FY 2007

Alaska Native-Serving and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions Education Grants Program

Description of Funded Projects

Multicultural Alliances
Science and Education Resources Development
Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, DC
Animal Migration Patterns and Demographics

Through a partnership with minority serving institutions and research consortium in Alaska and Hawaii, the University of Alaska Southeast, Sitka Campus plans to establish a center for the study of animal migration patterns and demographics. The center will be integrated into a teaching and experiential learning program for under-represented advanced high school and undergraduate students interested in pursuing a scientific career. Developing an online humpback whale catalog of photographs used to identify individual whales will be essential for the completion of this project. This project will enable Alaska-Hawaii students to develop scientific competency through experiential learning, have contact with real-world scientists and provide opportunities to fully understand the scientific process using data gathered from the part of the world in which they live.

University of Hawaii Agribusiness Education, Training and Incubator Project (AETI)

The University of Hawaii’s (UH) Agribusiness Education, Training and Incubator (AETI) project will enhance the University’s educational and workforce development and agribusiness incubation capacities. This consortium project is being implemented with a collaborative effort between the nine UH campuses and the associated Cooperative Extension Services, the Agricultural Incubator Program, local agriculture producers, business communities, and students. Emphasis is focused on building capacity and ownership among Hawaii’s many rural agriculture communities throughout the duration of this project, including a large number of Native Hawaiian and other traditionally underserved minority populations.

Healthy Animals Healthy Communities

The University of Alaska Fairbanks, Interior Aleutian Campus plans to develop a Veterinary Science (VTS) certificate program. This will increase the capacity of this program to include higher levels of coursework, which will more adequately prepare students seeking to pursue a career as a veterinary technician. Financial support will be provided for a new cohort of Alaska Native VTS students enrolled in the VTS certificate program from the Interior, Aleutians and the Northwest Arctic regions of Alaska while placing emphasis on student retention and academic success. There will also be support for students from outside Interior Aleutian Campus’s service region who enroll in the VTS program in order to expand the program to other parts of the state.
Alaska Native Education and Community Development within a Changing Landscape
The University of Alaska Fairbanks, Bristol Bay Campus plans to increase opportunities for Alaska Natives to participate in applied research and community development programs that are directly related to the ecosystem health of Bristol Bay. This project is designed to assist local indigenous populations through education, experiential learning and applied research as rural communities adjust to wide-ranging landscape changes. The educational need of the local population in food and agricultural science-related disciplines will be addressed. There will also be an emphasis on education in the conservation and renewable natural resources. Applied research and community development projects will explore and determine best practices while working to find solutions to local ecological problems.

Elitelta Naunranek: Let’s Study Plants
The University of Alaska Fairbanks, Kuskokwim Campus plans to develop an ethnobotany certificate program through the incorporation experiential learning experiences. The enhancement of the ethnobotany certificate program will include recruiting students into the science, technology, and math fields through summer science camps for high school students; providing an exciting experiential learning experience at field camp for ethnobotany certificate majors, and developing Yup’ik Eskimo ethnobotanical materials by convening a Yup’ik elder/expert working group to record traditional knowledge of plants in the Yukon-Kuskowim delta region. Student recruitment and retention will be increased by bringing faculty and students together in the enriched learning environment of summer camp in the wilds of Alaska. Access to native flora at field camps is immediate and provides the optimal type of classroom experience for studying plants in situ. Students will also be provided with financial assistance, the opportunity to study science will be available to more students than might otherwise be the case.