



Chef-Scientists:

A Collaborative Cross-Disciplinary Program

Award Number: 2007-02417

Award Amount: \$240,000

New Mexico State University (NMSU)
El Paso Community College (EPCC)
Central New Mexico Community College (CNM)

Project Directors: Dr. Priscilla Bloomquist, Dr. Wes Holley

CSREES/USDA Relevant Priority or Mission Areas

- Scientific Instrumentation for Teaching
- Student Recruitment and Retention
- Curricula Design, Materials Development

“**Chef-Scientists**” is designed to meet the growing needs of the food industry for professionals cross-trained in food science/nutrition and culinary arts. This will be accomplished through the development of a Culinary™ program and by strengthening the capacity of New Mexico State University to attract and retain Hispanic, and other underrepresented students to the program.

The Objectives of this project are (a) to establish a degree option in Culinary (b) to significantly update and improve NMSU’s food science laboratory equipment and to provide minor enhancements to the equipment used in the culinary teaching laboratories at EPCC and CNM (c) to form a collaboration between EPCC, CNM and NMSU to recruit outstanding culinary arts students into the Culinary program utilizing collateral materials and targeted scholarships and (d) to retain the students at a rate comparable to the overall retention rate at NMSU.

Activities:

- Develop the Culinary curriculum using a competencies matrix working with participating institutions and the Research Chefs Association.
- Submit the curriculum for approval through proper channels including the New Mexico Higher Education Department.
- Develop the transfer/degree completion guides.
- Replace outdated equipment in NMSU’s food science laboratory and enhance the laboratory equipment in partner institutions.
- Develop and distribute collateral material to be used to recruit students from EPCC and CNM.
- Provide 21 targeted \$1000 scholarships to first and second year Culinary students attending NMSU.
- Offer a first year experience course and use other retention strategies to ease the transition between the community college and the university .

Beneficiaries of the award include:

- All students taking classes which use the updated laboratory facilities (over 60 per semester at NMSU alone).
- All teaching and research faculty which use the laboratory facilities (4 at NMSU alone).
- The food industry, which will have access to students who will transfer their knowledge of cutting-edge science and technology to their operations.
- The agriculture industry which will have an increased capacity to vertically integrate.
- Up to 21 Culinary scholarship recipients.
- Enhanced educational opportunities and facilities for undergraduate students.
- Ability to meet food industry demands for cross-trained professionals.
- Stronger relationships between NMSU, EPCC and CNM.
- Increased recruitment and retention of Hispanic and other underrepresented students.

Expected Impact:

Formative and summative program evaluation techniques will be used to determine the effectiveness of the “Chef-Scientists” project. The formative evaluation component will focus on the development and implementation of the program. This allowing the project leadership to assess progress and make adjustments during the project as needed.

The summative evaluation will focus on impact, using an array of instruments and techniques, to determine how effectively the program met the stated goals.



New Mexico State University