

URGE Policies for Working with Communities of Color for University/Organization - Drafted Deliverable

This is what was found by DEEPS at Brown University on Policies for Working with Communities of Color as well as plans for improved processes and/or needed resources.

- **Audit of previous interactions with communities of color at our organization:**

One of the key ways students and faculty of DEEPS reaches out to the local community is through a program called DEEPS STEP and DEEPS CORES. Both are educational outreach programs where undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty design and implement Earth science curriculums for local elementary school and high school students. DEEPS STEP (the elementary-level program) has existed for several years and has been highly successful. DEEPS CORES (the high school-level program) is a newer initiative and has a few additional components to the program that seeks to connect high school students with careers in STEM and provides opportunities for students to participate in DEEPS-sponsored research projects.

On an individual level, a number of students regularly engage with communities of color by presenting and networking at key conferences (e.g., SACNAS), serving as mentors and advocates for the Leadership Alliance REU summer internship program for URM, and by serving as mentors and tutors for local high school students of color through the Graduate Students of Color GSOCnSTEM AspirED Minds outreach program

It was recognized that a number of DEEPS faculty and students have engaged in research projects on indigeneous land, but we were unable to identify instances of interactions of those researchers with the indigeneous communities.

- **What worked well in these interactions?**

In the case of DEEPS STEP and DEEPS CORES, program leaders have put in a tremendous amount of effort to understand their students and meet their needs. This typically involves extensive discussions with local teachers and administrators to identify student's needs, preferred learning styles, and other details that might help them connect with their students.

As mentioned above, we were unable to identify any instances of interactions with indigenous communities.

- **What did not work well, and how can this be better addressed in future plans?**

Perhaps the best place to start is the recognition that any interactions that may have happened with indigeneous communities (either through field work or collaborations) were not documented and shared with the broader DEEPS community as a way to identify and

teach best practices. Through this sessions we have identified a number of pitfalls and poor practices that we are planning to integrate into future training for our research. Specifically, we seek to avoid things like tokenism, disingenuous engagement, and last minute broader impact add-ons. Additionally, we recognize that we can also improve efforts towards retention and visibility.

- **Are there ways to improve the outcome of projects already undertaken?**

There are a number of initiatives that we've identified from this session and plan on integrating into our common practices, even for projects already undertaken. This includes land acknowledgements at the beginning of every presentation, for the land that DEEPS occupies and the land where we work and collect samples from. We also would like to integrate practices highlighted by some of the session interview speakers, like incorporating more personable introductions where we share who we are and where we came from and by using food as a means for connection. Additionally, we resolve to focus more on discussing the broader impacts of our work and how they may affect indigeneous and marginalized communities in our presentations and papers.

- **Are there specific resources or guidelines that are needed to improve the process for planning ahead and working with communities of color?**

We believe that DEEPS should be beholden to a set of standards and best practices when it comes to interacting and engaging with communities of color and indigeneous communities. To that effect, we plan on creating ethics trainings specific to engagement and collaboration with these communities that are to be incorporated into our pre-existing ethics trainings (e.g., BEARcore). Additionally, because the DEEPS POD represents only a subset of the entire DEEPS community, we are planning to create teaching opportunities via lunch bunches and colloquia to share what we have learned with the rest of the faculty and students in our department.