



in the Media

November 20, 2015

Citrus College Receives 2015 Chancellor's Student Success Award

By Marilyn Grinsdale

GLENDORA, Calif. – Citrus College was awarded the 2015 Chancellor's Student Success Award by California Community Colleges Chancellor Brice W. Harris.

The college was one of two California community college programs to receive the award on Friday, November 20, 2015. It was presented to programs that succeed in supporting students as they achieve their higher education goals. This year's honorees were Citrus College's Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Summer Research Experience (SRE) Program and College of the Canyons' Accelerate Your Dreams to Reality Program.

"I am deeply honored to accept the 2015 Chancellor's Student Success Award on behalf of Citrus College," said Superintendent/President Geraldine M. Perri, Ph.D. "Being recognized by the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges for 'innovative work that reflects, achieves, and improves student access, equity, and success,' is a highpoint in the institution's 100 year history."

In 2012, with the support of a Title III STEM grant and under the leadership of Dr. Marianne Smith, Director of STEM Grant Projects, the SRE program was developed to address student equity and success of STEM students, and in particular, to increase enrollment and achievement of Latino students in STEM programs.

"In addition to the level of commitment the students bring, I believe the program has realized success because of the passion and commitment to student success that STEM faculty, staff and administration bring to campus each day," said Smith.

The SRE program provides an opportunity for STEM students to conduct research with faculty and staff from local universities and research institutes. Each year, the college places 40 to 50 students in 8 to 10 week, 40 hour per week assignments at prestigious research sites throughout Southern California. This summer, the college placed 51 students at seven partnering institutions including, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory; the City of Hope; California State Polytechnic University, Pomona; the Oak Crest Institute of Science; Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Gardens; Chapman University; and California State University, Fullerton.

The SRE program has led to increased completion and transfer in STEM programs, including a 237 percent increase in STEM degree production and a 126 percent increase in STEM transfers to CSU and UC campuses over the past six years.

Perhaps most notably, Citrus College has selected those STEM students who were the least likely to continue in STEM classes. Over the past four years, 47 percent of participants have been women, 71 percent were students of color, 68 percent were first-generation college students, and 80 were classified as low-income.

Data indicate the SRE program may also accelerate transfer plans and boost involvement in other STEM activities. The program provides participants with an opportunity to envision themselves as STEM degree completers and gain an understanding of the relevance of STEM to their communities, making this a life-changing experience for these students.

“Citrus College’s Summer Research Experience program provides a unique approach to addressing student equity, access and completion goals,” said Citrus College Board President Joanne Montgomery. “I commend the entire Citrus College community on their commitment to student access, completion and success, which has resulted in this important recognition by Chancellor Harris.”