

NSF EPSCoR

THE SOLAR NEXUS IN NEVADA ANNUAL MEETING BROUGHT NEARLY 100 NEVADA RESEARCHERS AND PROJECT PARTICIPANTS TO LAS VEGAS

On February 9-10 more than 100 researchers and Solar Nexus Project participants gathered at UNLV for the Nevada NSF EPSCoR Annual Meeting & External Advisory Committee Meeting. The two-day conference allowed everyone involved in the project to come together and learn about the other aspects of the multi-faceted project currently in the second year of its grant cycle.

Presentations were given from the project leads in the areas of research, cyberinfrastructure, diversity, workforce development and external engagement. Additionally, the conference included breakout sessions and stakeholder panel discussion.



Solar Nexus Participants, February 9, 2015, University of Nevada, Las Vegas



MEET THE NEVADA EPSCoR TEAM: MICHELE CASELLA

Michele Casella is the education, outreach and diversity administrator (EOD) for the Nevada System of Higher Education Sponsored Programs Office (NSHE SPO). In this role, she is responsible for ensuring that EOD activities are integrated throughout the three NSF EPSCoR projects currently funded in Nevada.

Q: We have read your job description, but what do you really do?

A: I have THE BEST role in the Nevada EPSCoR program! I have the pleasure of working with students and faculty across programs, the university system, even across a number of states, to broaden the participation of underrepresented minorities in STEM education and research. With that, I meet many different people, from many different backgrounds and build unique opportunities to reach common goals in diversifying our workforce, and ultimately, economic growth in Nevada.

Q: What is the most important lesson you have learned from your job?

A: One size does NOT necessarily fit all! What is proven successful for a particular individual, group or institution, may not be for another. Education and outreach programs are often like research experiments, true to trial and error.

Q: What impact has working in the EPSCoR office had on you personally?

A.: Working for EPSCoR has made me realize that had I had more guidance and support while going through my academic career, I would have gone into a science-driven profession, possibly in health sciences. I get charged up when I hear of the amazing research that happens right in our backyard, and I am happy to be a peripheral part of that work! Who knows? I still have my whole life ahead of me and that's what I tell students I assist on a daily basis.

Q: If there was a movie made about your life, who would you cast as yourself?

A: Well, if I wasn't available to play me, I would have to say Sandra Bullock...but only if she could bring in some of her Gracie Lou Freebush characteristics from Miss Congeniality.

SOLAR NEXUS PROJECT LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE

In February, the Solar Energy-Water-Environment Nexus in Nevada project launched a new website to better serve the researchers, stakeholders and the community. The website highlights all aspects of the five-year multi-faceted research project including:

- Research
- Cyberinfrastructure
- STEM workforce
- External engagement

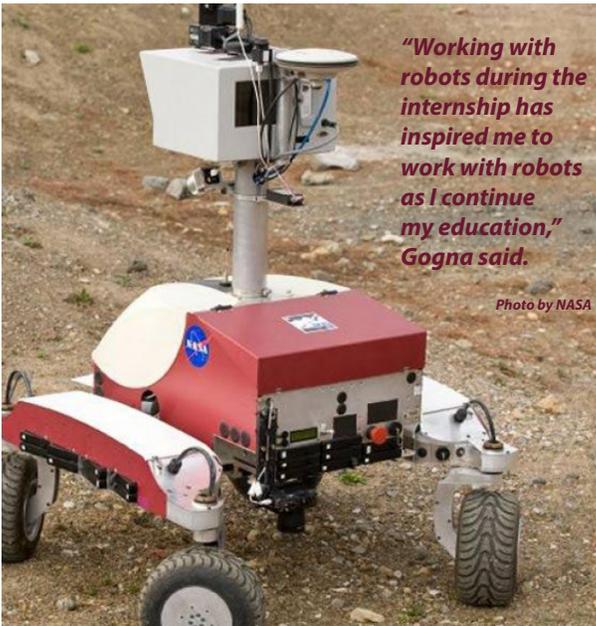
Additionally, the new site functionality provides photos, events and video that will be updated on a regular basis giving anyone interested a bird's eye view on what's going on with the project at any given time.



<http://nvsolarnexus.org>

NASA EPSCoR

STUDENTS EMBRACE OPPORTUNITY TO INTERN AT NASA WITH HELP OF EPSCoR FUNDING



Last summer UNR students David Frank, Josh Curtis and Shubham Gogna had the chance of a lifetime – interning at NASA. Frank and Curtis interned for the Intelligent Robotics Group at NASA Ames Research Center in Mountain View, California while Gogna worked at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California.

All three students were chosen based on their GPAs and performance in relevant courses. The process to become an intern is not as complicated as some student's imagine, and the benefit during and afterwards is long lasting helping students solidify the directions of their future careers.

The internships were made possible because of UNR professors George Bebis and Monica Nicolescu relationships with NASA as well as funding provided by EPSCoR. Bebis leads a NASA EPSCoR-funded research project focused on the use of computer vision techniques that help autonomous robots perform tasks on other planets.

Read the complete story published in Nevada Today <http://www.unr.edu/nevada-today/news/2014/nasa-summer-interns>

HOW DOES EPSCoR WORK?

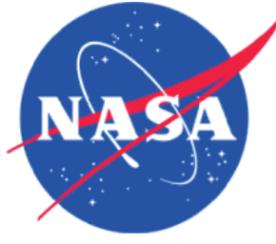
We get this question a lot, so we created an info-graphic showing exactly how the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR) works in Nevada. The research projects funded through EPSCoR help raise the level of scientific research in our state as well as bring together scientists and researchers from institutions across Nevada. Follow the EPSCoR arrows on the attached full page graphic to see how EPSCoR works.



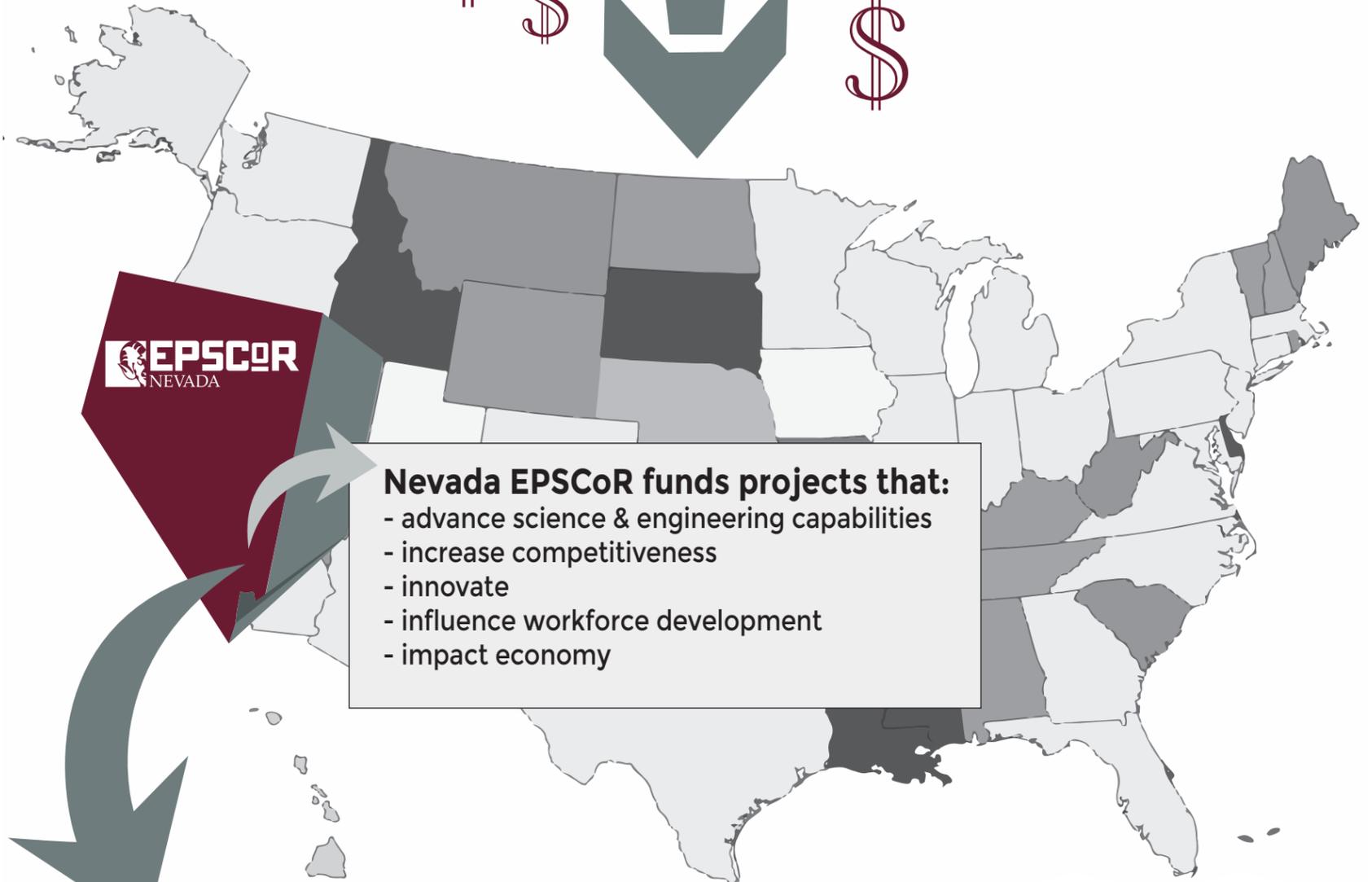
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HOW DOES EPSCoR WORK?

FUNDING FROM CONGRESS



EPSCoR
(Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research)



Nevada EPSCoR funds projects that:

- advance science & engineering capabilities
- increase competitiveness
- innovate
- influence workforce development
- impact economy



Nevada EPSCoR impacts quality of life, education, and economic development through science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) research.