



**Alliance for Graduate Education & the Professoriate**  
affiliate of the Michigan AGEP Alliance

479 W. Circle Dr.  
Linton Hall Rm. 116  
East Lansing, MI 48824

## Michigan State University AGEP returns to Washington

East Lansing, Michigan, March 3, 2014- In February, the Graduate School invited a group of advanced doctoral students of the MSU AGEP (Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate) Learning Community to represent MSU in Washington DC. This trip (Feb 19-22) had three components: Visit of the National Science Foundation (NSF), Discussions with elected representatives on Capitol Hill, and Recruitment of potential graduate students during the Emerging Researchers National (ERN) conference.



AGEP Students at the  
National Science Foundation

Reflecting the diversity of the AGEP Community the participants represented graduate programs in the Education, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences and Engineering fields. The trip was an initiative of the MSU Center for Academic and Future Faculty Excellence (CAFFE) and organized by Associate Deans of The Graduate School Drs. Antonio Nunez (Psychology & Neuroscience), and Julius Jackson (Microbiology & Molecular Genetics), with the support of Steven Thomas, Program Manager. The visit to NSF took place on Thursday February 20th. The group met with program directors to get advice on their career plans, grant-writing and to learn about the workings and mission of the agency.

As Ashley Hannah, a graduate student in the Neuroscience program describes the trip: "All parts of the trip were memorable. I enjoyed greatly the visits to Capitol Hill and NSF because I learned the most about how the government agencies interact with one another and their roles in funding scientific research." Mary Malaspina, Assistant Director, MSU Washington Office led a series of advocacy training sessions for the AGEP student before the trip. So when Feb 21 came around, the students were ready to share with congressional staffers what the AGEP community is all about. The students also had a chance to discuss their individual research projects as well as America's need to train domestic future faculty. Some of the congressional offices visited included the offices of Debbie Stabenow, Carl Levin, Mike Rogers, and Gary Peters.

The third part of DC trip, participating AGEP members helped to recruit for the MSU graduate and summer internship programs during the ERN Conference sponsored by NSF and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (Thursday-Saturday). During the conference, the MSU graduate students helped to judge posters and oral presentations of young scholars who attended the meeting. "In preparation in becoming a faculty member I think it is important to engage in active (recruitment fairs) but also indirect opportunities (poster judging) to inquire about their (undergraduate student) interests and encourage them to come to graduate school," stated by Kellie Mayfield, graduate student in Food Science and Human Nutrition.

For more information about the MSU AGEP Community, contact Steven Thomas ([deshawn@grd.msu.edu](mailto:deshawn@grd.msu.edu)) at 517-353-3262.

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