

LOUIS STOKES ALLIANCES FOR MINORITY PARTICIPATION VIRTUAL INSTITUTE

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has supported the Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation (LSAMP) program and the 27 Alliances since 1991. In that time, there have been substantial increases, nationwide from New York to California---Montana to Texas, Florida and Puerto Rico---in underrepresented minority student Science, Mathematics, Engineering and Technology (SMET) college enrollment, degree completion, and overall academic achievement. The LSAMP Program, encompassing about 350 colleges and universities, including nearly 25% minority serving institutions, has demonstrated certifiable strengths in several key areas in this undergraduate SMET enterprise. At this stage of LSAMP's development, it is important that information on the achievements of the national LSAMP enterprise, both in student outcomes and development of best educational practices be widely disseminated through documentation and training so that the broader academic community as well as government agencies and the private sector can reap the benefits of this national investment.

Overall Objective and Goals

The Louis Stokes AMP Virtual Institute (LSAMP-VI) is an integrated network of four specialized Virtual Centers (VC) that are connected by a common set of objectives. Although independent entities, the VCs' share a common set of goals and will interact with others to exchange information, set policy and develop procedures. The Virtual Centers are:

- Technology in Education Virtual Center (Western Alliances to Expand Student Opportunities)
- SMET Undergraduate Curriculum Virtual Center (Puerto Rico Alliance)
- Articulation and Transfer Virtual Center (Texas A&M Alliance), and
- Formative Evaluation Virtual Center (The University of Texas System Alliance).

The LSAMP-VI will provide an important function in helping to realize the critical mission described above by setting the following goals:

- **Collecting, organizing and posting on the World Wide Web nationally important data on educational policy, practice and reform with free, easy, and user-friendly national and international access.** This will include LSAMP SMET enrollment and degree completion statistics as well as national SMET statistics that are currently available to a very limited audience on LSAMP-MARS, WebMARS or from NSF in LSAMP printed materials.
- **Creation of a clearinghouse of best practices on the World Wide Web with each Virtual Center assuming primary responsibility for collecting, formatting and posting information on a specific area of LSAMP expertise and experience,** including how to access technical assistance by key experts at each Virtual Center and nationally, review of the literature and what is available in other programs, web sites and professional societies.
- **Organization and delivery of regional and national information on best practices,** including the use of technology in facilitating collaboration and data compilation within and between Alliances as well as Non-LSAMP entities e.g. governmental agencies, private corporation and academic institutions).
- **Continuing and expanding the LSAMP-VI listserver.**