



PRESS RELEASE

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Citrus College STEM Students Participate in Prestigious Summer Research Project

Glendora, CA. This summer, 51 Citrus College science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) students participated in a full-time, paid internship program at seven of the nation's most prestigious universities and research institutions.

Since 2012, the college's Summer Research Experience has offered STEM students an opportunity to work in a dynamic environment, where they collaborate and perform research alongside faculty and scientists from their host institutions. This year, the students held eight to 10 week internships at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (Cal Poly); Chapman University; California State University, Fullerton; City of Hope; Jet Propulsion Laboratory; Oak Crest Institute of Science; and Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden.

"The students who participate in the Summer Research Experience represent just one segment of Citrus College's talented students," said Superintendent/President Geraldine M. Perri, Ph.D. "The STEM Program has done an excellent job in preparing students to complete their studies and succeed in their careers. This is reflected in the fact that Citrus College ranks first in California for the number of associate in science transfer degrees awarded."

In addition to the support they received from their institutions' faculty and staff, the students created posters illustrating their research and summarizing their hypotheses, methods, and conclusions. The posters were displayed and the students were present to describe their research at the annual Summer Research Symposium held at Citrus College on September 15. The two-hour event drew hundreds of students, faculty and staff, as well as local elected officials and K-12 district superintendents.

"The Summer Research Experience has proven to be so much more than an academic program," said Dr. Marianne Smith, director of the Grant Project RACE to STEM

program. “For many students, participation boosts their confidence and confirms that they should continue with their STEM major and seek a career in a STEM field.”

David Chacon is one such student. His internship was at Cal Poly, where he conducted research on the topography of Costa Rica’s Nicoya Peninsula. Pursuing a hypothesis to determine whether the sediment along the peninsula was formed by fresh water or salt-water sources, Chacon, a fellow student, and two members of Cal Poly’s geological sciences department conducted hours of research that involved organizing, examining, analyzing, and recording data—a meticulous process that Chacon enjoyed.

“I had a great time,” he recalled. “We inventoried and cataloged Costa Rican beach rock samples, to be sent out and prepared for microscope slides.”

Chacon graduated from Citrus College in June 2015 with associate in science degrees in two disciplines: automotive technology and biology/physical science/mathematics. He has transferred to Cal Poly Pomona, where he is majoring in engineering technology.

“Citrus College’s STEM Program has an outstanding national reputation, and it consistently prepares students to earn advanced degrees and obtain jobs in these highly lucrative fields,” said Mrs. Joanne Montgomery, president of the Citrus Community College District Board of Trustees. “I look forward to attending the Summer Research Symposium every year. The students’ work reflects their dedication to academic excellence, and I am inspired by their success stories as they prepare for the next step in their education and exciting careers.”



Summer Research Experience participant David Chacon presents his poster. Chacon graduated from Citrus College in June 2015 and is currently studying engineering technology at Cal Poly, Pomona.