

# NMSU selected to take part in NSF Pathways to Innovation

**LAS CRUCES** >> New Mexico State University is one of 12 universities in the country selected to take part in the National Science Foundation's first Pathways to Innovation cohort.

The program is led by the National Center for Engineering Pathways to Innovation, known as Epicenter, and was created to help universities incorporate entrepreneurship and innovation into undergraduate engineering education.

The program will equip NMSU to strengthen regional and global competitiveness.

A recent U.S. Department of Commerce report found most U.S. job creation in the last two decades has occurred in young startup companies. Though the United States leads the world in innovation and entrepreneurship, global competition requires institutions to better develop products and services, the report said.

A team of NMSU faculty and administrators will work with Epicenter staff to design and implement a plan for the university.

NMSU will receive access to faculty training, successful models for integrating entrepreneurship into the curriculum, a national network of engineering and entrepreneurship faculty and membership in a peer network of schools with similar goals.

"Today's engineering students need to graduate with more than just technical skills," Epicenter Director and Stanford University professor Tom Byers said.

"Engineers need the tools and attitudes to help them identify opportunities and bring their ideas to life."

NMSU was invited to participate because of the leadership in entrepreneurship and innovation efforts already in place, said Patricia Sullivan, assistant College of

Engineering dean and director of the Engineering New Mexico Resource Network.

"The NMSU engineering program is often recognized for staying on top of industry needs, and our participation will ensure our graduating students continue to be regionally and globally competitive," Sullivan said.

The Epicenter program is "an opportunity for us to showcase the things we're doing and jump-start relevant changes to our curriculum," said Edward Pines, industrial engineering department head and enterprise adviser for Arrowhead Center's Arrowhead Innovation Network engineering. "We have an opportunity to learn from others in the cohort and contribute to best practices that can be transferred to other universities."

Sullivan and Pines serve as the NMSU Pathways team leaders. Faculty members include Phillip DeLeon, professor in the Klipsch School of Electrical and Computer Engineering; Jessica Houston, associate professor of chemical engineering; and Rolfe Sassenfeld, assistant professor in engineering technology and surveying engineering.

The other participating schools are California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo; The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art; Howard University; Michigan Technological University; Tennessee Technological University; Texas A&M University; University of California, Merced; University of Massachusetts Lowell; University of Nevada, Las Vegas; University of Pittsburgh; and University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Epicenter is funded by the National Science Foundation and directed by Stanford University and the National Collegiate Inventors and Innovators Alliance.

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