Howdy students! We hope you have settled comfortably into the spring 2017 semester. Since the semester began we have already hosted a few events such as the peer review informational session, a peer writing group, and a seminar luncheon. Please be sure to use your calendars on your mobile devices, social media, planners, etc. to record and remind you of AGEP events. Also be sure to promptly record the events you attend in your attendance log so you can receive your participation and performance-based retention bonuses. If you need an attendance log be sure to contact AGEP at tamus-agep@tamu.edu to request one.

As with the fall 2016 semester, you will begin to see new faces for the spring 2017 semester. We are working on recruiting student ambassadors from our participating AGEP campuses outside of TAMU College Station. We look forward to working with these ambassadors to create a more inclusive environment for all our AGEP students and learn about the dynamics and activities of the other universities. Your student ambassadors are great resources and peer confidants so be sure to reach out to them to introduce yourself, ask questions, and collaborate.

**PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE-BASED BONUSES**

While many activities are offered at various TAMU facilities and organizations, AGEP sponsored events are tailored to meet the needs of the Alliance community. As a team, we plan activities and events for you to collaborate with your peers, grow your professional network, and improve critical career skills. We identify and invite guest speakers with extensive experience and expertise. These speakers and their indispensable knowledge are a valuable resource to building your career and professional presence. This is why it is in your best interest to attend as many AGEP sponsored events as possible. For your attendance, you will earn more participation and performance-based retention bonuses when you attend AGEP sponsored events. This is a key component to keep in mind as you plan your schedules.

Photo above right courtesy of Gina M. Wadas. Taken at the Tech Museum of Innovation in San Jose, California.
AGEP is providing the students with great opportunities, but it is up to the individual student to really take advantage of them. That means you have to actively seek these opportunities and pay attention to what is being discussed.

While Escobedo’s graduate advisor, Dr. Erick Moreno-Centeno, was incredibly helpful, he could only provide him with his own limited perspective and experiences about school and career challenges. Escobedo sought additional perspectives and opinions and found a supportive community of peers and professors he met through many AGEP seminars and events. “You will get out what you put in,” said Escobedo of the AGEP program, and he was proactive about utilizing AGEP’s resources.

In addition to the financial assistance AGEP provided, Escobedo was grateful to receive other forms of support. “All those seminars gave me the upper-hand as I entered the academic job market,” said Escobedo, “AGEP is providing the students with great opportunities, but it is up to the individual student to really take advantage. That means you have to actively seek these opportunities and pay attention to what is being discussed.”

Escobedo had a mindset of making a positive experience in every event he attended, even when he first believed the topic wouldn’t be relative to his goals. For instance, he attended a discussion about the obstacles women in academic professions can encounter. “I was surprised to learn about the hurdles that women need to navigate in academia. I found the event useful because I know in my career I will have female colleagues and possibly female students to mentor. In order for me to support them I need to understand what they are going through,” said Escobedo.
Strong writing and communication skills are also key components to Escobedo’s success and are fundamental to his profession (as the skill is utilized in over 75% of the work he performs). He believes that not only is it important to be a good writer, but also a good speaker. He works diligently to tailor his presentations to his audience, whether they be his peers, his students, or grant committees reading his research proposals, so they understand him and the research he conducts. “We are in the business of communicating with the public about what we do and how their money is spent on research. If you cannot describe your work eloquently, then people are not going to understand it even if it is of the highest quality,” said Escobedo.

When Escobedo first started graduate school, he felt intimidated and introverted, but to be successful he knew he needed to branch out to have a good outcome. His efforts of using AGEP resources and reaching out to professors paid off later with letters of recommendation for job applications and other professional support. His hope is that AGEP students will do the same and take advantage of all the support and resources in graduate school. “You never know who will be helping you the next step of the way,” said Escobedo.

Escobedo works for Arizona State University in the School of Computing, Informatics and Decision Systems of Engineering. His research interests are in power systems, specifically how to optimize the operations of electrical grids to quickly and efficiently restore power when outages occur. He also has a strong interest in roundoff-error-free algorithms and social choice theory. Escobedo has a BA in mathematics from California State University and a PhD in industrial engineering from Texas A&M University.
WRITING SUPPORT

Are you applying for any scholarships, fellowships, internships, or jobs? Are you working on your thesis, journal article, poster, or PowerPoint? If you are looking for editorial feedback you can contact Writing Support Specialist, Gina Wadas.

Gina is available to assist AGEP students with any writing or communications needs. She is a valuable resource to help you with your thesis/dissertation, CV/resume, personal statements, fellowship applications, grants applications, proposals, poster and oral presentations, journal or magazine publications, etc.

To schedule one-on-one appointments with Gina please email her at gmw104@tamu.edu. She is also available to answer questions or review materials via email or video conferencing.

AGEP TRAVEL AWARDS AVAILABLE TO ATTEND CONFERENCES, SEMINARS, OR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

The Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (AGEP) Student Travel Grant Program is supported by the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies and by funds provided by the National Science Foundation Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (NSF AGEP). The purpose of the program is to support AGEP graduate student travel to make presentations by reimbursing students for some of the eligible expenses incurred. Travel expenses are allowed on research grants if (1) the student is full-time, (2) an active AGEP participant, and (3) absolutely required in order to complete the research.

Please visit http://tamu-agep.tamu.edu/Opportunities-and-Activities/Alliance-Activities/AGEP-Travel-Grant for more details about eligibility and application deadlines.

HORTICULTURE CAREER FAIR

The Department of Horticultural Sciences will be holding their 18th Annual Career Fair on Wednesday February 22nd, 2017 from 10am-2pm in the HFSB Atrium on the TAMU College Station campus. This is a great opportunity to gather information about vendors, future jobs, and internships. These industry leaders are looking for students interested in production, sales and marketing, management, and much more! The career fair is the perfect place to practice speaking with industry reps and potential employers. You may also want to ask them about future trends and what they are looking for in an employee.

Visit http://hortsciences.tamu.edu/career-fair/ for more details about the event and participating vendors.

SOCIETY FOR WOMEN ENGINEERS (SWE) CONFERENCE AND CAREER FAIR

Join the Society of Women Engineers (SWE) and collegiate and professionals from Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas in a weekend of innovation and inspiration at the SWE Region C Conference. The conference will be held in the Memorial Student Center on February 17th-19th, 2017 in on the TAMU College Station campus.

This year's theme is Innovative Women: Channeling your Creativity. Creativity is Innovation. Too often, engineers are thought of as the “math and science people” with no creative capabilities. Therefore, we must surpass thinking outside the box and recreate the box. We design new ways, methods, processes, and technologies that influence people across the globe.

Registration closed on February 3rd, but onsite registration is available at the door. Registration and admittance into the career fair only is available for just $25.

In 2000 the Intelligence Community (IC) Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Program was established to fund unclassified basic research in areas of interest to the IC. Funded primarily by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), the Program annually funds several Postdoctoral Fellows (Postdocs) from accredited colleges, universities, and U.S. Government laboratories across the country.

The IC Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Program offers scientists and engineers from various disciplines opportunities to conduct research in a range of topics relevant to the Intelligence Community. The research is conducted by the postdocs, while working in partnership with a research advisor and collaborating with an advisor from the Intelligence Community.

Recent Ph.D. graduates or doctoral students who will soon complete their degrees are invited to submit an applicant profile to: http://orau.org/icpostdoc/current-opportunities.aspx

To the Postdoc – a stipend award and insurance supplement ranging from $75,000 to $79,000, depending upon the location of the appointment, as well as a $6,000 travel allowance.

Applications accepted February 1 - March 31, 2017.

Science Outside the Lab, presented by Arizona State University’s Consortium for Science, Policy and Outcomes (CSPO), explores the relationships among science, policy, and societal outcomes in a place where many important decisions about these things are made – Washington, D.C.

With the intersections between science, politics, and society making the headlines every day, it is more important than ever for scientists and engineers to know how the decisions that affect them are made. Washington, D.C., where the $140 billion of federal science money and countless policy decisions originate, is the perfect setting to delve into the complicated world of science policy. Junior scholars who understand the goals and implications of publicly funded science will likely have an advantage when seeking jobs and funding. This program also will explore numerous careers in the science policy realm.

Doctoral students who are interested in how the decisions about science funding, regulation and policy are made will benefit from this program. Graduate students interested in careers in science policy also will find this to be an excellent opportunity to learn about important fellowships and meet current science policy professionals.

Applications will be accepted through March 29, 2017.
EXTRA! EXTRA! FEEDBACK NEEDED

Thank you to the those who participated in the survey that was distributed in December 2016. Your feedback was very resourceful and the AGEP staff welcomes feedback from you at any time.

There is additional feedback we like to know about you and your experience in AGEP. Feel free to leave a message on one of our social media outlets, contact your student ambassador, or email us at tamus-agep@tamu.edu

Do you think AGEP would benefit from participating in other social media outlets? If so, which do you recommend?

Are you graduating in May or August? Have you been given a job offer?

Would like to be a guest writer or have a topic for the newsletter?

Do you have any ideas or opinions on AGEP events?

ADD THESE UPCOMING AGEP SPONSORED EVENTS TO YOUR CALENDARS SO YOU NEVER MISS AN EVENT AND AN OPPORTUNITY TO EARN PARTICIPATION BONUSES

**February**

02/13/2017 - Piazza Chat: Effectively Working Alongside Undergraduate and Graduate Students in your Lab

02/15/2017 - Webinar: Picking the Right Journal and Avoiding Predatory Journals

* 02/21/2017 - Creating an Individual Development Plan (IDP)

02/23/2017 - Peer Writing Group - Session 2

02/27/2017 - Piazza Chat: The Benefits of Diversity: How to Use your Diversity to your Advantage

**March**

03/07/2017 - Peer Writing Group - Session 3

03/21/2017 - Peer Writing Group - Session 4

* 03/22/2017 - AGEP Luncheon: Enhancing your Scholarly Identity—Guest Speaker Mr. D.J. Lee, Librarian, Texas A&M University Libraries

03/27/2017 - Piazza Chat: Productivity Techniques and Tips

03/29/2017 - Webinar: Self-Editing Techniques

* 03/30/2017 - AGEP Evening Seminar: Preparing for Oral Presentations—Guest Speaker Dr. Barbara Gastel, Coordinator, MS Program in Science and Technology Journalism, Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences

* Registration is required. Please visit tamus-agep.tamu.edu for event details and registration calendar links.

Food will be provided at AGEP Luncheons, AGEP Evening Seminars, and AGEP/BTD Co-Led events.