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NM EPSCoR Diversity Coordinator Honored with National STEM Diversity Award

Chelsea Chee receives distinguished award for her work toward diversity & inclusion in STEM research and education

Albuquerque, NM — The National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity (NAPE) announced Chelsea Chee, Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator for New Mexico EPSCoR, as the 2018 recipient of their Rising Star Award. This prestigious award honors a person at the beginning of their career who has demonstrated exemplary leadership traits promoting access, equity, and diversity in education and/or the workforce.

Chelsea is from the small, remote community of Teesto, Arizona. Surrounded by high desert landscape and many generations of Navajo families, she grew up seeing the huge potential of human capacity with little access to opportunity. Chelsea has served in her role at NM EPSCoR as the Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator for just over four years, where she promotes access of under-represented undergraduate students to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) disciplines.

“Chelsea truly has vision and seeks innovative ways to promote diversity and inclusion,” says Anne Jakle, Associate Director of New Mexico EPSCoR. “Chelsea excels in connecting people and institutions to further diversity and inclusion in STEM education and careers, and we have no doubt that she will continue to contribute to this community for years to come.”

Chelsea has led and created several major programs that have directly impacted nearly 400 NM EPSCoR participants from across the state and indirectly impacted thousands more. One of Chelsea’s major projects, Natives in STEM (www.nativesinstem.org), brings visibility to Native STEM professionals, which in turn to inspires students of all backgrounds to pursue STEM careers. Now co-led with American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES), the project has distributed over 4,500 posters that feature five Native STEM professionals, including to 137 Bureau of Indian Education schools, 14 Tribal Colleges and Universities, and Tribal Libraries across the country. Chelsea is also active in the larger equity community at the state and national levels. She is recognized in New Mexico as a diversity champion and has presented across the state, including providing a keynote at the 2017 NM Alliance for Minority Participation annual conference. For the past year, she served as the chair of the National Science Foundation (NSF) EPSCoR Education Outreach and Diversity committee.

About NM EPSCoR: New Mexico EPSCoR is funded by the NSF to build the state’s capacity to conduct scientific research. The infrastructure and activities are designed to support shared-use equipment, engage new research and community college faculty, and support the STEM pipeline by training teachers, undergraduate and graduate students, and post-doctoral fellows. Visit www.nmepscor.org to learn more.