

ACS Virginia Section Project SEED Report

Submitted by Michael Hunnicutt, Chair
Executive Committee Meeting, Friday, June 19, 2020

Mission Statement

To ensure that students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds have opportunities to experience the challenges and rewards of chemically related sciences.

Goal Statement

To provide a positive, transformative experience for high school students aspiring to go to college and major in chemistry or a chemical sciences discipline. Students gain an expanded advocacy network, a heightened sense of personal accomplishment and a mastery of skills never imagined, and a new perspective with regard to their future plans for college and careers involving the chemical sciences.

2020 Goals

- Maintain SEED programs at Longwood University and VCU.
- Improve awareness and visibility of Project SEED in chemistry departments at colleges and universities in the Virginia ACS Section with the goal of increasing participation in 2021.

2020 Mid-Year Update

Summer 2020 marks the 52st year of the ACS Project SEED Program. The American Chemical Society announced its decision to cancel all Project SEED research for Summer 2020 on April 29th.

The national ACS office asked all sites registered to participate in the 2020 SEED research program to indicate if they would be willing to host to a virtual summer camp as described below.

In place of the traditional research model, ACS has created a 4-week virtual summer camp that expands some of the non-technical benefits of Project SEED into an experience that develops students in the areas of lab safety, communicating and understanding chemistry research, and professional development and college-academic readiness. The entire virtual camp is being curated, organized, and run by the national ACS office. The Project SEED students selected will receive a small stipend and spend ~20 hours per week in a series of webinars, virtual panels, writing and research assignments, and discussions in small-group settings.

Status of Section Participation in the 'Virtual Campsite' Project SEED Program

Antonio Harvey from Prince Edward County High School was selected to participate in the Virtual SEED Program as a SEED II student. Antonio was one of two Project SEED students in Longwood's inaugural program in 2019. **Sarah Porter** (Longwood University) and **Gina McDonald** (James Madison University) were selected to be Campsite Managers and **Keira Naff** (Longwood University undergraduate) has been selected as a Cabin Leader. **Jon White**, a Longwood professor, has volunteered to do a research seminar on Pt anti-cancer drugs as part of the virtual camp program. The 4-week program will run Monday through Friday from July 6 – July 31. Each Campsite Manager will manage two to three cabins consisting of ~10 Project SEED students. Cabin Leaders are undergraduate students and post-docs, and will manage one cabin and get paid a stipend.

Other Section Accomplishments

- New and Renewal SEED Sites
 - An email update and invitation to participate in the 2020 Project SEED research program was sent to all colleges and universities in the section in 1Q2020. James Madison University responded (L. Watkins) and was on-track to participate in the 2020 program in addition to VCU and Longwood University.

- VCU Project SEED
 - VCU program leaders met with new Richmond Public High School leadership team members and gained approval for the SEED program to be an official program recognized and sponsored by RPS. T. Epp (Chief Academic Officer), A. Nabors (Director of Curriculum & Instruction), and Josh Bearman (Science Curriculum and Instructional Specialist) are the current RPS sponsors. SEED directly supports Dreams4RPS priority 2.6 (RPS Strategic Plan); J. Kamras is the RPS superintendent.
 - As an extension of the SEED program, VCU Chemistry hosted three Professional Development resource days for RPS high school chemistry teachers. Interactive classroom and lab activities were designed and delivered based on RPS input.
 - A record eight research faculty members had submitted SEED projects. If approved by national, these projects would have supported 5 SEED I and 3 SEED II students.
 - New SEED promotional materials (2'x3' color easel posters and color flyers) were designed in collaboration with the College of Humanities & Sciences Communication Office. The origination of the new designs and poster format came from the 2019 SEED students. These were well received and increased prospective student interest and application responses.
 - The two area governor's schools were contacted and asked to participate in the Project SEED program (Maggie Walker – Richmond, Appomattox – Petersburg).

- Longwood University Project SEED
 - Longwood was on track to host Project SEED again in 2020.
 - Longwood had a record number of applicants to the program, from four different high schools in the area (up from two high schools last year).
 - Longwood's SEED program is run in conjunction with the AEOP-REAP program, which is a similar apprenticeship program for underserved and underrepresented high school students that extends to other STEM fields. Longwood's program had four mentors ready to participate this summer, two from chemistry, one from biology, and one from mathematics.