Two grants will support the College of Engineering’s efforts toward building an inclusive environment

Two three-year grants will help the College of Engineering continue its efforts in building a more inclusive environment.

Supported by the MSU Inclusion and Intercultural Initiative, the two new programs are designed to increase the number of women and underrepresented populations in research and leadership positions. Grant support in 2018-19 begins at $65,000.

Yue Qi, associate dean for inclusion and diversity in the College of Engineering, said “we are strengthening our efforts to ultimately ‘share the differences’ in the College of Engineering and Michigan State University to engineer a healthier, safer, and more sustainable world. We are so grateful that the faculty and staff, the college, and the university are all working together toward this common goal,” she added.

Enhancing inclusion for women in engineering
Galit Pelled, professor of biomedical engineering, is leading the “Enhanced Inclusion of Women in Engineering through Leadership Programs.”
Pelled said women in engineering are still largely underrepresented across the nation, despite many existing efforts. Pelled has teamed up with MSU’s Women in Engineering program; Juli Wade, associate provost for faculty and academic staff development and part of the MSU’s Academic Advancement Network; and Kenneth Levine, professor of communication arts and sciences, to build comprehensive and synergistic women leadership plans in the College of Engineering.

The program will feature activities to recruit, attract, and retain future female undergraduate and graduate students, and faculty and staff. It received $30,000 for its first year of programming.

Female students will develop their leadership identity while serving as ambassadors for K-12 and outreach efforts. Graduate students will mentor undergraduate female students and contribute to an inclusive and diverse community. Faculty and staff engaged in this program will serve as mentors for younger faculty, work on being promoted, and seek leadership appointments.

The PerSIST project
Assistant deans Theo Caldwell and Katy Luchini Colbry initiated “PerSIST: Pursuing Success through Inclusion, Support & Training.” The program will use a $35,000 grant for its first year to create a supportive pathway for talented students from disadvantaged backgrounds, including academically underprepared, and assist them in completing bachelor’s and master’s degrees in engineering at MSU.
The PerSIST project is an effort to leverage and connect existing programs that have been successful at supporting individual students at different points in the path from high school to college graduation. PerSIST will integrate with existing programs at MSU, including:

- ESSA (Engineering and Science Success Academy),
- Guided Learning Center (GLC),
- Engineering Summer Undergraduate Research Experience (EnSURE),
- Academic Achievement Graduate Assistantships (AAGA),
- Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (AGEP),
- Michigan Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (MI-LSAMP),
- MSU Office of Undergraduate Research, and
- Summer Undergraduate Research Academy (SURA).

Collaborating on PerSIST are Kyle Foster, director of the Diversity Programs Office in the College of Engineering; Steven Thomas, graduate school program manager and Summer Research
Opportunities Program coordinator; and Korine Wawrzynski, assistant dean for academic initiatives and director for undergraduate research in MSU’s Provost Office.

Related Website: Communications contact: Patricia Mroczek

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