

Arizona State University Wins CGS/Thomson Peterson's Award for Innovation in Promoting an Inclusive Graduate Community

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'Diversity is an essential ingredient of today's graduate campus. The recognition and support this award brings will be instrumental in recruiting and retaining talented minority students.' - Milton D. Glick, Arizona State University

WASHINGTON, Dec 9, 2004 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX/ -- The prestigious annual Thomson Peterson's/CGS Award for Innovation in Promoting an Inclusive Graduate Community, sponsored by Thomson Peterson's, a leading provider of information and advice on graduate admission, test preparation, and financial aid and a part of the Thomson Corporation (NYSE: TOC; TSX: TOC), and the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), was presented to Arizona State University today at a luncheon ceremony held at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel. Accepting the award for Arizona State University was Maria T. Allison, Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies.

First presented in 1994, this annual award recognizes innovative institutional programs that seek the identification, recruitment, retention, and graduation of minority graduate students. Programs should demonstrate creative approaches that enhance current recruitment practices and that can serve as models for other institutions. All CGS member institutions are eligible for the award. The institution that submits the winning proposal receives \$10,000 toward the implementation and administration of the program.

Arizona State's proposal for the award, Pathways to Success: An Undergraduate -- Graduate Collaboration, focuses on targeting ASU's own undergraduate minority talent pool as they make decisions regarding their futures after graduation. The award will allow three separate institutional entities, the Division of Graduate Studies, Barrett Honors College, and the Vice President's Office for Undergraduate University Initiatives, to collaborate and help these students better understand the graduate experience and ease their entry into graduate school. A proposed Reach for the Stars Fellowship program will provide financial assistance to the traditionally underrepresented students, particularly those who choose to pursue graduate degrees in science, technology, and engineering fields. "In our experience, minority students, particularly Hispanic students who make up Arizona's largest minority group, will put off graduate education if it means leaving home and family," said Glick, Executive Vice President and Provost. "This recruitment and retention program seems to be the smart thing and the right thing to do."

This year, ten institutions competed for the award. In addition to Arizona State, Fielding Graduate Institute, University of Nevada, North Carolina State University, University of Albany, Montclair State University, University of Minnesota, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Eastern Michigan University, and Virginia Polytechnic and State University also submitted proposals.

"Changing institutional behavior is not easy. And each year I am amazed at the tremendous level of creativity, time, and effort that goes into devising innovative ways to increase inclusivity in graduate education," says Debra Stewart, President of the Council of Graduate Schools.

"Applicants hail from all parts of the country and offer a wide range of strategies for creating a more diverse campus environment," adds Mary Gatsch, President of Thomson Peterson's. "Whether their focus is mentoring, advising, or program development, all are committed to making change at all levels of their institutions. Thomson Peterson's is proud to be involved with this award."

Last year's winner, the University of Mississippi, continues to build on a number of student-run programs, including writing assistance programs for international students, student mentoring programs, and various social activities, to strengthen diversity on campus.

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About the Council of Graduate Schools

The Council of Graduate Schools is an organization of institutions of higher education in the United States, Canada, and across the globe engaged in graduate education, research scholarship, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. For over four decades, the Council of Graduate Schools has been the only national association dedicated solely to representing the interests of graduate education. Our mission is to improve and advance graduate education. CGS accomplishes its mission through advocacy in the federal policy arena, innovative research, and the development and dissemination of best practices.

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