066 Session: Collaborations and Partnerships in Ocean Research and Education

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INSTITUTIONS (ALL):
  1. Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
  2. Institute for Broadening Participation
  3. University of Texas at Arlington
  4. Ohio Aerospace Institute
  5. Hampton University

Title: MS PHD’S: USING VIRTUAL COMMUNITY PLATFORMS TO INTEGRATE DIVERSITY, COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIES AND EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS IN OCEAN SCIENCES RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

The Ocean Sciences community must achieve greater levels of diversity to advance the goal of better ocean research and education. The Minorities Striving and Pursuing Higher Degrees of Success (MS PHD’S) in Earth System Science Professional Development Program facilitates the recruitment, retention and advancement of underrepresented students through multi-faceted strategies of collaborative partnerships, professional development, mentoring, and community building. This three-phase initiative relies on continual community interaction facilitated through multiple online platforms including social media, listserv, discussion forum, and public profiles. Designed as a sustainable component of the program, the virtual community facilitates engagement beyond face-to-face activities of the program phases. It provides a platform for students, agency officials, private employers and other stakeholders to form new partnerships and collaborations, disseminate opportunities, share reciprocal support and mentoring, and maintain continuity of shared networks. Participants report a reduced sense of isolation, an increased sense of community, and a higher level of confidence about their ability to succeed. Of the program’s 213 participants, 47 have earned doctoral degrees and are employed within the ESS workforce. Another 67 are enrolled in doctoral programs.