April 21, 2014

Campus to celebrate academic excellence by DEGREES

At noon Thursday, May 1, Sacramento State’s Dedicated to Educating, Graduating, and Retaining Educational Equity Students (DEGREES) Project will host the Affirming Success and Applauding Achievement Recognition Ceremony for underrepresented minority students with GPAs of 3.0 or higher. The hourlong ceremony will take place in the University Union Ballroom.

Marcellene Watson-Derbigny, DEGREES Project principal investigator and associate vice president for Student Retention and Academic Success, believes that it’s fitting for the campus community “to recognize and showcase our students’ many successes.” She’s particularly proud that “the program brings together faculty, staff and administrators to honor the DEGREES Project scholars.” This will be the first time that these students have been recognized for their academic achievements, aside from commencement.

The DEGREES Project is designed to promote the retention and graduation of all of the campus’s underrepresented minority students. The program is composed of four tracks: early warning interventions/continuing student support; curricular enrichment; mentoring/ tutoring services; and engagement. Project Co-Director Viridiana Diaz says that “despite the fact that Sacramento State has an abundance of resources and programs for all students, many students are not aware of the services available to them. DEGREES is designed to connect students to services necessary to succeed in college.”

Jessica Arauza will graduate next spring with a double major in women’s studies and communication studies, and she serves as the DEGREES Project lead coach. She reflects upon her own college achievements by stating, “Through my college experience, I have found that the key factors to my success have been my engagement on campus and participation in equity programs.

“I know other students have not taken part in the same opportunities, and as a project coach, it is a privilege to help others learn what services are available and help them navigate these services.”
According to the University’s office of Student Affairs, Sacramento State’s underrepresented minority students include 1,901 individuals with GPAs of 3.0 to 3.49, 1,002 with 3.5 GPAs or higher, and 111 with a 4.0 GPA.

For media assistance, contact Sacramento State’s Public Affairs office at (916) 278-6156. — Alan Miller

Sacramento State is making a difference in California’s Capital Region and beyond. We offer a life-changing opportunity for our 28,000 students, preparing them to be leaders in their professions and communities. Our professors are known for their dedication to great teaching. And our location in the capital of the nation’s most populous state allows students to pursue unique internships and research.

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