



For Immediate Release

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66 U.S. Students Named University Innovation Fellows by NSF-Funded Epicenter

(April 9, 2014) — Sixty-six university students from 45 higher education institutions across the United States have been named University Innovation Fellows by the National Center for Engineering Pathways to Innovation (Epicenter).

The University Innovation Fellows are a network of student leaders working to create lasting institutional change that will increase student engagement with entrepreneurship, innovation, creativity, design thinking and venture creation. The program is part of a national movement to help all students gain the attitudes, skills and knowledge required for them to compete in the economy of the future.

The new cohort of Fellows brings the total number to 110 Fellows at 78 schools in the U.S. The program is run by Epicenter, which is funded by the National Science Foundation and directed by Stanford University and the National Collegiate Inventors and Innovators Alliance (NCIIA).

“It is no longer enough for engineering students to graduate with a purely technical education,” said Tom Byers, Director of Epicenter and Professor at Stanford University. “Whether they start their own companies or join established organizations, engineers need to have an entrepreneurial mindset to identify and seize opportunities, bring their ideas to life, and solve global problems.”

The program offers undergraduate students in engineering and other fields the guidance and support to become agents of change on their home campuses. The Fellows have made it their mission to expand the number and quality of resources available to students and to advocate for necessary advancements with external advisory boards, trustees and institutional leaders.

Fellows are sponsored by faculty and administrators at their schools and selected through an application process each spring and fall. Following acceptance into the program, students complete six weeks of online training, during which they connect with their new network of Fellows, examine their current entrepreneurial ecosystems and formulate action plans for their ideas.

At their schools, Fellows have founded entrepreneurship clubs and organizations, worked with faculty to create courses, hosted events and workshops, and created student design and maker spaces. Read more about their activities at epicenter.stanford.edu/story/engineers-take-action-university-innovation-fellows.



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“University Innovation Fellows help their peers complement their coursework with interdisciplinary projects that build on their passions, career goals and desire to make a real impact in the world,” said Humera Fasihuddin, leader of the University Innovation Fellows program for Epicenter and Senior Program Officer at NCIIA.

“Students are capable of honing their leadership abilities by leveraging creativity, design thinking and an entrepreneurial mindset to solve problems on campus, in the local community and around the globe – all while still enrolled in school,” Fasihuddin continued. “These experiences give students a highly competitive edge in the job market because they are able to demonstrate the ability to bring products and services to market.”

The Fellows gathered in Silicon Valley March 20-22, 2014, for their annual meeting, where they took part in immersive experiences at Google, Stanford University and NCIIA's Open Conference. Fellows participated in workshops and exercises focused on design thinking, creativity, brainstorming and team building. They engaged with entrepreneurs and leaders from Google, Google Ventures, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, Design for America, 3 Day Startup, StartX and many others.

Learn more about the University Innovation Fellows program and learn how to apply at epicenter.stanford.edu/university-innovation-fellows.

About Epicenter:

The National Center for Engineering Pathways to Innovation (Epicenter) is funded by the National Science Foundation and directed by Stanford University and the National Collegiate Inventors and Innovators Alliance (NCIIA). Epicenter’s mission is to empower U.S. undergraduate engineering students to bring their ideas to life for the benefit of our economy and society. To do this, Epicenter helps students combine their technical skills, their ability to develop innovative technologies that solve important problems, and an entrepreneurial mindset and skillset. Learn more, and get involved at epicenter.stanford.edu.



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