



NSF EPSCoR

SUMMER 2021

CONTINUING STEM OUTREACH DESPITE COVID-19 AND REMOTE LEARNING

Under the NSF EPSCoR Solar Energy-Water-Environment Nexus in Nevada program, students at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) created multiple activities and built educational kits to teach youth about STEM topics like solar energy, water filtration, erosion, and electricity. The UNLV students, designated as STEM Ambassadors, partner with schools to educate and excite youth about STEM subjects.



Photo credit: Radioactive Productions

Due to COVID-19 and remote education at the K-12 level locally, STEM Ambassadors have transitioned from visiting schools to partnering with organizations like the Discovery Children’s Museum in Las Vegas. For an Astronomy Day event, STEM Ambassadors created an activity to teach about chemical composition of rocks. Using simulated rock samples for the Earth and Moon, youth tested for three different elements that helped them determine where the rock sample originated. This hands-on activity gave youth the opportunity to feel like scientists and conduct actual tests that are used for chemical analysis. Through more than 30 hours of direct outreach, local K-12 students learned about solar energy, water filtration, water erosion, chemical composition of rocks, electricity and engineering design.



NASA EPSCoR

2021 NV SPACE GRANT AND NV NASA EPSCoR VIRTUAL POSTER COMPETITION WINNERS

We are thrilled to announce the winners of the 2021 Nevada NASA Programs Virtual Poster Competition. Please take a moment to check out the [posters and videos](#) the students submitted. They did an amazing job!

College Students

- 1st Place:** Ariel Pefley (Truckee Meadows Community College)
- 2nd Place:** Samson Stynen (Truckee Meadows Community College)
- 3rd Place:** Nicole Downey (Great Basin College) and Christopher Catechis (College of Southern Nevada)

Undergraduate Students

- 1st Place:** Iris Nava (University of Nevada, Las Vegas)
- 2nd Place:** Bethany-Anne Calvert (University of Nevada, Reno)
- 3rd Place:** Cheyenne Brokaw (University of Nevada, Las Vegas), Faaris Khilji (University of Nevada, Las Vegas) and UNLV RebelSat

Graduate Students

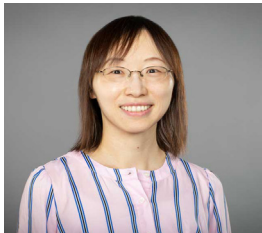
- 1st Place:** Nathan Ernster (Desert Research Institute), Nancy Nou (University of Nevada, Las Vegas), Alice Ready (University of Nevada, Reno), and Miranda Seixas (Desert Research Institute)
- 2nd Place:** Cindy Kha (University of Nevada, Las Vegas)
- 3rd Place:** Bang Tran (University of Nevada, Reno)



NASA EPSCoR

CONGRATULATIONS DR. FAN AND DR. MENEZES

It gives us great pleasure to congratulate Dr. Feifei Fan and Dr. Pradeep Menezes who have been awarded tenure effective July 1, 2021. The tenure recommendations were officially approved at the March 5, 2021 Board of Regents meeting. Both, Dr. Fan and Dr. Menezes are recipients of NASA EPSCoR Research CAN awards.



Dr. Fan joined the Department of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Nevada, Reno in July 2015. Her research is focused on the modeling and simulation of mechanics-related phenomena in advanced materials, encompassing solid mechanics, materials physics, and high performance computing at multiple length and time scales.



Dr. Pradeep Menezes is an assistant professor in the Mechanical Engineering Department at the University of Nevada, Reno. Before joining the University, he worked as an adjunct assistant professor at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM) and research assistant professor at University of Pittsburgh.

NSF EPSCoR

SUMMER 2021 UROP SCHOLARS

The Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP) promotes intensive undergraduate research opportunities for university students. Through these research experiences, our goal is to enhance the recruitment and retention of undergraduates in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) disciplines, particularly those related to solar energy and its effects on water resources and the environment in general.



Maya Zawlodski, Nevada State College
-Photo by Kurt Regner

Forty-two students across the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) applied to the Summer 2021 UROP, funded by the Solar Energy-Water-Environment Nexus in Nevada project, sponsored by NSF EPSCoR, IIA-1301726. A total of 24 research scholarships were awarded; 13 from the University of Nevada, Reno; 7 from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas; 3 from Nevada State College; 1 from Truckee Meadows Community College. The awardees conducted their research projects from June 1, 2021 to August 10, 2021 under the guidance of NSHE research faculty mentors. For a complete list of awardees, visit the NEXUS [website](#).

NEVADA NASA EPSCoR REQUESTS LETTERS OF INTENT (LOI) AND PRE-PROPOSALS FOR THE NATIONAL NASA EPSCoR RESEARCH CAN

The National NASA EPSCoR Program will be releasing the 2022 Research Collaboration Cooperative Agreement Notice (CAN) in late fall 2021. NV NASA EPSCoR will be permitted to submit a single full proposal, which will likely be due in early February or March 2022. A letter of intent and pre-proposals are being solicited in advance of the Federal CAN release. The LOIs are required to submit a pre-proposal and will be used to select review panel members for the pre-proposal competitive external review.

Eligibility: Faculty at NSHE institutions, particularly junior faculty, women, and members of other underrepresented populations are encouraged to apply. Faculty who have a current National NASA EPSCoR Research CAN project are not eligible to apply while their project is on-going. Pre-proposals must include Co-PIs from at least three NSHE institutions.

Funding: The NASA EPSCoR Research CAN will provide an award of \$1,125,000 total for a three-year period with the expectation of a 2:1 match; i.e., \$750K in Federal funds and \$375K in state matching funds.

Submit a Letter of Intent [here](#) no later than 5:00 pm PT on September 7, 2021.



epscorspo.nevada.edu | 702.522.7070
Nevada System of Higher Education
4300 S. Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89119