



NEWS RELEASE

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SREP sparks scientific interest, research *Program encourages careers in public health*

TSAILE, Ariz. — A science project is a great example of what experts call active, or "hands-on" learning. In higher education circles, it's considered a cornerstone of successful science teaching.

No one knows that better than Mark Bauer, Ph.D, a Diné College public health professor, who organizes the annual Summer Research Enhancement Program (SREP). SREP, with Bauer at the helm, has been a Diné College mainstay since the year 2000.

In 2017, SREP gatherings have taken place June 16 and Aug. 4 — both at the Tsaile campus of the college. In each instance, students gave group and individual presentations on obesity, diabetes, sexual health, among other subjects.

"For some this was kind of a capstone course and they will likely graduate soon, from places like Diné College, the University of Arizona, Northern Arizona University, Fort Lewis College, and other schools," Bauer said. "The goal of SREP is to prepare and encourage American Indian students to pursue careers in health and health research and to connect such students to opportunities in their own tribes and communities."

SREP goes 10 weeks. The first three are spent in the classroom learning about public health, health research methods and how to design and evaluate programs, Bauer explained. Later, students do intern work with a community health program. The students have assignments each week and contribute to the activities at their site — all the while developing a project utilizing and analyzing data from the internship site.

"The students work under the direct supervision of a mentor at their site,"

Bauer said. "The site mentor determines the data that can be used or collected at each site."

The topics of the presentations given in August ranged from the effectiveness of distance and age on mammogram appointments to HIV prevention and the Diné College student population.

"It was a great topic selection," Kirstin Powell, a mentor to (student) Breanna Lameman, said after the final individual presentations at the Student Union Building in Tsailé. Lameman is a junior at UA studying public health. "All of the presentations were good and very informative."