2016-2017 academic year ends. Best of luck to our 2017 graduates! We are proud of you and value your contributions as part of our CREST family. Keep in touch as your journey continues!

CCNY-UTEP partner to produce next generation Latino professors

The City College of New York is partnering with the University of Texas at El Paso to educate the next generation of Hispanic professors in environmental sciences and engineering. The five-year project, “Collaborative Research: The Hispanic AGEP Alliance for the Environmental Science and Engineering Professoriate,” received a $3.7 million grant from the National Science Foundation starting July 1, 2017.

CCNY will receive $2.315 million of the funding and UTEP $1.3 million as they collaborate to develop, implement and study Hispanic environmental sciences and engineering (ESE) doctoral students to STEM instructional faculty positions at community colleges and other institutions. Participants will primarily include Hispanic Marine Climatologist, majoring in ESE fields. These include civil, electrical, mechanical or biomedical engineering; earth and atmospheric sciences; ecology and evolutionary biology, among other disciplines.

Seminar Series Topics Cover Coral Reefs to Astronauts

Dr. Karsten Shein discussed Coral Reefs and Climate Change* Data, Technology and Citizen Scientists* at CCNY on May 3. The guest looked at how coral reef ecosystems might weather the impacts of climate change and identified gaps in scientific resources and technology which leave many coral reefs unexplored.

Students gathered again at CCNY on May 11 to hear Professor SMJ Mortazavi, an expert in Diagnostic Imaging Department at the Fox Chase Cancer Center in Philadelphia. The lecture entitled "How Does Biological Protection Help Astronauts Tolerate High Levels of Radiation During Deep Space Manned Missions?" addressed challenges in radiation protection.
NOAA CREST Awards First Lautenbacher Scholarship to UTEP Doctoral Student

by NOAA CREST Staff

El Paso, TX, May 28, 2017—The Graduate School and the Environmental Science and Engineering (ESE) Doctoral Program at The University of Texas at El Paso are pleased to announce that incoming ESE Ph.D. student Stephen Escarzaga has been awarded the prestigious NOAA-CREST Lautenbacher Public Service Graduate Scholarship. He is the first student to receive this award in its inaugural year.

“I hope to one day be using my expertise to facilitate sound and well informed decision making at NOAA, USGS or other agencies that are putting solid science at the forefront,” said Escarzaga.

The award, administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Cooperative Science Center for Earth System Sciences and Remote Sensing Technologies (NOAA-CREST), is named for longstanding NOAA supporter and past administrator retired Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher. This $45,000 scholarship supports STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) students pursuing graduate level studies at Minority Serving Institutions.

NOAA-CREST is a nonprofit led by the City College of New York and creates opportunities for students from underrepresented groups to achieve in environmental science and related technologies. UTEP is one of NOAA-CREST’s five partner institutions.

Escarzaga is a UTEP alumnus who earned his bachelor’s degree in science. As part of his graduate studies, he will research satellite and ground-based remote sensing techniques to measure coastline changes in the Arctic. To fulfill part of the scholarship’s service requirement, he will spend the summer conducting education and outreach in the predominantly Native American community of Utqiaġvik (formerly Barrow), Alaska, where his students will be introduced to basic applications of remote sensing first hand.

“‘I will give particular focus to subjects that arise in my personal research of observing arctic coastal and near shore dynamics,’” said Escarzaga.

Environmental Science and Engineering is one of five interdisciplinary doctoral programs at UTEP, which create unique opportunities for research, innovation and public engagement. Craig Tweedie, Ph.D., associate professor of biological sciences and director of the Environmental Science and Engineering Program at UTEP, and Miguel Velez-Reyes, Ph.D., George W. Edwards/El Paso Electric Distinguished Professor in Engineering and chair of the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department at UTEP, mentored Escarzaga and supported his application for the Lautenbacher Award.

Summer Bridge Students Arrive at City College of NY

by NOAA CREST Staff

There was an unmistakable buzz on the City College of New York campus mid-June as Summer Bridge students arrived for an eight-week research immersion program.

Summer Bridge is a paid internship that prepares scholars transition from high school, community college or undergraduate school to the next phase of their academic careers.

“We are excited to welcome so many talented students whom we have no doubt will develop new skills, meet new friends and clarify their career paths”, said Dr. Shakila Merchant, Assistant Director of NOAA CREST.

After the June 19 Orientation Sessions, future STEM professionals wasted no time diving in to hands-on research with NOAA CREST master’s and doctoral students.

The program runs for eight weeks from June 19 through August 11.