



**XAVIER**  
UNIVERSITY *of* LOUISIANA

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## **Xavier, California-San Diego Enter into Graduate Pathways Partnership**

New Orleans LA – Xavier University of Louisiana (XULA) and the University of California-San Diego (UCSD) have entered into a three-year program designed to provide exceptional undergraduate students opportunities for summer research in the biological sciences.

Under the new UCSD/XULA Graduate Pathways Partnership, beginning in 2018, up to six Xavier students will be selected to participate in the UCSD's prestigious STARS program, an intensive eight-week academy modeled on graduate school life. It includes 6-8 hours of lab research per day, a weekly student development workshop, a GRE (Graduate Records Exam) course twice each week, and optional social activities. To complete the program, participants are required to make a 15-minute research presentation at the Summer Research Symposium.

"This partnership opens up a new gateway for Xavier students interested in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math) to actively participate in on-going academic research at a premiere California university," said Torian Lee, Director of Xavier's Center for Intercultural and International Programs and campus coordinator of the XULA/UCSD partnership. He said the program will also provide students with insight into graduate school as well as afford them opportunities for professional development.

While participating in the STARS program, which averages 65 participants per summer, Xavier students will be partnered with UCSD faculty mentors in the Division of Biological Sciences and the Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

To facilitate the long-term success of the program and increase the support for participating students, Xavier's Division of Biological and Public Health Sciences will also have a role in the partnership. Xavier's Dr. Calvin Porter, has coordinated the pairing of XULA faculty with UCSD faculty based on mutual research interests. It is hoped that these pairings will lead to the building of long-term relationships that facilitate continued collaborations beyond the three-year grant.

Xavier faculty participating in the initiative include: Dr. Partha Bhattacharjee, Dr. Hector Biliran, Dr. Ian Davenport, Dr. Anup Kundu, Dr. Calvin Porter, Dr. Harish Ratnayaka, and Dr. Qian-Jin Zhang. Dr. Harris McFerrin serves as Head of the Biology Department.

Lee noted that under a pilot program, four Xavier students are already participating in the STARS program this summer. These include: Lamiah Hall, Selena Gray, Dominique Prophete and Emily Wilson.

The UCSD/XULA partnership is part of the University of California-Historically Black Colleges and Universities Initiative (UC-HBCU).

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