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25 U.S. Institutions Selected for Pathways to Innovation Program by NSF-Funded Epicenter

(January 16, 2015) — 25 U.S. institutions have been selected by the NSF-funded National Center for Engineering Pathways to Innovation (Epicenter) to join the Pathways to Innovation Program.

The Pathways to Innovation Program is designed to help institutions fully incorporate innovation and entrepreneurship into undergraduate engineering education. The program is run by Epicenter, which is funded by the National Science Foundation and directed by Stanford University and VentureWell (formerly NCIIA).

Ongoing innovation is required to maintain America's global competitiveness and address pressing problems. Engineering is the foundation of much of that innovation. Faculty and administrators participating in Epicenter's Pathways program are taking on this challenge and leading their universities into a new era of engineering education that prepares students to tackle big problems and thrive in this ever-changing economy.

"There are 500,000 students in the U.S. majoring in engineering and computer science fields," said Tom Byers, director and co-principal investigator of Epicenter and professor at Stanford University. "These students are expected to enter industry with technical knowledge as well as a diverse set of skills and attitudes that help them to innovate, collaborate and create value. As educators, we need to better prepare this generation of students for the workforce and position them for success in their careers."

The following universities were selected for the 2015 Pathways program:

- Case Western Reserve University
- Clemson University
- Colorado School of Mines
- Florida Institute of Technology
- Hampton University
- Illinois Institute of Technology
- James Madison University
- Loyola University Maryland
- Missouri University of Science & Technology
- New York Institute of Technology
- North Carolina A&T
- Oregon State University
- Southern Methodist University
- Temple University



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- Universidad del Turabo
- University of Alabama - Birmingham
- University of Delaware
- University of Hawaii at Manoa
- University of Nebraska - Lincoln
- University of North Dakota
- University of Puerto Rico - Mayaguez
- University of Texas - Arlington
- University of Texas - El Paso
- Washington State University
- Wichita State University

Participating schools assemble a team of faculty and academic leaders to assess their institution's current offerings, design a unique strategy for change, and lead their peers in a two-year transformation process. Program teams receive access to models for integrating entrepreneurship into engineering curriculum, custom online resources, guidance from a community of engineering and entrepreneurship faculty, and membership in a national network of schools with similar goals.

The schools in the new cohort join an inaugural group of 12 institutions that have participated in the program since January 2014. Their projects include innovation certificates and majors, maker and flexible learning spaces, first-year and capstone courses, faculty fellows programs, and innovation centers. Additionally, several cross-institutional collaborations have resulted from the first group of schools.

"Our first group of Pathways schools have already made an enormous impact on the undergraduate engineering students at those institutions," said Liz Nilsen, a Pathways program manager and senior program officer at VentureWell. "These new schools joining Pathways have equally ambitious aspirations. Having the experience of the first group to help guide them will accelerate the impact of their efforts."

Leaders from each Pathways team met at Stanford University on January 14. A second meeting will bring together teams of faculty and administrators from each school in Phoenix, AZ, February 16-18, to analyze the opportunities at their schools and develop plans for transforming the undergraduate engineering experience.

Learn more about the Pathways to Innovation Program at epicenter.stanford.edu/pathways-to-innovation.

About Epicenter:

The National Center for Engineering Pathways to Innovation (Epicenter) is funded by the National Science Foundation and directed by Stanford University and VentureWell (formerly NCIIA). Epicenter's mission is to empower U.S. undergraduate engineering students to bring their ideas to life for the benefit of our economy and society. To do this, Epicenter helps students combine their technical skills, their ability to develop innovative technologies that solve important problems, and an entrepreneurial mindset and skillset. Epicenter's three core initiatives are the University Innovation Fellows program for undergraduate engineering students and their peers; the Pathways to Innovation Program for institutional teams of faculty and university leaders; and the research program Fostering Innovative Generations Studies, which contributes to national knowledge of entrepreneurship and engineering education. Learn more and get involved at epicenter.stanford.edu.





About Stanford University:

At Stanford University, the Epicenter collaboration is managed by the Stanford Technology Ventures Program (STVP), the entrepreneurship center in Stanford's School of Engineering. STVP delivers courses and extracurricular programs to Stanford students, creates scholarly research on high-impact technology ventures, and produces a large and growing collection of online content and experiences for people around the world. Visit us online at stvp.stanford.edu.

About VentureWell:

VentureWell was founded in 1995 as the National Collegiate Inventors and Innovators Alliance (NCIIA) and rebranded in 2014 to underscore its impact as an education network that cultivates revolutionary ideas and promising inventions. A not-for-profit organization reaching more than 200 universities, VentureWell is the leader in funding, training, coaching and early investment that brings student innovations to market. Inventions created by VentureWell grantees are reaching millions of people in more than 50 countries and helping to solve some of our greatest 21st century challenges. Visit www.venturewell.org to learn how we inspire students, faculty and investors to transform game-changing ideas into solutions for people and the planet.



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